

"PRAYING FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH"
ACTS 12:1-19

INTRO: It is said that there is more PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS now than at any other time in the history of the Church. CHRISTIANITY TODAY MAGAZINE reports the following:

- Every Day 8 Christians are killed around the world for their faith.
- Every week 182 Churches or Christian buildings are attacked around the world.
- 260 million Christians have suffered HIGH TO SEVERE LEVELS of persecution around the world this year...up from 245 million last year.

THE TOP TEN NATIONS IN WHICH IT IS THE HARDEST TO FOLLOW JESUS: 1) North Korea, 2) Afghanistan, 3) Somalia, 4) Libya, 5) Pakistan, 6) Eritrea, 7) Sudan, 8) Yemen, 9) Iran, 10) India

THE TOP TEN NATIONS IN WHICH CHRISTIANS FACE THE MOST VIOLENCE: 1) Pakistan, 2) Nigeria, 3) Egypt, 4) Central African Republic, 5) Burkina Faso, 6) Colombia, 7) Cameroon, 8) India, 9) Mali, 10) Sri Lanka.

THE TOP TEN NATIONS WHERE THE MOST CHURCHES WERE ATTACKED OR CLOSED: 1) China, 2) Angola, 3) Rwanda, 4) Myanmar, 5) Nigeria, 6) Ethiopia, 7) Burundi, 8) Mali, 9) Pakistan, 10) Burkina Faso

THE CHURCH AND PERSECUTION

- Persecution of Christians was predicted by Jesus Christ - Matthew 5:10,11
- Persecution of Christians was predicted by Paul - 2 Timothy 3:12
- Persecution was experienced by Paul - 2 Corinthians 4:8-10; 11:23-28
- Persecution was experienced by the early Church - 14 times as recorded in the Book of Acts

CHRISTIANS MUST PRAY FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

Note: Acts 12:1-19

- 1) Persecution by the Government - Vss. 1-4
- 2) Prayer by the Church - Vss. 5,6
- 3) Provision by the Lord - Vss. 7-16
- 4) Perseverance by Peter - Vs. 17

CHRISTIANS RESPONSE TO CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

- 1) We MUST Observe: Worldwide Persecution
- 2) We MUST Pray: Regularly for the Persecuted Christians
- 3) We MUST Prepare: For our Own Persecution
- 4) We MUST Act: Be About the Business of the Lord