

Christians are being captured and killed across the globe: 'World Watch List' takes you inside the crisis

'An unparalleled glimpse into the 50 places around the world where it costs the most to be a Christian.'

Millions of Christians across the globe live in perpetual fear that they will be punished, harmed — or even killed — for merely practicing their faith.

Worldwide persecution continues to be at a fevered pitch, with varying degrees of affliction for those who openly embrace the Bible.

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This tragic reality is more than evident in Open Doors USA's latest "World Watch List," an annual report that offers "an unparalleled glimpse into the 50 places around the world where it costs the most to be a Christian."

According to the stunning 2020 report, more than 260 million Christians live in places where there is a high level of persecution, amounting to one-in-eight Christians worldwide.

Learn more about the horrors of Christian persecution:

The "World Watch List" gives a lens into some of the most unthinkable scenarios.

"It's the foremost grassroots data on the persecution of Christians," Open Doors USA president and CEO David Curry recently told "The Pure Flix Podcast." "It gives us an idea about the trends of religious liberty generally."

He said there are restrictions in most places of the world, but that the areas of extreme oppression will likely shock those unfamiliar with the dire scenario.

From government seizure of property and social exclusion to violence and

murder, there is a wide range of ways in which Christians can be oppressed for their faith.

“The most dangerous country where persecution was most intense was North Korea,” Curry said. “But as far as violence, Nigeria pops up [high] on our list.”

The government of North Korea, for instance, has “great control over every sphere of life,” Curry said, with people who are found with scripture or who are suspected of being a Christian at risk of losing everything and being sent to labor camps.

In places like Nigeria — the 12th most dangerous place to be a Christian on the 2020 list — Islamic extremists with the Boko Haram terror group use extreme violence.

“Such violence often results in loss of life, physical injury, as well as the loss of property,” the report says. “As a result of the violence, Christians are also being dispossessed of their land and means of livelihood — and Christians with a Muslim background also face rejection from their own families.”

Curry said Open Doors collects the “World Watch List” data through a network of researchers who are on the ground all over the globe.

“We measure it across all spheres — church life national life, the community, private life,” he said, noting that the level of violence is then discerned. “The trends are all very difficult right now.”

You can see the 2020 “World Watch List” for yourself here.

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