

Following Jesus Under a Tyrant's Rule

Last fall, China's President Xi Jinping began his third term as leader of China's Communist Party, a historic move with far-reaching consequences.

"It is very significant because he is officially the dictator, tyrant and successfully removed the term limit of the presidency from the [Chinese] constitution," said Bob Fu, founder and president of China Aid Association. "[President Xi Jinping] has basically set himself as president for life."

Fu is also a former prisoner for Christ in China, as well as a former teacher at a Communist Party school in Beijing. His background and experiences give him unique insight on what's going on in China and how current events affect Chinese Christians, in particular. Since Xi Jinping gained power, he has led a campaign against biblical Christianity that has led to what Bob called a "new wave" of persecution for Chinese Christians.

"I think [Xi] really wants to follow the steps of Kim Jong Un of North Korea," Bob said. "You have seen, first, the forced demolition campaign of crosses [in] thousands of churches. Then, the sinicization campaign tried to make the church become compatible with socialism-communism ideology. Then he started forced allegiance to himself."

Christian children, in particular, have become a primary target in this campaign to eradicate Christianity. Parents and children have been forced to sign government forms renouncing their Christian faith, or children will be denied access to public education. Chinese authorities are also trying to restrict children from interacting with God's Word by removing all Bible and Bible-related apps from Apple smartphones in the

country. "They want to totally remove access to the Scripture," Bob said.

Yet China's crackdown on Christians is producing the opposite of its intended effect. "[Through] the new wave of this kind of persecution...house churches have learned how to be faithful to the Lord until death," Bob said. "Through the suffering, they learn how to obey the Lord and His Word."

Bob went on to describe the testimony of a Chinese believer who was interrogated by police authorities about her ardent devotion to Christ. "I only began to love the Lord passionately after you arrested me, when the shackles were on my feet," the Christian sister said. "I realized a little bit how much Christ had paid for me."

✘ Fu also shared about how Chinese churches are baptizing thousands of new believers, even as the government's restrictive "zero COVID" policy limited worship gatherings during the pandemic.

Bob encouraged Christians around the world to pray for those in authority in China. "They need a resurrection by the Holy Spirit," he said. He also requested prayer for church leaders who are serving long prison sentences for refusing to bow to the oppressive rule of China's Communist regime.

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