



PRAY FOR PERSECUTED BROTHERS & SISTERS

Pray for the Persecuted Christians in Somalia



Pastor Faisal Hassan Jama, attacked by Somali Muslims on April 27th, 2012

Christian Population: A few hundred, unspecified

Total Population: 15,636,000

Violence, civil war and extreme persecution

Somalia remains mired in civil war, tribalism and violent Islamic militancy. Conversion to Christianity is regarded as a betrayal of the Somali family and clan. If Somalis are suspected of being converts, family members and clan leaders will harass, intimidate and even kill them. Christians with a Muslim background are regarded as high-value targets by al-Shabab operatives and have often been killed on the spot when discovered.

The violent Islamic terrorist group, al-Shabab, advocates Shariah law as the basis for regulating all aspects of life in Somalia. This group has repeatedly expressed its desire to eradicate Christians from the country. Foreign jihadists are also present in the country, but Islamic oppression is not limited to militants only. Christians also face serious persecution from family, extended family members and the community at large.

In every sphere of life-private, family, community, and national-being exposed as a convert to Christianity means life-threatening danger, often leading to

on-the-spot execution. This persecution pattern is exceptional and puts Somalia high up in the category of extreme persecution.

As a result, most Somali Christians keep their faith completely secret. But despite the risks, Somali people are coming to faith in Jesus-some in miraculous ways.

Examples of Persecution

Al-Shabaab has been attacking Christians in Somalia at an extremely high rate. They are not only carrying out attacks on individuals, but they have also committed large-scale terrorist acts that have killed many people at a time. In 2013, Abdikhani Hassan, a husband of a pregnant wife and father of five children, was shot to death by two gunmen on his way home from work because he was spreading his faith. In 2013, 67 people were killed at the upscale Westgate Shopping Mall. In 2014, Al Shabaab beheaded a mother of two girls and her cousin publicly, declaring to the public that they want to wipe out all the underground Christians in the area. One of the most notable instances of recent terrorism from al-Shabaab was on April 2, 2015, when five gunmen from al-Shabaab stormed into Garissa University College, killing 147 people, and injuring 79 others. A month earlier, al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for attacks on the Somali border in which 12 people died. The reason they are persecuting Christians is that they consider Christians to be the enemy of God, and by committing this act of killing, they are pleasing Allah. One major problem is that much of Somalia is illiterate. Of the 216 countries in the world, Somalia ranks 210th in literacy with only 37.8% of their population being literate. As a result, often times the illiterate population will depend upon the rumors they hear. Therefore, when they hear preaching against the ideology of "western imperialists," the public will often times accept these rumors and believe that Christianity must be wiped out.

Pray for Somalia

- The Somali people are more than 99 percent Muslim and society expects all Somalis to be Muslim. Islam is the state religion. Pray the Lord will continue to build His Church here amid these hostilities.
- Pray the Somali people in the Horn of Africa turn to God when they go through turmoil. Pray they will have a deep hunger and thirst for the righteousness of God.
- Open Doors estimates the number of Christians in the country to be in the hundreds. Pray believers are bold to share the gospel.
- Pray for mature and godly role-models among Somali believers. Pray for growing unity among the different fellowships.