

Evil is raging: Anti-Christian slaughter explodes across the globe

OPINION: By [Billy Hallowell](#) - *The Washington Times* - Friday, January 23, 2026



Evil is raging across the globe, with Christian persecution reaching a fever pitch. The statistics surrounding abductions, land grabs and slaughter are absolutely staggering.

According to Open Doors' 2026 World Watch List, released last week, 388 million Christians across the world face "high levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith."

Ultimately, 1 in 7 Christians are [persecuted](#) worldwide, with their biblical beliefs sparking a wide range of discriminatory acts, horrors — and even death. It seems unfathomable in the modern era that persecution could be worsening, yet the statistics paint a truly tragic picture.

The watch list documented some alarming numbers last year: 4,849 Christians were killed, 4,712 were detained and 3,632 houses of worship and Christian properties were attacked.

"The total number of Christians killed for their faith increased from 4,476 in WWL 2025 to 4,849 in the WWL 2026 reporting period," Open Doors [noted](#). "The vast majority of this being from sub-Saharan Africa. Out of the total of 4,849 deaths, 4,491 took place in the region — a shocking 93% of the global total."

This shocking reality continues to play out in the headlines. Nigeria, which ranks seventh most dangerous nation for Christians, continues to see intense persecution. This month, more than 170 people were seized by an armed gang during three church services, terrifying residents and making international headlines.

Such kidnappings — and far worse — have become routine in Nigeria. The problem is so pronounced that President Trump has made concerted efforts to pressure the Nigerian government and has even launched strikes against the Islamic State inside the country.

Organizations such as Open Doors have long documented the persecution horrors inside Nigeria, creating a country profile that offers a lens into how such anti-Christian evils manifest. The group noted in this year's WWL that "Nigeria has been the most violent place in the world for followers of Jesus for several years."

"Violent Islamic militant groups also operate across northern Nigeria and into the country's central region," it [reads](#). "Some of these groups — including Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), an offshoot of Islamic State — target followers of Jesus and any properties owned by Christians. Other Christians, particularly farmers in Nigeria's Middle Belt, are confronted by Islamic militants among the Fulani people, who disproportionately attack Christian communities with horrific violence."

This is just one such profile, with the watch list tackling the top 50 nations where persecution is the worst. The five nations where anti-Christian sentiment is most extreme are North Korea, Somalia, Yemen, Sudan and Eritrea, with North Korea topping the list.

It's important to note that the evils of persecution vary in different nations. While Nigeria and many of the nations on the WWL face horrors driven by Islamic extremism, countries such as North Korea face a divergent scenario.

According to Open Doors, the atheist nation delivers "unimaginably stark" consequences for anyone it suspects of being a Christian, including forcing them into labor camps, immediate execution and imprisonment. Even family members can fall prey to these punishments.

Owning a Bible is a crime, and yet the underground church persists inside the hermit nation.

"Christianity has no place in North Korea, a country where homage must be directed one way only: towards the Kim regime," the WWL states. "With watchful eyes everywhere — even from neighbors and family — even the slightest hint of worshipping Jesus can have devastating consequences. Remarkably, believers do gather, but in utmost secrecy and at enormous risk."

These descriptions only scratch the surface of the diabolical evils raging across the globe — a sinister effort to snuff out Christianity by terrorizing, stealing, pillaging and killing those who practice the faith.

The WWL offers a sobering reminder that persecution is very real and that evil persists. At a time when modernization and technology should be opening hearts and minds, by all measurable accounts these issues are worsening.

Amid the terror, there's something faithful Americans must engage in: intense and intentional prayer for those on the receiving end of such dread.

The U.S., despite our problems, guarantees freedom and liberty to worship, something that's so easy to take for granted. And yet people around the world are forced to secretly gather, conceal their Bibles and risk everything for simply loving the Lord.

This should drive us all to our knees in prayer for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are suffering so profoundly in Nigeria, North Korea and beyond. We see the Apostle Paul make this very request in his own appeals as he faced retribution for sharing his faith.

"Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains," he wrote in Ephesians 6:19-20 (NIV). "Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should."

May we pray for the same boldness for Christians under duress across the globe.

• *Billy Hallowell is a digital TV host and interviewer for Faithwire and CBN News and the co-host of CBN's "Quick Start Podcast." Mr. Hallowell also is the author of four books.*