



THE WORLD'S MOST PERSECUTED MINORITY: CHRISTIANS

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Which is the most persecuted religious group in the world today? The answer in terms of sheer numbers and sheer horror might surprise you. It's Christians, specifically Christians living in Muslim-majority countries, countries where Christians often preceded Muslims by centuries. I'm not talking about "War on Christmas" type harassment; I'm talking about "know your place or we're going to kill you" persecution. Astonishingly, the Western mainstream media barely acknowledge what is happening.

Let's look closer at this issue. It tells us a lot about the world we're living in.

One hundred years ago, 20% of North Africa and the Middle East, the birthplace of Christianity, was Christian. Today, Christians make up 4% of the population. Much of that decline has occurred in the last decade. In essence Muslims are rendering North Africa and the Middle East free of Christians.

Take Egypt, for example, my ancestral homeland. In just the past two years, tens of thousands of Christian Copts have left Egypt. And many others want to leave, but they simply cannot afford to. Why they want to leave is no mystery.

On New Year's Day 2011, the Two Saints Church in Alexandria was bombed, leaving 23 Copts dead and 97 injured. In recent years dozens of Coptic churches have been attacked, many burned to the ground. In August 2013 alone, the Muslim Brotherhood and its supporters attacked and destroyed some 80 churches.

Unfortunately, Egypt is more the rule than the exception.

Hundreds of Nigerian churches have been destroyed in recent years, with especially deadly attacks reserved for Christmas and Easter church services, leaving dozens dead or mutilated. Churches have been bombed or burned in Iraq, Syria, and just about every place in the Middle East where churches still exist except Israel. Christian businesses have been torched, Christian girls have been kidnapped, sold as child brides or slaves, and had acid thrown in their faces for not being veiled. Anyone born a Muslim who converts to Christianity faces jail and possibly execution. The list of fresh atrocities by Muslims against Christians grows longer almost every day. Even in Muslim countries often portrayed as "moderate" – Morocco, Indonesia, Malaysia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan – Christian minorities are under legal pressure not to build churches or evangelize.

The Christians in these Muslim countries are often identical to their co-citizens in race, ethnicity, national identity, culture, and language; there is no political dispute between the

Christians and Muslims, no land dispute. Vastly outnumbered and politically marginalized, these Christians simply wish to worship in peace. Instead they are hounded and attacked.

So, then, why is this happening? And why is the media making so little mention of it?

The first question is easy to answer. Christians are being persecuted in Muslim countries because they're Christians, or as the Quran puts it, "infidels," that is, non-Muslims, who are regarded by many fundamentalist Muslims as inferior. As a fundamentalist interpretation of the holy books of Islam has grown in the last fifty or so years, Christians have suffered. And in recent years, they have suffered terribly. I document this in my book, *Crucified Again: Exposing Islam's New War on Christians*.

If this were happening to any other group besides Christians, it would be the human rights tragedy of our time. There would be loud worldwide calls for action. But the silence in the mainstream Western media is, as they say, almost deafening.

Why?

Because Muslim persecution of Christians throws a wrench in the media's narrative that "Muslim violence is a product of Muslim grievance." That grievance is, first and foremost, portrayed as the sin of European colonialism and alleged American imperialism. In the Muslim world's mind, those two sins are personified by the Jewish State of Israel, a nation the Muslim world believes was forced upon it by the colonial powers of Europe following World War II and is currently supported by the United States.

Much of the Western world and the Western media have largely bought at least some of this narrative. Here's how it works: Because Israel, with the backing of the United States, is stronger than its Muslim neighbors, the media, while not defending Islamic terrorism, often portray terror against Israel, America, and even Europe as the actions of understandably angry "underdogs" fighting for what they deem "justice." But what happens to this media narrative when Islamic terror is directed against a minority weaker than them--in this case, the millions of indigenous Christians throughout the Islamic world?

The answer is that, rather than abandon this narrative, the media just don't report Muslim persecution of Christians except for the most sensational cases. That's why you probably don't know that there are barely any Christians living in Algeria, Tunisia and Libya, nations where Christianity once thrived. Or, that this is happening in Egypt, Iraq, Iran, and even Lebanon.

So, yes, Christians are indeed the most persecuted religious group in the world today. But reporting it would violate the media's narrative of Christians as persecutors and Muslims as victims.

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