

# **International missionaries face new restrictions in China**

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BEIJING (BP)—The Chinese Communist Party enacted [new restrictions](#) on foreign missionaries there May 1, preventing them from preaching, evangelizing and establishing various religious organizations among other activities without official government approval.

Establishing schools, appointing clergy, using the internet to conduct illegal religious activities and producing, selling or distributing Bibles and religious audio-visual products are among activities punishable by law for foreigners and Chinese nationals that aid them, according to the rules posted online by China's National Religious Affairs Administration.

The rules are among the latest in the Communist nation's drive to Sinicize Christianity and other religions under the leadership of President Xi Jinping. The Chinese Communist Party cited national unity in justifying the rules.

State-run churches, such as the Protestant Three Self Church and the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, are tightly controlled.

## **Human rights and religious liberty violations noted**

China is one of the most severe state persecutors of Christians and other religious groups, requiring clergy to pledge allegiance to the Chinese Communist Party and socialism, resist certain religious activities and extremist ideology and resist infiltration by foreign forces using religion.

The U.S. State Department annually names China as a Country of Particular Concern for egregious religious freedom violations, and the 2025 Open Doors' World Watch List ranks China as 15th among the 50 worst places for Christians to live, citing Communist and post-Communist oppression.

Under Xi's Sinicization, the Chinese Communist Party allows five organized religions and tightly controls all aspects of them, including their houses of worship, beliefs, activities, leadership, language and even how the adherents dress, according to a September 2024 factsheet from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

"Enforcement of such Sinicization policies has consistently resulted in systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom and related human rights, including genocide, crimes against humanity, mass incarceration, enforced disappearances and the destruction of cultural and religious heritage," USCIRF wrote in "[Sinicization of Religion: China's Coercive Religious Policy](#)."

In April, the Chinese Communist Party-sanctioned China Christian Council and the National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement announced the upcoming publication of the book *Sinicization of Christianity*, China Aid announced.

The book is marketed as emphasizing harmony with Chinese culture and socialist society, China Aid reported, but is seen as a tool in the implementation of Xi's "Five-Year Work Plan for Further Advancing the Sinicization of Christianity (2023-2027)."