

Pray For Iran

Population: 85 million

Official Language: Persian with Farsi, Dari and Tajik the main dialects

Total People Groups: 97

Total Languages: 79

Largest Religion: Muslim

Iran is a country where the power of the gospel is evident.

There was an estimated 500 Christians in 1979.

Today it is estimated that there are 1 million Christians in Iran. (Operation World)

Iran and Persecution:

The organization Open Doors keeps a worldwide watchlist of the top 50 most persecuted Churches in the world. Iran is number 9 on that list. Conversion to Christianity from Islam can be punishable by death.

Why Muslims are turning to Christ:

- Prayer
- Intentional Evangelism
- Bible translation and distribution
- Other reasons:
 - Internet, TV, radio
 - Worldwide movement of people
 - Increased perception that Christianity is not European colonization

Even with persecution, the Church in Iran is growing for these reasons and ***this is your prayer list:***

- Personal Witness
- Trained leaders
- The availability of Scripture – translation and distribution
- House Churches
- Christian media – TV and internet

Note: While prayer is normally hard to measure in terms of empirical numbers, consider this...

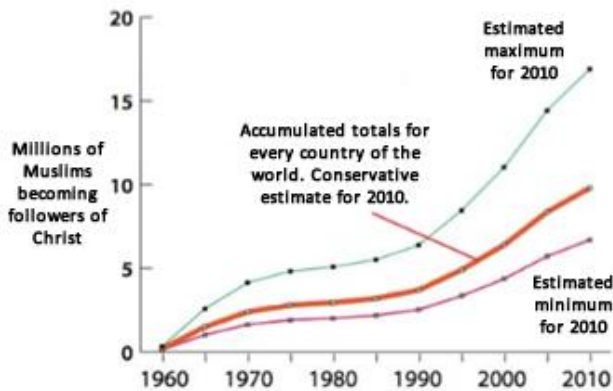
There is now a 25-year history of a global prayer movement for Muslims called "30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World." This is during the same period of time as 84 percent of all the Muslim movements to Christ recorded in 14 centuries. (<https://www.newsweek.com/christianity-islam-turning-jesus-1446327>)

THE GOOD

--- Encouraging Trends ---

Dramatic increase in Church Planting Movements (CPM) – New research suggests that there are over 1,350 CPMs now underway. A CPM has multiple streams of at least four generations of churches. These CPMs involve over 70 million new disciples in 2.8 million small, new house churches.

Muslims coming to Christ – From 1960 to 2010, the number of Muslims that have converted to faith in Jesus Christ has grown from fewer than 200,000 to a conservative figure of 10 million people. Research suggests the number of conversions could be as low as around 6 million or even as high as 17 or 18 million. The data does not include 2011 to the present, though there is evidence of continued — perhaps even accelerated — conversions in recent years.



Shrinking unengaged population – less than 1% of the world’s population live in unengaged unreached people groups (UUPGs). Unengaged unreached people groups have no reported on-site church planting team.

Indian church growth – God is doing something unique in India. Some say it is similar to the revival in China in the 1980s. Asia Harvest Ministries reports “... poor Hindus and tribalists in the states like Odisha, Bihar and many others are on fire in many districts and there is tremendous growth! ... There is a great revival going on and I wouldn’t at all be surprised if the number of believers in India is up to 70+ million.” Hindu leaders in the Indian government are so concerned they refuse to release accurate Christian percentages from the recent census.



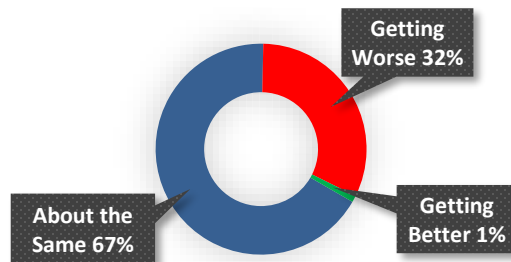
THE NOT SO GOOD

--- Challenging Trends ---

Absolute number of unbelievers is increasing – while Christians of all types make up about 1/3 of the world, the absolute number of non-Christians is increasing.

Year	Non-Christians
1900	1.06 billion
1970	2.46 billion
2000	4.14 billion
2020	5.27 billion
2025	5.36 billion (est.)

Increase in persecution of Christians worldwide – 2018 was the worst year in modern history for Christian persecution. According to the president of Open Doors, “The level of exclusion, discrimination, and violence against Christians is unprecedented, spreading and intensifying.” The percentage of the world’s population living in countries where religious restrictions or social hostilities are:



Pastor training needed – An estimated 95% of pastors worldwide (2.2 million) have had no formal training. Thousands of new pastors are needed to keep up with new churches planted. Without leaders fully equipped in the Word to deal with the nurture of their flocks, the church can easily become unhealthy or disappear. In fact, 2/3s of those reached through evangelism fall away!

Unreached peoples not a financial priority – Until recently, Americans spent more on Halloween costumes for their pets than on outreach to unreached people groups. In addition, the amount of money involved in ecclesiastical church crime is greater than the amount that goes to global foreign missions.



Record displacement of people – The UN says 71 million people were displaced in 2018, a new record. This is the equivalent of the entire population of the United Kingdom being uprooted and moved to a new location.