



DIG DEEPER
WEEK 4



PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS IN ODISHA, INDIA

Please be aware that this reading may be sensitive for some children.

Children's Bible Clubs are important in every part of India, but in the state you are visiting this week with Kevin, Sam, and Anjoli, it's a big deal to be spreading the love of Jesus.

The state is called Odisha, and it's one of several states in India with "anti-conversion laws," meaning the government says people aren't allowed to change to a different religion. Anti-Christians in Odisha feel very strongly about this. They do not want anyone to leave Hinduism for Christianity. (93% of the state is Hindu and less than 3% is Christian.)

In 2008, people were so against Christians in Odisha that they became violent. Christians were beaten, put in jail, stoned, and even killed. When Christians worshipped Jesus or spread the Good News of His love to others, they had to be careful to avoid being caught by anti-Christian extremists. They had to be very brave to keep following Jesus.

God cares so much about His people and doesn't want to see them hurt. He has a big heart for those who are persecuted for following Him, and says in Matthew 5:10, "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

We praise God that Odisha has become more peaceful and that He continues to raise up Christian leaders there like Anjoli! She and other Children's Bible Club leaders are living out the Great Commission in a place that needs Jesus desperately, and it's making a difference in the lives of millions.

Isn't it amazing to think of how different life is in the United States, where we don't have to be scared of violence for telling others about Jesus? Take time to talk with a friend or family member about what it means to live bravely for Jesus. Then, spread His love in India to people who need to know about Him through your coin collector or other donations!

