



PRAY FOR PERSECUTED BROTHERS & SISTERS

Pray for the Persecuted Christians in China

Remember the prisoners as if chained with them - those who are mistreated - since you yourselves are in the Body also.

(Hebrews 13:3)



China

Total Population: 1,439,323,776

Self-Proclaimed Christian Population: 9% – **Evangelical Witness: 8%**

Largest Religion: Non-Religious: 44%

Death Rate: 8.2/1000 per year: Just today: 32,335

New Report Highlights Severe Lack of Religious Freedom in China

03/05/2021 China (International Christian Concern) – In its recent Freedom in the World report, Freedom House—a D.C.-based human rights watchdog group—ranked 195 countries and 15 territories on their political rights and civil liberties. The report considered many specific questions within the categories of political and civil freedom, including the extent to which each country allows its citizens to freely practice and express their religion.

On a scale from 0-4, with 4 representing the greatest degree of freedom and 0 representing the least, China scored 0 for religious freedom in Freedom House’s latest report.

The report cites a number of broad trends in persecution across China, including the government’s increased focus on vetting religious leaders and its attempts to align religious doctrine with Chinese Communist Party (CCP) priorities. China’s state-approved churches, including the protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the catholic Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association, face this type of pressure regularly and leaders in both institutions are vetted for their allegiance the CCP.

The Vatican signed an agreement with the Chinese government in October, 2020 in which it agreed to accept the legitimacy of bishops already appointed by China in exchange for acknowledgment of the pope’s authority to appoint bishops in China going forward. It was recently discovered that China reneged on its side of the bargain just weeks after signing the agreement.

Persecution is even more severe outside of state-run religious institutions—a 2017 Freedom House report found that “at least 100 million believers belong to groups facing high or very high levels of religious persecution, namely Protestant Christians, Tibetan Buddhists, Uighur Muslims, and Falun Gong practitioners.” Research from other groups corroborate this finding.

ICC published an in-depth report in the summer of 2020 examining the legal mechanisms China uses to suppress religion. Topics covered in the report included an array of administrative decrees used to suppress religious expression, and the government’s ongoing campaign to “Sinicize” religion, or change religious identity into something more consistent with CCP values. The report also included a list of Christian persecution incidents from the previous year.

China earned a final overall score of 9 out of a possible 100 points in the recent Freedom House report, earning it a spot in the lowest group of countries, labeled “Not Free.” China is fast becoming one of the world leaders in religious persecution. Other countries must do everything they can to push back against the CCP’s war on religion and ensure that Chinese citizens are free to worship as they please. This kind of freedom may be a long way off in China, but it is only by working together that the international community can hope to effect real change.

Persecuted for Preaching the Word of God

(ChinaAid-March 18, 2021) In the video presentation, "When Darkness Challenges-Light Triumphs-China Freedom File 25," Bob Fu, PhD, shares several stories of those who have experienced what one detained Christian described as "prison theology."

"Prior to CCP authorities seizing and sentencing church Pastor Wang Yi to nine years in prison on December 30, 2019, they cut off electricity to his home." Dr. Bob explains. "Officials typically reserved the 'dark' charge the court used to convict Pastor Wang, 'subversion of state power,' as a political indictment reserved for political dissidents or democracy activists. CCP authorities considered Pastor Wang's charge, however, not to evolve from political actions, but from words in a sermon he preached one Sunday based on John 3:16. In Pastor Wang's sermon, he challenged China's president to repent... to renounce his ill-advised religious policy-to accept Jesus Christ as his Lord.

"CCP authorities also cut off electricity to the home of Early Rain Church (ERCC) pastor, Minister Wu," Dr. Fu notes. "Nevertheless, even in the dark, Minister Wu, his wife, and their children could smile because they know Jesus Christ, the light of the world. As Ms. Xiong said, even though 'we don't have light now, we have Jesus' light in our hearts.'

"Continue to pray for Lawyer Zhang Zhan," Dr. Fu encourages viewers. "She traveled to the epic center of the COVID-19 virus, Wuhan City to report on how the CCP's treatment of the pandemic affected Chinese citizens. While detained in that dark prison, Lawyer Zhang said that only the Word of the Lord [the Light of the world] proved to be the only thing that sustained her.

"Although darkness looms in front of us and challenges us," Dr. Fu encourages, "We have light. We have the light of Jesus in our hearts."