

10 THINGS
YOU MUST KNOW ABOUT
THE
GLOBAL WAR
ON
CHRISTIANITY

JOHNNIE MOORE



TAKE THE NEXT STEP. READ *THE MARTYR'S OATH*.



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10 Things You Must Know about the Global War on Christianity

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10 THINGS YOU MUST KNOW ABOUT THE GLOBAL WAR ON CHRISTIANITY

In February 2015, ISIS terrorists released a now-infamous video that horrified the world. On a Libyan beach, twenty-one Christians were dressed in orange jumpsuits, standing silently in a line, heads down, their hands cuffed behind their backs. ISIS members in all black stood behind each one, guarding the kidnapped prisoners. In the midst of this ominous scene a masked spokesman addressed

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the camera, saying, “The sea you have hidden Sheikh Osama bin Laden’s body in, we swear to Allah, we will mix it with your blood.”¹

Then, on signal, all the Christians were pushed to the ground and beheaded. This image shocked the world. It finally convinced a skeptical press of the rising persecution of Christians around the world, and it helped to jar an apathetic church from its malaise.

Yet the horror we witnessed on that beach was not an anomaly.

This and other horrors have become familiar to us—we’ve seen them on the news, people have reacted to them in shock on our Facebook feeds, and they might be the first thing we think of when we hear about persecution of Christians worldwide—but they are even more familiar to countless Christians around the world who have borne the atrocities of escalating persecution for decades.

Just because it was the first time you

noticed doesn't mean it was the first time it had happened.

Yet the global war on Christians has many more faces than those of masked ISIS fighters dressed in black in a Middle Eastern desert. Terror unfolds every day across Africa and Asia and in both North and South America. It can involve not only physical violence but also political maneuvering and legalized discrimination. It can be initiated not only by religious extremists but also by families, employers, or governments. It affects tens of thousands each year, all around the globe.

The lowest estimate* is that every month,

* One word about the numbers cited in this booklet: accurate numbers of incidents of persecution are very difficult to obtain, in part because many of these incidents are never reported. Several organizations do their best to track persecution statistics, and their numbers vary widely because they use different definitions of persecution or martyrdom. Researchers evaluate to what extent an individual's Christian faith contributes to his or her persecution experiences, and groups vary in how rigorously they verify the data. A group like Open Doors, for example, will count toward its total only cases where the victim can be identified by name and the cause for the treatment is clear. Throughout this booklet I have tended to use the most conservative numbers available. These are horrifying enough, but readers need to be aware that some sources estimate these numbers tenfold or even far more.

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- 322 Christians are killed for their faith;
- 214 churches and Christian properties are destroyed; and
- 772 acts of violence (such as rape, beatings, forced marriages, arrests, and abductions) are perpetrated against Christians.²

Genocide against Christians has been recognized by the US, European, British, Australian, and Canadian governments and by Pope Francis, who said,

Perhaps more than in the early days, [Christians] are persecuted, killed, driven out, despoiled, only because they are Christians: Dear brothers and sisters, there is no Christianity without persecution. . . . Today too, this happens before the whole world,

with the complicit silence of many powerful leaders who could stop it.³

Here's my question: Will you be a part of that silence?

Persecution of Christians is a human rights concern so severe that it demands much more from us and much more from the entire world, whatever our religious beliefs. Standing by while others suffer for their faith goes against the basic rights of religious freedom that all people deserve.

There are things we can do to help—even as everyday people. But first we need to understand what's going on. In my book *The Martyr's Oath* I share the stories of Christians persecuted around the world, but here in this pamphlet I would like to make you aware of ten simple facts that will help you understand the reality of the global war on Christianity.

1

CHRISTIANS ARE THE MOST PERSECUTED RELIGIOUS GROUP ON EARTH—NO EXAGGERATION

Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and many others experience faith-based discrimination, and we don't seek to minimize their experiences. However, research is clear that Christians face more persecution in far more places than followers of any other religion.

Pew Research analyzed global restrictions on religion among religious groups in every country of the world. They noted that harassment originated from both government and civil society. Pew documented incidents of physical violence; discrimination in education, jobs, or housing; arrests; verbal assault;

and desecration of sacred sites. Data shows that in 2014, Christians were harassed in 108 countries. By contrast, Muslims were harassed in 100 countries and Jews in 81. The number of countries where Christians experienced harassment increased from 102 to 108 between 2013 and 2014, while the number of countries where Muslims were harassed remained the same.⁴

The International Society for Human Rights, an organization based in Germany, estimates that of all the world's incidents of religious discrimination, 80 percent are against Christians.⁵ In the 2016 annual report of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom, their seventeen "countries of concern" are places where varying religions are being persecuted, but Christians are persecuted in all seventeen countries, and the persecution extends through all denominations of Christianity, from Roman Catholics

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to Orthodox to evangelical and Pentecostal Protestants.⁶

Yet despite this overwhelming evidence, Christian persecution remains under-reported. Even when Christians are specifically targeted, such as in a 2015 attack by extremist group al-Shabab on Garissa University in Kenya, government officials seemed reluctant to acknowledge that the victims' faith was the motivating factor for the terrorists. The terrorists intentionally began their killing spree at a morning prayer meeting. This attack was in Kenya—not Somalia, Syria, or a country more prone to such acts of terror. Yet Christians in Kenya immediately stopped sending their kids to certain schools out of a growing concern that their children might be the next victims of these extremists.