

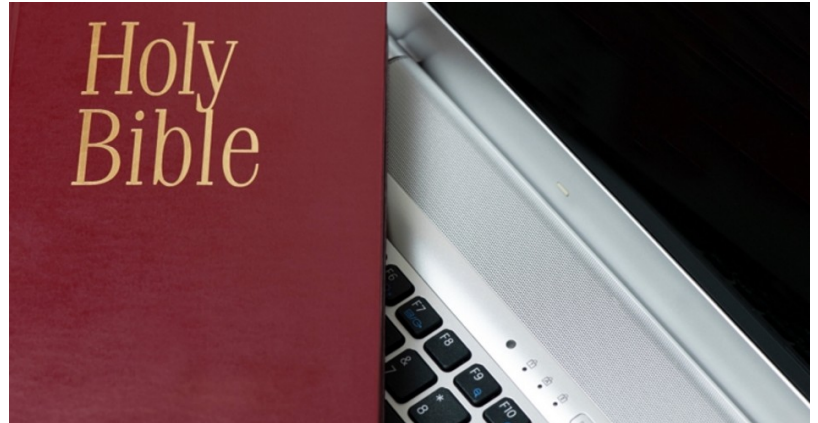


Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on April 8, 2018

Cracking Down on Christianity, China Bans Online Bible Sales

China is one of the largest producers of Bibles in the world, but its communist leaders don't want their own citizens to have access to the life-changing truths of Scripture. In early April China's government announced a ban on online sales of Bible, part of its efforts to tighten central control over religious expression across the nation.

The [New York Times](#) reported that following the announced ban, "Internet searches for the Bible came up empty on leading online Chinese retailers, such as JD.com, Taobao, and Amazon, although some retailers offered analyses of the Bible or illustrated storybooks."



The move comes as the Chinese government is trying to halt the influence of Christianity among its citizens. "Among China's major religions — which include Buddhism, Taoism, Islam and folk beliefs — Christianity is the only one whose major holy text cannot be sold through normal commercial channels," reported the *Times*. "The Bible is printed in China but legally available only at church bookstores."

However, the explosion in recent years of online stores has offered easy access to Chinese residents who wanted Bibles. China's oppressive regime is now plugging that loophole in an effort to limit the influence of Christianity while promoting Buddhism, Taoism, and other folk religions as part of President Xi Jinping's campaign to promote China's native religious traditions.

The Bible ban comes as China has been meeting with the Vatican in an effort to end the divide between the illegal underground Catholic Church and its smaller communist-government sanctioned counterpart. "This would end a nearly 70-year split between the Chinese government and the global church, which Beijing traces to the Vatican's historically strong anti-Communist stance," reported the *Times*.

However, based on comments from Beijing, it seems unlikely that the regime would allow the Vatican to maintain the oversight it wishes for Catholic clergy in China — meaning that, despite the government's efforts, the underground church in China will not go away, but will, in fact, become stronger as a majority of Catholic Christians gravitate toward congregations that are not controlled by the atheist Chinese government.

Over the past several years China's government has been cracking down on such public displays of Christian devotion as crosses, and has demolished several prominent church buildings. Nonetheless, the efforts will most likely do little to stem the increase of Christian adherents in the nation. In fact, many observers are predicting that in as little as 10 years, Mainland China will be, demographically, the most Christian nation in the world.



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In 1949 the number of Christians in the newly communist nation was estimated at just one million. But by 2010, according to the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion and Public Life, that number had skyrocketed to more than 58 million Protestants alone, compared to 40 million in Brazil and 36 million in South Africa, two traditionally Christian nations.

And by 2030, according to Fenggang Yang, director of the Center on Religion and Chinese Society at Purdue University, the total number of both Protestant and Catholic Christians in officially atheist Red China could exceed 247 million, putting it ahead of Mexico, Brazil, and the United States as the most Christian nation in the world.

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