

**14th Assembly of the  
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MISSION STUDIES  
August 11–17, 2016  
Seoul, South Korea**

**Conversions and Transformations:  
Missiological Approaches to Religious Change**

*Fools for Christ's Sake: Missional Presence amid Muslim Pressure*

Titus Presler

Abstract

Relations between Christians and Muslims are one of the chief challenges of the world community in a 21st century beset by intensifying religious conflict, mutual stereotyping and the rise of extremist groups. Christian mission in Islamic republics affected by extremism has become sensitive both for Muslim majorities and for minority Christian communities experiencing persecution.

From the author's perspective of sharing the social and physical persecution of Christians in Pakistan, this paper offers theological and missiological reflection on persecution around the challenging dominical and Pauline themes of the refuse of the world, love for enemies, God's foolish wisdom, and sharing the suffering of Christ.

Persecution arises from an apprehension that difference is dangerous and must therefore be suppressed and eliminated. Difference is also intrinsic to Christian mission understood as ministry in the dimension of difference. The danger associated with Christian presence and mission in Islamic republics must thus be anticipated as natural and inherent. Yet mission from outside Muslim societies must be correlated and guided by the missional vision and initiative of indigenous Christian communities within those societies.

Dr. Titus Presler, Edwardes College, Peshawar Study Area: Religious Freedom, Persecution and Mission