



PRAYERPOINTS

A PRAYING PEOPLE IMPACTING A LOST WORLD

Faithful Amidst Persecution

THROUGHOUT EAST ASIA, STORIES OF INCREASED SCRUTINY AND PERSECUTION ARE EMERGING. CHURCHES ARE BEING CLOSED, CHRISTIAN WORKERS ARE BEING FORCED TO LEAVE, AND VISAS ARE BEING DENIED. IN THE MIDST OF THESE NEW REGULATIONS, THE GOSPEL MUST CONTINUE TO MAKE PROGRESS.

Night is Coming

In East Asia, a sense of urgency not seen for decades is manifesting itself. John 9:4 tells us to quickly carry out the work assigned to us because the night is coming when no one can work. The common sentiment today is that night is coming. East Asian governments are cracking down on religious activities and Christians are carefully watched. Visas are being denied, businesses closed, church services interrupted, and people detained and even imprisoned.



Previously, relative freedom was felt in many areas. Sunday School was available for children. Outreach activities and even Vacation Bible School were fairly common. These activities, though technically forbidden, were nonetheless allowed. But since 2014, things have become tense. Crosses have been removed from churches, VBS activities have been forcibly canceled, and Christian teachings to those under age 18 have been brought to a halt. Bibles have been burned, churches closed, and tighter controls on the internet have restricted Christian activities. Even in villages where outsiders were previously welcomed, local people are told to take pictures of those sharing the gospel and report them. Now, more than ever, the church in East Asia needs our prayers.

Pray that East Asian believers will stay faithful even as persecution increases.

“I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you because the news of your faith is being reported in all the world” (Rom. 1:8 HCSB).

1 MEXICO. “Migrant workers are flooding in by the busload from all over Mexico. Pray that we will be able to make contact with those whom the Lord has prepared to hear his message.”

2 WESTERN NIGER. Pray for western Niger Fulani who are hearing the Word through recorded memory cards or radio programs, and by reading the Word themselves. Give thanks for Fulani believers, and ask God to give them courage and wisdom.

3 EAST ASIA. Many young people leave home and go to big cities to work. Pray those who come to faith will be trained in sharing and in discipling others, so they can take the gospel to family and friends in their hometowns.

4 THE PHILIPPINES. Please remember the ones who have decided to follow Jesus. They are living out their faith and telling the story while experiencing persecution in their communities. Pray that they will be encouraged to stand firm despite fear and hardship.

5 BRAZIL. The city of São Paulo is filled with neo-Pentecostal movements, Spiritism, and secular humanism. People want and need help, so they will embrace all religions in hopes of obtaining a better life. Pray for God to open the eyes of the city’s inhabitants to the gospel.

6 EAST ASIA. Pray for God’s glory to be evident in the midst of persecution and for Christians to remain focused on him rather than on the troubles they face. When brought before authorities, pray they will be sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s leading.

7 CENTRAL ASIA. Teams are rethinking and strategizing how to reach the people in the far corners of the country with the good news. Pray for those doing the research and planning to have Holy Spirit-inspired creativity.

8 EAST ASIA. In light of increased restrictions on publicly teaching Christian values to children, pray for Christian parents to assume the sole responsibility for this and raise up children who will wholeheartedly follow Christ, no matter the cost.

9 CAMBODIA. A Christian who is trained in health care has used her

own personal past struggles and victory over depression and anxiety to minister to the Khmer people. Please pray that God will raise up more Christians to reach those who are suffering in hopelessness.

10 KENYA. “Our team is growing, and we are excited because that means more laborers in the harvest field! Pray for boldness as we are out weekly, sharing truth in hard areas. We desire to be confident in our message and clear in our delivery.”

11 EAST ASIA. Now is the time for the church in East Asia to stand strong and press on. Pray that it will stand firm against the powers of darkness and shine brightly for Christ. When the dust settles, it will sparkle like jewels in a crown.

12 MOZAMBIQUE. Please lift up the Nsenga people. Ask that God will hear the prayers of his people and send harvest laborers among them. Pray that those faithful to the Lord will be strengthened and persevere.

13 SOUTH ASIA. As hundreds of new house churches are formed and leaders are trained, there is the threat of false teaching confusing new believers and leaders. Pray that all will use God’s Word to instruct and to correct.

14 EAST ASIA. Living under scrutiny causes stress. Pray for Christian families to find healthy outlets for stress as they deal with these struggles. Pray for their children to not be adversely affected, but to grow in the knowledge and power of Christ.

15 GUINEA. Please continue to pray for the women of the local church in Conakry who are meeting together monthly for Bible study. Pray that the women will grow deep in their faith.



Activities like Vacation Bible School are being forcibly cancelled.

16 PAKISTAN. Some Christians are trying to reach out in a part of town that has a bad reputation. Pray for them to have opportunities to share truth, and pray for seekers to emerge.

17 EAST ASIA. Ask God to provide necessary training and education for pastors in East Asia's restricted countries. Pray for godly teachers and hungry students with teachable spirits. Pray for multiple training venues and protection for all involved.

18 DEAF PEOPLES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Pray for the two Deaf churches in major cities in a Southeast Asian country. Ask that they will continue to be faithful evangelists in their communities, trust the Lord for their needs, and hold fast to his Word.

19 EUROPE. Pray that IMB personnel and their partners in Denmark, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden will find the energy to get out and connect with people in the cold months, and ask that they will be proactive in inviting people into their homes and lives.

20 EAST ASIA. Just as persecution scattered the early Christians, pray that today's trials will take Christians to areas never before reached by the gospel. Ask God for a great harvest from a variety of tongues, tribes, and nations this year.

21 YEMEN. So many Northern Yemeni Arabs have been traumatized by the war. Pray for a supernatural healing to blanket Yemen today.

22 ZAMBIA. Pray for the churches in northern Zambia, asking that God will be glorified in their efforts to expand the kingdom of heaven in that area.



Pray that East Asians who encounter God's Word will come away changed.

23 EAST ASIA. Students may face repercussions if they are known as Christians. They may be held back in school or not allowed to graduate. As they consider the cost of following Christ publicly, pray they will choose Christ above everything else.

24 ECUADOR. Marriage is not a part of the Afro-Ecuadorian culture. Pray that the young people will see marriage as a good thing in their lives and make it a goal.

25 EAST ASIA. Throughout history governments have tried to eradicate Christianity, but to no avail. Praise God that his church will survive against the strongest enemy. The gates of hell will not prevail!

26 THAILAND. In Thailand, the biggest barrier to the gospel is unrepentant sin. Pray for the people of Thailand. Pray that they will forget their excuses. Ask God to give them the faith to believe and the boldness to follow Christ.

27 DEAF PEOPLES OF CENTRAL ASIA. A Deaf mother and daughter in Central Asia are interested in spending more time with an IMB worker. Praise God for this opportunity! Pray for wisdom, and ask that she will

be bold and courageous as she shares God's stories.

28 EAST ASIA. As a government task force forms to rewrite the Bible and align it more with the ruling party's thinking, pray that those reading God's true Word will be convicted of their sin, repent, and be baptized.

29 MEXICO. "Please pray for our team's upcoming trips to villages that are home to a few Christians who have recently felt discouraged due to political unrest and threats of violence against them. Pray that we can be a source of encouragement and wisdom."

30 EAST ASIA. In a world growing increasingly evil and perverse, Christians must continue to run with perseverance the only race worth running. Though difficult, there is no better way. Pray they will finish strong and receive the prize.

31 CENTRAL ASIA. "Please pray for the children on our team. It's often challenging to live here while trying to speak the language, make friends, and study. Pray that our children will learn to trust in the Lord completely and to grow spiritually in their faith."



Forced to Leave

There was no warning. We were eating breakfast when they knocked on the door and entered our apartment. We immediately had to leave home and undergo questioning that lasted for days. We were legitimately in the country, running a small business. However, as Christians, we also participated in weekly meetings with other Christians. The authorities don't approve of these activities.

We had always been very careful in what we said and did so that we wouldn't cause any of our friends to be exposed as Christians. Yet, we knew we were being watched closely. The situation was both stressful and dangerous, but worth it in order to share the gospel. Hoping to get more information out of us, the authorities questioned us separately. They had pictures of us with other people.

Then abruptly, the questioning stopped, and we were forced to leave the country. Our greatest concern was for our friends that now felt like family. Our hearts are burdened for what may happen to them as a result of knowing and interacting with us. Please pray for their safety.



**Names changed*

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