

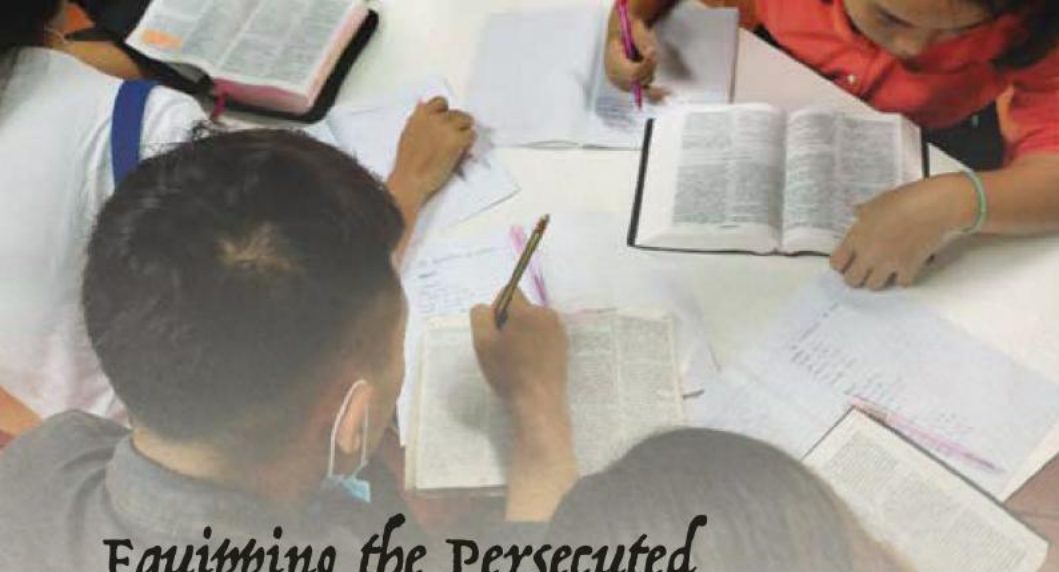


Christian Freedom[®]
International

Equipping Persecuted Christians

www.ChristianFreedom.org

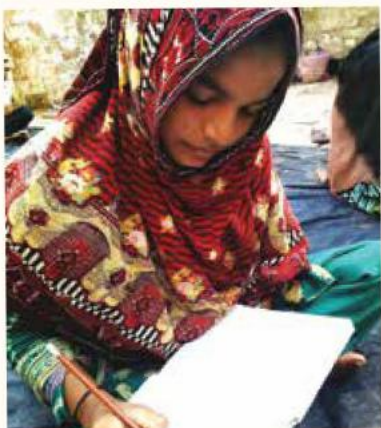
DECEMBER 2021



Equipping the Persecuted to Serve Others

At CFI's Bible school, persecuted Christians learn to be Christian leaders with life-skills to survive in a jungle, and jobs-skills for a modern world.

The twin crises of Covid and Burma's violent coup add to their real-world training.



Many Christians in countries of persecution lack education or skills. CFI provides aid and training to give hope for a better life.

Emergency Covid Aid

- “Praising God for providing!”



CFI delivers gifts of food and prayer to Christians in areas of persecution during Covid.

“Some had called me they had no things at all to cook,” said a CFI co-worker. “We pray and bless those who gave these donations.”

Two Christian families escaped from North Korea. They were caught in China, which plans to force them back. We are urging authorities to intervene and allow them to go to a safe country.

We help other escapees with safe houses stocked with food, clothes and Bibles.





Shagufta and Shafquat were accused of 'blasphemy' and sentenced to death in Pakistan. CFI joined legal groups to hire an expert attorney – and won! They are now free in an unnamed country.



Christian converts built a new church. Extremists destroyed it, beat the women, and threatened to kill the men. CFI rescued them, provided food and a safe house and spiritual encouragement.



Contact Us!

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**PASS THIS NEWSLETTER
TO A FRIEND WHEN YOU
ARE FINISHED READING IT.**



Christian Freedom[®]

International



December 2021

*"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,
who is Christ the Lord." - Luke 2:11*

Dear Friend of the Persecuted Church,

Merry Christmas! May the joy of Jesus fill you this season!

For many Christians worldwide, this Christmas will be like the first one . . . spent in awe that God came in flesh to save us, yet clandestine . . . and steeped in danger.

Some Christians will celebrate in secret. Some will tell no one – not even family.

Others will gather in churches . . . knowing that extremists often attack on holy days. The Taliban's take-over of Afghanistan is a shocking blow for endangered Christians – and may embolden terrorists worldwide.

This is the world that Jesus enters . . . to spread His kingdom.

And we can join Him – even in countries where Christians are persecuted – through helping our brothers and sisters in Christ in these dangerous areas.

Here are highlights of how your prayers and gifts to Christian Freedom International (CFI) helped persecuted Christians this year – and a glimpse into what more we can do:

NORTH KOREA: Christians face horrendous persecution if caught. Torture, slave labor, prison camp, execution. Covid and new harsh laws have added even more challenges to getting Bibles in, and people out.

Even so, defectors who escaped from the totalitarian country hid in our shelter on the underground railroad. This refuge is supplied with food, clothes, and Bibles. One challenge is re-stocking the shelter with Bibles (it's in a perilous area for delivering Bibles). We are delighted that apparently the defectors take them when they leave!

Getting Bibles into North Korea on electronic devices (USBs and micro-chips) has run into new obstacles. One expert noted that old-fashioned short-wave radio is still the best way to

reach inside the isolated country. We partner with Free North Korea Radio – which is run by defectors – to broadcast the Bible, testimonies, news, and prayers.

One escapee said, "I learned from radio about Christmas, it is a worldwide holiday. But it is not in North Korea." Instead, they celebrate the dictator's birthday.

"My friend smuggled a radio from China and I could not stop myself from listening even though I knew I could be discovered and sent to a political prison camp," said another.

"You should never think that Christianity died in North Korea. It is alive," said another.

We will tell more in the future. Watch for our newsletters – and give them to others!

NEW WAR IN BURMA: The military's violent attacks, including on Christian ethnic groups, churches, and pastors, continues months after a coup in February. One pastor said, "The actual situation is worse than [what is reported] on the news."

This crisis – on top of Covid – stretched CFI's school for persecuted Christians.

CFI's school trains Christian refugees to become pastors, teachers, and leaders in this conflict-ridden region. Many students arrive with medical and other troubles. Yet they are eager to learn how to love God and serve others . . . in the midst of persecution.

Students learn solid Biblical discipleship, life-skills to survive in a jungle, and jobs-skills for a modern world. New classes, like electrical wiring, and deeper teachings on God, our provider and protector, and Scriptural forgiveness of sins, were added this year – which keeps the teachers always learning along with the students.

The twin crises of Covid and the coup are giving CFI's students real-world training in some of the hardest situations. Faced with ever-changing restrictions, students found ways to reach people in remote areas and floods to give aid and teach Bible lessons.

This is a critical time for Christians in and from Burma. Pray with us that CFI's students will be ready for the challenges. Our students have seen God work in their lives – and they *thank God for you and CFI's supporters for giving them skills to serve others.*

Do you want to learn more about our school? Go to CFI's website – or contact us.

IRAN/AFGHANISTAN: You will understand, we must be stingy with details after the Taliban's take-over. Our partner for Iranian converts is ideally situated and became a refuge for fleeing Afghan Christians who made the treacherous journey to the shelter.

THEY BELIEVED, THEN TROUBLE BEGAN: In religiously hostile countries the first threat for people who trust in Jesus – and leave Islam, Buddhism or Hinduism – can be their own family or village. They try to force the believer to return to their religion – or be killed.

When Badshah converted, he was beaten, his family threatened to kill him, and a radical imam tried to force him to deny Jesus – then accused him of blasphemy. He was thrown in jail. CFI hired an attorney and Badshah was released! But the abuse took a toll. With your support CFI paid for his medical care. He is back with his family – who are now believers!

You can see Badshah's journey. Go to our website for a short video – and see how God provided for this faithful servant who, despite the costs, still believes.

In another village, several families converted to Christ and built a small church. Buddhist leaders destroyed the church, beat the women with rods, and tried to kill the men.

CFI's co-workers found these Christians who were hiding in a jungle. We gave food to the starving families and brought them to our safe house. They have stayed for months at our shelter while leaders try to negotiate a safe return to their homes.

Thank you for making this possible! Your gifts are turned into food, shelters, medical aid – and just as important, care and encouragement for persecuted Christians.

WIDOWS AND SURVIVORS IN NIGERIA: More Christians were killed in Nigeria than all other countries combined. Others are kidnapped and enslaved by terrorists. Widows and orphans are left destitute.

"Lilly" was kidnapped and sexually abused. She escaped, and returned to her village with a baby. Women like her are called 'defiled' and her baby 'a child of the enemy'. That's just what persecutors want – to destroy Christians and tear apart their families. (Go to our website – or get our newsletter – to read how "Lilly's" village responded to her.) Pray for Christians to be rescued and restored – and made whole in Christ.

To empower Christian widows – survivors of massacres – to provide for their families, CFI's partners equip them with training and micro-funds to start small businesses.

TRAIN UP A CHILD: Christian children in countries of persecution are especially vulnerable. Our child sponsorships – in Egypt, Bangladesh, and Pakistan – provide monthly supplies of food and encouragement and are greatly appreciated during the pandemic!

This year we added partnerships in undisclosed countries to train children to be safe from traffickers, abuse and drugs . . . from a Christian perspective. This is a way to empower children with tactics and faith to protect against the evil one.

AID IN A TIME OF COVID: Shut-downs also shut-off jobs for impoverished Christians. They get no help from governments. And there are no tithes for pastors. CFI is delivering emergency Covid aid to Christian families and pastors in several countries.

PAKISTAN: A Christian couple convicted of blasphemy and sentenced to death were acquitted – thanks in part to your support for Christian Freedom International!

Shagufta and Shafqat, an illiterate and impoverished couple with four children, were accused by a Muslim imam of sending a blasphemous text message. Pakistan's blasphemy laws are notorious tools to victimize Christians – and trigger mob violence.

CFI, joining with several groups, hired an expert attorney who won their acquittal. Shagufta "could not find the words to describe how relieved and happy she was".

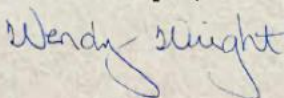
Thank you for your support! Together we were able to free these Christians from the clutches of persecutors. The family is now safe in an undisclosed country.

Many Christians in Pakistan lack education or skills. CFI provides aid and training to give hope for a better life.

With your support, CFI gives food and aid to Christians in debt bondage in brickyards – and provides classes in basic education and Bible. Our newest partnership trains Christians in slums to learn computer, beauty techniques, and sewing. Equipped with skills, they can get jobs or start their own businesses.

Whew – and this does not tell all! Your gifts for our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ help to meet their critical needs – and are tangible ways to love one another.

God bless you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wendy Wright". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Wendy" and last name "Wright" clearly distinguishable.

Wendy Wright / President

P.S. Thank you for aiding and equipping persecuted Christians! Pray for their protection – especially those facing the greatest threats – and a strong faith to endure persecution this Christmas and into next year.

Your gifts for persecuted Christians will help to meet their critical needs

And please share with your friends and church of how we can help the persecuted.

Special "Tax Tip" for Givers in 2021



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Thank you for your prayers and support for persecuted Christians!

As we come to the end of 2021, I wanted to make sure you know that this an excellent time to take advantage of an opportunity. Whether you itemize deductions or not on your annual tax return, there are temporary opportunities in the tax law encouraging you to give now.

But those provisions are set to expire on December 31!

This is so important that the IRS issued a special "tax tip" earlier this fall for generous givers like you. Here is the gist (in plain English) of the benefits meant to support your giving this year:

- For many givers, it may not make sense for you to itemize deductions every year. But shouldn't the tax code give some credit to your gifts? Thankfully Congress agreed, at least at the start of the pandemic. Right now, you can deduct up to \$300 contributed to this ministry during 2021 – \$600 if you are a married couple filing a joint return – even if you do not itemize and take the standard deduction.

- If you do itemize deductions, this is for you. Usually, your eligible gifts cannot exceed a specific fraction of your income. But for gifts in 2021, you can generally elect to claim a charitable deduction for cash donations up to 100 percent of your adjusted gross income (consult your tax professional or read the IRS update noted below for limited exceptions).

- If you run a business, there are incentives for you, too. The deduction thresholds for cash and food donations for many businesses have temporarily increased depending on your status as a corporation, sole proprietorship, and so forth. It's definitely a benefit to explore with your accounting team. These incentives are slated to end this year, so please consider taking advantage of these opportunities before December 31.

One more idea that is not in the IRS tax tip but is worth considering. You might reduce your tax bill by making a distribution from your IRA to our ministry. This can satisfy the required annual minimum distribution for taxpayers 72 or older, while not resulting in taxable income. It's effectively another way to qualify for a charitable tax benefit whether you itemize or not!

Thank you for partnering with Christian Freedom International. We are humbled by your generosity, and we thank God for you continually in our prayers.

God bless you!

¹ See "Expanded tax benefits help individuals and businesses give to charity in 2021", Sept. 28, 2021, <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/expanded-tax-benefits-help-individuals-and-businesses-give-to-charity-in-2021>.