

How to Address the Rising Tide of Religious Persecution

BY AN ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL WORKER

Imagine going to work one day and being handed a form you have to complete and sign. It asks about your religious beliefs. Once you answer these questions, the form requests more information. You can also indicate you aren't religious. You have the impression that if you check that one, you'll be left alone.

Admitting to a religious belief means you'll eventually be invited to the boss's office—and maybe his or her supervisor's office. There you will be coaxed to think about your future and your family because if you don't comply, your kid may be expelled from school, effective immediately.

The New Normal

This is the growing reality we now face—as do our friends in surrounding areas. In one locale, a number of churches have been closed. Our weekly outreaches continue, people are still attending, and lives are still changing. Yet, there is this looming sense that many more are not coming who otherwise would—because of the fear that seems to effectively extinguish sprouting spiritual appetites.

A Narrow Window

About 15 years ago, we described a window of time that would be open for about a decade. That window is closing fast. Almost overnight, we have found ourselves in a different era.

Our sense of urgency is essential; it's also good for the soul. We find ourselves no longer preoccupied with the pettiness that comes with complacency—a quick way to shed extra weight in the journey of faith.

We really need your prayers now.

Please pray for our protection—and for wisdom and discernment as we navigate these perilous waters. Pray also for God's intervention to keep the doors open for the good news to be proclaimed and for authorities to reverse their position on religious freedom. Ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen believers and help them to stand firm in Christ.

Intercede as well for the United States. Pray that our churches will learn to focus on strengthening God's people in these end times through developing strong disciples of Jesus. For in the end, the Church—as faulty as she is—remains God's visible banner of hope for the world.

How to Address the Rising Tide of Religious Persecution

BY AN ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL WORKER

Imagine going to work one day and being handed a form you have to complete and sign. It asks about your religious beliefs. Once you answer these questions, the form requests more information. You can also indicate you aren't religious. You have the impression that if you check that one, you'll be left alone.

Admitting to a religious belief means you'll eventually be invited to the boss's office—and maybe his or her supervisor's office. There you will be coaxed to think about your future and your family because if you don't comply, your kid may be expelled from school, effective immediately.

The New Normal

This is the growing reality we now face—as do our friends in surrounding areas. In one locale, a number of churches have been closed. Our weekly outreaches continue, people are still attending, and lives are still changing. Yet, there is this looming sense that many more are not coming who otherwise would—because of the fear that seems to effectively extinguish sprouting spiritual appetites.

A Narrow Window

About 15 years ago, we described a window of time that would be open for about a decade. That window is closing fast. Almost overnight, we have found ourselves in a different era.

Our sense of urgency is essential; it's also good for the soul. We find ourselves no longer preoccupied with the pettiness that comes with complacency—a quick way to shed extra weight in the journey of faith.

We really need your prayers now.

Please pray for our protection—and for wisdom and discernment as we navigate these perilous waters. Pray also for God's intervention to keep the doors open for the good news to be proclaimed and for authorities to reverse their position on religious freedom. Ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen believers and help them to stand firm in Christ.

Intercede as well for the United States. Pray that our churches will learn to focus on strengthening God's people in these end times through developing strong disciples of Jesus. For in the end, the Church—as faulty as she is—remains God's visible banner of hope for the world.

Hope for the Hopeless

BY JERRY K., REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR EUROPE/MIDDLE EAST

Although we travel more than half the year, my wife, Shelly, and I try to connect with our neighbors, praying for them regularly and trusting God to give us opportunities to share the gospel with them in word and deed. During the first few weeks we lived in this apartment, we introduced ourselves and gave them a little taste of typical American culture—chocolate chip cookies!

Our efforts were rewarded when a neighbor couple invited us for coffee in their home. As our conversation flowed, they asked about what we do—and why we do it. This led to a discussion about our respective beliefs. Their worldview could be described as “functional atheism.” They believe that “love is God,” a New Age interpretation of 1 John 4:8 that allows people to argue that He is an impersonal principle rather than a personal being.

It broke our hearts to hear them share a philosophy of life that includes no hope for the future—no God who created them, loves them, and desires to spend eternity with them.

Although most people in this country are resigned to a life without hope, it doesn't make it any easier to hear it from our neighbors who have grown close to our hearts. Pray with us that the Holy Spirit will reveal Himself to them, soften their hearts, and give them a desire to come to know Jesus—the Hope of the world!

He Is Still Our Healer

From its earliest days, The Alliance has preached Jesus as our Healer—one of the foundational teachings of the C&MA's Fourfold Gospel. There is no record in the gospels that Christ turned away anyone who came to Him for healing. He even raised the dead. Our founder, A. B. Simpson, knew from his own experience that divine healings still occur today—evidence that Jesus continues to be our Healer.

A praise report from Andy Brake, an Alliance international worker in Indonesia, testifies to this truth. Alliance Dutch colleagues Peter and Anne-Marie took a three-year-old boy to the hospital for a critically needed hip operation. He could not walk because he had no hip joint.

The doctor refused to operate, stating the procedure was too risky. Peter and Anne-Marie were disheartened as they took the boy and his mother, who practices the majority religion, home.

Soon after, the couple decided to ask the Great Physician to heal the child, anointing him with oil. “He is now walking with the use of a cane—for the first time!” says Andy. “We are rejoicing that God continues to open doors for the good news of the Kingdom in Indonesia.”

Praise God for His healing touch; pray too that He will use this miracle to draw this family to Himself. May He continue to demonstrate His mighty power to many more people in this area so they will turn to Him for salvation.

Hope for the Hopeless

BY JERRY K., REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR EUROPE/MIDDLE EAST

Although we travel more than half the year, my wife, Shelly, and I try to connect with our neighbors, praying for them regularly and trusting God to give us opportunities to share the gospel with them in word and deed. During the first few weeks we lived in this apartment, we introduced ourselves and gave them a little taste of typical American culture—chocolate chip cookies!

Our efforts were rewarded when a neighbor couple invited us for coffee in their home. As our conversation flowed, they asked about what we do—and why we do it. This led to a discussion about our respective beliefs. Their worldview could be described as “functional atheism.” They believe that “love is God,” a New Age interpretation of 1 John 4:8 that allows people to argue that He is an impersonal principle rather than a personal being.

It broke our hearts to hear them share a philosophy of life that includes no hope for the future—no God who created them, loves them, and desires to spend eternity with them.

Although most people in this country are resigned to a life without hope, it doesn't make it any easier to hear it from our neighbors who have grown close to our hearts. Pray with us that the Holy Spirit will reveal Himself to them, soften their hearts, and give them a desire to come to know Jesus—the Hope of the world!

He Is Still Our Healer

From its earliest days, The Alliance has preached Jesus as our Healer—one of the foundational teachings of the C&MA's Fourfold Gospel. There is no record in the gospels that Christ turned away anyone who came to Him for healing. He even raised the dead. Our founder, A. B. Simpson, knew from his own experience that divine healings still occur today—evidence that Jesus continues to be our Healer.

A praise report from Andy Brake, an Alliance international worker in Indonesia, testifies to this truth. Alliance Dutch colleagues Peter and Anne-Marie took a three-year-old boy to the hospital for a critically needed hip operation. He could not walk because he had no hip joint.

The doctor refused to operate, stating the procedure was too risky. Peter and Anne-Marie were disheartened as they took the boy and his mother, who practices the majority religion, home.

Soon after, the couple decided to ask the Great Physician to heal the child, anointing him with oil. “He is now walking with the use of a cane—for the first time!” says Andy. “We are rejoicing that God continues to open doors for the good news of the Kingdom in Indonesia.”

Praise God for His healing touch; pray too that He will use this miracle to draw this family to Himself. May He continue to demonstrate His mighty power to many more people in this area so they will turn to Him for salvation.

Thank you for praying for Alliance workers and for the people with whom they share the gospel. To receive The Alliance Call to Prayer and weekly Alliance Prayer Requests via e-mail, subscribe at www.cmalliance.org/pray. Alliance Ministries are supported by gifts to the Great Commission Fund and the CAMA Advance Fund.



THEALLIANCE

8595 Explorer Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920

Thank you for praying for Alliance workers and for the people with whom they share the gospel. To receive The Alliance Call to Prayer and weekly Alliance Prayer Requests via e-mail, subscribe at www.cmalliance.org/pray. Alliance Ministries are supported by gifts to the Great Commission Fund and the CAMA Advance Fund.



THEALLIANCE

8595 Explorer Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920