

North Korea: Pastor Killed

VOM partner Pastor Han Chung-Ryeol, 49, was brutally murdered on Saturday, April 30, in Changbai, China.

Born in China, he pastored a Three-Self Church near the North Korean border and helped countless North Koreans come to know Christ. He leaves behind a wife, a son and a daughter.

Pastor Han reportedly left his church building in Changbai at 2 p.m. on April 30. His body, mangled beyond recognition, was discovered at 8 p.m. He had been repeatedly stabbed in his stomach and his head had been hacked with an axe. All of his personal belongings, including his cell phone, were stolen.

He is believed to have been killed by North Koreans, who likely returned to North Korea following the attack.

In February, the North Korean government issued an order for Pastor Han to be kidnapped, brought to North Korea and interrogated. Despite the threat, Pastor Han continued his work in Changbai.

Pastor Han was known for helping anyone who crossed into China from North Korea. He would help in practical ways, like food or clothing, and introduce each person to the gospel. Then he would send them back to share Christ inside North Korea and help their families.

Since planting his church in 1993, Pastor Han had helped orphans, sex-trafficked women, soldiers and the famine-starved, among others.

North Koreans often said they could “see his heart,” which helped them trust him as he nurtured them spiritually.

Pray for Pastor Han’s family and those inside North Korea whom he has helped. Many of these people have reportedly been rounded up for questioning, too. Also pray for those who killed him.

