

***"If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."***

~ John 15:18-19 ESV

## **MEXICO: Christians Expelled and Homes Destroyed**

Sources: Evangélico Digital, Christian Post

Evangelical Christians in the San Cristóbal municipality of Chiapas State have faced opposition from other villagers for several years. In May 2016, 84 homes in the area were looted and partially destroyed, forcibly displacing 350 evangelicals. A year ago, these believers were prevented from constructing a church building and again forced to leave. In the latest incident, the homes of five Christian families in the community of Mitzitón were destroyed on January 10th, and 30 people were expelled.



Believers in Chiapas routinely face opposition for their faithfulness to Christ.

Many of the Tzotzil people, who practise a combination of traditional Aztec beliefs and Catholicism, have been strongly opposed to the growth of evangelical Christianity in their community. Sometimes they have blamed neighbouring followers of Christ for the misfortunes they themselves encountered.

The expelled Christians now must wait for a decision to be made by local leaders, determining if or when they will be allowed to return. For more on the persecution of Christians in Mexico, specifically those in the southern state of Chiapas, go to our [country report](#).

***Pray that the Lord's provision and protection will be upon all these persecuted Christians, including those who have been driven from their homes. May they be allowed to return and live peacefully within their community. Ask God to soften the hearts of their opposers, that they may also come to realize the hope and saving grace that are available to them through faith in Jesus Christ.***

## **UGANDA: Conversions Lead to Attacks**

Sources: International Christian Concern, Morning Star News



The church building where the pastor and his wife were damaged in the most recent attack.

Photo: Morning Star News

Two separate incidents that took place last month in Uganda demonstrate the opposition that can arise after choosing to follow Christ.

On November 30th, Yusuf Kintu, a former Muslim imam from Dolwe Island, put his faith in Jesus Christ after having the Gospel presented to him. According to Pastor Andrew Nyanma, Yusuf had talked about matters of the faith several times before he repented and committed to following Christ.

Three days after converting, Yusuf's wife divorced him and left the family home, taking

their two youngest children with her. Shortly after, on December 7th, he was ambushed by militant members of the Muslim community. During the attack, he was severely beaten and left in an unconscious state. Despite attempts by the two older children to help their father, and Pastor Andrew's arrival the next day to take him to the hospital, Yusuf succumbed to his injuries.

On December 5th, another imam in the Kibuku District of eastern Uganda also came to trust in Christ. Five days later, his wife became a Christian as well. On December 27th, the couple joined in a worship service where the former imam was given an opportunity to testify of his newfound faith. Members of the church were overjoyed and shouted praises to God, which drew the attention of nearby Muslims. That evening, an announcement was made in the mosque of his "apostasy."

As the leaders of the church where the new convert had testified were returning to their home that same evening, eight Muslim militants attacked them, beating Pastor Moses Nabwana and his wife Naura with sticks and blunt objects. When Christian neighbours heard what was happening, they rushed over. By this time, the assailants had fled the scene. The pastoring couple were treated at a nearby clinic, though Pastor Moses had to be transferred to hospital the next day due to the seriousness of his injuries. Naura, who requires continued treatment, is unable to afford it.

After the assault, local Muslim militants also attacked the church building, causing extensive damage to the structure and its contents. The former imam and his wife have since been moved to another location for their safety. To read about other incidents of persecution that have taken place in Uganda, visit our [country report](#).

***Pray for both Ugandan church communities as they now must cope with the aftermath of the violence and the hostility of their persecutors. May these Christians fearlessly continue to shout praises to God for the salvation of their people, while placing their trust explicitly in Him. Specifically uphold Pastor Moses and his wife Naura in your prayers, asking God to fully restore their physical health and well-being. Also remember Yusuf's children and his former wife as they mourn their traumatic loss. May these family members recognize their own need for salvation through Christ, and thus receive the comfort of knowing that Yusuf is now basking in the presence of the Lord.***

## **CHINA: Release of Pastor An Yankui**

Source: Early Rain Covenant Church

In VOMC's previously posted *Persecution and Prayer Alert*, it was reported that Pastor An Yankui had been arrested on December 30th and sentenced to 15 days in prison. (This particular report may be [reviewed here](#).)

Due to the nature of China's judicial system, there can be frequent uncertainty regarding the details of an arrested person's sentencing. In this case, however, we are thankful to report that Pastor An was indeed released on January 16th and joyfully greeted outside the detention centre by his family and fellow members of the Xuncheng Reformed Church.



Pastor An Yankui with his his family and church.  
Photo: Facebook / Pray for Early Rain Covenant Church

***Praise God for protecting Pastor An in prison and for his safe release. Ask the Lord, who "preserves all who love Him," to continue to watch over this pastor, his family, and fellow church members in the days to come (Psalm 145:20). Pray also that the church will be able to resume their worship of God and conduct Bible studies without further harassment from local authorities.***