

Wrath

Romans 2:5

Imagine the outrage of a being who is pure holiness with no evil intent, not even a hint of sin.

I. God's Wrath is _____.

II. God's Wrath is _____.

Paul describes this person as having a hard (the Greek word is where we get the word sclerosis from) and non-repenting heart. This person is not moved by God's kindness, His tolerance, His patience.

III. God's Wrath is _____.

Will God's judgment be different for those who've been exposed to His revelation than those who've heard the gospel?

IV. God's Wrath is _____.

The Day of Wrath.....

V. God's Wrath is _____.

God's judgment is _____. It will be according to the _____. The cry of the rebellious heart is always "I want _____." You don't want that from God. You want _____.

VI. God's Wrath is _____.

If you're not sure the wrath of God is real, look at the hours preceding Jesus going to the cross.

There were centuries of sin built up like _____ by a _____. When Jesus died, that massive curtain, torn from top to bottom, now allows human beings to enter the holy of holies.

There's only one approach....

Nigeria

What does persecution look like in Nigeria? What is life like for Christians?

Persecution in Nigeria is, simply put, brutally violent. In much of northern Nigeria, Christians live their lives under the constant threat of attack from Boko Haram, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), Fulani militants and criminals who kidnap and murder with few consequences. While all citizens of northern Nigeria are subject to threats and violence, Christians are often specifically targeted because of their faith—ISWAP and Boko Haram want to eliminate the Christian presence in Nigeria, and Muslim Fulani militants attack Christian villages specifically. In addition to the violence risks, Christians in some of Nigeria's northern states also live under Shariah law, where they face discrimination and treatment as second-class citizens. Christians who convert from Islam also face rejection from their families, often pressured to recant their faith in Jesus; sometimes, they are even violently attacked.

Meet "Rose"

"When I lost my husband, my in-laws never cared about me; they didn't come to check on me or the children. When [our daughter] Patience died, I thought they would rally around me, but nobody came. I felt so pained in my heart ... But I decided to let go of my bitterness and let God heal me."

What has changed this year?

Christians continue to be attacked indiscriminately and brutally in northern Nigeria, and Nigeria's rank has risen accordingly. The violence has continued unabated—one of the only places in the world where COVID-19 travel restrictions and lockdowns had little impact on attacks against Christians. Christians in northern Nigeria remain at risk of daily pressure and discrimination, as well. The attacks and insecurity have also spread to southern Nigeria. Fulani militants and other violent actors have settled into southern forests, making it difficult for Christian farmers to access their land.

Who is most vulnerable to persecution?

In many ways, vulnerability depends on where in Nigeria a Christian lives. Remote villages in Nigeria's Middle Belt region are at risk of attacks from Fulani militants or other violent actors, and these attacks have even spread into southern Nigeria. In the northeast, any community of believers is at risk of attack from Boko Haram or ISWAP. Because of the violence, thousands of Christians are forced to live in formal or informal camps for internally displaced people (IDPs). This situation contributes to the vulnerability, because people who have lost their home or loved ones are now effectively refugees within their own country. Women and girls tend to have higher levels of vulnerability as well—and anyone who converts from Islam to Christianity is likely most vulnerable of all.

What does Open Doors do to help Christians in Nigeria?

Open Doors partners with the local church in northern Nigeria to strengthen, support, equip and provide assistance to persecuted believers through trauma counseling (including a trauma center), Bibles and discipleship training, socio-economic aid, literacy projects and worldwide prayer support.

