

[View this email in your browser](#)



Release Women Monthly Email

January 2019

Hello Friend

The brave pastor's wife who won't give up

We read of many stories of persecution in Release's *Voice* magazine or in Release Women's *Embrace* newsletter. But the stories don't end there. Many people continue to live with the consequences of the persecution they suffered, whatever form that has taken.

Bharathi (pictured), wife of a Christian pastor in India, is one such person who knows what it means to live with the ongoing consequences of the persecution her family endured. She and her husband Pastor Paul have served the Lord for many years in India, working to spread the gospel. They would often do this by going from door-to-door to distribute tracts, especially during the Advent season. Despite receiving warnings from Hindu activists not to do so, they continued, until the inevitable happened. Back in 2011, Pastor Paul was violently attacked after a Sunday worship service. Two masked individuals on motorbikes beat him with rods. He suffered severe wounds to his head and back as well as extensive internal injuries, including blood clots in his stomach. In hospital the doctors were reluctant to operate, believing it was too late to save his life. Eventually, one doctor was persuaded to operate on him, and Pastor Paul's life was saved.



Their story does not end there though. For three years after the attack, Bharathi cared for her husband who was confined to bed. He still suffered greatly from his injuries as his spine had been damaged and his spleen removed. We can imagine how difficult this must have been for them both, and their children. It was already tough living as a Christian in a hostile and oppressive environment, but now with Pastor Paul unable to work and with Bharathi as his carer they had the added knowledge and fear that no one had ever been arrested for the attack.

A Release colleague met Bharathi and her family last year, seven years after the attack. Pastor Paul is now able to work again in a limited capacity and runs a small church. He remains on medication and still suffers from constant digestive problems as a result of the beating. It would be so easy to give up, but Bharathi is a determined woman! 'We are depending on God for all we need,' she said. 'We want to continue to stand for God, but we have faced so many problems.' Her husband is understandably afraid of further attacks, not just on himself, but on Bharathi and their children. The family have asked for prayer that their ministry will be able to continue; for an improvement in Pastor Paul's health, and for a proper church building to meet in.



Their story didn't end with the attack, it continues today. This year we are continuing our 'I will not abandon them' campaign and we encourage you to continue praying for sisters in Christ like Bharathi, for their husbands and children, and for the many Christians like them who experience oppression in their daily lives because of their faith in Jesus and their desire to serve Him.

Thank you for praying.

Blessings