



## News and Current Events :: Christianity 'close to extinction' in Middle East

**Christianity 'close to extinction' in Middle East - posted by Keylla (), on: 2012/12/25 5:53**

Christianity 'close to extinction' in Middle East

Christianity faces being wiped out of the "biblical heartlands" in the Middle East because of mounting persecution of worshippers, according to a new report.

The most common threat to Christians abroad is militant Islam Photo: ALAMY

The study warns that Christians suffer greater hostility across the world than any other religious group.

And it claims politicians have been "blind" to the extent of violence faced by Christians in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

The most common threat to Christians abroad is militant Islam, it says, claiming that oppression in Muslim countries is often ignored because of a fear that criticism will be seen as "racism".

It warns that converts from Islam face being killed in Saudi Arabia, Mauritania and Iran and risk severe legal penalties in other countries across the Middle East.

The report, by the think tank Civitas, says: "It is generally accepted that many faith-based groups face discrimination or persecution to some degree.

"A far less widely grasped fact is that Christians are targeted more than any other body of believers."

It cites estimates that 200 million Christians, or 10 per cent of Christians worldwide, are "socially disadvantaged, harassed or actively oppressed for their beliefs."

"Exposing and combating the problem ought in my view to be political priorities across large areas of the world. That this is not the case tells us much about a questionable hierarchy of victimhood," says the author, Rupert Shortt, a journalist and visiting fellow of Blackfriars Hall, Oxford.

He adds: "The blind spot displayed by governments and other influential players is causing them to squander a broader opportunity. Religious freedom is the canary in the mine for human rights generally."

The report, entitled Christianophobia, highlights a fear among oppressive regimes that Christianity is a "Western creed" which can be used to undermine them.

State hostility towards Christianity is particularly rife in China, where more Christians are imprisoned than in any other country in the world, according to the report.

It quotes Ma Hucheng, an advisor to the Chinese government, who claimed in an article last year that the US has backed the growth of the Protestant Church in China as a vehicle for political dissidence.

"Western powers, with America at their head, deliberately export Christianity to China and carry out all kinds of illegal evangelistic activities," he wrote in the China Social Sciences Press.

"Their basic aim is to use Christianity to change the character of the regime...in China and overturn it," he added.

The "lion's share" of persecution faced by Christians arises in countries where Islam is the dominant faith, the report says, quoting estimates that between a half and two-thirds of Christians in the Middle East have left the region or been killed in the past century.

"There is now a serious risk that Christianity will disappear from its biblical heartlands," it claims.

The report shows that "Muslim-majority" states make up 12 of the 20 countries judged to be "unfree" on the grounds of religious tolerance by Freedom House, the human rights think tank.

It catalogues hundreds of attacks on Christians by religious fanatics over recent years, focusing on seven countries: Egypt, Iraq, Pakistan, Nigeria, India, Burma and China.

It claims George Bush's use of the word "crusade" after the September 11 attacks on New York created the impression for Muslims in the Middle East of a "Christian assault on the Muslim world".

To read more:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/9762745/Christianity-close-to-extinction-in-Middle-East.html>

**Re: Christianity 'close to extinction' in Middle East, on: 2012/12/25 8:39**

My sister I see a different picture emerging in the Middle East from the profiles I read. It might be reasoned that traditional Christianity such as the Orthodox faiths are declining because of persecution. But on the other hand a gospel movement is taking place among the Moslems. Many Moslems are coming to faith in Christ, some through dreams and visions, and becoming part of an evangelistic house church movement.

The best example is Iran. In 1979 there were less than 500 believers in Persia under the Shah. After the Islamic revolution there was a gospel revolution. Now there are conservatively about 100,000 believers in Iran. Some put the estimate at over one million followers of Christ in Iran. These are Moslems who have converted to Jesus and meet in networks of house churches.

Traditional Christianity that may be found in structured churches may be on the decline in the Middle East. But the gospel, if anything, is spreading and many are coming to salvation in Jesus.

My sister, just wanted to give the other side of the story.

Merry Christmas to you in Brazil.

Bearmaster.

**Re: Christianity 'close to extinction' in Middle East - posted by ArthurRosh, on: 2012/12/25 10:38**

Eye-opening article. Thank-you.

**Re: - posted by Keylla (), on: 2012/12/25 10:57**

Hi brother bearmaster

Thanks. actually I received the article from a pastor and wanted to share it. Anyway thanks for reminding me that God is working and strengthen His church does not matter where. He is working.

He has followers everywhere, I believe His church will be taken from many parts of the world. For His grace He also got many true disciples in Brazil and when you remember it please pray for my Brazil, that God can bring repentance and the true gospel to His church here. The gospel of His kingdom be preached everywhere in South America.

Merry Christmas.

**Re: , on: 2012/12/25 11:49**

My sister it will be our honor to lift up Brazil and South America in prayer. Could you please send me an email with some prayer points. My email address is at close of post here. I moderate a prayer conference call where we pray for the persecuted church and global evangelism.

Would love to hear from you how we can pray for Brazil.

Blaine Scogin aka Bearmaster  
tpw707@gmail.com

**Re: - posted by Keylla (), on: 2012/12/25 12:20**

Sorry, I can't tell you all the needs. Pray for the church and for the pastors here.

Thanks,  
In Christ.