

# The Value of Persecution

On July 15, 2002, a 17-year-old Christian Pakistani girl resisted the sexual advances of a Muslim man in her workplace.

Angry at her refusal, the man returned and doused her with acid. She was burned severely on her face and chest and lost sight in her right eye.

What she endured, as reported in news accounts, was heartbreaking.

International Christian Concern is a non-denominational, non-governmental, Christian watchdog group located in Washington, D.C., whose concern is the human rights of Christians. Its mission is to help religious minorities from all forms of persecution through assistance, advocacy and awareness.

ICC lists 68 countries around the world where there is severe persecution or discrimination against Christians. Today, newspaper stories and television news shows regularly report incidents in which Christians are slaughtered, many beheaded, by the jihadist militant group known as ISIS. They die, in many situations, because they refuse to deny Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

When we read stories in the Bible of believers being thrown to the lions, put into a fiery furnace, stoned, beaten or made to suffer other forms of torture, we tend to think in historical terms only. But the truth is, millions of saints around the world today live in daily fear of persecution, simply for identifying themselves as Christians.

And it is even happening in America, although in much more subtle ways.

The irony associated with persecution is striking. Historically, there has been a direct correlation between the growth of the church and the degree of persecution it suffers.

God is never so present in our lives as when we suffer in His name.

*Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us (Daniel 3:17 NKJV).*

– Beecher Hunter