



## Persecution of Christians in Turkey

### Turkey

On April 18th (2007), during a Bible study in the city of Malatya, a group of youths, who were thought to be "seekers", revealed themselves as part of a muslim terror organisation. They tied up three of the Christians, tortured them and eventually cut their throats. The Christians were Tilman Geske from Germany, working with notes for a Christian Study Bible, pastor Nacati Aydin and Ugur Yuksel.

Andrew Jackson, founder of the International Turkish Network told Charisma Magazine that "fundamentalism in Turkey is strongly nationalistic, and for Turks to do this to other Turks indicates how far and deep the anti-Christian propaganda has reached. In recent years the anti-Christian propaganda has been particularly active and purposeful. The young murderers are not deranged individuals, but exponents of a movement."

Meanwhile Pastor Behnan Konutgan of Turkey's Bible Society pointed out that government ministers have made public statements claiming that missionaries are "worse than terrorists."

"Official government documents list three threats to our national security: two guerilla armies and all foreign missionaries," Konutgan said. Technically, Turkey is a "secular democracy" offering equal liberties to all religions, with a constitution that does not favor Islam. "Our problem is not with the laws, but with the predominant mind-set identifying Turkey with Islam and Christianity with Turkey's enemies," Konutgan said.

In the midst of the persecution, a broadcasting of Christian tv programs (ECTV) in Turkish started last March and more than 400 letters from viewers were received in the first two months. Even condolences for the murdered Christians have been received from Turkish non-Christians, who are appalled over the cold-blooded killings. Several viewers have also received Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

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