

Pastor tells dying wife: Hold to Jesus, we'll meet again

Testimony comes in aftermath of Muslim atrocities in Nigeria

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A Nigerian Christian pastor says he held his dying wife's hands and told her, "Hold on to your faith in Jesus, and we shall meet and never part again" after an attack by Muslim criminals on their small village.

The account comes from writer Obed Minchakpu, who submitted the report to the [Compass Direct](#) news service, which specializes in reporting persecution of Christians worldwide.

Pastor James Musa Rike said his wife was on the ground after being shot by Muslim attackers and slashed with a machete in Kurum, Nigeria.

Dune James Rike looked into her husband's tear-filled eyes and asked, "Is this the end between us, so we shall not be together again?"

Pastor James said he told his wife, 35, to remain faithful to Jesus.

Minchakpu's account told how Muslim extremists who attacked Kurum village, in the Bogoro local government area of Nigeria's Bauchi state, already had killed two of the couple's children in a rampage just days ago. James Rike, pastor of a Church of Christ in Nigeria congregation in Kurum, next heard the cries of his 13-year-old daughter, Sum James Rike, a few yards away.

"I rushed to my daughter, only to discover that she too was cut with a machete on her stomach, and her intestines were all around her," he said. "I held her hand and began to pray, knowing she too was about to die. She told me that the Muslim militants told her they would kill her and 'see how your Jesus will save you.'"

According to Compass Direct, the girl told her father that she responded by telling them that Jesus had already saved her and that by killing her they would only be making it possible for her to be with Him.



Pastor James Musa Rike with wife Dune James Rike, daughter Sum James Rike (in back) and two other children. (Image courtesy Compass Direct)

Pastor Rike prayed for her as she died.

Shooting and setting homes on fire, the Muslim extremists killed 12 other Christians in the attack. Bauchi police reported 16 people dead – one man, three women and 12 children.

Compass Direct reported Pastor Rike said the attackers tried to force their way into his home.

"I opened a back door, and we ran out into the dark night while the militants pursued us," he said. "They shot my wife and two of our kids as they tried to escape."

Minchakpu reported Pastor Rike said that after killing the two children, Faith James Rike and 1-year-old Fyali James Rike, the assailants cut his wife's abdomen with a machete.

"I was shocked at what I saw," he said. "I knew my wife would not last long, and the only thing I did was to encourage her to hold on to her faith in Jesus."

The Muslim extremists set more than 20 houses ablaze before leaving the village, he reported.

Pastor Rike and his son survived the attack, and he said his adopted daughter, Whulham James Rike, was injured and was being treated at the General Hospital in Bogoro. He said five others were also receiving hospital treatment.

Among those killed, church sources told Compass Direct, were Murna Ayuba, Angelina Ezekiel, Dorcas Sunday, Asabar Toma, Rhoda Joseph, Dhunhgwa Zakka, Bukata Amos, Ishaku Amos, Kalla Amos, Amos Daniel, Samidah Joel and Changtan Joel.

Compass Direct reported the area has a history of sectarian violence, and the attack follows the death of hundreds of people in Bauchi and other northern states last month after Muslims rioted over the April 16 election of a Christian, Goodluck Jonathan, as president. He defeated a Muslim candidate, Muhammadu Buhari. Pointing out more than 200 church buildings were burned, Christian leaders in northern Nigeria have called for a federal probe into the violence, in which Christians mounted counter attacks.

The church where Pastor Rike ministers has about 30 members and has been in existence for more than 50 years. Those killed were members of the three churches in the village – Rike's church, St. John's Catholic Church and an Evangelical Church of West Africa congregation.

"Whatever is the situation, I will never forsake Christ," Pastor Rike said. "All human beings are created by God, and our attackers must know that they need to abandon anything that will lead them to destroy creations of God."

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