Turkey: The Gateway to Asia — Opening or Closing?

**Growth of Believers by Region**

- **Orthodox Christian Population** has plummeted from 3 million in 1900 to 87,000 today. That is how a massive iconic church building like Hagia Sophia becomes a mosque.

- **Most Orthodox were not ethnic Turks but Armenian or Greek minorities.**
- **The ethnic cleansing of Armenians in 1915 may have caused 1.5 million deaths.**
- **The 1923 population exchange between Greece and Turkey saw as many as 1.3 million Orthodox Christians leave Turkey.**
- **Turkish-Greek War split Cyprus in 1974 and is still unresolved.**

**Opportunities for Engagement:**

- **Refugees**: A national church in Central Anatolia recently began providing aid to the Chaldean background Christian refugees who were being ignored by other relief efforts focused on Muslims. Through this effort over 30 Syrians have professed true faith in Christ and been baptized.
- **Arabic Services**: With help from Egyptian believers, one church in Ankara has started an Arabic service to reach this language group.
- **Diaspora**: Turkish diaspora, especially the 3 million who live in Germany, creates many new opportunities for witness.
- **Social Media**: Twitter has significant penetration and Facebook is seeing dramatic growth.

**Ways to Shine a Light Through the Crack**

- **Pray for the believers who must deal with restrictions and persecution.**
- **Support cross-cultural missionaries who are helping establish and disciple a young evangelical church.**
- **Ask God to move among Turkey's people as they struggle with a slowing economy, the refugee crisis and increasingly authoritarian rule.**

**A Crack in the Gateway**

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