

## Assassination of Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto

Audio Blog by Gregg Harris, President - FEBC

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The recent assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has shocked and outraged the world and once again brought Pakistan to the forefront of the global stage. This act of violence occurred just days before scheduled elections that many hoped would move this country toward increased levels of democracy and freedom for its citizens. As followers of Jesus Christ, we must consider carefully our response to this act of terrorism that generates pain at so many levels:

For this is a personal tragedy: Mrs. Bhutto was the mother of 3 young children, whose lives are now forever changed. Yet, this is also a national tragedy: the country of Pakistan is in a collective state of shock and mourning. And this is an international tragedy: the effects of these violent actions are resonating around the world, with the full consequences yet to be understood. How then as Christians, can we respond to such an atrocity? I suggest that we remember the power of conviction, we deploy the tool of prayer, and we renew our commitment to minister to the people of Pakistan.

\* As Christians we can benefit from this powerful demonstration of standing up for what you believe, even at great personal cost. Regardless of our individual political perspectives, Mrs. Bhutto serves as a fine example of courage and commitment to personal principles. As believers living in an increasingly relativistic society, we need to be reminded of the importance of standing strong in our convictions. When necessary, we need to be willing to pay a price to stand up for what we believe.

\* We also need to pray for the people of Pakistan, and especially the Christians in that country.

\* Persecution and danger are part of the daily lives of many Pakistanis who follow Christ. Pray that the Christians caught in the crossfire will not be further marginalized due to the unrest and violence in the country.

\* Pray that the country will not fall into total chaos during this time.

\* Ask the Lord to comfort the family and followers of Benazir Bhutto as they experience loss, anger and pain.

\* And, pray that Believers will stay firm in their faith no matter what.

We also need to renew our commitment to taking the Gospel of Peace to this troubled and tumultuous country. Pakistan is the 6th most populous nation in the world with more than 160 million inhabitants, yet less than 3% are Christians. The needs are great, as there are many languages and dialects spoken in the country, dozens of which have no viable indigenous church. 50% of the population is under the age of 15, so reaching the young people of Pakistan is vital. Only 25% of children go to school and child-labor and drug use are serious problems. As an Islamic Republic, there is serious opposition to those who follow Christ. In short, this is an area of the world with great needs and significant obstacles.

Yet, there are numerous forms of outreach taking place in the country including literature and cassette distribution. Far East Broadcasting Company and our World By Radio partners are also working together to bring evangelistic radio programming in many different languages. Yet much more needs to be done to reach the tens of millions of Pakistanis who do not know Christ. Pakistan desperately needs peace and stability. At this time of pain, confusion and darkness, let's ask the Lord of the Harvest to shed the light of Christ on the country of Pakistan.

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