



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER October 2017

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Dear Pastor and Mission Leaders,

Greetings in Christ. November 5th, 2017 is the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. This is an annual Sunday focus around the world to remind us to pray for the believers living under persecution.

What is happening to our fellow believers?

- 600 Million followers of Jesus are being prevented from practicing their faith through “intimidation, forced conversions, bodily harm or even death” according to the Center for Studies on New Religions.
- Pew Research says that Christians in 145 countries face harassment or worse.
- In Iraq, the number of Christians has gone from 1.5 million in 2003 to 275,000 today.
- China has increased its level of persecution against Christians according to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.
- Open Doors USA reports that last year was the worst year on record for global religious persecution.
- North Korea is the top persecutor of Christians according to Open Doors USA.
- In India in 2016, there were 443 incidents of Christian persecution. In mid-2017 there were 416 incidents of Christian persecution, more than double from 2016. Radical Hindus want to eradicate Christians from India by December 2021.

What can we do as Churches or as followers of Jesus Christ?

- We can pray daily for believers facing persecution and also pray for the persecutors.
- As a church we can order the IDOP kit from Voice of the Martyrs and use it on November 5th. [The complete IDOP kit costs \\$75](#). It can be ordered by calling 800-747-0085 or [visit the website](#). The kit includes a prayer DVD, newsletters, prayer reminder and bookmark, prisoner prayer bands and a 4'x4' cloth prayer banner.
- Open Doors USA also has the IDOP kit for November 5th. It is free. [For more information and to access the IDOP kit.](#)
- Read the latest book [Standing in The Fire](#) by Tom Doyle, which focuses mostly on Syrian believers facing persecution.

Blessings,
Steve Austvold