

August 2015

Those who have never faced religious persecution may find it easy to overlook the plight of persecuted Christians in foreign places. Our HBC supported missionary in Nepal faces many obstacles in a country torn by Hindu radicalism, political unrest, and a devastating earthquake. As you read his story, you will hear the plea of Christians across Nepal: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you" (2Thessalonians 3:1).

Danger for Christians in Nepal

Last year Pastor Boxtton lay in a hospital bed for several days recovering from a head injury. He had moved to Nepal in June 2013 with a vision to make disciples in any way possible. Soon he began visiting the nearby villages, getting to know people and sharing the gospel. Many people reacted with either anger or disinterest. He had a small following and began a Bible study, however, the village chief warned him many times not to return. Ignoring the warnings, he was beaten over the head and hospitalized.

Christian persecution is worsening in Nepal, a nation that is 81 percent Hindu and only 2 percent 'Christian.' In 2008 after a bloody civil war overthrew the Hindu monarchy, Nepal held its first democratic election. Seven years later, Nepal has just finalized its new constitution that declares it to be a secular state. This angered many, including neighboring India which has put pressure on Nepal to banish Christians and Muslims and return to its Hindu roots.

Today, the Madhesi (6 million people) and other ethnic groups are demonstrating over what they consider inequities in the constitution. Nepal depends on India for its petroleum and cooking gas, and it faces a severe fuel shortage due to a blockade of trade by India and the Madhesi.

Some churches in Nepal have been burned. An extremist Hindu group has distributed leaflets threatening Christians and warning them to leave. In addition, the new constitution contains an anti-conversion clause that makes it illegal for anyone to convert a person from one religion to another.

While some missionaries have left the country, Christian ministry continues. Pastor Boxtton teaches at an Independent Baptist seminary, which provides him an opportunity to better learn the local language. He also preaches in different churches leading a Christian music program and Bible study. He left the village Bible study group in the hands of a brother in Christ whom he trained. The reports he receives indicate that the fellowship is going well and has grown to about 27 people.



Bible Study Group

Last April an earthquake damaged the Pastor's home and those of some villagers. Donations from HBC friends enabled them to rebuild two homes with tin sheets and purchase tents for others.

Pastor Boxtton writes, "I'm trying to be 'wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.' One wrong move and I won't be allowed to stay in this country. I want to settle (here) for my generations to come."