

Some hope in Eritrea

Reports have emerged that 69 Eritrean Christians have been released from imprisonment, some of them having suffered brutal treatment for up to thirteen years. But the releases have been conditional upon the lodgement of bail securities, usually in the form of property deeds. It is not entirely clear what has changed the mind of the country's erratic president, the man behind Eritrea's vicious anti-Christian activity. Whether or not this sudden reversal is related to a fear of coronavirus spreading throughout Eritrea's overcrowded jails, Christians across the region are rejoicing that at least some prisoners have been released. But there are still 300 to 500 imprisoned Christians, many of them held in shipping containers in appalling conditions.

My Christian Daily

Great day for Papuan tribe

The remote Yali tribe in the mountains of Papua, now part of Indonesia, has received 2,500 Bibles, 55 years after missionaries who tried to reach them were slain. In the 1960s, attempts to reach this tribe resulted in two missionaries being killed in a gruesome incident that shocked the Christian world. But efforts to reach this tribe did not cease, and in time it received the gospel and a church was born. Now the Bible is being received with much joy and praise to God.

Christian Today

Hindu extremists attack Indian Christians

Mobs of Hindu nationalists have driven Christians in three villages from their homes, demanding that Christians give up their faith because Christian prayers 'caused defilement' to their gods. The Christians lodged a written complaint, but the magistrate confirmed the attackers' demands. The Christians are determined not to deny their faith.

Morning Star News

ISIS leader surrenders to Jesus

After tuning to Christian satellite TV in the Middle East, an ISIS leader decided to contact a follow-up counsellor and kill him. But through a dream about Jesus, the man's life was dramatically turned around. He met the Christian counsellor, heard the gospel and surrendered his life to Jesus Christ.

ASSIST

Colombia: the gospel in dangerous regions

More than ten years ago a Colombian family moved deep into the jungle regions to settle into the tribal way of life, become proficient in the local language, share the gospel and plant churches. As they built relationships among the region's large Afro-Colombian population, they learnt how to live in close proximity to dangerous paramilitary groups, drug lords and armed rebel groups.

Over several years this Colombian couple saw people come to faith in Christ and churches established with their own local leadership. But spiritual attacks also came, firstly though those who practised witchcraft and then more threateningly through the various armed groups that unofficially controlled the region. But the Christians maintained their faith and the evangelists kept distributing Bibles, something that proved to be very effective in penetrating the rebel groups.

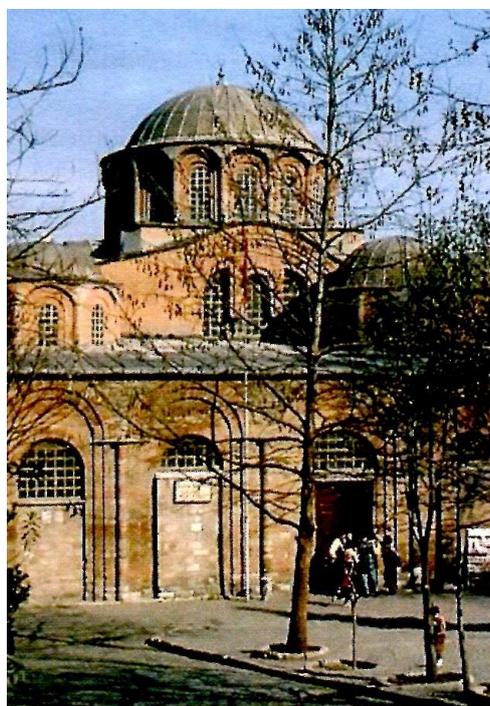
In spite of often being forced from one locality to another, the seventy people who have come to Christ maintain churches in two communities. In addition they have ongoing outreach into 25 of the 28 indigenous communities in the area.

Voice of the Martyrs

Turkey: more provocation

Just a month after changing the ancient Christian landmark Hagia Sophia from a museum to a mosque, Turkey's President Erdogan ordered another ancient church to be turned from a museum to a mosque. This was the St. Saviour in Chora Church (pictured) in Istanbul whose history closely mirrors that of neighbouring Hagia Sophia. Repression of religious minorities is increasing in Muslim-majority Turkey, as Islamist President Erdogan makes no secret of his desire to recreate the Ottoman Empire.

Barnabas Fund



Belarus unrest

The country of Belarus, said to be the last dictatorship in Europe, still has Soviet-style collective farms yet also a disproportionately large number of skilled IT workers. Although half the people call themselves Christian (Russian Orthodox) and legally have freedom to worship, they are the victims of restrictive legislation and official intolerance. They, with most other people, are crying out for freedom from repression.

Barnabas Fund

Evangelism in Kenya

“I travel to our remote northern part of Kenya on mission work with a special outreach and people there are very much in need of any help we can give them. I request more books, because they are of much help to believers which helps them reach the others. But I need help not just for learning books but also for clothing and utensils.”

Schools work in Burundi

“We have about one thousand people who volunteer to teach Bible in about 300 schools each week. We also teach a large group at the university and we have camps for primary, secondary and tertiary students. We have printed study guides to help these students read through the Bible.”

Bridgeway

Killings in Ethiopia

Hundreds of Christians from a range of ethnic groups have been killed in coordinated attacks over several months, while police have just stood by and watched. Christians were carefully selected and murdered, Christian homes and Christian businesses destroyed. One survivor wrote, “They came to my home and began to knock on our door violently. We tried to escape with our children via the window. They burned my home and grain mill business. But with the kindness of God, I have been able to save my children from being burnt.”

These targeted genocides of Christians by Muslim extremists are still going on in the south, south-east and east of the capital Addis Ababa. The attackers are from a traditionally Muslim ethnic group who are retaliating because of the assassination in June of a prominent figure in their group who was shot dead while driving in Addis Ababa. Gross atrocities were perpetrated upon innocent victims and bodies of the dead were desecrated. In some places Muslim citizens, disgusted by the carnage, came to the rescue of Christians.

Barnabas Fund

Turkmenistan, a bizarre country

The central Asian country of Turkmenistan has one of the most erratic, oppressive and paranoid governments in the world. The president has established a quasi-religious cult of personality around himself and changed the constitution so that he can remain in office for life. The government exercises strict control over every aspect of people’s lives – what they hear or read, limited access to the internet, monitoring of how they spend their money, even a night curfew to keep them indoors. It is believed that most citizens would leave the country if they had the chance.

For Christians the pressures are even greater. There are just five registered churches in the whole country, and these are the only places where Christians can meet legally. Christians are isolated from believers outside the country and prevented from having any meaningful contact with each other. Most of Turkmenistan’s Christians are converts from Islam and, in spite of their strange environment, are energetic and joyful. They want their lives, their witness and their prayers to be a blessing to the society in which God has placed them. Yet they are barred from engaging in social work and have difficulty in obtaining Bibles legally.

Barnabas Fund

No Islamic utopia for Iran

Forty years after the revolution that brought in Iran’s Islamic republic, the people of Iran are largely disillusioned and angry. The Islamic utopia did not eventuate and the authoritarian government is largely hated by the people it rules.

Christian converts from Islam also suffer, yet their numbers increase faster than almost anywhere in the world. In a population of 84 million, the number of Iranian Christians is reported to be one million (not counting the 120,000 Armenian and Assyrian Christians), in spite of the preaching of the gospel and conversion to Christianity both being illegal. Iran is one of the hottest recruiting and funding countries for Islamic terror.

VOM/Christian Today

Improvements for Laos

According to reports, the Communist government in Laos has passed a law allowing Christians the right to conduct church services and preach throughout the country. It also allows them to maintain contact with believers in other countries. The test for this massive policy change lies with local authorities, where tribal animists have long viewed Christians as 'bad elements' who attract the wrath of belligerent spirits. Through seminars and meetings, Christians are working with the government to make the new law widely known.

Religious Liberty