

# barnabasaid

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SEPTEMBER/  
OCTOBER 2017

BARNABAS FUND - AID AGENCY FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH - BRINGING HOPE TO SUFFERING CHRISTIANS



Suffering Church  
Action Week

29 OCTOBER – 5 NOVEMBER 2017

14 PAGES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES INSIDE  
FOR YOU AND YOUR CHURCH

I am not   
**ASHAMED!**



  
barnabasfund  
hope and aid for the persecuted church

## The Barnabas Fund Distinctive

What helps make Barnabas Fund distinctive from other Christian organisations that deal with persecution?

### We work by:

- directing our aid only to Christians, although its benefits may not be exclusive to them ("As we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." Galatians 6:10, emphasis added)
- aiming the majority of our aid at Christians living in Muslim environments
- channelling money from Christians through Christians to Christians
- channelling money through existing structures in the countries where funds are sent (e.g. local churches or Christian organisations)
- using the money to fund projects that have been developed by local Christians in their own communities, countries or regions
- considering any request, however small
- acting as equal partners with the persecuted Church, whose leaders often help shape our overall direction

- acting on behalf of the persecuted Church, to be their voice – making their needs known to Christians around the world and the injustice of their persecution known to governments and international bodies

### We seek to:

- meet both practical and spiritual needs
- encourage, strengthen and enable the existing local Church and Christian communities – so they can maintain their presence and witness rather than setting up our own structures or sending out missionaries
- tackle persecution at its root by making known the aspects of the Islamic faith and other ideologies that result in injustice and oppression of non-believers
- inform and enable Christians in the West to respond to the growing challenge of Islam to Church, society and mission in their own countries

- facilitate global intercession for the persecuted Church by providing comprehensive prayer materials

### We believe:

- we are called to address both religious and secular ideologies that deny full religious liberty to Christian minorities – while continuing to show God's love to all people
- in the clear Biblical teaching that Christians should treat all people of all faiths with love and compassion, even those who seek to persecute them
- in the power of prayer to change people's lives and situations, either through grace to endure or through deliverance from suffering

**"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."**

(Matthew 25:40)

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German supporters may send gifts for Barnabas Fund via Hilfe für Brüder who will provide you with a tax-deductible receipt. Please mention that the donation is for "SPC 20 Barnabas Fund". If you would like your donation to go to a specific project of Barnabas Fund, please inform the Barnabas Fund office in Pewsey, UK.  
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Singaporean supporters may send gifts for Barnabas Fund online via Olive Aid Trust:  
**Beneficiary:** OLIVE AID TRUST  
**Bank Name:** United Overseas Bank (Malaysia) Berhad  
**Swift Code:** UOVBMYKL  
**Location:** KUALA LUMPUR  
**Account Number:** 140-901-654-0

**To donate by credit/debit card, please visit the website**  
**www.barnabasfund.org or phone 0800 587 4006 (from outside the UK phone +44 24 7623 1923).**

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**Front Cover: Christians from Iraq, Uganda and Sri Lanka.**

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# Remember, remember 31st October

## On

31 October 445 BC (according to Jewish tradition), Ezra gathered the people together in Jerusalem, read to them from the Book of the Law, and called them to national repentance. Israel had sinned grievously against God. She had forsaken the God of her fathers and so God had sent judgment.

On 31 October 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to a church door in Wittenberg. His first point called the Christians to repentance: "When our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, said 'repent', he called for the entire life of believers to be one of penitence." Luther faced two major challenges: firstly, a Church that had become morally corrupt, spiritually deficient and financially grasping, and, secondly, the real possibility of a Turkish Muslim invasion via central Europe. In the face of these challenges he recognised the importance of the Book of the Law - the Bible - and the need for national repentance.

Luther found himself isolated. There were those on all fronts who disagreed with him. Some German pastors even suggested welcoming Islam, seeing it as less oppressive than their situation under the Church, with its Catholic army under Habsburg rule.

On 31 October 2017, when the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation will be celebrated, the Church, particularly in the West, is faced with the same challenges that faced Martin Luther. Sadly, the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ is morally complacent, more concerned with social ethics than with the commands of Scripture, spiritually weak to the point of insipidity, and so consumed by materialism that she has lost the reason for her existence. At the same time, Islam now poses a new challenge to the Church. Theologically coherent, community-centred, with a dynamic spirituality, socially and politically aware, Islam has made considerable progress in re-shaping the West through the presence of its own communities and through the influence of Islamic states with massive finance and energy reserves.

But a third challenge has arisen, one which Martin Luther did not have to face. This can be termed the new civic religion – the secular humanism that is reshaping society and has eroded, if not destroyed, the Judaeo-Christian foundations of society, so that the book of the law is despised and Christianity increasingly abhorred.

Western secular governments, concerned for community cohesion and for national security, are increasingly introducing hate speech legislation, which is gradually eroding religious liberty and fundamental freedoms. Christians, both in the West and in the non-Western world, are faced with growing marginalisation, discrimination and sometimes outright persecution.

The call of Scripture is to stand up in the midst of all this and proudly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord; to affirm that we will not be ashamed of the centrality of our faith, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, His word, His message and His life; that we will not be ashamed of His people, whom we will embrace; and that we will look for that judgment day when we will all have to stand before Him, when He will not be ashamed of us and we will hear His words, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

**THE CALL OF  
SCRIPTURE IS TO  
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**4** **Compassion in Action**  
Rising from the ashes in Nepal

**I AM NOT ASHAMED**  
Suffering Church Action Week 2017

**6** **SCAW Introduction**  
Information and resource guide

**7** **A4 Poster**  
Advertise your SCAW event

**8** **Persecuted and not ashamed**  
Intensified persecution  
in our generation

**12** **Sermon Outline**  
I am not ashamed

**14** **Bible Study**  
for small groups

**15** **Day of Prayer**  
Join the Barnabas global  
prayer day on Saturday 4 November

**16** **Youth page**  
standing unashamed with  
the suffering Church

**17** **Song for the  
Suffering Church**  
"Oil of His grace"

**18** **Getting involved**  
with Suffering Church  
Action Week

**19** **Project Focus**  
changing children's futures

**20** **In Brief**  
Muslim neighbours  
protect Christians from Islamists  
in the Philippines

**22** **In Touch**  
Canon on wheels!

# how barnabas is helping

## Nursery blesses a whole church community

“For me it’s a chance and a privilege to serve the kids of our church. Thanks to all who contribute in realising this project. It’s my sixth year. What a blessing!” – Nedjma, nursery teacher

In a country where believers are discriminated against because they are converts from Islam, Barnabas Fund’s grant to cover the salaries of the three teachers in a church-run nursery makes a big difference. Not only does it help with their personal support, but also their financial giving to the local church brings blessing to many others. The nursery is a safe and loving place for the 23 children of Christian parents who attend. It not only provides trained childcare, but also teaches Bible basics to these little ones who would otherwise be learning in a Muslim environment (if their parents could even afford the fees). This congregation’s church building has been attacked in the past.



Two of the Christian children cared for in the church-run nursery by Nedjma and her colleagues. The children’s ages range from 6 months to 4 years

**£5,400 for salaries of three nursery teachers for one year**  
(\$7,060, €6,040)

Project reference 02-1045

## Church planters’ years of work bears fruit

“You cannot experience this overwhelming love and power within you and keep your mouth shut, no, no way, if it is dying then so be it!” With these words, a Kenyan Christian from a Muslim background, declared willingness to die for the Gospel. She had been led to the Lord by Kenyan church planters supported by Barnabas Fund.

For 21 years, Barnabas has been supporting Kenyan church planters in their work among unreached communities. When new Christians in one area gathered together for the first time there was an outpouring of eagerness to share their faith. All were isolated believers, and had never met together as a group before. “The time has come for our people to meet this Saviour we have met and experienced, we cannot remain hidden anymore!” said another new believer. This part of Kenya is very dangerous for Christians, with Al-Shabaab Islamist militants trying to hunt them down and kill them.



Isolated converts gather for the first time

**£28,000 to help support 30 Kenyan church-planters in 2017**  
(\$36,600, €31,325)

Project reference 25-017

## Maize seeds bring harvest for 3,300 hungry families

“I am now able to eat without stress but with joy and hope in my heart, knowing that you love me even though you didn’t yet meet me.” – Mrs S. Moyo (age 88).

Barnabas Fund gave Mrs Moyo 2kg of seeds and 5kg of lime fertilizer, from which she grew enough maize to feed her eight dependents (including orphan grandchildren) from May to August. Then, they will have to rely again on food aid until the next harvest.

After the worst drought in living memory, rains fell earlier this year and there was a harvest. But for many people it was not a very big one. Barnabas has worked through local churches in Zimbabwe, distributing seeds and fertiliser to 3,319 families.

We are also continuing to provide desperately needed food aid. Project Joseph is currently providing a million meals a month in Zimbabwe.



Mrs Moyo - seeds and food aid bring joy and hope to her and her 8 dependants

**£22,400 for 3,319 seed and fertilizer parcels in Zimbabwe**  
(\$29,300, €25,060)

Project reference 00-1313  
Project Joseph

Strengthened and encouraged. This is what we often hear from Christians who have received support from Barnabas Fund. Thank you for making this possible. Here are just a few examples of the many ways we have recently helped persecuted and pressurised Christians.

## Convert families' tractor boosts income generation

Barnabas Fund has enabled four Christian convert families – 19 people – to buy a second-hand tractor and farm implements. The stony terrain of the 8.6 hectares they rent proved too difficult to work productively without machinery; now, they can farm efficiently, generate an income and even help their neighbours too.

The population of Kyrgyzstan is about 80% Muslim and discrimination against converts from Islam makes jobs extra hard to come by. A local project leader told Barnabas, “It is very difficult to find people to help Christians ... people look at us as betrayers of Islam.”

However, the four families now generate an income through farming together, and the stronger church is an example to the wider community. “Neighbours look at us and see that we work hard and have love and communication with each other.”



Farming was made viable for five families when they were able to purchase a tractor and farm implements

**£6,617 to help purchase tractor and farm implements in Kyrgyzstan**  
(\$8,650, €7,400)

Project reference 00-113  
(Convert Fund)

## Lives transformed at women's sewing and literacy centre

“I was worried that I will have to work as a maid with my mother, as I belong to a poor and illiterate family, but I'm very grateful to the Lord, who provided a great opportunity to learn stitching dresses, reading and writing,” said Kinza to Barnabas Fund. “By the grace of God, my life has been transformed. Now I am a skilful lady, I have stitched more than 400 dresses 'til today, therefore I am able to earn for my family and for my better future.” Poverty had deprived Kinza of an education; her father cleans sewers and her mother is a maid, work that carries a high risk of abuse for Christian women in Pakistan.

Now, she is one of 15-20 Christians blessed each year through a church-run sewing and literacy centre for women. The centre also provides Bible studies (Kinza has memorised several Psalms) and hygiene classes.



Kinza's new skills have changed her life and Bible study has strengthened her faith. Each woman receives a sewing machine and a Bible when they complete their training

**£1,790 to support the Sewing & Literacy Centre, Lahore, Pakistan, for one year**  
(\$2,340, €2,000)

Project reference 41-1046

## Rising from the ruins – ten strong, new church buildings for Nepali communities

“You don't know us, and you have never seen us, yet you gave because we believe in the same God.” – A church leader, Nepal.

The terrible earthquakes of 2015 left 8,700 people dead and over 750,000 homes destroyed or damaged. At least 783 churches across the country required rebuilding or repairs but government assessors ignored these.

Barnabas has joined with the rebuilding effort, one project being the construction of ten churches in a remote, mountainous district. All ten churches, earthquake-resilient and doubling-up as community halls, are now finished. Toilets and water storage will be added soon.

It has been quite a feat. Building materials had to be transported on foot over rugged terrain, and monsoon conditions hampered construction efforts. Until these were completed, believers met for worship in tents. Now, with solar powered lighting, night-time meetings are possible.



Villagers helping to complete one of the ten 6m x 12m earthquake-resilient churches funded by Barnabas

**£231,000 to rebuild ten earthquake-hit churches in Nepal**  
(\$302,000, €258,125)

Project reference 00-634  
Disaster Relief Fund

# I am not ASHAMED!

**I**N Romans 1:16, Paul proclaims, “I am not ashamed of the Gospel,” and goes on to explain why. This confidence is echoed when he writes to Timothy, “Do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or of me His prisoner” (I Timothy 1:8).

Christians are coming under increasing pressure from ideologies such as Islam, Buddhism, Hindu nationalism and secular humanism. In Suffering Church Action Week (SCAW), we have an opportunity to stand with our faithful brothers and sisters in Christ, whatever they are facing and wherever they may be. We can each declare, with Paul and fellow-Christians through the ages and across the world, “I am not ashamed.”

With this magazine, and in the free Suffering Church Action Week Inspiration Resource Pack, there is a range of resources to help you, your prayer group and your church participate in Suffering Church Action Week. We suggest 29 October – 5 November but, if you prefer, these resources can be used at another time more suitable to your church’s calendar. Here is a guide to what resources are available and how you could use them. For further supplies and more information, please contact your local Barnabas office (see inside front cover for details).

## INSIDE THIS SPECIAL ISSUE OF BARNABAS AID

7	<b>I AM NOT ASHAMED POSTER</b> A4 size poster to publicise your SCAW event
8	<b>PERSECUTED AND NOT ASHAMED</b> An overview of persecution of the Church today
12	<b>SERMON OUTLINE</b> Notes for a sermon on the theme <b>I am not ashamed</b>
14	<b>SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY</b> A thought-provoking Bible Study on the SCAW theme
15	<b>BARNABAS FUND INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH</b> A day to join Christians around the world in prayer, standing with our suffering brothers and sisters
16	<b>YOUTH AND CHILDREN</b> Ideas for children and teenagers
17	<b>SONG: “OIL OF HIS GRACE”</b> A new worship song specially written with the suffering Church in mind
18	<b>GETTING INVOLVED WITH SCAW</b> More ideas and resources for your Suffering Church activities
19	<b>AND AFTER SUFFERING CHURCH ACTION WEEK HAS FINISHED?</b> –Long-term action: sponsor a Christian school-child





**SUFFERING CHURCH ACTION WEEK 2017**  
29 OCTOBER – 5 NOVEMBER 2017

## IN THE SCAW 2017 INSPIRATION RESOURCE PACK

(one of each item, but you can order more)

	<b>DVD CONTAINING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PowerPoint sermon presentation with images to accompany Sermon Outline (p.12 of magazine)</li> <li>• words and score for a new full-length musical <i>Perpetua’s Diary</i> by Donald &amp; Eleanor Battley, Rosie Hamilton, Karl Fedde – the moving tale of a young 3<sup>rd</sup> century Christian woman, martyred for her faith</li> <li>• short introductory video about the work of Barnabas Fund</li> <li>• digital copies of many of the SCAW resources</li> </ul>
	<b>PRAYER GUIDE FOR BARNABAS FUND INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER</b> for the Persecuted Church Saturday 4 November
	<b>PRAYING FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH 2017 BOOKLET</b>
	<b>NEW 2017 PRAYER BOOKMARK</b> (also included with this magazine)
	<b>LARGE (A3) I AM NOT ASHAMED POSTER</b> to advertise your Suffering Church Action week events (a smaller cut-out poster is on the opposite page of this magazine; it can also be downloaded at <a href="http://www.barnabasfund.org/scaw">www.barnabasfund.org/scaw</a> , or printed out from the DVD)
	<b>MONEY BOX</b> that could be used for individuals at home or a small group meeting
	<b>SAMPLE GIFT AID</b> envelope for donations from UK tax-payers
	<b>EIGHT-DAY DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET</b> to help you pray through the week (also included with this magazine)
	<b>ADDITIONAL COPY OF THIS SPECIAL SCAW EDITION OF BARNABAS AID MAGAZINE</b>
	<b>SCAW WRISTBAND</b>

## AND ENCLOSED WITH YOUR MAGAZINE

	<b>EIGHT-DAY DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET</b>
	<b>NEW 2017 PRAYER BOOKMARK</b>

*I am not*   
**ASHAMED!**



## What we're doing for Suffering Church Action Week

*What*



*When*

*Where*



[barnabasfund.org/scaw](http://barnabasfund.org/scaw)



Suffering Church  
Action Week

  
**barnabasfund**  
hope and aid for the persecuted church



# PERSECUTED AND

*How the persecution of Christians is intensifying  
and spreading in our generation*

# NOT ASHAMED





## MOVING ALONG THE SPECTRUM: FROM DISCRIMINATION TO PERSECUTION

When Barnabas Fund began, a generation ago, Christians in a number of countries faced marginalisation, discrimination and harassment, yet only very rarely were Christians physically attacked, let alone killed, for their faith. In just a few short decades that has changed. The same cycle of events has happened in other countries and with other ideologies: increasingly restrictive laws are introduced and mobs are inspired and encouraged to enforce the same ideology by violence.

### COMMUNISM IS NO LONGER THE MAIN DRIVER OF PERSECUTION

The year 1989 saw the fall of the Berlin Wall, which had divided the Communist-controlled Eastern Bloc of Europe from the free democratic countries of the West. On one side of the wall, Christians were persecuted; on the other side they were free to practise their faith. At the height of Cold War there were 40 Communist countries in the world and atheistic Communism was the most significant ideology driving the persecution of Christians.

Today, that situation has changed beyond all recognition. There are now only five countries that give even notional allegiance to Communism (China, Cuba, Laos, North Korea and Vietnam). Sadly, however, the collapse of Communism has not always led to freedom from persecution.

In some former Communist countries, such as Poland, democracy and religious freedom have become firmly established. Interestingly, Poland is a country that has very much emphasised its Christian heritage. However, in a number of other countries, such as Belarus and Eritrea, Communism has been replaced by equally authoritarian dictatorships which brutally suppress religious freedom.

## Case study: Pakistan



Until the early twenty-first century, if you were a Christian in a country such as Pakistan, you were likely to face significant discrimination from early childhood until the day you died. You might find it hard to get an education, be treated unfairly in your exams and find it difficult to get a job because Muslim employers preferred to employ Muslims. Yet, with the exception of converts from Islam and Christians accused of “blasphemy”, there was no anti-Christian violence.

However, over the last decade or so there has been an increasing number of attacks on churches, Christian neighbourhoods and individual Christians. For example, in March 2013 a 3000-strong Muslim mob rampaged through Lahore’s predominantly Christian Joseph Colony, destroying 178 homes and 75 shops, following a false accusation of blasphemy. Six months later, the suicide bombing of All Saints Church, Peshawar, killed more than 80. Similarly, last year’s bombing at Lahore’s Gulshan-i-Iqbal Park, where Christian families were celebrating Easter Sunday, left more than 70 people dead.

How did this happen in just a generation? There are several factors. Chief among them has been a gradual Islamisation of Pakistan’s laws, beginning during the presidency of General Zia ul-Haq (1977-88). It was under General Zia that the “blasphemy law” (Section 295 of the Pakistan Penal Code) was amended to make it the fearsome weapon it is today. New crimes were added such “defiling the name” of Muhammed, which now carries a compulsory death sentence. Christians and other non-Muslims are particularly vulnerable to false accusation under this law. Although no one has yet been executed, many have died at the hands of zealous Muslim vigilantes. Sometimes, the mere rumour of an accusation of speaking against Muhammed or of desecrating the Quran has led to mobs rampaging through Christian districts, torching homes and shops and seeking to kill Christians.

## RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM

In some countries, Christians suffer because of religious nationalism, which ties national identity so closely to a particular religion that members of other groups are treated as subversives and face harassment and even persecution. For example, in Russia, President Putin's strident nationalist agenda has increasingly linked patriotism and loyalty to the state with membership of the Russian Orthodox Church. Recent new laws have given the government sweeping powers over other groups.

Elsewhere, governments go even further and expect all citizens to belong to a particular religion, such as Buddhism in Bhutan and Islam in the Maldives. In fact, the Maldives' constitution actually states that only Muslims can become citizens.

Often, however, persecution does not come just from the government but also from ordinary citizens. In many countries, there is a widespread ideology that links national identity to a particular religion. This can easily lead to persecution as vigilante gangs seek to enforce this, with the police often making little effort to protect Christians. For example, when Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka have disrupted lawful church services, the police have often either taken no action or have even told the Christians to stop meeting together.

## HINDUTVA

The most serious example of religious nationalism is Hindutva ("Hinduness") which affects India and Nepal. Hindu nationalists claim that only Hindus should live in India and Nepal. Some even claim that everyone who lives there – including Christians, Muslims and Sikhs – are really Hindus and should therefore "reconvert" back to Hinduism.

Although India is a secular state and its constitution guarantees the right of every citizen to "profess, practise and propagate religion", several Indian states have passed anti-conversion laws (confusingly called "freedom of religion laws"). These make it illegal to persuade anyone to change their religion by force, fraud or allurement. They further require anyone who does convert to register their conversion with the local



authorities. Such actions by the government embolden Hindu extremists to take the law into their own hands and attack any Christians they suspect of sharing the Gospel.

This anti-Christian hostility has become much worse since May 2014, when the Hindu nationalist BJP government of Narendra Modi came to power. Hindu nationalists have mounted a small (but increasing) number of sometimes violent attacks on Christian meetings.

## RADICAL ISLAM

In 1979, the Iranian Islamic revolution established the modern world's first radical Islamist state. It inspired Islamists around the world to seek to create a similar, radical Islamic state in their own countries. Since then, many Muslim-majority countries have undergone a process of increasing Islamisation, with a particular emphasis on prioritising sharia over Western-style law. Most Muslim-majority countries now have sharia clauses in their constitutions stating, in effect, that all laws and international agreements are subject to sharia, i.e. if there is any conflict between human rights and sharia then sharia takes precedence. Some countries, such as Pakistan, even have national sharia courts that can strike down any parliamentary laws that are deemed to be incompatible with sharia.

At the same time, we are seeing more and more countries either enforcing sharia (Islamic law) for the first time or extending the reach of sharia courts into more and more areas of law. For example, in 2014, Brunei (where at least 8% of the population are Christians) began the process of introducing full sharia enforcement, which is intended eventually to include *hudud* punishments, such as amputation for theft, flogging for drinking alcohol, and stoning or flogging for adultery.

However, even in countries where sharia is restricted to family law, this still creates serious problems for some Christians, because anyone born into a Muslim family is potentially punishable by execution if they choose to leave Islam. Although this ultimate penalty is very rarely enforced, there are many lesser penalties if the individual's conversion is recognised. If it is not recognised, the person continues to be treated legally as a Muslim which usually means, for example, that their children will be legally considered Muslims. Also, a Muslim-background Christian woman cannot marry a Christian-background Christian man.

Here we see a similar pattern emerging. When some aspects of sharia enforcement are formally introduced by the government, Islamists often feel empowered to use vigilante violence to try to enforce even stricter measures – and Christians are often one of their principal targets.

## Case study: Nigeria



In 1999, the newly-elected governor of Zamfara state (which was over 90% Muslim) introduced full sharia enforcement. Many other states in Muslim-majority northern Nigeria quickly followed suit, even though this violated Nigeria's constitution. By 2002 the Islamist militant group, Boko Haram, had been founded, and a year later it declared a jihad to turn Nigeria into an Islamic state. Their initial targets were Christians, Western-style educational establishments, the Nigerian security forces and Muslims whom they did not consider sufficiently devout but in August 2016 their new leader declared that Christians were their main target. Thousands of people have been kidnapped or killed by Boko Haram, with hundreds of thousands forced to flee, and countless homes, buildings, churches and fields razed. Boko Haram later declared its intention to drive all non-Muslims out of northern Nigeria and in 2014 it announced that it had reinstated the sharia provisions that allowed it to enslave non-Muslims. Boko Haram's attacks and religious cleansing have now spread to neighbouring countries such as northern Cameroon.

We are now seeing serious attempts to religiously cleanse large areas of their non-Muslim populations and enforce strict sharia: in west Africa by Boko Haram; in east Africa by Al Shabaab (who repeatedly target Christians in locations such as northern Kenya); and by a whole range of jihadi groups including Islamic State in Iraq, Syria and, increasingly, northern Egypt. In Iraq, where Christians made up an estimated 3% of the population in 1997, around a third of all Iraqis who have fled the country have been Christians. This has been due to a targeted campaign of church bombings, assassinations and abductions which they have endured since 2004. In Syria, where Christians were around 10% of the population before the civil war that began in 2011, Christians have also been specifically targeted by jihadi groups, leading to large numbers fleeing the country.

# I am not ASHAMED

## Sermon Outline



### 2 TIMOTHY 1:1-14

This sermon outline can be used at a Suffering Church service or meeting. It can be read out as it stands, though you may want to add some illustrations of your own or take some from the information on pages 8-11. You might also find helpful material in the small group Bible study on page 14 or the eight day devotional booklet. Alternatively, the outline can be used as a framework for your own ideas and applications.

## INTRODUCTION

Paul's second letter to Timothy was written during Paul's second imprisonment in Rome (according to tradition), within the appalling Mamertine Prison. It has been said that the Mamertine could have been called the "House of Darkness". Worse still, he was being held in its underground dungeon, which had been described earlier by the Roman historian Sallust as "foul from neglect, darkness and stench, it is an altogether terrifying sight."

Prisons in the ancient world were rarely used for punishment as such, although people were routinely stripped naked and flogged before being imprisoned, and then held in painful leg irons. Their normal purpose was as holding cells for those on remand awaiting trial or those convicted and awaiting execution. Nevertheless, it has been estimated that Paul may have spent as much as 25% of his ministry time in prisons of various kinds.

By the time he was writing his second letter to Timothy, Paul had apparently already had a preliminary hearing and was now awaiting his final trial. His future was very uncertain. It seems that he expected to be found guilty and executed (2 Timothy 4:6-7,16). Despite all this, he could say boldly, "I am not ashamed." (2 Timothy 1:12)

## 1 HE WAS NOT ASHAMED OF HIS CALLING (v.1,11)

Paul begins his letter by describing himself as an apostle of Christ Jesus (v.1) and expands on this in verse 11.

- A He was an apostle**, literally, "one who is sent out," such as an envoy or an ambassador. Elsewhere Paul had described himself as, "an ambassador in chains" (Ephesians 6:20). An ambassador was a position of high honour, as he carried the authority of the country or king he represented.
- B He was a herald**. The Greek word *kerux* is translated as "preacher" in some versions of the Bible, but "herald" is a better translation, carrying with it the idea of someone who brings an announcement from the king. A *kerux* was also the official who, in a battle situation, crossed from one army to the opposing army, bringing a message requesting a truce or peace. The same word was used for a person employed by a merchant or auctioneer to cry out to the crowds what goods were on offer. So a *kerux* brings a message from the King, enables people to make peace with God, and calls out to others about the wonderful treasure which God is offering to them.

**C** **He was a teacher.** While an evangelist (ambassador or herald) brings individuals to the point of committing their life to Christ, many new believers will drift away or even fall away unless there is someone who teaches them how to live as a Christian, who disciples them, and enables them to grow in their faith.

Paul was not ashamed of his three-fold calling to be a herald, an apostle and a teacher. For him it was the highest honour given to him by Christ.

## 2 HE WAS NOT ASHAMED OF HIS SUFFERINGS (V.8)

In chapter 2 verses 8-9, Paul explains that it is the Gospel for which he is suffering and wearing fetters like a criminal. So he counsels Timothy not to be ashamed:

- A** **Not to be ashamed to be a witness for Christ.** He must not have a spirit of timidity, but recognise that God has given us a spirit of power and love and self-control (v.7).
- B** **Not to be ashamed of Paul who was suffering for Christ.** He must be willing to identify with those who are suffering for Christ, even if they themselves are shamed by the world. For Timothy, this meant identifying with Paul, a prisoner in chains.
- C** **Not to be ashamed of sharing in suffering for the Gospel.** He must not only identify with persecuted Christians, but also share their suffering and join them in it. A single Greek word – *synkapatheo* – is used for the concept of suffering hardship in company with someone else. He is called to suffer *with*, and not just to minister *to*.

Likewise, we must not be ashamed to be witnesses for Christ, to be one with those who suffer for Him and to be willing to embrace suffering with them.

## 3 HE WAS NOT ASHAMED TO FACE THE COMING JUDGMENT DAY (V.12)

The “Day” was an eschatological term, referring to the coming judgment. Paul could face this Day without shame because of:

- A** **His confidence in the Person of Christ.** “I know whom I have believed,” he affirms, as he recalls his Saviour’s appearing or *epiphaneia* (v.10). This wonderful word had great resonance for both Romans and Jews. The coming of a new emperor to the throne was called his *epiphaneia*; it was a time of renewed hope, fresh beginnings, and new blessings.

Jews used the word *epiphaneia* to refer to the saving manifestations of God when enemies were trying to exterminate Israel, the times when God intervened dramatically to rescue His people in their hour of greatest need. Jesus was God’s greatest *epiphaneia* (epiphany), intervening to rescue sinners and manifesting God in the world. Paul does not speak of “what” he believes – theology – but “whom” he believes – a Person.

- B** **His confidence in the power of Christ to protect.** Paul affirms that Christ will guard what Paul has entrusted to him – his work, his life, his soul and his very salvation. Remember that he wrote this in the expectation that he would shortly be executed, cutting short both his ministry and his earthly life, and bringing him before the Judgment throne.
- C** **His confidence in the *paratheke*.** This word is usually translated as “what I have entrusted (or committed) to him.” The word *paratheke* was used of something valuable deposited for safekeeping with someone trustworthy who would return it later when it was reclaimed. Paul knew that Christ had given to him a sacred trust, which he could never betray. He also knew that the Person in whom he had trusted would never betray him. Perhaps there seemed little to show for His work – the early Church was already riven with conflict and riddled with error – but, as for all of us, Paul knew that, having done his task to the best of his ability, he could leave the result to the Lord. His life was safely hidden with Christ in God and that neither death nor life, nor anything else in all creation, could separate him from the love of Christ (Colossians 3:3; Romans 8:38-39).

## CONCLUSION

Timothy was a faithful disciple, and for Paul a beloved younger brother and valuable, dependable ministry colleague. But in this letter we learn about another of Paul’s fellow-workers, one who did not stay the course – Demas. Demas betrayed Paul. Demas had started well, but fell in love with the world and deserted his friend and co-worker at his time of greatest need (Philemon 1:24; 2 Timothy 4:10). What happened to Demas’ earlier commitment that caused him to fall out of love with the Lord and in love with the world? Was he embarrassed by the “foolishness” of the Gospel, making him ashamed to be a witness for Christ? Or could he not bear the shame of being associated with someone who was suffering for Christ in the Mamertine dungeon? Or was he fearful of consequences for himself, unwilling and ashamed to join Paul in his suffering for the Gospel? We shall never know exactly, but Paul’s use of the word *agape* to describe the love which Demas had for the world shows that Demas made a deliberate choice to forsake his ministry, Paul and indeed Christ Himself.

# I am not ASHAMED

## Small Group Bible Study

This study is on the same theme as the sermon outline (pages 12-13) and looks at some of the same verses mentioned in it. It can be used before or after hearing the sermon. If it is used without the sermon, it may be helpful for the group leader to read through the sermon outline beforehand. You may also like to read the SCAW 2017 eight-day devotional booklet, which is enclosed with this magazine or can be ordered from [barnabasfund.org/scaw](http://barnabasfund.org/scaw) or your nearest Barnabas office (contact details inside front cover).

The section at the end, entitled "Digging Deeper", is intended for those who would like to explore the theme in more depth.

1. What does the word "ashamed" mean? How is it different from "embarrassed", "guilty", "humiliated" or "afraid"? What is the opposite of shame?
2. Different cultures take different views about shame and honour. How important are shame and honour in your culture? From the Bible we learn "Christian culture" i.e. how to think and live Christianly. How important do you think shame and honour are in the Bible?
3. Are there any things that the Bible considers shameful but which are honoured by the society in which you live?
4. Are there any things which your culture considers shameful but are honoured in the Bible?



### READ 2 TIMOTHY 1:1-14

5. Have you ever missed an opportunity to witness for Christ because you felt ashamed?
6. Have you ever overcome a feeling of shame to speak out about your Christian faith? What was the result (for you and for the person you spoke to)?
7. Paul is writing to a beloved young co-worker, Timothy, and urges him not to be ashamed of testifying about the Lord (verse 8). Looking at the earlier verses, what can we learn about the strengths and weaknesses of Timothy, to help us understand why Paul wrote like this to him?
8. Paul is writing from a notorious prison dungeon in Rome. He is awaiting trial and seems to expect to be found guilty and then executed. He asks Timothy not to be ashamed of his association with Paul the prisoner (verse 8). From the world's perspective, Paul was a prisoner of the Roman authorities, but how does Paul himself see it? What effect do you think this has on Timothy's attitude to Paul the prisoner and his willingness to identify with him?
9. Do you know of any Christians in prison for proclaiming the Gospel or persecuted in other ways because of their faithfulness to Christ? (You can find examples from around the world in *Barnabas Prayer*, enclosed with this magazine, or by visiting [barnabasfund.org](http://barnabasfund.org)) What is your attitude to them?
10. What does Paul say that Timothy should do instead of feeling ashamed of his mentor's imprisonment?

11. Two brothers and a sister, all in their twenties, insisted on staying with their elderly parents on the 17<sup>th</sup> floor of Grenfell Tower, as it was engulfed in flames on 14 June. Their 82-year-old father could barely walk and would not have been able to escape. As they waited for death, the family phoned their relatives. "I'm going. Forgive me if I've been offensive to anyone," said the father. His 26-year-old son asked people not to mourn for them but to be happy because they would be in a better place. All five perished in the deadly fire that killed more than 80 residents of the west London apartment block. "They stayed with their mum and dad. Family was so important to them. They lived together and they died together," said their cousin. This family, who set us such a wonderful example, were Muslims. How can we as Christians share with other Christians in suffering for the Gospel?

12. Paul writes of the power of God, which is available to help us (verse 8). Reading on in verses 9 and 10, list what the power of God has accomplished. Take a moment to pray and thank God for the spirit of power, which He has given to us (verse 7).

13. In verse 12, Paul says that he will not be ashamed on the Day (i.e. the Day of Judgment). What reasons does he give for that confidence?

14. Are you ready to stand before Christ our Judge? We are saved by faith but our work on earth will be judged, as Paul writes elsewhere (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).

### Digging deeper

15. Paul wrote that he was suffering for the Gospel because he had been appointed a herald (or preacher), apostle and teacher (verse 11). The Holy Spirit gives each of us different gifts. Encourage one another in your small group by recognising each other's callings and gifts, whether natural or supernatural.
16. A single Greek word *synkathesis* is used for the concept of suffering hardship in company with someone else (verse 8). What do you think the existence of this word suggests about the importance of this concept in first century culture? How important is the concept in your culture?
17. The Word of God is rich in meaning. Verse 12 is translated in some Bible versions as "what I have entrusted to him" and in other versions as "what has been entrusted to me" (compare with 1:14; 2:2 and 1 Timothy 6:20). Explore the depths contained in these few words.

Barnabas Fund



# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

## 4<sup>th</sup> SATURDAY NOVEMBER

*"Pray that things don't happen - but when they do happen we thank you [Barnabas Fund] for being there with us."*

CANON FRANCIS OMONDI, KENYA

**Will you stand alongside our suffering brothers and sisters through prayer, calling on the Lord to uphold and strengthen them to remain faithful as they face discrimination and persecution?**



### GETTING INVOLVED

You can use our resources for your own prayer on the day, or to help your church to set up a special event. You can also get involved using social media, via the Barnabas Fund Facebook page and Twitter feed.



### RESOURCES

As well as the information and resources included in this magazine, you can also request your free Suffering Church Action Week (SCAW) Information Resource Pack, which includes a Prayer Guide with suggested prayers, including special prayers for morning and evening, and hourly prayer topics, along with information and inspiration to aid you, your small group or your congregation in interceding for the persecuted church. In addition, you can keep up to date with the latest news via our website. There are also free SCAW 2017 bookmarks with the prayer (right) on them - why not order one for everyone in your prayer group?

SCAW Information Resource Packs can be ordered by contacting Barnabas Fund via telephone on 024 7623 1923, or you can download the prayer guide from our website [www.barnabasfund.org/SCAW](http://www.barnabasfund.org/SCAW)

*"As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. When Moses' hands grew tired ... Aaron and Hur held his hands up—one on one side, one on the other—so that his hands remained steady till sunset."*

EXODUS 17:11-12



## PRAYER FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH 2017

### GOD OF GRACE,

Look upon Your suffering people.  
In their distress, hear their cry.  
Save them from those that seek to harm them.  
From violence deliver them  
And grant them protection from their enemies.

### GOD OF GOODNESS,

Look upon Your wandering people.  
In their alienation, hear their cry.  
Homeless, vulnerable refugees and sojourners,  
From rootlessness deliver them  
And grant them a resting place here on earth.

### GOD OF MERCY,

Look upon Your hungry people.  
In their need, hear their cry.  
Famished, thirsty, sick, exhausted,  
From poverty and destitution deliver them  
And grant them provision from Your bounty.

### GOD OF JUSTICE,

Look upon Your hurting people.  
In their shame, hear their cry.  
Save them from injustice and false accusation.  
From cruel lies deliver them  
And grant them vindication.

*For You, O Lord Jesus, were reviled,  
You were abused and falsely accused.  
You were dependent for Your daily bread.  
You, a refugee and wanderer,  
Had nowhere to lay Your head.  
You fell into the hands of violent men.*

*So feed Your people with the manna from above.  
Give them to drink from your life-giving streams.  
Deliver them from all evil  
And guide them to their heavenly Home.*

In Your Name we pray,

**AMEN**

© Patrick Sookhdeo 2017

# Activities for

# YOUNG PEOPLE AND CHILDREN

The suggestions below contain ideas for various age-groups. Please select and use whichever are appropriate.

Many Christian children and young people around the world face great pressure and even persecution because they love and follow Jesus Christ. Some are failed in their exams because they are Christians, some go hungry, some lose their homes, some suffer violence. They may be hated, despised and attacked, but they are not ashamed of belonging to Jesus.

You can stand with persecuted Christians this Suffering Church Action Week, to support them and show that you too are not ashamed to be a Christian, using the hashtag #IAmNotAshamedOfChrist

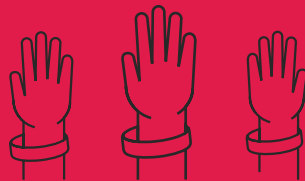
## HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED



Change your Facebook, Twitter or Instagram profile picture to the Not Ashamed logo, then fast from social media to spend time praying for Christians facing persecution.

When you change your profile picture, let your followers know why and explain the reason for your fast.

You can download your profile picture and find out more information at [www.barnabasfund.org/scaw](http://www.barnabasfund.org/scaw)



Wearing an I Am Not Ashamed wristband for the week, to show your solidarity with believers who are not allowed to display their faith publicly, are discriminated against, or violently attacked.

Go to the SCAW website [www.barnabasfund.org/scaw#wristbands](http://www.barnabasfund.org/scaw#wristbands) for inspiration for how to make your own wristband or to order a ready-made silicone wristband.



Helping to raise funds by organising a team sports match with your church youth group – each team member could pay a small amount to play, with proceeds given to Barnabas Fund to help persecuted young Christians. Why not join with another local church and invite friends to come and play or watch, so they know you are Not Ashamed to help Christians who are just like you, but who face persecution?

### TO HELP YOU PRAY



You can use the *Barnabas Prayer* leaflet – enclosed in this magazine and available online [bit.ly/PrayerS017](http://bit.ly/PrayerS017) – to guide you or your youth group as you pray.

Look in *Barnabas Prayer* at the items for 1, 4, 11, 23, 25, 29, 30 September and 9, 11, 17, 27 October for prayers that specifically relate to young people and children.

ALSO REMEMBER Saturday, 4 November is the Barnabas Fund International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church.\*

### YOU COULD RAISE FUNDS FOR THE ABBA GIRLS' HOME, PAKISTAN

The Abba Home is a safe haven for 31 young orphaned Christian girls, who all come from poor backgrounds. As Christians and girls, they are despised by the majority of society, but at the Abba Home they are able to grow up and learn in a loving, family-centred, Christian environment.

Project ref: 41-1095



The Abba Home is a place of laughter and new life for 31 orphaned Christian girls

\*There are lots of other prayer resources available. Order a free SCAW inspiration Resource Pack to receive a guide to help you pray through the day on 4 November (and through the night too as well, if you choose). It also contains a 2017 Prayer Booklet with useful information and prayer aids for Christians suffering in different countries.



# Standing against persecution – BY THE “OIL OF HIS GRACE”

“The Lord inspired me through your materials to write a song entitled “Oil of His Grace” ... I have long wondered how Christians can stand against such severe persecution, but now I understand that without God’s grace it would be impossible.”

With these words, Christian songwriter Patricia Blaylock Jennings from Maryland, USA, told Barnabas how she had come to write “Oil of His Grace”, hoping that it would bring comfort to persecuted Christians and help other Christians become more aware of the plight of their suffering brothers and sisters. You are welcome to use this song in your Suffering Church Sunday service, your home group or your own devotions.

Barnabas Aid is not the holder of the copyright, but has been granted the right to use “Oil of His Grace” in raising awareness of the persecuted Church. Churches may reproduce the score and/or lyrics to facilitate the song’s use by their congregations, but may not otherwise copy, distribute or exhibit it. No third party may copy, distribute or exhibit “Oil of His Grace” outside this remit without the express permission of the copyright holder. For further information, contact your local Barnabas office (details on inside front cover).

Patricia Blaylock Arrangings

1. Paul  
2. To - sus  
3. Je - sus  
4. Faith

wrote of his suf - fering from a thorn in his flesh. Three times he prayed the day God's peo - ple still suf - fer in fear; in faith they do strug - gled in the gar - den, "Faith - er, Let this cup pass, but, not as I suf - fers, is quenched when our hearts are in fear, when friends and foes a -

Lord would ease his dis - tress. God said "My grace is suf - fi - cient for - cle to fin - ish the race. Stand bold - ly for Christ, fuel the fire of your will, but, Thy will be done." His soul full of sor - row un - to like, our faith do not care. Yet, there's One who keeps us, in His arms He

19  
for My strength is made perfect in weak - ness. Ask free - ly of God for His oil of grace, His glo - ry would come, The oil of His grace it feeds our souls.

25  
Chorus  
Faith is a fi - re that burns in the heart. Doubt and fear try to ex -

31  
English the spark. When God's peop - le suf - fer per - se - cution and pain, God gives them fresh oil of His grace to sus - tain.

37  
Final Ending  
oil of His grace to sus - tain.

43  
oil of His grace to sus - tain.

You can download a larger version of this score at [www.barnabasfund.org/scaw](http://www.barnabasfund.org/scaw)

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# Getting involved with SUFFERING CHURCH ACTION WEEK

## THINKING BIG?

Extra quantities of any of the resources in the Inspiration Resource Pack are free; so why not **think BIG?**

For example, you may want to order an eight-day devotional booklet for each member of your home group. You could also place a Gift Aid envelope on each seat at your Suffering Church Sunday service, so that Barnabas Fund can claim an extra 25p from the government for every £1 given by a UK taxpayer.

For more resources, simply get in touch with your nearest Barnabas office (see inside front cover), complete the order form below or visit [www.barnabasfund.org/scaw](http://www.barnabasfund.org/scaw). You may find it especially useful to order extras of the following items: A3 posters, eight-day devotional booklets, prayer bookmarks, money boxes and Gift Aid envelopes.

If you have resources to stage a full-scale musical, why not go for *Perpetua's Diary*? The words and score are on the DVD and the SCAW 2017 website.



## A SUNDAY SERVICE FOR THE SUFFERING CHURCH

### Sunday service with the theme "I am not ashamed"

Dedicate a special service on 29 October or 5 November (or another Sunday that suits your church calendar) to stand with our persecuted brothers and sisters in Jesus and declare, **I am not ashamed!** When planning your themed Sunday service or meeting, you may find the following resources useful: Sermon Outline (p12-13), overview "Persecuted and not ashamed" (p8-11), new song, "Oil of His Grace" (p17), other suggested songs (this page); on the DVD, there is a PowerPoint presentation with images to accompany the sermon.



### Suffering Church offering

If you take up an offering for the Suffering Church during your special Sunday service, you may like to give it to a particular project or need. Alternatively choose our General Fund. Giving to the General Fund allows us flexibility in allocating funds, so that we can use your gift wherever the need is greatest. It enables us to react quickly to emergency situations and to meet needs that are too sensitive for us to publicise.



## SUGGESTED SONGS FOR A SERVICE FOCUSING ON THE SUFFERING CHURCH

- Oil of His Grace,**  
Patricia Blaylock Jennings,  
score and lyrics on p17
- I know Whom I have believed,**  
Daniel W Whittle,  
Songs of Fellowship 220
- I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,**  
Isaac Watts,  
Mission Praise 323
- Stand up! Stand up for Jesus,**  
George Duffield,  
Songs of Fellowship 513
- 10,000 reasons,**  
Matt Redman,  
[www.mattredman.com](http://www.mattredman.com)
- I'm not ashamed,**  
Jeremy Camp  
[www.musixmatch.com/lyrics/Jeremy-Camp/I-m-Not-Ashamed](http://www.musixmatch.com/lyrics/Jeremy-Camp/I-m-Not-Ashamed)
- Give us your courage,**  
Tim Hughes,  
[www.worshiptogether.com/songs/give-us-your-courage/](http://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/give-us-your-courage/)

## GIVE A PRACTICAL GIFT

If you would like to show your love in action you could give a gift to Barnabas Fund. On pages 4 and 5, you can read about some of the many practical ways in which Barnabas Fund helps persecuted Christians.

So, set your imagination free and think of ways you could help through fundraising! From coffee mornings to concerts, quiz nights to car washes, or simply taking up a collection at your home group, prayer meeting or Bible study – the possibilities are endless.

Resources to help you include money boxes, Gift Aid envelopes, a sponsorship form (go to [www.barnabasfund.org/scaw](http://www.barnabasfund.org/scaw) to download a form) and a poster to advertise your event.



**If you can commit to ongoing support, after the end of Suffering Church Action Week, why not sponsor a Christian school-child? – See opposite.**

### PLEASE SEND ME A FREE SUFFERING CHURCH ACTION WEEK INSPIRATION RESOURCE PACK

Also, please send me extra quantities of the following resource(s) (state quantity of each):

.....  
.....

Name .....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Email address ..... Phone.....

Name of church / group .....

# YOUR REGULAR GIFTS AND PRAYERS CAN *change their future*

## BARNABAS FUND'S SCHOOL-PLACE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME



Christian schools – like this small, simple one in Sindh, Pakistan – provide a safe and encouraging environment in which Christian children can learn basic literacy skills to equip them for life and develop their academic and other talents, as well as grow in their relationship with God

***Sponsoring a child through Barnabas Fund doesn't just change one life, it can transform a whole family.***

Christian children living in contexts of persecution or poverty often have few prospects. In government schools in countries where Christians are a despised minority, Christian children can be treated as inferior and even marked down in their exams by teachers. Sometimes they face strong pressure to convert to the majority religion.

In places like Pakistan, many children from poor families have to go out to work, simply so the family can survive. Without being able to read or write, they and their parents are vulnerable to exploitation and their employment opportunities are drastically limited.



St Aphrem's School, Bethlehem

School-place sponsorship enables poor Christian children to study at places like the highly regarded St Aphrem's Christian school in Bethlehem – the curriculum includes learning Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke, which helps preserve the Christian heritage of the region

Enabling a Christian child, growing up in a place of pressure or persecution, to go to a Christian school is not just vital for their own individual future, it can transform everyday life for the whole family.



Brothers Suleman and Imran attend a Christian school in Faisalabad, Pakistan. Their father works as a security guard. He could not afford to pay for his sons to receive an education. But with support from Barnabas Fund, the school can give them an education for only a nominal fee

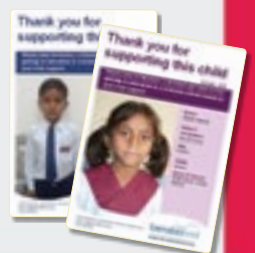


## £18 a month

The average monthly amount needed per child is £18, but it does not matter how great or small your regular gifts are - you can still be part of the School-Place Sponsorship Programme.

As we mark Suffering Church Action Week, will you consider sponsoring a child, or encouraging your church, small group or youth group to do so?

Supporters who give regularly will be sent a card with a photo and details of a Christian schoolchild who they can pray for. You will also receive a twice-yearly newsletter about the schools, which might from time to time include news of "your" child. For security reasons, to save overheads and to enable as much as possible of your gifts to be sent overseas, we do not arrange personal communication between you and "your" child.



Project reference 00-514

## Christian asylum-seeker dies in Detention Centre

THAILAND

A day after being denied refugee status in Thailand by the UNHCR, 34-year-old Pakistani Christian Ijaz Tariq died in Bangkok's Immigration Detention Centre (IDC) from a heart attack. Ijaz had previously complained of chest pains and was hospitalised, but doctors could not diagnose his problem so sent him back to the IDC. There he was put in a punishment room, because he could not pay his hospital bill. Eventually, his local church in Bangkok paid the bill with funds from Barnabas Fund. Despite Ijaz's continued ill health, the IDC doctor refused to allow his pastor to bring him medicine. He died on 27 May.

## Christians who have fled genocide “second-class citizens” in Kurdistan

IRAQ

Iraqi Christians are experiencing discrimination in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq (Kurdistan), despite having sought refuge there from Islamic State. An independent report has found that although the Kurdistan Regional Government's policy is “outwardly favorable to religious freedom in the region ... Many religious groups ... remain second-class citizens compared with Sunni [Muslim] Kurds.” Although safe from persecution and violence, the displaced Christians in Kurdistan still face discrimination. “Christian lands have been appropriated by Kurds in Dohuk and Erbil governorates, and the Nineveh plains.” In several cases, Christians have asserted that local officials colluded in the land-grabs.

## Christians face “intimidation and violence”

MYANMAR



Thousands of ethnic Kachin Christians live in refugee camps. Barnabas Fund has provided emergency aid for them

Despite Myanmar (Burma) taking encouraging steps towards greater democracy, the Buddhist majority continue to persecute many of the country's Christians. Most of Myanmar's Christians come from non-Burman ethnic minorities and these groups are singled out, according to a report by the independent United States Commission on International Religious Freedom earlier this year. They face “discriminatory restrictions on land ownership, intimidation and violence ... forced relocation and destruction of Christian cemeteries, violent attacks on places of worship, and an ongoing campaign of coerced

conversion to Buddhism.” Children are particularly vulnerable. “Na Ta La [Buddhist] schools offer free education and boarding to children of poor families. In return, however, Christian students are not allowed

***The Buddhist majority continue to persecute many of the country's Christians.***

to attend church; must practice or learn about Buddhist worship ... become initiated into the monkhood or nunhood.”

## Hindu nationalists aim to make India “Hindu nation” by 2023

INDIA

The leader of a Hindu nationalist organisation, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, has called upon Hindus to make India a “Hindu nation” by 2023. Speaking at a gathering of Hindu organisations, Sadhvi Saraswati asserted that the goal of

establishing a Hindu nation would not be hindered by the Indian constitution – which defends the rights of minorities – because “the [true] constitution is one that was written by Ram and Krishna [Hindu deities]”.

## Government plans to tighten draconian 2009 Religion Law

KYRGYZSTAN



The government of Kyrgyzstan is proposing amendments to the already restrictive 2009 Religion Law which would ban the sharing of beliefs in public, censor all religious literature and make it harder for church congregations to register. Among the proposed amendments is the full state censorship of all religious literature imported or distributed in the country, and restricting its use to existing registered religious organisations. The registration of a religious community – including churches – would require 500 adult citizens to supply their details. Even the 200 adults required for registration under the current law is unattainable for many churches.

## Christian girls forced off bus for eating during Ramadan

JORDAN

Two Christian girls were forced off a bus travelling between Amman and Aqaba on 5 June because they were eating during Ramadan, when many Muslims observe a strict daytime fast. A Muslim passenger had complained and the driver ejected the girls at the next intersection, where they were met by police. Even Muslims are permitted by sharia law to eat during Ramadan if they are travelling. Although Jordan is generally viewed as one of the more tolerant countries in the Middle East, Islam is the state religion and eating in public during Ramadan is technically a criminal offence.

## Islamists target Christians in Marawi but local Muslims protect them

PHILIPPINES

Islamists launched an assault on the city of Marawi on the island of Mindanao in late May, torching a church and targeting Christians. In scenes reminiscent of actions by Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, they destroyed Christian symbols, vandalised the inside of the church and then torched the building. Muslims in the city lent Christians hijabs (Islamic head covering for women) to protect them from Islamists. At the time of writing, government forces are battling to recapture the city from militants, who have campaigned for Mindanao to become an Islamic state governed by sharia.

## Al Shabaab terrorists murder Christian teacher

KENYA



Al Shabaab was responsible for the 2015 attack on Garissa University in which Christians were singled out and murdered

Elly Ojiema, a Christian teacher from the village of Fafi in Garissa, north-east Kenya, was murdered by Al Shabaab militants on 14 June. Local Somali Muslims warned the Christian community that an attack was imminent and around 9pm armed men entered the school compound. Barnabas Fund's project partner in Garissa reported that "They found Elly under the bed and shot his leg, dragged him out and killed him by cutting his throat."

## Muslim state governor steps in to defend Christians after Muslim youth call for their eviction

NIGERIA



Barnabas Fund has come to the assistance of Christian communities attacked by Boko Haram; pictured is a village in Borno State, Nigeria

Sixteen Muslim youth organisations in Kaduna state issued an ultimatum for the predominantly Christian Igbo tribe to leave northern Nigeria by 1 October 2017, stating they were "no longer ... disposed to coexisting with the Igbo". Regional governors in Kaduna state were reportedly planning to send buses to evacuate Igbo communities, but the Muslim state governor intervened, halting the plans and ordering the arrest of the signatories to the anti-Igbo ultimatum.

Christians in Kaduna state have suffered a wave of attacks in the last two years, particularly from Muslim Fulani herdsman. A joint communique by Anglican Church leaders in northern Nigeria stated that "the recurring and orchestrated killings of Christians in Southern Kaduna, mass killings in parts of Benue State and others across the country have increased suspicion that the so-called herdsmen are an extension of terrorist groups carrying out an evil agenda of ethnic and religious cleansing."



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# In Touch

## Canon on Wheels!

Canon John Bowers, a veteran fundraiser for Barnabas, mounted a 79-year-old single-speed bike in June to complete his annual sponsored bike ride in aid of Christians in Syria and the Cana Girls' Rescue Home in Kenya. This year, the 85-year-old canon's journey was to Chester Cathedral, UK. Accompanied by his daughter Ruth and a Barnabas Fund staff member, he rode along a disused railway line and various cycle paths across the Wirral, hugging the coastline, taking in the stunning sea views and the mountainous North Welsh border as he made his way to St. Anselm's chapel in Chester Cathedral to preside at a communion service. The first part of his 45-mile round trip culminated in a triumphant procession through the Cathedral's grand Abbey Square archway to the welcome of his family and 50 supporters inside the chapel. The return trip after the service was more arduous as Canon Bowers and his companions cycled into a headwind but nothing could diminish their spirits.

Barnabas Fund is very grateful to Canon John, Ruth and all their generous sponsors.



Canon John Bowers, with his daughter Ruth, undertook a 45-mile sponsored bike ride to raise funds for the Cana Girls' Rescue Home in Kenya, and Christians in Syria

## UK Supporter Days make a great impact

Our Supporter Days in Swindon and Rugby in June made a great impression on the hundreds of people who came. After an update and overview of current Barnabas activities, guests Nissar Hussain and Umar Mulinde (by video from Uganda), both converts from Islam, spoke movingly of their personal experience of persecution and how Barnabas Fund has helped them. One supporter told Barnabas that Nissar's story brought home how Muslim background believers in the UK currently experience serious persecution – to the point of having to relocate for family safety – and she welcomed the fact that Barnabas is both giving practical help and campaigning on their behalf.

## What will happen to your earthly treasures after you have gone on to glory?

Through your wise planning and investment you can continue to be a blessing to the persecuted Church long after you have left this earth.

**Please remember Barnabas Fund in your will.**

For a helpful booklet to guide you in this process, please contact the Coventry office (details on the inside front cover).

**"This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God."** (2 Corinthians 9:12)



Nissar Hussain's personal experience of persecution in the UK moved supporters





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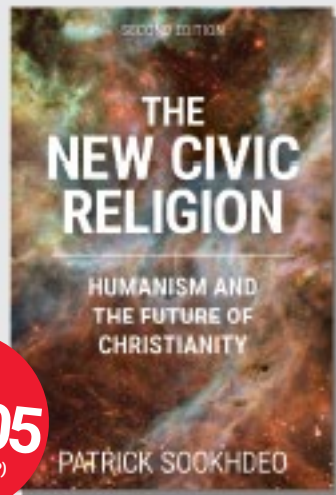
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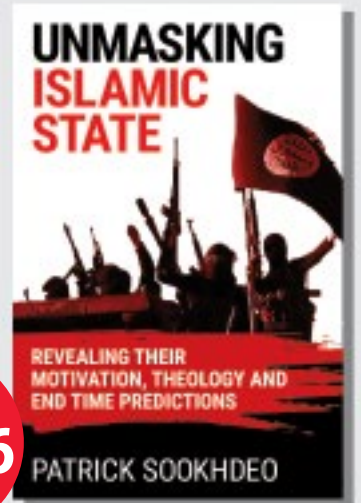


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