

# **CORE SINGLES FELLOWSHIP**

## **SIGNS OF THE TIMES**

# **SIGNS OF THE TIMES**

**A Very Current Sign  
Rampaging Persecution**

# Rampaging Persecution

## Jesus Prophesied it

**Matthew 24:9 (ESV)**

*9 “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake.*

# Rampaging Persecution

## Jesus Prophesied it

***John 17:14-15 (ESV)***

*14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.*

*15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.*

# Rampaging Persecution

## Jesus Prophesied it

***John 17:20 (ESV)***

*20 “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,*

# Rampaging Persecution

In the Headlines

# Rampaging Persecution

## In the Headlines

<http://www.persecution.org/awareness/global-persecution-post-map-2/>

# Rampaging Persecution

## Topics to be covered

Some facts about persecution

A definition of persecution

Who is persecuted?

Who does the persecuting?

What is the cause of Persecution?

How does a Christian respond to it?

Where is God in all of this?

# Rampaging Persecution

## Some facts about Christian persecution

- Most persecuted group in the world
- Occurring in >60 countries
- >100 million suffer WW/year
- >180/month killed on avg.

# Rampaging Persecution

## Topics to be covered

A definition of persecution

Let's look at "Open Doors"

<https://www.opendoorsusa.org/persecution/about-persecution>

# Rampaging Persecution

Christian Persecution is any hostility, experienced from the world, as a result of one's identification with Christ. From verbal harassment to hostile feelings, attitudes and actions, believers in areas with severe religious restrictions pay a heavy price for their faith. Beatings, physical torture, confinement, isolation, rape, severe punishment, imprisonment, slavery, discrimination in education and in employment, and even death are just few examples they experience on the daily basis.

# Rampaging Persecution

## Underlying impulses

Tribal impulse

Other religious militancy

Tribal antagonism

Ecclesiastical arrogance

## Secular impulse

Aggressive secularism

## Exploitative impulse

Organized corruption

## Persecution engine

Islamic extremism

Communist oppression

Totalitarian paranoia

# Rampaging Persecution

## Drivers of Persecution

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Government (any level)                 | Local to national officials |
| Society (any level)                    | Ethnic group leaders        |
| Non-Christian religious leaders        |                             |
| Religious leaders of other churches    |                             |
| Fanatical movements                    |                             |
| Normal citizens (mobs)                 |                             |
| Extended family                        |                             |
| Political parties                      |                             |
| Revolutionaries or paramilitary groups |                             |
| Organized crime cartels or networks    |                             |
| Multilateral organizations             |                             |

# Rampaging Persecution

## Topics to be covered

A definition of persecution

Let's look at "Open Doors"

<https://www.opendoorsusa.org/persecution/about-persecution>

And now – World Watch List

<http://www.worldwatchlist.us>

# World Watch List

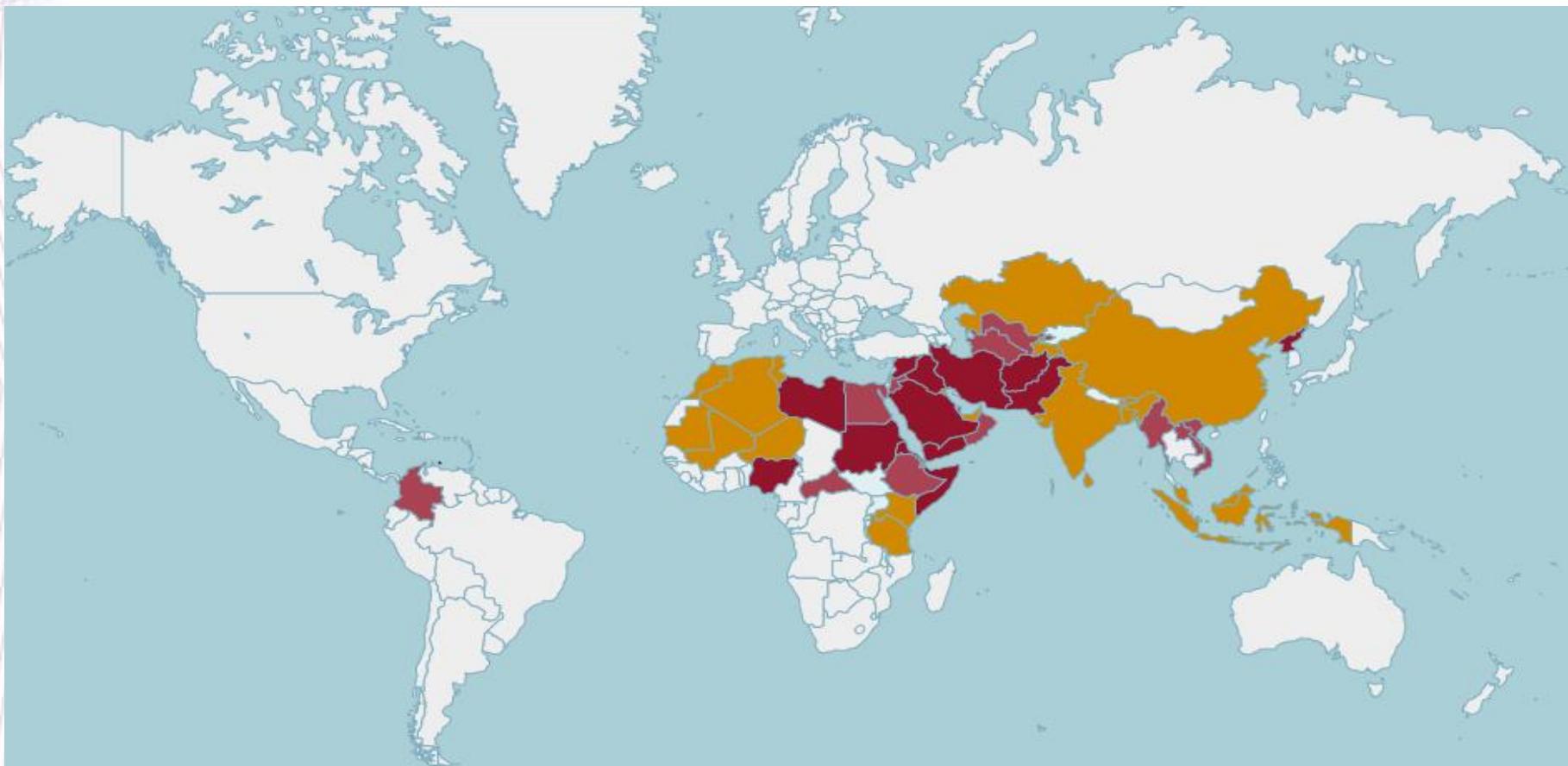
KEY

EXTREME PERSECUTION

SEVERE PERSECUTION

MODERATE PERSECUTION

SPARSE PERSECUTION



# World Watch List

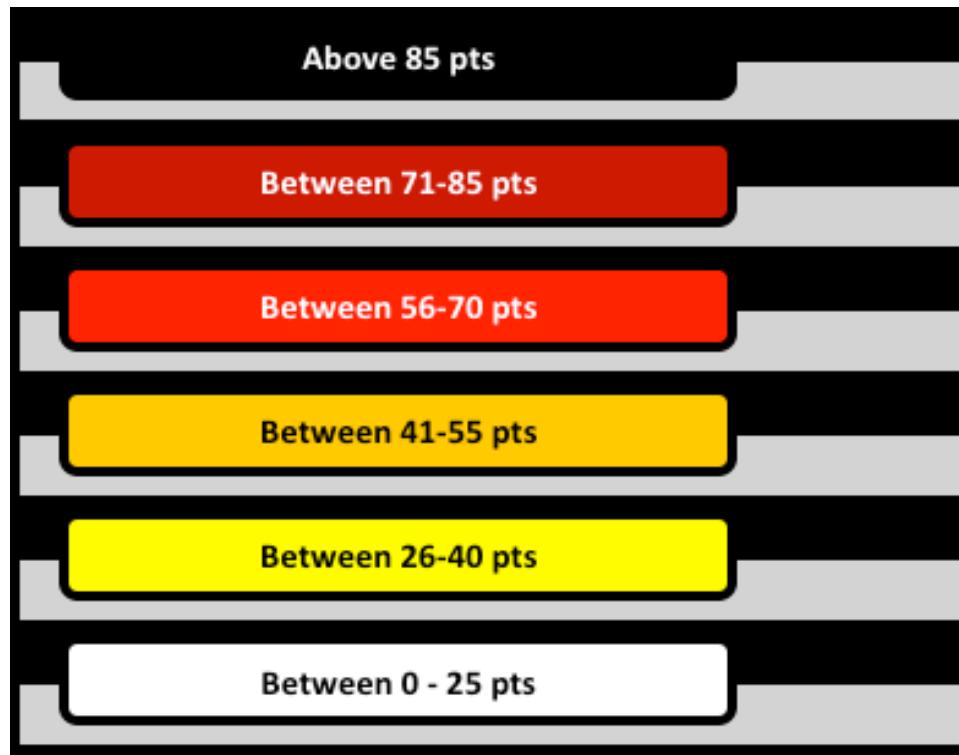
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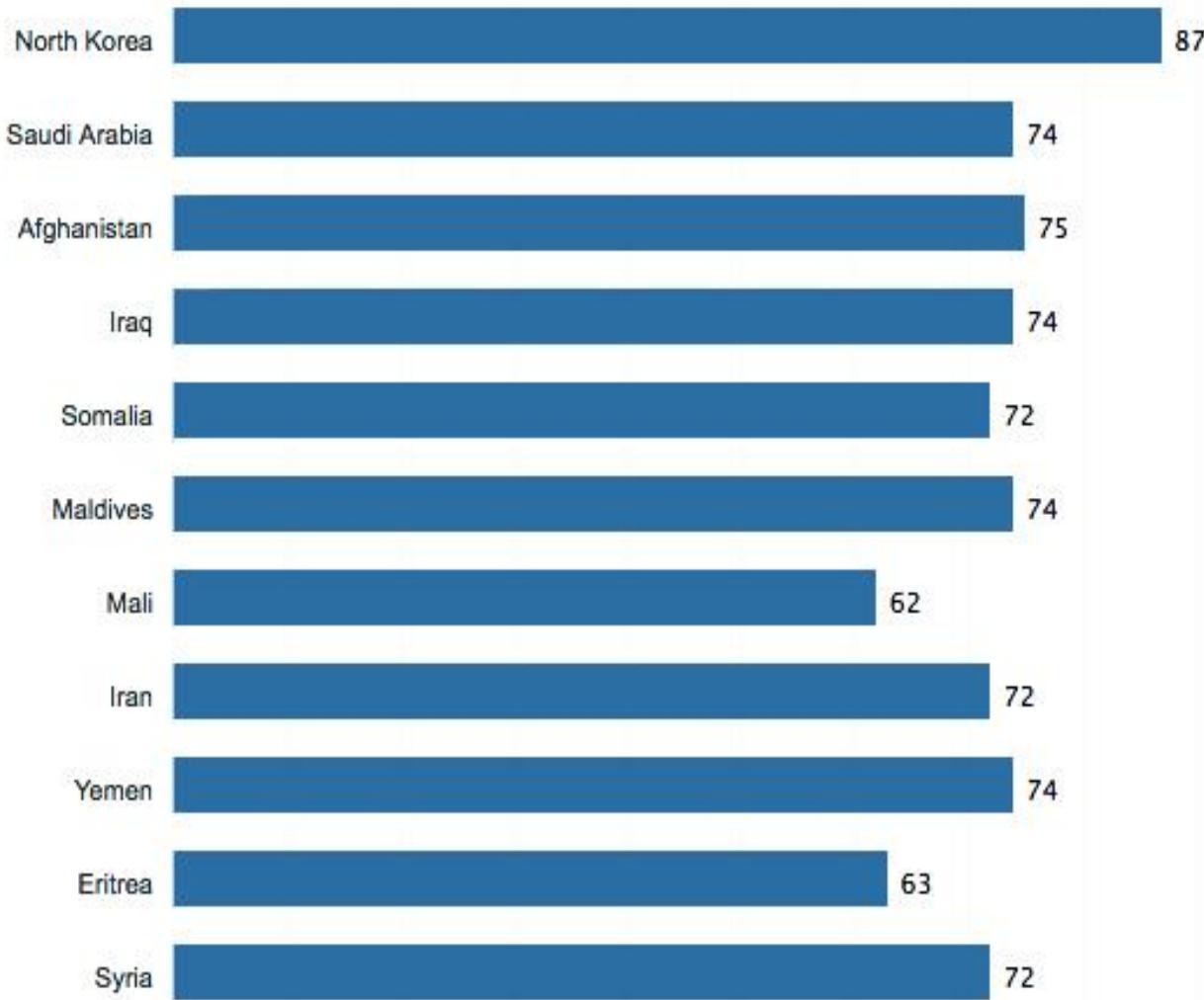
SEVERE PERSECUTION

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# Country Index



# Rampaging Persecution

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A 3<sup>rd</sup> Site – Voice of the Martyrs

# **Rampaging Persecution**

**What is the cause of Persecution?**

# Rampaging Persecution

## What is the cause of Persecution?

It is normal for a follower of Jesus:

He said we would have it: Mat 5:10-12

He experienced it – challenges, trial, cruc.

Obedience produces it – Mat 28:18-20

He sent us a helper – Jn 14:15-17

# Rampaging Persecution

**What is the cause of Persecution?**

Paul also experienced it

And described it to Timothy as

The depraved nature of humankind

# Rampaging Persecution

## What is the cause of Persecution?

### 2 Timothy 3:1-5 (ESV)

*1 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. 2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.*

# Rampaging Persecution

**What is the cause of Persecution?**

Paul describes it as a spiritual battle

# Rampaging Persecution

## What is the cause of Persecution?

*Ephesians 6:12 (ESV)*

*12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*

# Rampaging Persecution

## What is the cause of Persecution?

Peter addresses it with the church in Asia

*1 Peter 5:8 (ESV)*

*8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*

# Rampaging Persecution

## **Is persecution coming to you and me?**

- Have you experienced discrimination?
- How free are you to witness?
- What expression is prohibited in your workplace?
- How do you counter it?
  - Are your advancement opportunities limited because you are a known Christian?
- Is your employment in jeopardy?

# Rampaging Persecution

## How does a Christian respond?

- Educating yourself on the persecuted church
  - These are our suffering brothers and sisters

# Rampaging Persecution

## How does a Christian respond?

- Praying for the persecuted Church
  - for strength to stand
  - for boldness in their witness
  - for inspired speech
  - To be kept from the evil one

# Rampaging Persecution

## How does a Christian respond?

- Preparing for it
  - Grounded in the Word – 1 Pt 3:15
  - **Covered by the armor of God**

# Rampaging Persecution

## How does a Christian respond?

*Ephesians 6:10-11; 14-17 (ESV)*

*10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ...*

*14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,*

# Rampaging Persecution

## How does a Christian respond?

*1 Peter 5:6-9 (ESV)*

*6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. 8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*

*9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.*

# Rampaging Persecution

## How does a Christian respond?

- Preparing for it
  - Grounded in the Word
  - Covered by the armor of God
  - **Prayed up for ourselves AND for others**

# Rampaging Persecution

- **How does a Christian respond?**

## Ephesians 6:18-20 (ESV)

18 **praying at all times in the Spirit**, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert **with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints**,  
19 **and also for me**, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth **boldly to proclaim** the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

# Rampaging Persecution

## How does a Christian respond?

- Preparing for it
  - Grounded in the Word
  - Covered by the armor of God
  - Prayed up for ourselves AND for others
  - **Trusting God for the outcome**

# Rampaging Persecution

## Where is God in all of this?

- He will be with you –
  - Matt 28:20b; Jn 14:1-3; 2 Pet 2:4-9
- the Holy Spirit will strengthen you and give you the words to speak –
  - Jn 14:15-17; Lk 21:12-19
- A great reward in Heaven – Matt 5:11-12
- An eternal dwelling place in Glory –
  - 1Pt 5:10

# Rampaging Persecution

## Antisemitism and Israel

- Longest ongoing persecution against any Ethnic group
- Started with Israel's slavery – Egypt ~1800 BC
- Dispersed again – 70AD and forward
- Pogroms/Crusades in the middle ages
- Genocide in Germany in the '30s and '40s

# Rampaging Persecution

## Antisemitism and Israel

- Ongoing struggles with neighbors since 1948
- On the rise in Europe again
  - The worst since the Nazis
  - Swastikas on synagogues, stores, etc.

# Rampaging Persecution

## Antisemitism and Israel

### Recent headlines

- Riots in France, Germany and Spain
- Synagogues and stores attacked
- Cars and businesses firebombed
- Placards: “Death to Jews,” “Hitler was right”
- Belgian store: “Jews not served here”

Antisemitic acts up 7X: 2000s over 1990s

Social media deluged with antisemitic slurs

# Rampaging Persecution

## Antisemitism and Israel

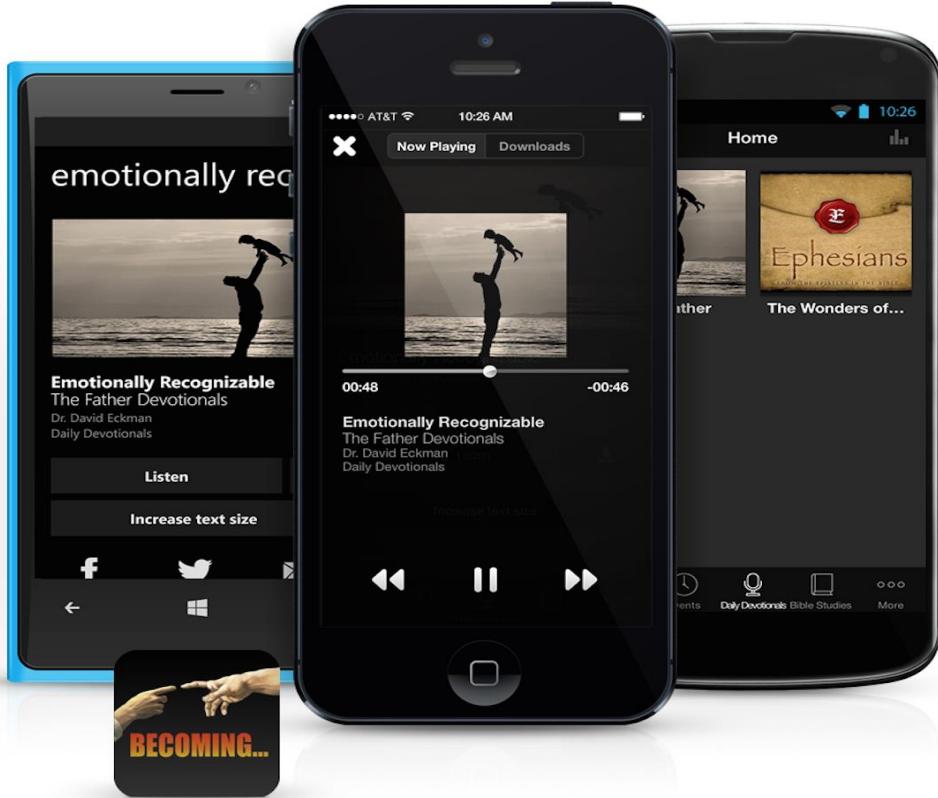
2014 ADL survey – antisemitic attitudes (11?S)

World wide	1.09 billion	26%
USA		9%
Americas		19%
Asia		22%
Europe W. / E.		24%/34%
Russia		30%
Mid. East/N. Africa		74%

# Rampaging Persecution

## Antisemitism and Israel

- Ongoing struggles with neighbors since 1948
- On the rise in Europe again
- Anti-Zionism/Anti-Israel the new antisemitism
- Some Evangelicals promoting it:
  - Christian Palestinianism



Now Available

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- Google play: “Dr. David Eckman”



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