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## Focus on Religious Freedom

***“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways: then will I hear them from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14***

### Where in the World is Religious Revival Happening?

In a time of global religious revival, people of faith in many countries also face significant ongoing persecution and denial of any religious freedom. The same trends - expansion of religious zeal and religious repression - apply particularly to Christians. The majority of countries in which Christianity is growing are located in Africa, Eastern Asia, and the Arabian Peninsula. None of the top 20 is found in Europe, North America or Latin America. Still, Christianity is the most widely practiced religion in the world with approximately 1/3 of the global population.

Even though the number of atheists has increased worldwide, a new 2022 report from Lifeway Research shows the world's population of religious people is growing even faster with more Christians now living in Africa than any other continent and Christianity is growing faster there than any other place in the world.

Why is Christianity growing faster in Africa as well as in China where persecution and attacks on religious freedom are the most extreme? Research organizations point to the success of underground churches, evangelization, more than 90 million Bibles printed this year alone, as well as over a million Christian martyrs in a 10-year period. Many will quote Tertullian, the 2nd century Christian author who wrote, ***“Blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.”***

Religious revival is sorely needed in America today where a recent survey by the Freedom Forum showed only 14% of Americans consider religious freedom to be the most important freedom. The religious revival in the colonies from the 1730s - 1740s, called the First Great Awakening, inspired Benjamin Franklin to write,

***“Revival changes a nation from the inside out. It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world were growing religious.”***



[www.cffor.org](http://www.cffor.org)

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(baptiststandard.com, 10/4/17; 1.cbn.com, 2/4/22; christianpost.com, 3/24/21; doulospartners.org, 4/5/18; washingtontimes.com, 2/1/21; cbsnews.com, 11/17/17; christianitydaily.com, 7/26/21)