

VIETNAM #16



68/100

Severe Persecution

Leader: President Truong Tan Sang

Population: 93.3 million (9.9 million Christians)

Main Religion: Buddhism

Government: Communist state

Source of Persecution: Communist oppression

Vietnam is one of the few remaining countries in the world following a communist ideology. Consequently, authorities still perceive Christianity as a foreign influence and Christians as Western agents. The regime is based on Marxist-Leninist doctrine and Ho Chi Minh's thoughts. The publication and distribution of Christian materials is difficult and highly restricted. Work among children and youth is not officially restricted, but monitored and youth camps and trainings can be disturbed. The level of violence increased in 2014. Several church buildings as well as houses of Christians were destroyed and more than 10 Christians were sentenced to jail.

PRAY

- + For Christian leaders and pastors in the north and central highlands; authorities keep a close watch on their activities
- + Praise the Lord for the 584 young people who drew deeper in the Lord through five Open Doors-sponsored youth camps across the country in 2014
- + That the Christians who were imprisoned might keep the faith and that their families and fellow believers will encourage them

**CHURCHES ARE MONITORED AND
CHRISTIANS HAVE A HARD TIME REGISTERING
THEIR CHURCHES IN VIETNAM**



INDIA #21



62/100

Severe Persecution

Leader: Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Population: 1.3 billion (59 million Christians)

Main Religion: Hinduism

Government: Federal republic

Source of Persecution: Religious nationalism

The oppressive caste system is blocking social mobility. Economic wealth is unevenly distributed. A new Hindu government (in power since May 2014 and led by Hindu hardliner Narendra Modi) is radicalizing society. All traditions of Christianity are affected by persecution in India, but Christian converts from a Hindu background and non-traditional Protestant groups are suffering most. At the top level the influence of fundamentalist Hindus has increased. Hindu radicals have started monitoring Christian activity in much detail. Many of them have planted spies in churches. Reports on pastors and church members beaten because of allegations of conversion are frequent; sometimes Christians are even killed.

PRAY

- + For Christian converts to stand strong against those who are trying to force a return to Hinduism
- + That hatred against Christians instigated by radical political parties may end
- + That the new government of Narendra Modi will give Christians the freedom to express their faith without violence in every part of India



CHRISTIANS IN CERTAIN COMMUNITIES OF INDIA ARE **PREVENTED FROM GETTING GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES** SUCH AS FOOD



MYANMAR (BURMA) #25



60/100

Severe Persecution

Leader: President Thein Sein

Population: 54.1 million (4.7 million Christians)

Main Religion: Buddhism

Government: Unitary constitutional republic

Source of Persecution: Religious nationalism

The majority of Myanmar's people are of Burmese ethnicity, also called "Bama." Being Bama is equated with being Buddhist. Everyone deviating from this heritage is labelled as being potentially dangerous. Pressure comes from two sides: one side is society including the movement of radical Buddhist monks called "969," the other side is the government which supports such movements. Some larger minorities are predominantly Christian like the Chin, or have strong Christian groups like the Kachin and the Shan.

PRAY

- + That Thein Sein, President of Myanmar since 2011, will know Jesus Christ
- + For children from Christian families, who face constant disadvantages in education
- + That minority Christian groups such as the Chin will be kept safe from violence and ravages of war



LAST YEAR IN MYANMAR, DOZENS OF
CHRISTIANS WERE KILLED AND
NUMEROUS CHURCHES AND CHRISTIAN
HOMES WERE **DESTROYED**

CHINA #29

		57/100	Moderate Persecution
<p>Leader: President Xi Jinping Population: 1.4 billion (85 million Christians) Main Religion: Atheism Government: Socialism Source of Persecution: Communist oppression</p>			

The Communist government under China’s new president Xi Jinping aims at controlling religious activities. While in most regions in China, Christian activities have been watched rather than controlled, the unregistered house churches could be affected by a program started to eradicate so-called “evil cults.” Concerning the ethnic Han churches, some observers speak of three kinds of churches: the “black” ones which are illegal and which the state is fighting against (for example Vatican loyal Roman Catholics), the “red” ones which are state-approved and controlled and the “grey” ones which are not registered, but tolerated, and which form the majority of the Christians.

PRAY

- + For Christians in the southern province of Zhejiang where local authorities started a campaign against religious structures, especially churches, last year
- + That Christians will continue to grow in their faith and spread it to other countries
- + For Muslim Background Believers in the state of Xinjiang as they cope with pressure from their families and friends as well as the government



AUTHORITIES IN CERTAIN REGIONS OF CHINA **REQUIRE CHRISTIANS** TO REPORT THEIR RECENT ACTIVITIES

MALAYSIA #37



55/100

Moderate Persecution

Leader: Prime Minister Najib Razak

Population: 30.6 million (2.9 million Christians)

Main Religion: Islam

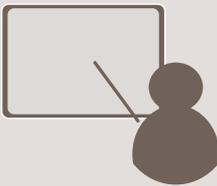
Government: Constitutional monarchy

Source of Persecution: Islamic extremism

Observers of the country talk about a quick Islamization. Additionally, according to the government, Malay ethnicity is seen as being Muslim. The highest pressure is put on Christian converts from Islam. They not only face the risk of being divorced, losing their children's custody rights and inheritance rights, but families will take every means to bring the convert back to the "right" faith. This may start with isolation and pressure to recant the Christian faith, but often will end in a re-education center. It is almost impossible for a Malay Muslim to convert to Christianity.

PRAY

- + That God continues to strengthen Christians in the face of growing restrictions, including plans to put Sharia courts on an equal footing with civil courts
- + For Prime Minister Razak to be more tolerant towards the small Christian minority
- + That the forced closing of churches will not continue in 2015



ALL CONVERTS IN MALAYSIA **HAVE TO BE AFFIRMED BY A SHARIA COURT** AND MUST SPEND THREE MONTHS IN A RE-EDUCATION CENTER

SRI LANKA #44



51/100

Sparse Persecution

Leader: President Mahinda Rajapaksa
Population: 21.6 million (1.9 million Christians)
Main Religion: Buddhism
Government: Socialist democratic republic
Source of Persecution: Religious nationalism

Officially, as a socialist democratic republic, Sri Lanka is a secular state. However, its constitution puts Buddhism first and promotes Buddhism as the state religion. This condition strengthens the Buddhist radicals' power over religious minorities, such as Christians. The majority of Sri Lanka's population is Buddhist. Every citizen is perceived to be a Buddhist. Not only are the Tamil Christians treated as second-class citizens, but also the Sinhalese ethnic Christians are looked at with suspicion and frequently slandered and attacked. Christians continue to be monitored and threatened by Buddhist monks, sometimes accompanied by mobs. That is also why Christians have become cautious in collecting Christian materials or meeting privately, let alone talking to others about their faith.

PRAY

- + For Christian children who are denied of enrollment in public schools because of their parents' faith
- + For Buddhist fundamentalists to no longer treat Christians as second-class citizens
- + That Christian converts from Buddhism will keep their faith as they face intense pressure from their family and communities

CHRISTIANS ARE MONITORED AND **THREATENED**
BY BUDDHIST MONKS WHO ARE SOMETIMES
ACCOMPANIED BY MOBS IN SRI LANKA



INDONESIA #47



50/100

Sparse Persecution

Leader: President Joko Widodo

Population: 255.7 million (36 million Christians)

Main Religion: Islam

Government: Republic

Source of Persecution: Islamic extremism

The situation Christians find themselves in is diverse. There is much hope related to the newly elected president and his public statements concerning religious minorities. But radical Islamic groups continue to act violently when it comes to minorities, especially Christians. The groups put Christians, in certain parts of the country, under enormous pressure. Muslim Background Believers are especially targeted. Last year, more than 30 churches of various denominations were forced to close and/or were attacked.

PRAY

- + For Christian workers who minister in Muslim areas
- + That Christian church members will reach out to all and care for new believers
- + That the closing of churches will end, as well as the attacks on places of worship



MUSLIM BACKGROUND BELIEVERS OFTEN FACE **PHYSICAL ABUSE, AND SOMETIMES HAVE TO FLEE THEIR HOMES** AND RELOCATE ELSEWHERE IN INDONESIA.



5 POWERFUL PRAYERS FOR THE PERSECUTED FROM SCRIPTURE

Adapted from Sarah Cunningham in Advocacy, May 9, 2017

1. Pray that whatever their circumstances, God will give persecuted Christians the right words.

Ephesians 6:19-20, *"Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should."*

2. Pray that persecuted Christians will understand and find peace in the sufficiency of God's grace, even in their weaknesses.

2 Corinthians 12:9, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."*

3. Pray that Christians facing hardship will draw from a source of power larger than themselves.

2 Corinthians 1:7-9, *"For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death...But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead."*

4. Pray God would be present with persecuted Christians in their hardship, protecting them according to His will.

Matthew 26:39, *"My Father, if it is possible let this cup pass from me...Yet not my will, but yours be done."*

5. Pray their witness would inspire those who seek to harm them.

Luke 6:27-31, *"But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."*