



## ***Stand with Them: Bibles for the Persecuted Church*** **Spring 2019 Radio Campaign – Talking Points**

Please encourage your on-air staff to use these talking points compiled by Bible League International (BLI) during your station's radio campaign. They will be especially helpful during radio-thons and interviews.

### **Worldwide**

- In our modern-era, 2018 was the most violent year for Christians worldwide (*Christianity Today*)
- The influence of Islam exists on nearly every continent, and especially Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East. Relational evangelism has been a key to explosive Church growth among Muslims.
- Two out of three illiterate adults worldwide are women. Under-resourced churches in countries hostile towards the Gospel use BLI's Bible-based Literacy program as a powerful evangelistic tool.
- Many new Christians living under persecution often begin their new life in Christ without a Bible
- Christians have been persecuted in more countries than any other religious group, and have suffered harassment in many Muslim countries in the Middle East (Pew Research Center)
- Christians need God's Word to resist the pull of traditional religious beliefs, occult practices, secularism, materialism, and other influences, and to stand strong against persecution from extremists of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and other religions.
- Millions of believers in the world suffer for following Jesus. Some face physical violence, while others are denied basic services, such as water, electricity, schooling and employment.
- In 2018 (fiscal year ended Sept. 30, 2018), more than 1.7 million people were reached with the Gospel by Bible League International in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East and the U.S.
- Nearly 129,000 Christians worldwide were trained in 2018 to share God's Word
- Over 1,300 new churches were planted in 2018 by church planters using Bibles and training from Bible League. Over 200,00 people were trained as church planters worldwide.
- In 2018, nearly 35,000 people worldwide were given the gift of literacy by learning to read and write through Bible League International's Bible-based literacy program
- Persecuted Christians find strength and hope in God's Word to sustain them. By sending Bibles, children and adults all over the world can gather and study God's Word. Having Bibles allows Christians to remain strong in their walk with Jesus Christ.

## Africa

- Islam is increasing its footprint in predominantly Christian countries like Uganda and Ethiopia. New believers risk being attacked by family members and neighbors if their conversion is revealed.
- People live in the grips of witchcraft, ancestral spirit worship, cults and traditional religion
- Remote churches often advocate syncretism, a blend of Christian faith and pagan practices
- Kenya's government includes Islamic extremists who often give impunity to extremists that attack and discriminate against Christians
- Africa is the world's poorest, least-developed continent, and its population is youngest in the world. Religions like extreme Islam promise financial incentives if young people will convert as Muslims.
- By sending Bibles, you're supporting Christians living in countries in Africa where many people are intolerant of faith in Jesus Christ. Believers find strength and hope in God's Word to live boldly.
- Bible League's programs are active in the African countries of Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe
- Over 337,000 people in Africa were reached with the Gospel in 2018 by Bible League International
- More than 20,000 believers in Africa were trained in 2018 by Bible League to share God's Word

## Asia

- The majority of people in Asia follow Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, or no religion at all
- In Bangladesh, dozens of Bengali language Bible-based Literacy classes were held specifically for Muslims, most of whom were women that met at significant risk from local authorities.
- In Indonesia, Muslim political parties and radical Islamic groups exert significant influence, resulting in Sharia-inspired policies and public opinion opposing Christianity. As the government tightens its blasphemy laws, most problems for believers come from confrontations with radical groups.
- With Nepal's new anti-conversion law, Christians can be fined and jailed for evangelizing others
- In Asian countries like Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam where persecution is present, Christians are isolated, but Bible studies, new churches and training create support and community
- In India, the world's second most populated country with 1.3 billion people, converts to Christianity from Hinduism experience extreme persecution, discrimination and violence from family members
- Believers in Asia, including China and the Philippines, are being persecuted because of their faith. Some face physical violence, loss of life and tragic circumstances, while others are denied basic necessities, such as water, electricity, and access to education.

- Your prayers and financial gifts for Bibles help Christians in Asia to stand strong against persecution from extremists of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and other religions
- Bible League's programs are active in the Asian countries of Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam
- In Asia in 2018, over 715,000 people were reached with the Gospel by Bible League International. More than 64,000 people were trained by Bible League to share the Gospel, and 109,000 people were trained as church planters. Nearly 900 churches were planted in Asia in 2018.

## **Europe**

- Persecution of believers by Islamic extremists and poverty exist in remote areas. Christians who have converted from Islam face pressure and discrimination from families and communities.
- The influence of Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Islam is prevalent in Europe, and remnants of Communist atheism remain strong in many European countries
- The materially poor suffer from effects of regional conflict, including terrorism, revolts and coups
- By sending Bibles, you're helping children and adults to gather and study God's Word in areas where persecution is high and to discover new hope that is found in Jesus Christ
- Bible League International's programs are active in the European countries of Albania, Armenia, Italy, Russia and Ukraine
- Over 51,000 people were reached with the Gospel in 2018 by Bible League International in Europe
- Nearly 1,500 people in Europe were trained in 2018 by Bible League to share the Gospel

## **Latin America**

- Violence, drugs, and poverty are daily struggles for ministry in Latin American countries, such as Colombia and Venezuela. In Colombia, church workers are threatened, harassed, extorted and even murdered by guerillas, drug cartels, gangs and other criminal groups.
- In Mexico, organized crime groups target pastors, while indigenous power holders pressure Christians through fines, denying basic community service, and imprisonment
- Your support encourages Christians with the Gospel's message of hope in countries like Nicaragua, Venezuela and Haiti that are facing rising economic and social tensions
- Bible League's programs are active in the Latin American countries of Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru and Venezuela
- In Latin America in 2018, nearly 449,000 people were reached with the Gospel by BLI. More than 56,000 were trained by BLI to share the Gospel, and 64,000 people were trained as church planters.

## **Middle East**

- Christians make up less than 5 percent of the population in the Middle East; in most countries, like Egypt and Jordan, the Muslim majority comprises more than 90 percent of the population
- Providing access to God’s Word and training to equip believers in under-resourced churches to reach their communities is crucial for those living in Islamic nations opposed to the Gospel
- Refugees and internally displaced people in the Middle East now number in the tens of millions
- Christians who have converted from Islam face discrimination from families and communities
- Despite persecution, believers in the Middle East have a strong hunger for God’s Word, and they’re finding strength and hope to remain faithful in their Christian walk
- Bible League’s programs are active in the Middle East countries of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, South Sudan, Syria, Iraq Kurdistan, and one country we do not name for security reasons
- Arabic Bible-based Literacy is reaching the region’s poorest with the hope of the Gospel, including refugees from countries in the Middle East
- In the Middle East in 2018, over 158,000 people were reached with the Gospel by BLI. Nearly 1,200 people were given the gift of literacy through BLI’s Bible-based Literacy.

## **United States**

- NOTE: We are not focusing on the U.S. in this radio campaign

## **Scripture for Encouragement in Persecution**

- “If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God.” – 1 Peter 4:14-16
- “If one part of the body of Christ suffers, all parts suffer with it.” – 1 Corinthians 12:26
- “Remember those... who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.” – Hebrews 13:3
- “Many who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” – 2 Timothy 3:12
- “We are persecuted, but not abandoned; Struck down, but not destroyed.” – 2 Corinthians 4:9
- “Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous and strong.” – 1 Corinthians 16:13
- “Our present troubles are small and won’t last very long. They produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever.” – 2 Corinthians 4:17
- “I want to know Christ... and participate in His sufferings.” – Philippians 3:10
- Jesus: “I am with you always.” – Matthew 28:20