

Shattered Lives

Islamic State (ISIS), the ultra-radicalized rogue offshoot of al-Qaeda, is the militant jihadist group and self-proclaimed religious authority of Muslims across the globe. Their ambition is to conquer Iraq and Syria, with an even greater goal of world domination. From beheadings to crucifixions, the terrorist group has become the most feared organization in the Middle East.

The ancient city of Mosul, Iraq, has been home to a large Christian population for almost 2,000 years. When ISIS launched its reign of tremendous terror, it ordered believers to convert to Islam, pay a tax or die. Over the last few months, ISIS has forcibly taken over areas of Iraq and Syria, setting up their own repressive regime. Sources report commencement of "fatwa" which allows for the rape of all non-Sunni women. Yasir al-Aljawni, a Salafi Shiekh of Jordanian origin, extended the law to condone the capture and rape of Christian women to epic proportions. Al-Aljawni claims such brutality is not contrary to the teachings of Islam. ISIS is seizing every opportunity to inflict great evil.

ISIS does not value human life and no one is safe in their path. Most vulnerable are defenseless women, children, elderly and the handicapped. Two Catholic priests published a story of a young girl named Miriam in hopes that the world will no longer close their eyes and hearts to the persecution experienced by believers in the Middle East.

Mariam was a 15-year-old Christian girl and one of the thousands of innocent victims of ISIS. Mariam was from Qusair, a city 35 km south of Damascus. Qusair was an ISIS rebel stronghold until the national army took it back in June. The liberation came too late for Miriam.

Jabhat al-Nusra, a militant commander conquered Qusair earlier this year. Mariam's family was able to escape, but Mariam was captured and forced into an Islamic marriage with al-Nusra. Mariam was repeatedly raped by the commander. In the morning, he divorced her, only to give her to another Islamic militant, repeating the nightmare all over again. For fifteen days, Mariam was forced to marry fifteen different militants who raped and tortured this child. The extreme trauma psychologically destabilized her and caused her to completely lose her mind. Being finished with her, Miriam was murdered.

On August 7th, international news agencies reported that ISIS rebels from Mosul had taken children, beheaded them and set their heads on fence posts in the city park. Such wickedness is evident that these terrorist have no moral compass. There are no limits to their depravity.

As fellow Christians, we cannot stand by while our brothers and sisters are being crucified, raped and beheaded without doing everything that is within our power to help. God expects His people to act! This life was not meant to be a playground—it is a battlefield. We are to fight for the souls of those who are lost and suffering. If we hold our peace at this critical hour, we will not be guiltless. As believers, the most precious thing that we will ever handle is the human soul.

At FRM, we have partnered with a network of believers in the Middle East to bring as much aid as we can to those suffering under unimaginable terror. I am not at liberty to share many of the details with you because it will put the lives of these precious believers in tremendous danger. Under our Ghost Operations team protocol, we are working under the radar to save as many lives as possible.

There are three ways in which you can help. The first, and most important, is to pray and ask the Lord to come to the aid of His people. Secondly, you can send a financial gift that will be used for everything from food to medical supplies, as well as for funds to help believers escape and relocate to safety. As many as ten families can be fed for \$500 a month. For \$1000, we can assist a single family to safety. Please indicate

"Persecuted Families" on the enclosed gift card. The third way of getting involved is to become an ongoing sponsor of Middle East pastor who is doing all that he can to protect and feed his flock. These pastors are willing to stay and suffer possible crucifixion or beheading for the sake of the Gospel. They are men who have counted the cost for the Gospel and are willing to die for Jesus Christ. To sponsor a persecuted pastor is \$50 a month. There may not be a better investment in God's Kingdom than to one day see on the other side of eternity the ones you became a cup of cold water to in a dry, thirsty land. It is our hope to be able to provide you with a photo of your pastor, but please be advised that his name will be changed and his face will be blocked out to protect his identity. We will not be able to provide you with their exact locations, as all of them are serving in areas that are being overrun by ISIS.

What I can tell you is that the men and women who we are supporting are facing unimaginable atrocities and leading other Muslims to Christ. Through ISIS's ongoing campaign of terror, less radicalized Muslims have become filled with fear and are becoming disillusioned by the evil of Islam. They are searching for the Truth. What Satan has meant for evil, God is using for good.

I spoke with our contact in the Middle East and inquired if a few hundred dollars a month would really make any difference. He said, "Wes, you cannot begin to fathom how even a few hundred dollars a month is vital to each pastor's survival."

At some point in the future, members of our Ghost Operations team will be traveling to these hard hit areas to minister to our brothers and sisters in Christ. A visit from believers, when you are hurting and feeling completely alone, is a tremendous infusion of hope. It confirms that they are not alone in the worst circumstances imaginable and encourages them that we will do everything in our power to stand with, provide for and protect them.

A few months ago I had just finished speaking at a church when a brother approached me and said, "I cannot imagine what your life must be like." For most of my life, I have been living as a missionary by the Book of The Acts, and I realized that most people in today's Christian culture do not realize or understand their full potential to serve the Lord.

I was recently meeting with one of the FRM board members who is a top agent in U.S. Counter Terrorism. We spoke late into the night about the things that we have witnessed around the world, both good and evil, and the difficulties that come with ministry and the burden of caring for others. Our conclusion was that we did not choose this life, but that God has chosen us and appointed us to be his agents to show His love in an ever increasingly dark and evil world. The reason I share this with you is that you are also called on by the Lord, and your life, too, can have a tremendous impact for the suffering church.

Until the oppressed are free,

Wes Bentley
Far Reaching Ministries

ISIS based facts:

- ISIS has made Christianity “Punishable by Death”
- Thousands of innocent Christians and others from minority groups have been killed since June
- There are zero practicing Christians left in the city of Mosul
- The city of Mosul will be under 65 feet of water if their dam is destroyed; having the potential to kill 500,000 civilians
- It is estimated that ISIS earns \$3M per day in oil and gas revenues, and currently hold \$2B in cash and assets
- ISIS has between 30,000 – 50,000 militant fighters
- According to global terrorism experts, ISIS’s commitment to shocking violence is at the core of their recruitment efforts and their increasing number of radicalized Islamists fighters from around the world