



The Burden Afghanistan

By

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Christians in Afghanistan need our prayers – **right now** – they need our prayers. Like many Christians around the world, I am burdened for our brothers and sisters in Afghanistan. Here's why.

Christianity in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has been a predominately Muslim country for many years with an estimated 99.7% of the country being followers of Islam. About 85-90% are Sunni and 10-15% are Shia. Christians are an extremely small minority. Some estimates are as few as one-thousand while other estimates are closer to ten-thousand Christians still living in Afghanistan. The numbers are difficult to verify because identifying publicly as a Christian in Afghanistan can lead to beatings, torture, rape and death.

Christians have long been persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ in Afghanistan. While other minority religions like Hindus and Sikhs have been permitted to live as second-class citizens in Afghanistan, Christianity is not recognized and believers have no official status in the country.

Conversion from Islam to another religion is considered apostasy, which is punishable by death, imprisonment, or confiscation of property, according to the Sunni Islam Hanafi school of jurisprudence. United States Department of State, 2019

That executive summary from the U.S. State Department was written before the Taliban returned to power this month. Many believe the Taliban will be even more strict than the former Afghan government as they will run the country under Shariah law as they did when they were in power 20+ years ago.

Many of the reports we've read and heard about Afghan Christians this week is that they have quickly gone underground in fear for their lives. Most of them are converts from Islam, which make them a target for Taliban fighters. Many Christians have reportedly buried their Bibles and destroyed other Christian literature. [Open Doors](#) has listed the persecution level for Christians in Afghanistan as "Extreme." The [World Watch List](#) has Afghanistan only slightly less oppressive toward Christians than North Korea.

What We Can Do

We can pray for our brothers and sisters in Afghanistan. We may be able to do more than that later and we'll keep you updated about future options and opportunities to help. However, the one thing we can do now is pray. Open Doors has some suggestions for [how we can pray for Christians in Afghanistan](#).

- Pray for an end to violence and death
- Pray for hungry people, that God will provide them both physical and spiritual food to nourish their bodies and souls
- Pray for people who are fleeing or displaced from their homes
- Pray for protection and peace for Christians in Afghanistan, that the Holy Spirit will strengthen these secret believers in their inner being

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. Ephesians 6:17-18

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