

"I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

MATTHEW 5:44

The Challenge of Living Together

On April 18th, three Christians – two converts and a German missionary – were brutally murdered in the eastern city of Malatya, Turkey. They were in a small Christian publishing office in Malatya when they were killed. The murders may have been fueled by statements made by some politicians and journalists concerning the “threat” Christian missionary activity poses to the stability of the Turkish nation, and its perceived insult to Islam.



Most Turks are very tolerant and caring people who have been shocked by these murders. Most Turkish Muslims I meet are not negative to those of a different ethnic background or of a different faith. What can we as Christians do for Turkey? We can pray for the people of this country, be aware of what is happening and express our concern. We can encourage those Turks who are asking questions such as “How can these types of murders be happening in this country?” and “What factors are causing an element of our youth to hate so much?” In terms of human rights abuses, we can encourage the appropriate legal processes and practice what we preach. We can work to be as objective as possible and refrain from labeling and stereotyping.

Pray for those who mourn and pray also for those who are so filled with rage and hatred. Pray for those who work for change within this land that is fighting for its very soul.

Alison Stendahl serves through Global Ministries with the Near East Mission in Istanbul, Turkey. She is the Academic Dean of Uskudar American Academy and teaches math.

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