

The 5 Most Dangerous Countries for Christians

For the sixteenth consecutive year, North Korea is ranked as the most oppressive place in the world for Christians, according to the international non-profit ministry Open Doors.

Every year Open Doors publishes the [World Watch List](#) to highlight the plight of persecuted Christians around the world. The list represents believers “who are arrested, harassed, tortured—even killed—for their faith.” The list measures the degree of freedom a Christian has to live out their faith in five spheres of life (private, family, community, national, and church) plus a sixth sphere measuring the degree of violence.

Here are the top five countries listed by Open Doors as being the most dangerous for Christians:

1. [North Korea](#)

Leader: Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un

Government: Communist Dictatorship

Population: 25,405,000 (300,000 Christians)

Main Religion: Atheism, Traditional Beliefs

Persecution Level: Extreme

Source of Persecution: Communist Oppression, Dictatorial Paranoia

Comment: “If Christians are discovered, no matter if they are heirs of the Christian communities from before the Korean War or found the Christian faith in other ways – e.g. during the great famine in the 1990s (which caused tens of thousands of

citizens to seek help in China) – not only are they deported to labor camps as political criminals or even killed on the spot, their families will share their fate as well.”

2. [Afghanistan](#)

Leader: President Ashraf Ghani

Government: Republic

Population: 34,169,000 (thousands of Christians)

Main Religion: Islam

Persecution Level: Extreme

Source of Persecution: Islamic Oppression, Organized Corruption and Crime

Comment: “Because all Christians in Afghanistan are essentially converts, they are unable to express their faith, even in private. In many cases, upon being discovered, these converts are considered insane for leaving Islam. If they cannot be convinced to return to their former faith, they are sometimes committed to psychiatric institutions. ”

3. [Somalia](#)

Leader: President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed

Government: Federal Parliamentary Republic

Population: 14,320,000 (a few hundred Christians)

Main Religion: Islam

Persecution Level: Extreme

Source of Persecution: Islamic Extremism, Ethical Antagonism

Comment: "Upon discovery, Christians are often killed on the spot. Al-Shabaab holds to the strict Islamic doctrine of Wahhabism and advocates for Sharia law in every facet of life for Somalis. While al-Shabaab poses a severe threat to Christians in Somalia, believers are also persecuted by their families and the community at large."

4. [Sudan](#)

Leader: President Omar al-Bashir

Government: Presidential Republic

Population: 42,166,000 (1,996,000 Christians)

Main Religion: Islam

Persecution Level: Extreme

Source of Persecution: Islamic Oppression, Dictatorial paranoia

Comment: "The government regularly arrests and intimidates Christian leaders and has demanded on at least one occasion that leadership be handed over to a government-supported committee. When interacting with Sudanese Muslims, Christians must be extremely cautious, as any mention of their faith can be construed as an 'act that encourages apostasy against Islam.'"

5. [Pakistan](#)

Leader: Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi

Government: Republic

Population: 196,744,000 (3,938,000 Christians)

Main Religion: Islam

Persecution Level: Extreme

Source of Persecution: Islamic Oppression, Organized Corruption and Crime

Comment: "Churches that are engaged in outreach and youth work face the worst of the persecution, although all Christians suffer from institutionalized discrimination. Occupations deemed as 'dirty' and 'shameful' are reserved for Christians, and many believers are victims of bonded labor."

[North Korea: #1 on the 2018 World Watch List](#) from [Open Doors USA](#) on [Vimeo](#).

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