



PRAY FOR PERSECUTED BROTHERS & SISTERS

Pray for the Persecuted Christians in Algeria



Government Closure of Churches

Christian Population: 129,000 (0,3%)

Total Population: 42,679,000

Rising violence and pressure in North Africa

Algeria has seen a rise in every persecution category over the last year, which is why it's risen five spots on the 2020 World Watch List. The most visible example of persecution in 2019 was the seemingly systemic closure of Protestant churches. In some of these cases, Christians were forcibly expelled by police in the middle of church services. Pressure from family also remains high, particularly for Christians who were previously Muslim. Extremist Islamist groups continue to pressure the government to restrict Christians' freedom, as well.

Christians must be very careful about how they share their faith. Churches are allowed to exist-but only if they agree to the government's rules. These rules forbid churches to hold Bible studies, host foreign preachers or even run a Sunday school. Very few churches agree to these rules.

Church leaders report that female Christians from Muslim backgrounds are

sometimes placed under house arrest by their families when their faith is discovered. They are not allowed to meet other Christians or to have any contact with them. They are not allowed to watch TV or listen to the radio, as Christian channels are broadcast into Algeria.

Despite all this, the church in Algeria is growing. Most Christians in Algeria come to faith through dreams, visions and Christian broadcasts. Churches send their sermons out of the country to be broadcast back into Algeria over satellite TV.

How Christians Are Suffering

Algeria's blasphemy laws make it difficult for Christians to share their faith out of fear their conversation may be considered blasphemous and used against them. In Algeria, it's forbidden by law to "shake the faith" of a Muslim or to use "means of seduction" to convert a Muslim to another religion. Christians also suffer from harassment and discrimination in their daily life. Family members and neighbors try to force converts to adhere to Islamic norms and follow Islamic rites. The pressure Christians face is particularly high in the rural and religiously more conservative parts of the North African country. These regions acted as a stronghold for Islamist insurgents in the fight against the government in the 1990s.

Pray for Algeria

- At the same time radical Islamic influence is growing, the number of Christians is growing. There is a real openness to Christian faith. Pray believers are bold in sharing the gospel.
- The government has continued its' campaign of closing Protestant churches, including one of the largest ones (about 700 members). Pray the sense of community is not lost and that Christians are still able to gather.
- Churches are mainly made up of first-generation Christians. Pray that local churches will be strengthened and rooted in the Word of God. Thank God for those churches that invest in discipleship training. Pray that new believers will be trained to live as disciples of Jesus.
- Please also pray that the Bible Society in Algeria will get permission to open shops throughout the country, to make Christian literature available to all citizens.
- Pray: The Algerian government are about to reveal "profound" changes to their constitution. They have not asked Christians for input. It is feared that the changes will limit Christian freedoms even more.