

FALL / WINTER 2023

HeartCry

MAGAZINE



Pray for the

10/40

Window

Dear Brother and Sister in Christ,

Today we find our world in a darkness greater than has been known in living memory. Nations teeter on the brink of collapse; bombs of war ignite our horizons; men and women around the world turn to idols and forsake the glory of the one true God (Romans 1:23).

As darkness overwhelms and disaster seems inevitable, many self-appointed prophets proclaim the end of time and the imminent return of Christ. And this may well be true! Yet our hope can never be found in our circumstances, good or bad. Our only hope is established upon the Kingdom that cannot be shaken (Heb. 12:28); in the God who will save His people to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25), and who will complete the work He has begun (Phil. 1:6). As the works of men crumble to ash and dust, the handiwork of God will endure through all eternity.

Therefore, our task is clear. Today there are billions of people who have never heard the Name of Christ; billions who live in darkness unreached by the one true Light (John 1:4-5). The vast majority of these live in a geographical region called the 10/40 Window—the darkest and most unreached area of the world. At HeartCry Missionary Society, we have committed ourselves to the following goal for the next decade: to see at least two missionaries working in every country in the 10/40 Window.

This is an impossible task that cannot be accomplished apart from the power of God through prayer. In this special issue of HeartCry Magazine, we highlight the countries of the 10/40 Window to demonstrate the great works God is accomplishing, as well as the desperate need for more laborers in a vast harvest.

As you read this issue, please commit to joining us in prayer as we look expectantly to “Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us” (Eph. 3:20).

Your fellow-workers,
The HeartCry Staff



Pray for the
10/40
Window

PRAY FOR THE 10/40 WINDOW ----- PAGE 19
THE GREAT NEED ----- PAGE 21
COUNTRIES ----- PAGE 25
PRAY FOR OPEN DOORS ----- PAGE 59

CONTENTS



61 **The Power of Prayer**
BY PAUL WASHER
On the centrality of prayer in the Christian life, and how the impossible is possible through the power of God.

71 **From The Archive**
A moment of God's sovereignty in the midst of persecution. Ukraine, 2001.

73 **Missionary Spotlight**
John Gireada and the church in the village of Terebleche, Ukraine.

3 **Featured News**
Highlights of God's work among the nations in the last quarter.

25 **Afghanistan**
The testimony of one HeartCry missionary, coming to faith in the most persecuted country in the world.

On The Cover
A Sadhu (Hindu ascetic) sits on the steps of a temple in India. Sadhus renounce material comfort for spiritual gain. Yet in all their striving, they lack the true eternal life found only in Christ.

YOUNG MONKS FILE OUT OF THE BUDDHIST PAGODA IN SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA. 2023.

FEATURED NEWS



VENEZUELA

Baptisms in Venezuela

From HeartCry missionary Plinio in Venezuela: “This weekend we had several baptisms at our church. It was a very special occasion. On this Lord’s Day we praised God for saving new converts, and we took time to reflect on the gift of our own salvation. These baptisms have been a cause to remember God’s sovereign grace in our lives as followers of Christ. We are already preparing for the baptisms of more converts. The Lord continues to add to his church.”

ASIA

HeartCry Asia Pastor’s Conference

This fall HeartCry hosted a conference for missionaries serving in Asia. One missionary said, “This conference encouraged me in personal holiness, and pushed me to reexamine myself. It was also so encouraging to be able to talk to fellow workers from other Asian regions and to hear about how they are serving the Lord.”



SOUTH AFRICA

NEW CHURCH BUILDING IN SOUTH AFRICA

FROM HEARTCRY MISSIONARY BHEKI BEMBE IN SOUTH AFRICA:

“Brethren, I am pleased to report that the Sovereign Grace Bible Church community continues to grow and thrive. Our congregation has remained dedicated to worship and service, and our efforts to reach out to the community have borne fruit. We have seen an increase in attendance at our Sunday services and a growing sense of unity among our members.

“We continue to be grateful to the Lord for the land that was purchased for us—a very generous and heartwarming gift. We are still progressing on our work on the land, leveling the place and creating more space for car-parking. We praise the Lord that we have not seen any resistance to our church by the community

in many months. It seems that at last we are in a good understanding with them. They have accepted the fact that there is a church among them, and we pray that they will also come to see our church as their home soon.

“This month we will be hosting our first conference since moving to the area. We are delighted to be the hosts of the Isolezwi conference, a yearly conference involving seven like-minded churches. Last year we had the privilege of hosting Pastor Conrad Mbewe. Hosting this conference this year will give us the opportunity to reach the community in large numbers with the power of the Word of God.”



SOUTH AFRICA

DEDICATION CEREMONY OF SYNAGOGUE BUILDING IN RUSTENBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

In Rustenburg, South Africa, HeartCry purchased a synagogue building to be used by Central Baptist Church for a place of worship. Over the past many months, the members of CBC have been renovating the building.

On September 3rd, Central Baptist church held their inaugural service in dedication of their new church building.

HeartCry missionary Karabo Msiza says this: "For more than half a century this

building stood as a platform from which the Torah alone was proclaimed, where worldly wisdom found its voice. Now in a remarkable transformation, God has breathed new life into the old bones of this structure. Now it shall serve as a pulpit from which the true gospel of Jesus Christ will resound, piercing hearts and transforming souls. It is a powerful testimony of the faithfulness of God and of the power of His Word that never returns void."





CAMBODIA

Idol Burning in Cambodia

From a HeartCry missionary in Cambodia:

“When a Christian comes to faith in Cambodia, they take all their objects of idolatry and publicly burn them. One such burning happened just yesterday.

“This is a rather big deal locally, as these are expensive objects. Idol-makers make a full-time living making them. Yet it is only a small sacrifice for Christ, and symbolizes the total dedication of one’s life to Him.”

ARMENIA

Armenian Translations of *The Preminent Christ*

Translations of *The Preminent Christ* by Paul Washer have been translated, printed, and distributed throughout Armenia. Though there were many difficulties in this project given the current economic plights, one of the project leaders writes this: “Praise God, the more difficulties we have, the more astonishing answers to prayers we have received.”



SPAIN

Baptisms In Spain

From HeartCry missionary José Guzmán in Spain: “This past Saturday we baptized several new believers. It has been truly encouraging to witness how the Lord has worked in their hearts, leading them into new life in Christ and filling them with a desire to live for Him.”



GERMANY

ORDINATION OF HEARTCRY MISSIONARY RICHARD FRIESEN

FROM HEARTCRY MISSIONARY RICHARD FRIESEN IN GERMANY:

“Last month we were able to taste and see how good and lovely the Lord is.

“At the beginning of the month we celebrated the founding service of our church, and had the opportunity to hold this service at our sending church. It was a great joy that pastors Sebastian Engelhardt from Basel and Peter Schild from Frankfurt could also attend this special service. At this founding service I was ordained as an elder by the pastors of our sending church.

“Following this, I had the privilege of

baptizing four people on the confession of their faith in Jesus Christ, who were then received as members into the new church.

“Finally, a total of eleven persons were received into this congregation as members after making a solemn promise of membership to one another. Overall it was a day of great joy. I could truly feel the burden and tension of the past months falling off from me. Thank you for all the prayers, and please continue to pray for this work that God has begun here.”



SORIN PRODAN, PASTOR OF PROVIDENCE CHURCH IN BRASOV, ROMANIA, SPEAKS AT THE EUROPEAN PASTORS CONFERENCE.



ROMANIA

PROVIDENCE CHURCH HOSTS EUROPEAN PASTORS CONFERENCE

In October, HeartCry-supported pastors from all over Europe gathered at Providence Church in Braşov, Romania, for a conference. The teaching focused on “Biblical Foundations of Pastoral Ministry.” The men enjoyed rare fellowship and formed new friendships with their fellow laborers from foreign fields.

The main speaker was a missionary with a protected identity who agreed to fill the pulpit when the previous speaker was tak-

en ill. He flew directly from HeartCry’s Asia Conference in Indonesia on short notice, and in Romania preached ten sessions. Because of his protected identity he was unknown to most of the men at the conference, yet they all reported the overwhelming inspiration they received from his example and teaching, the intensity of his exhortations to them, and their zeal to return to their own pulpits with renewed vigor.



European Pastors Conference

PASTORS FROM ALL OVER EUROPE—FROM THE UK, TO GERMANY, TO UKRAINE, AND EVERYWHERE IN-BETWEEN—STAND TOGETHER OUTSIDE PROVIDENCE CHURCH ON THE LAST DAY OF THE CONFERENCE.

BRAȘOV, ROMANIA. OCTOBER 2023.





HEARTCRY COORDINATOR FOR AFRICA PRAYS DURING A BREAKOUT SESSION.



DR. CONRAD MBEWE, PASTOR OF KABWATA BAPTIST CHURCH, OPENS THIS YEAR'S MISSIONS CONFERENCE.



HEARTCRY MISSIONARY JOE SHOKO SITS WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILD AT THE MISSIONS CONFERENCE. JOE AND HIS WIFE MINISTER IN HARARE, ZIMBABWE.

ZAMBIA

ZAMBIA MISSIONS CONFERENCE FOCUSES ON 10/40 WINDOW

In Lusaka, Zambia, HeartCry partnered with Kabwata Baptist Church to host a missions and pastors conference focusing on the 10/40 Window. HeartCry missionaries from all over Africa attended and reported being greatly encouraged.

Conrad Mbeve (pastor of KBC) says this: "At this conference we are focusing on reaching the 10/40 Window with the gospel. It is something that we have anticipated for a long time. Because the 10/40 Window is a dark area shielded behind curtains against the gospel, we rarely get to hear about what's happening in that area, beyond what we see in the news about disasters and so

forth. It has been exciting and encouraging to find out about the open doors for the gospel there, and to discern how we might go through them. We need to not just pray, but also "Go" (Matt. 28:19) and be party to what God is doing for His kingdom in this dark area of the world."

One HeartCry missionary says this: "I live in Nigeria and I'm familiar with the challenges of reaching the Muslims in the regions of the north. I'm now going back home encouraged and strengthened in my resolve to reach this difficult group in the north of Nigeria with the gospel of Jesus Christ."

SCAN WITH MOBILE
DEVICE TO WATCH



WATCH A SHORT VIDEO

of the children of Kabwata Baptist Church as they rehearse one of their hymns to sing in the Missions Conference.

LEARNING MISSIONS IS NOT JUST FOR ADULTS. KBC'S 10/40 WINDOW CONFERENCE OFFERED CLASSES FOR CHILDREN ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF MISSIONS.



A NEW DOCUMENTARY BY HEARTCRY FILMS

FIRST FRUITS

ZIZIN, ROMANIA

FIRST FRUITS tells the story of the church in the village of Zizin in Romania. This church began four years ago when one villager, Ava, heard the gospel through the evangelism of HeartCry missionary Alex Palade. Through his gospel witness, Ava and her son came to believe the Lord Jesus Christ.

Soon after, HeartCry missionaries Alex and Emmanuel Ivan planted a church in their little one-room home. New members were quickly added until the congregation outgrew Ava's house. They began praying for a new building where they might worship in unity and continue to grow.

WATCH *FIRST FRUITS* TO WITNESS THE STORY OF GOD'S ANSWER TO THEIR PRAYERS.

www.HeartCryFilms.com

SCAN WITH MOBILE
DEVICE TO WATCH



The following pages define the 10/40 WINDOW and exhibit the countries in which HeartCry currently supports missionaries. You may use these pages as a prayer guide.

Pray according to the Scriptures provided. Lay claim to the promises of God. Cry out to Him that Christ's Name would be made great among the nations (Mal. 1:11), that God would open doors for the preaching of the gospel (Col. 4:3).

Pray for the

10

40

Window

What Is the 10/40 Window?

A GEOGRAPHICAL "WINDOW" THAT LIES BETWEEN 10- AND 40-DEGREES NORTH OF THE EQUATOR. IT IS THE DARKEST AND MOST UNREACHED AREA IN THE WORLD, THE EPICENTER OF THE WORST HOSTILITY AND PERSECUTION AGAINST CHRISTIANITY. THE 10/40 WINDOW IS HOME TO OVER FOUR BILLION SOULS WHO ARE ENSLAVED TO IDOLATRY AND PAGAN RELIGION, ENCOMPASSED BY TOTAL DARKNESS AND UNREACHED BY THE LIGHT OF CHRIST.

"HOW THEN WILL THEY CALL ON HIM IN WHOM THEY HAVE NOT BELIEVED? HOW WILL THEY BELIEVE IN HIM WHOM THEY HAVE NOT HEARD? AND HOW WILL THEY HEAR WITHOUT A PREACHER? HOW WILL THEY PREACH UNLESS THEY ARE SENT?" (ROM. 10:14-15)

THE GREAT NEED OF THE 10/40 WINDOW

FROM THE MISSIONS DIRECTOR

Although there is darkness in every country in the world, there is no darker area than the 10/40 Window. It is the most challenging and persecuted region of the world, consisting of seventy countries, over four billion people, and 82% of world poverty. It is dominated by a multitude of extreme and aggressive religions violently antithetical to Christ. Many of the countries hold anti-conversion laws, with penalties of imprisonment and even execution. The 10/40 Window is truly unreachable. Millions of its people have never heard the gospel; millions have never even met a Christian. Despite this devastating need, according to Win 10/40 project, only 5 cents of every \$100 given toward missions goes into the 10/40 window. That means that only .0005% of mission funding goes toward the darkest area of the world. The need for the gospel in the 10/40 Window is overwhelming, and our efforts are tragically deficient.

And yet, when the Father speaks to His Servant about the work He will accomplish, He declares to Him: "It is too

small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth" (Is. 49:6). This is one of the most glorious promises given to this Suffering Servant, whom we know to be His Son Jesus Christ. God's salvific work will be so great that it will not be contained by a single nation. His light will be global, reaching the ends of the earth! Notice that this is not a conditional promise; it does not hinge on the response of other men. It is guaranteed and absolute. The Father, who is sovereign over all things and cannot lie, will fulfill His promise to His Son. And His Son, who faith-

fully accomplished the work given to Him, will receive the fullness of this promise. Salvation will go to the ends of the earth, and all His elect will be saved.

What a joy this is for the present-day church! What a freedom this gives His people! Apart from the love of God displayed in the cross of Christ, promises like this provide a great motivation for missions. Promises like this keep His people pressing forward into the darkness, through the guaranteed heartbreak and pain, knowing that Christ will one day receive the fullness of His reward.

Out of love for our Savior, we must do more in the work of missions. How do we make a difference in the 10/40 Window, when many



Street Evangelism in Cambodia

PASTOR KIEN APPROACHES TWO SHOP OWNERS AND GIVES THEM BOOKLETS THAT SPEAK ABOUT THE “TRUE KHMER GOD”—NOT BUDDHA, BUT JESUS CHRIST.

of its countries are closed, hostile toward the gospel, and have no known biblical church? This is the petition that the staff of HeartCry consistently lays before the Lord in prayer. While we continue to seek direction from the Lord, we do know that this task is an absolute impossibility according to the strength of man. This is something the Lord must do. Yet when we examine His word, we hear Christ’s command for us that we go into all the world (Matt. 28:18-20). We know His promises. We witness the heart of Christ, and see His example in seeking to save the lost (Luke 19:10), and laying down His life for His sheep (John 10:15). We know of His soon return in power, where all of creation will give an account to

Him (I Cor. 4:5; Rom. 14:12). If we are going to walk in obedience, follow the example of Christ, and be prepared for the day we stand before Him, we must press forward into the darkness of these areas.

As a staff we have determined to give Him no rest in prayer (Is. 62:7) until we see at least two missionaries laboring in every country within the 10/40 Window. That is our desire, and that is the goal to which we are committing ourselves in the next decade. We are fully convinced that the Lord has a purpose in stirring up these affections within us.

In setting our hands to the plow of this task, we understand that this can only be accomplished through fighting the good fight and

relying on the weapons that God has provided for our warfare. Preaching a clear and Biblical gospel, teaching the whole counsel of God, true prayer, sacrificial love, and an unwavering faith will always be the means by which HeartCry presses forward. The Scriptures are sufficient, and we are resolute that we will make no compromise with the doctrinal principles or operational convictions by which HeartCry was established. We will only advance as the Lord guides, and we will only support elder-qualified men who are accountable to local churches.

Where do we start? Practically, we must continue with our existing indigenous partners, providing them necessary resources as they mature, while cultivating in them a vision for the 10/40 Window. They must be strengthened and equipped to send out more workers into the harvest. Additionally, our partners must develop an open ear to the opportunities around them, doing all that they can to press forward for the sake of the Name. For example, when possible they should consider taking interns at the church from other countries, be active on the campuses of local international universities, while continuing to deepen their congregations’ understanding of the vast need for the gospel. As our partnering churches grow in maturity, their reach should expand.

Moreover, we know that the Word of God cannot be bound (II Tim. 2:9). Even though men can be prevented from entering into certain countries, we live in an age when books

and technology have made their way into the darkest of jungles. The expanded reach of media provides another strategy of attack. This includes translating doctrinally sound resources and gospel tracts into the languages of the people, preaching and teaching the fundamental truths of the faith through a recorded translator, and producing material that will strengthen, encourage, and aid His church in these dark areas. In addition, areas of the world that we can enter we must explore through gospel conferences. Even though we

cannot support men without a healthy church who can hold them accountable, we can preach to and train men anywhere. This is an effective way to make contacts and build relationships.

The Father promised His Son that through Him salvation would go to the ends of the earth. The apostle John saw it and wrote: “I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one

could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb’” (Rev. 7:9-10). We have the privilege to take part in this task. Please join us in prayer for wisdom as we beseech “the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest” (Matt. 9:38). Pray “that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ” (Col. 4:3). •••

AS A STAFF, WE HAVE DETERMINED TO GIVE HIM NO REST IN PRAYER (IS. 62:7) UNTIL WE SEE AT LEAST TWO MISSIONARIES LABORING IN EVERY COUNTRY WITHIN THE 10/40 WINDOW. THAT IS OUR DESIRE, AND THAT IS THE GOAL TO WHICH WE ARE COMMITTING OURSELVES IN THE NEXT DECADE.

99.9% OF POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

AFGHANISTAN

This is the testimony of a HeartCry missionary whose identity must remain protected given the immense persecution of Christianity in Afghanistan.

HUNTED BY CHRIST

I was born and raised in a Muslim family in central Afghanistan.

When I was a teenager, I began attending a madrassa, a religious training-school for Muslims. During the 1990s, when the Taliban began ruling Afghanistan, I was attending this madrassa. At that time schools began changing their curriculum from the usual subjects—chemistry, biology, mathematics, etc.—to intensive Islamic studies. I was passionate and enthusiastic about this. In 1998, when Osama bin Laden fled to Afghanistan, the Taliban wanted to mobilize more young people to join them in their war against America.

One day at my school a Taliban leader came and gave a three-hour speech. He ended this speech with what was essentially an altar call: “Whoever wants to give their life to jihad,” he said, “take a step forward.” I was one

of the many boys who went forward; they wrapped black turbans around our heads. But when I went home and told my father, he was angry. He forbade me from joining the Taliban. The next day I returned to school and told the principal that I could not join. The principal was a relative of mine and had been looking out for me. He said, “I didn’t list your name, because once your name is there, you cannot be taken off.”

Still I longed to join jihad. I wanted above all to kill infidels. From that point I continued going to madrassa and studying Islam; I was going to the mosque at three in the morning to pray. But nothing was happening in my life—the Islamic god seemed silent to me, and I began to wonder why he did not speak or relate to people as he once had in the time of Moses and the prophets. All of my



COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **ISLAM**
 POPULATION: **42.1M**
 PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **<0.05%**



Afghan Family

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERTINO RADOVIX

devotion and studies brought me nothing, not even a sense of Allah's presence. By the time I graduated high school, I was thinking: "Maybe there is not really a god after all." Why should I bother to continue my Islamic studies? I stopped fasting, I stopped praying, I stopped reading the Islamic texts. Instead, in 2003, I went to medical school.

It was during my studies at medical school that I began learning about the human system—the physiology and the biology of *homo sapiens*. What I soon discovered is that nature is vastly complex. I remember one professor saying that all the organs inside our bodies—if they were a collective man-made machine—would require thousands of hu-

man workers to run all their intricate parts, untold amounts of energy, and would have necessitated many geniuses to have invented it to begin with. This is the nature of nature.

Thus I came to the conclusion: there *must* be a Creator who made us and all the world around us. There is no other explanation for the design of the human system alone—to say nothing of all the rest of creation. But if this is true, who is this Creator? Has it been the god of Islam all along? Or is this creator to be found in other religions? In Hinduism? In Buddhism? By this point I was deeply confused. One day I returned to my dorm room and I prayed. I only knew how to pray in an Islamic fashion, but I prayed nonethe-

less. I said: "Oh God, if you truly exist, and if you truly hear me, then show yourself to me. Because I want to know You. I want to know the true Creator God who made me and all the universe."

Around this time I met a few South Koreans who had been sent to work in a hospital in Kabul. They wanted to learn how to speak Dari; I wanted to improve my English. Thus we made friends. In spending time with them I saw, for the first time in my life, people praying in a way different from Muslims. "Perhaps they are Buddhists," I thought, because they would fold their hands and close their eyes. When I asked them, they said: "We are not Buddhist. We are Chris-

tian." Still, I was not curious to know about this Christianity, even though I was seeking God by my own means.

But one night, I had a dream. In my dream, a person who did not have a face or an identity appeared behind me. I heard their voice speaking to me, and they said clearly: "If you want to know the true God, ask the South Koreans for a book."

The next time I went to their home I was frightened. When I asked them for a book, they told me that they could not give me one because of the danger. Instead, they invited me to come to their house regularly each week to study the Bible. They printed copies of the Gospel of John, chapter one: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God."

Now I was even more confused. I could not understand what I was reading. Though I was reading the words in my own language, they made no sense to my mind. This caused me to become depressed and sad, because I could not understand however hard I tried. It was precisely as the Gospel of John itself says: "The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it" (John 1:5).

But my friends persevered with me, and after several weeks we reached John chapter ten. This was the chapter that truly pierced my heart, most especially the verse that says: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

It was a flash. All at once, the Light shown—and I could see it. I could see that God is always present. He is always working. His Light is always shining. This was the an-

**“OH GOD, IF
YOU TRULY
EXIST, AND
IF YOU TRULY
HEAR ME,
THEN SHOW
YOURSELF
TO ME.”**

swer I had never found in Islam, whose god is ever-distant and ever-silent, who never spoke to me as I thought he had in ages past. Here was the Light of true revelation, and it came in a person: the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was Christ who had pursued me all along.

HUNTED FOR CHRIST

My conversion to Christ meant the end of my medical career. I had been working in the radiology department of a hospital in Kabul, but one day my supervisor approached me and said, “There is no future for you here. The secret police are after you.” By this point I had been meeting for years with Christian friends to study the Bible and enjoy fellowship together. Now I had to quit my job at the hospital and leave for a different city and a different life.

By more providential encounters, I met a Christian man from Bangladesh who had endured similar persecution as me. He told me about a theological program in India, and invited me to join him there to study. With my medical career sacrificed, I knew my life was Christ’s and that I had nothing but to live for Him. In 2009, my wife and I moved to India so I could enroll in this discipleship training school. We returned in 2010. That was the year I was put in prison.

My wife and I had moved to a city in the western part of Afghanistan. We were working in an underground church, ministering to the believers there. We had a supply of bibles that we gave away, as well as MP3 devices that played recordings of theological materials in the Dari language. We had boxes full of these MP3 players to distribute.

One day we had a new visitor at our church. He was a young man and a stranger to me, but he arrived alongside a friend of mine, so I allowed him into the house. From the moment he stepped through the door, it was evident that he was behaving suspicious-

ly. He started asking questions: *Where could he obtain bibles? Where do we keep our MP3 players and other theological materials?* I knew immediately that he was a spy.

Twelve hours later police cars showed up at my house. There were around fifteen vehicles and nearly fifty intelligence officers. There were so many of them because of their zeal to hunt Christian infidels such as myself, and they considered the discovery of our church a major victory. They arrested me and one of my friends and brought us to prison. That whole night they interrogated us. They demanded the names of other believers. They wanted to know who was paying us, if we had foreign support, the nature and extent of our network. They charged us with the crime of religious provocation—a crime against national security.

We were imprisoned for a month. In the day they interrogated us; in the night they tortured us. There were stretches of time in which I was put in solitary confinement. During several of these days, I found myself lost in anxiety for my wife and kids. I did not know what had happened to them—I did not have any contact with my family. But in the midst of my worry, and in the empty solitude of that cell, I thought back on the story of my life—how everything had unfolded providentially, how God had pursued me when I was lost. Nobody had convinced me to believe in Christ, and I had not believed Him for any kind of earthly gain. It was God, and God alone, who had saved me. I had made the choice to take up my cross.

In this realization, I *knew* the sovereignty and faithfulness of God. I knew that He was

**“WE WERE
IMPRISONED
FOR A MONTH.
IN THE DAY THEY
INTERROGATED
US; IN THE
NIGHT THEY
TORTURED US.”**

Hillside Housing

TIERS OF SIMPLE HOMES ASCEND A RUGGED HILL IN KABUL, AFGHANISTAN. OVER THREE-QUARTERS OF AFGHAN RESIDENTS NAVIGATE LIFE WITHOUT PROPERTY RIGHTS, ABIDING IN MAKESHIFT HOUSING. GIVEN YEARS OF WAR AND IMPOVERISHMENT, MANY LACK BASIC NECESSITIES INCLUDING CLEAN WATER.

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN.





Ancient Afghanistan

AFGHANISTAN IS AN ANCIENT CIVILIZATION DATING BACK TO THE TIMES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, WITH ROOTS IN THE LARGER PERSIAN EMPIRE.

far more able to protect and care for my family than myself, locked away in this prison cell. I knew that God had absolute power. In that moment, I experienced peace.

“NEXT TO MY SIGNATURE THEY APPLIED MY FINGERPRINT IN INK. THEN THEY SAID, ‘YOU HAVE SIGNED YOUR DEATH SENTENCE WITH YOUR OWN HAND.’”

In the midst of this peace I was, of course, still in prison. There were Muslim prisoners who wanted to kill me and guards who beat me. I could only use the bathroom for two minutes in the morning and two in the evening. I was given small amounts of water. I became sick. I became broken. Guards would drag me into interrogation cells and demand that I return to Islam. They promised that all the pain would end if

I simply denied Christ and pled allegiance to my old faith. But in all of this the realization stayed with me—the peace that surpasses understanding ruled my heart.

During one of these interrogations, I was being questioned by two officers. Once again they were demanding that I return to Islam. I told them, “I will never return to Islam. I have left Islam forever, and I do not regret it.” One officer became angry and pulled out a gun. He started shouting: “Let me kill him! He is a pig! He is an infidel! Let me shoot him!” They made me write my confession with a pen and sign my name: “I have left Islam and I will not return.” Next to my signature they applied my fingerprint in ink. Then they said, “You have signed your death sentence with your own hand.” In my heart I said to myself, “My life is in God’s hands. If He would take my life, then He can.”

With the interrogation finished and my death sentence signed, I returned to a hold-

ing cell with two-hundred other prisoners. Here I was together again with my friend from church. Soon we heard the other prisoners murmuring: “These two have changed their religion. They have become infidels. If we kill these men we will go to paradise. Let’s kill them!” But of the two-hundred, there were a few who actually knew my friend—they had grown up together from childhood. They stood up for us to the rest of the group: “These are friends of ours,” they said. “You cannot touch them.” Nobody would have known if these two hundred men killed us. The authorities would not have cared. But God sent us protectors in the form of criminals and idolators. His almighty protection was greatly displayed.

We were ten days there, sleeping side by side, using empty soda bottles for pillows. Finally the guards pulled us out again. “We will take you to Kabul,” they said. We knew we were being transported there for our execution.

But when we arrived at the airport in Kabul, the officers escorting us handed us a phone. “Call your family,” they said. At this point I did not know who to call, so I called my mom. She was crying. She simply said, “Just come to me and we will talk.” When we gave the phone back to our escorts, they said, “You are free to go.” We thought they would shoot us as we walked away. We made it to a bus, rode a few stops, then caught a taxi. We were free.

We stayed at motels on our days of our traveling. We had no IDs going through Taliban territory so I had to give the motel-owners my father’s phone number to verify our identities. Soon I learned that my wife and children were safe with her family, but that her parents were pressuring her to divorce me. Of course she would not consider it—she was waiting for me.

At last I made it safely back to Kabul to my wife and family, and from there we moved to a different city. In the following years, we continued ministry in underground churches. The number of believers grew rapidly. In 2014, we had nearly four-hundred baptized believers in our network of small churches. Though the persecution only increased, so did the abundance of fruit from the harvest—so did God’s faithfulness to His people.

The church is growing but the difficulties are not gone. Afghanistan is the most dangerous country for Christians. We have a number of Afghan Christians in Taliban prison. They are being tortured daily for their faith. We know Afghans struggling, stranded in Afghanistan and neighboring Muslim countries. Some of them cannot leave because they do not have proper documentation. There is no way for them to escape to a safer country.

Yet the Kingdom of God is growing, because the gospel still prospers in times of persecution. There will always be difficulty and hardship, there will always be pain and tears; Christians will die, believers will be imprisoned. The church of Jesus Christ cannot avoid persecution. But we are determined to stand with our fellow Christians, to “remember those imprisoned and those persecuted” (Heb. 13:3). We are grateful that HeartCry is standing with us in this time of suffering. ●●●

“WE HAVE A NUMBER OF AFGHAN CHRISTIANS IN TALIBAN PRISON. THEY ARE BEING TORTURED DAILY FOR THEIR FAITH.”

CAMBODIA

96% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR CAMBODIA

Decades of genocide and war have smitten the nation with poverty and eradicated the larger presence of Christianity. Buddhism is dominant throughout the nation. Most children are taught from birth to worship idols or even raised in temples to become Buddhist priests. Material necessities are the foremost concern of most people as the majority of the population are impoverished. Yet the true gospel is doing its work through the labor of a few faithful men of God. Despite their hardships, churches are growing in number and maturity, and new generations of children are being raised in the fear and instruction of the Lord (Eph. 6:4).

Pray for the growing church in Cambodia: For a converted membership (John 3:3, 5; Romans 8:6-8; I Corinthians 2:14-15).

COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **BUDDHISM**
POPULATION: **16.9M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **2%**



CHINA

93% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR CHINA

The People's Republic of China is tightly shut up against the gospel. In the past century, through the brutal regime of Mao Zedong, the memory of Christ has been largely wiped out. Still today, public expression of the Christian faith continues to be outlawed by a totalitarian and atheistic government. Most Christians must meet in secret in underground churches. Evangelism is dangerous and risks a terrible cost.

Pray for China and its believers: That the gospel would expand, that doors would be opened for the preaching of the Word (Col. 4:3); pray that Chinese believers would be filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:17-18; Acts 1:8), so that the church might be Christ's witnesses.



COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **NON-RELIGIOUS**
POPULATION: **1.4B**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **<7%**

TIMOR-LESTE

98% OF THE POPULATION IDENTIFY AS **CATHOLIC**

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR TIMOR-LESTE

In recent years, civil war, famine, and foreign invasion have caused severe economic hardship. Catholicism is the official national religion, and approximately 98% of the population identify as Catholic. Yet the true gospel exists among only a small minority of believers, and prejudice against evangelical Christianity still persists.

Pray for the church in Timor Leste: For God to establish His true church and make it a praise in all the earth (Isaiah 62:6-7).

COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **CATHOLICISM**
POPULATION: **1.34M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **<2%**



HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR EGYPT

Islam is the official national religion of Egypt and Muslims make up the majority of the population. In recent years, persecution against Christianity has been on the rise, and the true church is finding increased difficulty persevering in evangelism and congregational life.

Pray for the church in Egypt: For the members of the church to be “continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42); that none forsake assembling together, but that all encourage one another and consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24-25).

EGYPT

90% OF THE POPULATION IDENTIFY AS MUSLIM

COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: ISLAM
POPULATION: 112M
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: <1%



JAPAN

97% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED**
BY THE GOSPEL

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR JAPAN

From HeartCry missionary Luis: “Japan is known by some as ‘the missionary’s graveyard.’ Many missionaries have traveled to Japan only to return to their home countries discouraged. The difficulties of a society permeated by cultural indoctrination, language barriers, and widespread rejection of the one true God, has for decades overwhelmed many missionaries. In the graveyard of Japan, true belief in Christ is replaced by the worship of man and the love of self.”

Pray for Japan: For God to call out a people from throughout the nation for His own name’s sake and glory (Ezekiel 36:22-24), and to cleanse them from all their impurities and idols (Ezekiel 36:25).



COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **BUDDHISM**
POPULATION: **123M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **<1%**

INDIA

95% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED**
BY THE GOSPEL

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR INDIA

Though there is officially freedom of religion in India, in reality there is great strife among religions and increasing persecution of Christianity. Recently there has been a rise in anti-conversion laws which target those leaving Hinduism. In the Northern region of India, Hindu radicals are most active and persecution of Christians is great. In the Northeast, ongoing tribal warfare causes suffering and persecution among Christians and unbelievers alike. India is increasingly becoming a closed door to the gospel, and believers are struggling in the midst of greater economic and political trials.

Pray for India: For open doors for the gospel (Col. 4:3), and for the conversion of unbelievers, that God would remove their heart of stone and give them a living heart that is responsive to Him (Ezekiel 36:26).



COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **HINDUISM**
POPULATION: **1.4B**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **UNKNOWN**

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR INDONESIA

The Indonesian population is predominantly Muslim, and many unreached tribes in the jungle areas are permeated by animistic and cannibalistic practices. There is also a great famine of the Word of God. Though the Scriptures have been translated into the Indonesian language, there are still hundreds of languages or dialects into which the Bible has never been translated. Indonesia contains many of the darkest areas on Earth unreached by the gospel. The need for laborers is great.

Pray for Indonesia: For God to raise up more laborers to send into the harvest (Matt. 9:37-38).



INDONESIA



COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **ISLAM**
POPULATION: **277M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **3%**

70% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

JORDAN

93% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR JORDAN

Although Jordan has a great Biblical legacy, being one of the most frequently mentioned locales in the Bible, nevertheless Muslims make up the vast majority of its population. Islam is the official national religion, and while there is a visible Christian presence, Christianity is still in the severe minority. Those unreached by the gospel make up the greater portion of the population.

Pray for the church in Jordan: For God to increase the number of His people throughout the nation as a shepherd might increase his flock (Ezekiel 36:37-38).

COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **ISLAM**
POPULATION: **11.2M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **2%**



ISRAEL

97% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

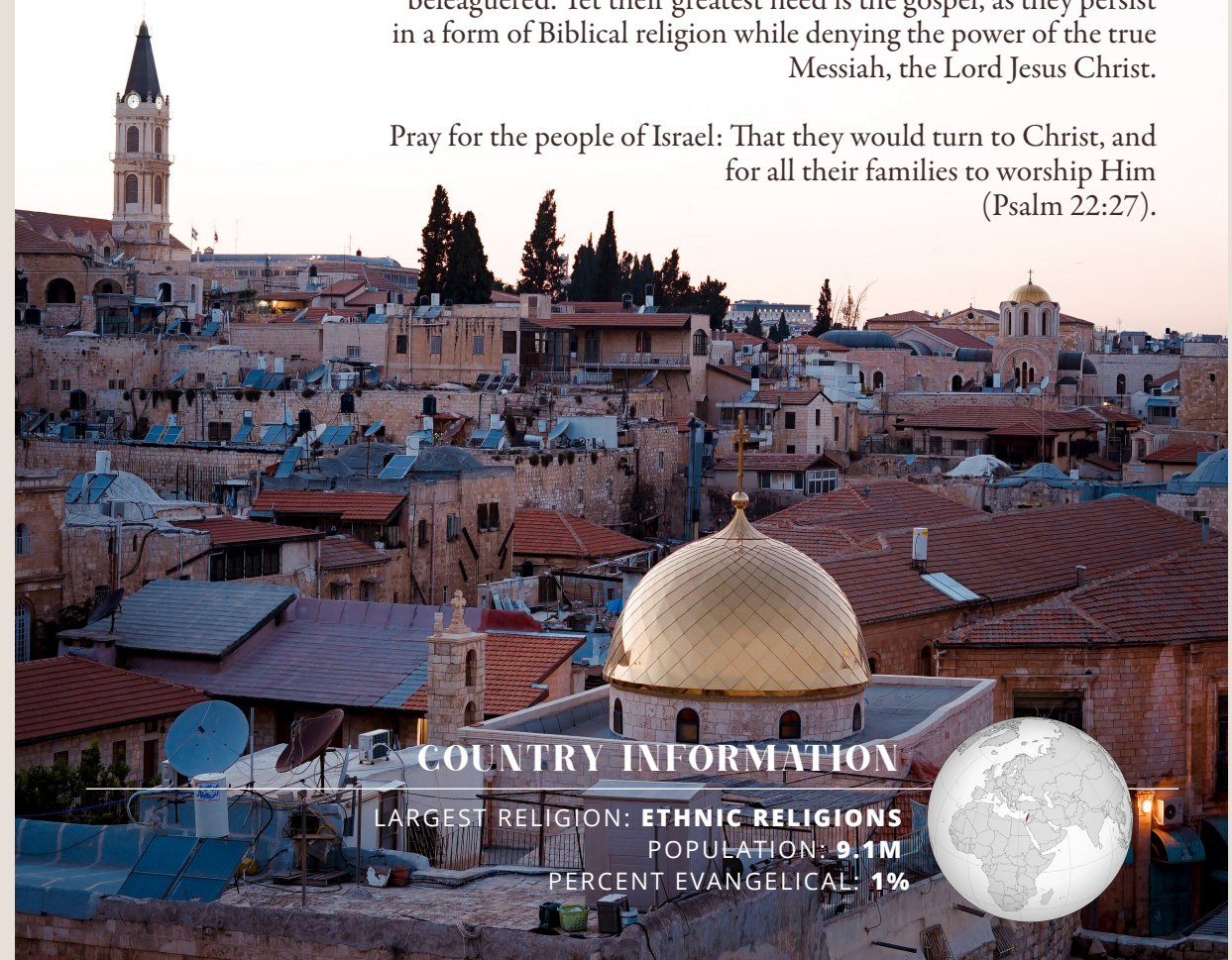
HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR ISRAEL

After being a people without a country for almost two-thousand years, Israel has found itself continually in political turmoil since its established statehood in the mid-20th century. At the center of war and existential threat, the people of Israel are truly beleaguered. Yet their greatest need is the gospel, as they persist in a form of Biblical religion while denying the power of the true Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pray for the people of Israel: That they would turn to Christ, and for all their families to worship Him (Psalm 22:27).

COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **ETHNIC RELIGIONS**
POPULATION: **9.1M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **1%**



IRAN

99% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR IRAN

An Islamic dictatorship rules Iran, with terrible consequences for any who oppose it—including death sentences for those who apostatize from Islam. True believers in Christ make up a fraction of a percent of the population, and there is zero freedom to live as public Christians. Iran is a tightly shut door to the gospel. Iranians live in desperate darkness and in need of the one true Light (John 1:4-5).

Pray for the people of Iran: For the eyes of their hearts to be enlightened (Eph. 1:18), and for the Light to shine in the darkness so that all of Christ's people might believe in Him (John 1:4-5; 7).



COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **ISLAM**
POPULATION: **88.8M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **<1%**

SERBIA

99% OF THE POPULATION IDENTIFY AS **ORTHODOX**

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR SERBIA

The majority of the population identify as Christian but are largely Orthodox. Inoculation against the true gospel by this nominal religion presents a great need. Though there is freedom of religion, pressure from the government and the community favors the Orthodox church and brings many difficulties for evangelical believers.

Pray for the church in Serbia: For pastor-elders who are biblically qualified (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9); for the members of the church to be “continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42).

COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY**
POPULATION: **7M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **<1%**



KAZAKHSTAN

75% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR KAZAKHSTAN

Under communism all religious belief was suppressed by an atheistic totalitarian government. Since the fall of the USSR in 1991, political freedom has still been limited. Today the majority of the population is Muslim. Under these circumstances, the Christian church has found great difficulty in gaining a foothold in this nation.

Pray for Kazakhstan: For the gospel to spread rapidly and for Christ to be glorified (II Thessalonians 3:1) so that He is preached throughout the whole nation (Matthew 24:14).

COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **ISLAM**
POPULATION: **19.5M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **<2%**



SCAN WITH MOBILE
DEVICE TO WATCH



WATCH AN INTERVIEW

with two HeartCry missionaries serving in Myanmar.

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR MYANMAR

From a HeartCry missionary with a protected identity:

“The civil war has been ongoing for two years. Every day in the tribal mountain areas there is fighting and killing. Every day people die.

Please pray for peace in Myanmar. Pray for our missionaries who are being persecuted, for church members who have had to flee to the mountains and jungles to survive. Some of them have been in the jungles for over two years. Above all, they greatly need prayer.

Pray for God to protect them. Pray for their salvation, and an outpouring of the Spirit. Pray for the peace of God to reign in the nation, for justice against those who war against God and His people. Pray that God would save to the uttermost His elect among those who war and rage.”

MYANMAR

83% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **BUDDHISM**
POPULATION: **54.3M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **<5%**



NEPAL

88% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR NEPAL

Nepal is among the most impoverished countries in the world. The population is largely Hindu, and Christians are only a tiny minority. Though freedom of religion is generally protected by law, it is illegal for Christians to evangelize.

Pray for the Christians in Nepal: That they would shine as lights among unbelievers (Philippians 2:15), and that doors would be opened to share the gospel with the lost (Col. 4:3).



COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **ISLAM**
POPULATION: **30.7M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **UNKNOWN**

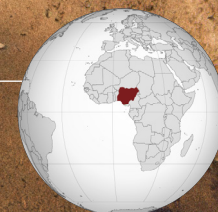
NIGERIA

30% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR NIGERIA

Nigeria is divided roughly in half between Muslims in the north and Christians in the south. Christianity in Nigeria is dominated by the Prosperity Movement, and Christians suffer severe persecution especially in the north. While a few sound churches exist, there is great need for many more biblical churches that proclaim the true gospel.

Pray for the church in Nigeria: For believers to hold an unwavering confidence in the inspiration, inerrancy, and sufficiency of the Scriptures (II Timothy 3:15-17; II Peter 1:20-21); for preachers to solemnly devote themselves to precise exposition of the Scriptures with reproof, rebuke, and exhortation (II Timothy 4:1-2).



COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **CHRISTIANITY**
POPULATION: **223M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **26%**

PAKISTAN

99% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR PAKISTAN

Pakistan is one of the most persecuted countries for Christianity; believers face threats from Islamic activity in their community and through governmental oppression. Churches must operate in secrecy and evangelism carries grave consequences.

Pray for believers in Pakistan: For deliverance from perverse and evil men (II Thesse 3:2), to be strengthened by grace (Heb. 13:9), and to rejoice amidst persecution (I Peter 4:13).



COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **ISLAM**
POPULATION: **239M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **UNKNOWN**

SUDAN

95% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR SUDAN

In recent years, the Sudanese government removed Islamic law from its constitution, resulting in more religious freedom. There is a growing Christian church in Sudan with many church plants having begun in the past decade. Despite this, the nation has seen little but strife and war, and its population is still Islamic by majority.

Pray for Sudan: For God to increase the number of His people throughout the nation as a shepherd might increase his flock (Ezekiel 36:37-38).



COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **ISLAM**
POPULATION: **47.8M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **<1%**



IRAQ

97% OF THE POPULATION IDENTIFY AS **MUSLIM**

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR IRAQ

The nation is ruled by Islamic law, and religious freedom is non-existent. Persecution of Christianity is widespread. Moreover, the nation has been scourged by war and terrorism from Islamic extremists. Although Christianity has had a continual presence in Iraq since the first century, Christians are only a tiny minority of the population and are greatly oppressed.

Pray for the church in Iraq: For the nation to be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Habakkuk 2:14); for believers to be delivered from perverse and evil men (II Thess. 3:2).

COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **ISLAM**
POPULATION: **40M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **<1%**



U.A.E.

83% OF THE POPULATION **UNREACHED** BY THE GOSPEL

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR U.A.E.

Islam is the official national religion. A considerable degree of religious freedom is allowed, but Christians are a small minority and evangelism is outlawed.

Pray for believers in the UAE: To grow in the knowledge of God through the study of the Scriptures (II Peter 3:18); to walk in obedience to the will of God (Eph 5:15-17); and for open doors for the gospel to be proclaimed (Col. 4:3).

COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **ISLAM**
POPULATION: **9.4M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **1%**



VIETNAM

1% OF THE POPULATION IDENTIFY AS **CHRISTIAN**

HOW YOU CAN PRAY FOR VIETNAM

The majority of the population is Buddhist, while Christians are few and face various forms of persecution. There is a great deficiency of Scripture and theological materials in dozens of languages and dialects. Pastors and congregations lack basic resources for understanding the Scriptures and the full counsel of Christ.

Pray for Vietnam: For the church to “receive the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11).

COUNTRY INFORMATION

LARGEST RELIGION: **BUDDHISM**
POPULATION: **98.7M**
PERCENT EVANGELICAL: **<1%**



PRAY FOR OPEN DOORS

IN THE 10/40 WINDOW

While the previous pages outlined ways to pray for specific countries in the 10/40 Window where HeartCry supports active missionaries, there is a desperate need for laborers. Commit to pray for open doors in the following countries. The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

PRAY FOR OPEN DOORS INTO THESE 10-40 WINDOW COUNTRIES:

ALBANIA
ALGERIA
AZERBAIJAN
BAHRAIN
BANGLADESH
BENIN
BHUTAN
BRUNEI
BURKINA FASO
CHAD
CHINA, HONG KONG
CHINA, MACAU
DJIBOUTI
ERITREA
ETHIOPIA
GAMBIA

GUINEA
GUINEA-BISSAU
NORTH KOREA
KUWAIT
KYRGYZSTAN
LAOS
LEBANON
LIBYA
MALAYSIA
MALDIVES
MALI
MAURITANIA
MONGOLIA
MOROCCO
NIGER
OMAN
QATAR

SAUDI ARABIA
SENEGAL
SIERRA LEONE
SOMALIA
SRI LANKA
SYRIA
TAIWAN
TAJKISTAN
THAILAND
TUNISIA
TURKEY
TURKMENISTAN
UZBEKISTAN
WEST BANK / GAZA
WESTERN SAHARA
YEMEN

“THE HARVEST IS PLENTIFUL, BUT THE WORKERS ARE FEW. THEREFORE BESEECH THE LORD OF THE HARVEST TO SEND OUT WORKERS INTO HIS HARVEST.”

—MATTHEW 9:37-38

Doorway to Angkor Wat

THE SUN RISES BEHIND ANGKOR WAT, THE WORLD'S LARGEST RELIGIOUS STRUCTURE, STANDING AS A SYMBOL OF THE PROFOUND SPIRITUAL DARKNESS THAT GRIPS ASIA. PRAY FERVENTLY THAT GOD WILL OPEN WIDE THE DOORS TO THESE DARK AREAS OF THE WORLD, TRANSFORMING MINDS AND HEARTS THROUGH THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL OF THE GLORY OF CHRIST (2 COR. 4:4).

SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA. OCTOBER, 2023.

THE POWER OF PRAYER

BY PAUL WASHER

Evening Prayer At The Orphanage

IN CAMBODIA, DARA LEADS AN EVENING SESSION OF PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY WITH THE TWENTY-FIVE CHILDREN UNDER HIS AND HIS WIFE'S CARE IN THE ORPHANAGE. TOGETHER THEY EACH TAKE TURNS TO OFFER THEIR PRAYERS TO THE LORD.

CAMBODIA. OCTOBER, 2023.

“Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.’”

— Matthew 6:9-10

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”

— Matthew 7:7-8

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of prayer in the Great Commission. Prayer is the great complement to biblical knowledge without which there will be little life or power in the missionary, his preaching, or any of his missionary endeavors. Every triumph of the church in the last two thousand years has been birthed, cultivated, and matured through prayer. If there is one thing that all the great missionaries of church history have in common, it is their intense and unceasing devotion to God in prayer.

This becomes especially apparent when we realize that the work of global missions is an outright impossibility apart from the power of God. The Apostle John tells us that “the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.”¹ Consequently, it would be easier to lift Mount Everest and cast it into the sea than to take one inch of Satan’s domain in our own power. He laughs at our endless strategies and mocks our clever schemes, but when one man lashes himself to the Word and wears out his knees in prayer, all of hell shudders.

All the Christians, churches, missionary societies, and institutions combined cannot win one soul. All our conferences, campaigns, and desires to give our lives away cannot advance the kingdom. Even if there were no devil, the radical corruption of one sinner’s heart would bring to nothing all our efforts and make us a laughingstock of impotence. The lost world and the lost soul are like Jericho. They are tightly shut up—no one can go in and no one can come out.² We can march around the wall until we are utterly worn out. We can lift up our voices and blow our trumpets until we are blue in the face. We can throw ourselves at the wall until our bodies are broken and lying in heaps on the ground. But the wall is not going to fall by any human effort. It requires the power of God. He can make quick work of the wall and bring down in seconds what we could not even if we were granted ten thousand eternities!

¹ I John 5:19

² Joshua 6:1

UNDERSTANDING OUR NEGLECT

Most if not all Christians would heartily agree with the previous paragraphs regarding the importance of prayer. Why then do ministers and missionaries openly admit to praying so little? This is especially perplexing when we realize that many of those who lament their neglect of prayer are truly God-called men and women, who love the Lord and honestly desire to see His kingdom advance across the globe. Why then do we so often neglect prayer? Although there are more reasons than we have room to mention, we will consider several of the most obvious.

The first culprit is our poor theology which leads to a superficial understanding of the impossibility of the task. Not only do we not seem to understand the power of our enemy, but also and most importantly we do not understand the corruption of the human heart. The unreached nations are not merely ignorant of God so that they can be cured by more information. Neither are they seeking God so that they only need to be pointed in the right direction. The nations, like the men who form them, are morally depraved, hostile to God, and will be unresponsive to any gospel herald that is sent to them apart from God's direct intervention.³ Only God can change the human heart and advance His cause. Apart from His aid, our attempts to tear down the iron walls of sin that surround the nations is comparable to a tiny gnat beating its head against a wall of granite the size of the world. Therefore, in the beginning, middle, and end of all our missionary endeavors we must constantly and relentlessly seek God's aid in believing and persevering in prayer.

Secondly, unbelief is a great enemy of prayer. Do we really believe in our utter inability to win even one soul of the eight billion that now reside on this planet? Do we really believe that God is "able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us?"⁴ Do we really believe that prayer is absolutely essential and



Nepalese Women Praying

A GROUP OF WOMEN PRAY TOGETHER IN THE MOUNTAINS OF NEPAL. EVANGELISM IS OUTLAWED, AND CHRISTIANS ARE ENDANGERED EVERY DAY BY RADICAL HINDU SECTS.

that it is the catalyst for life and power in all our activities? To answer these questions, we must not merely appeal to our theology because we often affirm truths with our head that we do not practice with our heart. Nor should we merely appeal to sentiment because we can feel deeply that we ought to pray without ever truly praying. To properly discern the answer to this question, we must appeal to the practice of our

**“When
one man
LASHES HIMSELF
to the Word
and wears
out his knees
in prayer,
ALL OF HELL
SHUDDERS.”**

daily lives. How much time do we set aside for prayer? How often do we run to prayer as our first recourse?⁵ If we graphed a chart comparing our time in prayer with the time consumed by all our other activities, would it not show that we are an unbelieving generation?⁶

Thirdly, our fallen flesh is one of the great nemeses of prayer. In fact, the flesh probably hates prayer even more than it disdains the study of God's Word. At least through study the flesh can boast in its knowledge, but in prayer it has no such grounds for boasting. Through study, a man may gain fame for his

scholarship, erudition, and eloquence; but prayer is performed in secret and demands that a man lay down all his credentials at the door. True prayer is a renunciation of the flesh and its power. In the prayer closet, the most capable men must acknowledge that the "flesh profits nothing"⁷ and it is "not by might nor by power, but by God's Spirit."⁸

Fourthly, spiritual and physical laziness is a major culprit in the neglect of prayer. We should not be deceived. Intercession is hard work, even for those who are most devoted to it. One of the greatest and most pervasive de-

³ Romans 1:18-32; 3:10-18

⁴ Ephesians 3:20

⁵ This question is prompted by the popular declaration, "There is nothing left to do but pray," as though prayer were the last recourse instead of the first.

⁶ Mark 9:19

⁷ John 6:63

⁸ Zechariah 4:60

Prayers Offered In Romania

SORIN PRODAN JOINS IN EARNEST PRAYER WITH FELLOW EVANGELISTS EMANUEL IVAN AND ALEX PALADE.

THE VILLAGE OF ZIZIN, ROMANIA. 2023.



ceptions among Christians is that those who devote themselves to a certain spiritual discipline do so because it comes easy for them. We convince ourselves that the saint who is devoted to Bible study or prayer does so because of some special gift or even natural inclination that makes it easier for him than for the rest of us. However, the primary reason behind his devotion is not his spiritual strength but his recognition of his weakness. He knows that he cannot do anything apart from divine aid and so he fights to overcome the spiritual laziness that holds many of us in bondage. Our problem is not that we are too weak, but that we do not recognize how weak we are and how much we need God in prayer. It is liberating to know that spiritual disciplines such as intercession are *hard work* for everyone, even the most mature and gifted saint. This proves that our lethargy can be overcome.

Fifthly, pragmatism that has inundated the West is contrary to and stifles prayer. Pragmatism is the worldview that determines the value or rightness of something in terms of its apparent success. In the Western church, pragmatism manifests in the tendency to adopt any strategy of ministry that alleges to produce positive results regardless of the fact that it has little or no biblical foundation—or is even contrary to the Scriptures. The Western church is literally inundated with books, conferences, and media material peddling the latest scheme or strategy to grow the church and evangelize the world. One of the most telltale signs of the limited value of these programs and strategies is their lack of endurance. The strategy that takes Christianity by storm and becomes all the

rage today is soon jettisoned and replaced by another. Is it possible that this preoccupation with finding the *golden key* for church growth and missions is the result of the church's ignorance of the Scriptures and its carnal aversion to the hard work of prayer, piety, and proclamation?

Sixthly, busyness (the evil twin of pragmatism) is a great enemy of prayer. One of the most frequent confessions of churches, pastors, evangelists, and missionaries throughout the world is that they are just too busy to pray. In fact, we seem willing to wear ourselves out for the cause of the gospel by doing any activity

except those that have been commanded by Christ: abiding in the Word of God and praying before the throne of grace.⁹ God calls for one sacrifice that we are unwilling to make; thus we substitute countless others in its place. As a result we are *nickel-and-diming* away our ministries. Little termites are eating away the foundation of our house, and foxes are spoiling the vineyard.¹⁰ We would do well to remember that “to obey is better than sacrifice,”¹¹ and, “unless the

**“True
PRAYER
is a
RENUNCIATION
of the flesh
and its
POWER.”**

Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it.”¹²

Seventhly and lastly, the devil is the great enemy of prayer. He would grant us hours of unhindered study, let us read good books without end, and allow us to wear ourselves out in ministry, if only he could keep us from praying. He knows that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us,¹³ and that apart from Him we can do nothing.¹⁴ He knows that Christ has chosen us, and appointed us that we should go and bear fruit, and he knows that this fruit is directly relat-

⁹ John 15:7 - “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.” John 15:16 - “You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.” Notice the direct relationship between the abiding word and prayer in John 15:7, and the direct relationship between God’s sovereignty, fruitfulness, and prayer in John 15:16.

¹⁰ Song of Solomon 2:15

¹¹ I Samuel 15:22

¹² Psalm 127:1

¹³ Philippians 4:13

¹⁴ John 15:5

ed to our petitioning the Father in Christ's Name.¹⁵ Thus, the devil is constantly working to make us forgetful of our own impotence and blind us to God's infinite strength and willingness to do abundantly beyond all that we ask or think.¹⁶ We must never forget that the missionary is sent out like a sheep in the midst of wolves.¹⁷ It does not matter how the sheep array themselves for battle, how willing they are to sacrifice, or how vigilant their watch, they cannot repel even the slightest assault from the weakest whelp in the pack. The sheep's only hope is that the Great Shepherd will hear their bleats and come running to their aid.

A PLEA FOR PRAYER

Prayerlessness is sin. It is not simply the neglect of a spiritual discipline; it is rebellion against the specific commands of God. If these words have caused the reader to wince then they have achieved their goal. The statement is not only true, but it is as necessary as it is painful. At all costs, we must be awakened from our deadly slumber. The neglect of prayer is sin! As we have said before, so we say again now,¹⁸ prayerlessness is sin!

According to the Westminster Larger Catechism, sin is "any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, any law of God, given as a rule to the reasonable creature."¹⁹ The meaning is that we have sinned whenever we fail to conform to God's commands, either by not living up to them or stepping beyond them, either by active rebellion or passive neglect. The biblical text that supports this definition of sin is found in I John 3:4, which states, "Everyone

"Prayerlessness is sin. It is not simply neglect of a spiritual discipline; it is rebellion against the specific commands of God."

who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness." The word "lawlessness" is translated from the Greek noun *anomia*, which literally means "without law." To sin is to live without law, or to live as though God had never given us a command to obey.

When we think of lawlessness, our minds run to such things as idolatry, murder, theft, and all forms of immorality. However, we often fail to realize that since prayer is commanded, a lack of prayer is also a form of lawlessness. Therefore, using John's definition of sin, we may rightly say, "Everyone who does not practice prayer, practices lawlessness; and prayerlessness is lawlessness." Again, we have written with the intention to wound, but do not hide your back from the lash. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend."²⁰ And again, "Stripes that wound scour away evil, and strokes reach the innermost parts."²¹ And still again, "Let the righteous smite me in kindness and reprove me; it is oil upon the head; do not let my head refuse it."²² This painful remedy is not worse than the malady. Prayerlessness is as deadly as frost on the vine, drought in the field, and a body without breath.

The Scriptures are overflowing with commands to pray, but these commands are not burdensome.²³ Each is an open door to the throne room of God who has extended His scepter that we might approach. Moreover, each command comes beautifully attended with an array of divine promises that God will do far more abundantly beyond all that we can ask or think.²⁴ When Esther entered the throne room of King Ahasuerus, he extended

his scepter that she might approach without fear. He then said to her, "What is troubling you, Queen Esther? And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be given to you."²⁵ If a bride among countless concubines can find such grace before the chair of a pagan king, how much more may Christ's only beloved expect to find an extended scepter and abundant grace before His throne? For this reason, the author of Hebrews encourages us, "Let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."²⁶

Writing extensively on prayer is beyond the bounds of this article. The Scriptures are overflowing with so many commands and promises regarding prayer that it would be impossible

to expound them even in multiple volumes. However, we cannot conclude until we communicate one great truth that has the power to transform the life and ministry of the weakest saint. Simply put, *Prayer to the Father in Jesus Name is the lifeline and catalyst of the Christian life and fruitfulness*. There is simply no way to exaggerate the profundity and importance of this simple statement. In John 13-17 is recorded the upper room discourse. This was Jesus' last meeting with His disciples prior to His trial and crucifixion. It was an extraordinarily crucial moment in which He spoke His final words in his final hours. Of all the doctrines He could have chosen as His theme, He chose prayer and the promise of answered prayer. The texts are worth reading in their entirety:

"Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it." — **John 14:11-14**

"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples." — **John 15:7-8**

"You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you." — **John 15:16**

"In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full." — **John 16:23-24**

"In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will request of the Father on your behalf; for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from *the Father*." — **John 16:26-27**

¹⁵ John 15:16

¹⁶ Ephesians 3:20

¹⁷ Matthew 10:16

¹⁸ Galatians 1:9

¹⁹ Westminster Catechism, Question 24

²⁰ Proverbs 27:6

²¹ Proverbs 20:30

²² Psalm 141:5

²³ I John 5:3

²⁴ Ephesians 3:20

²⁵ Esther 5:1-3

²⁶ Hebrews 4:16

“Prayer to the Father in Jesus Name is the lifeline and catalyst of the Christian life and fruitfulness.”

We would do well to read the above texts multiple times until the following truths become ingrained in our hearts and minds: (1) the Father truly loves us because we love His Son; (2) we have been chosen and appointed to go and bear fruit; (3) this fruit is completely and totally dependent upon prayer to the Father in Jesus’

Name; (4) the Father invites our prayers and promises to do works of the greatest magnitude in response to our prayers that He might be glorified in the Son and we might have joy.

What an open door of intimate fellowship and partnership has been given to every believer in Jesus’ Name. We have been invited to hold audience with the Father in the courts of heaven and we are given multiple assurances of answered prayer. If we are looking for a key to fruitfulness, to overcoming obstacles, and to opening doors, then we need look no further than prayer! And yet, how many opportunities are lost because the above truths are unknown to God’s people or they have not taken hold of them? May the Lord open the reader’s eyes to see that there is no limitation to the magnitude and quantity of works that can be accomplished through prayer and no possibility of accomplishing anything apart from prayer. All who would be ministers of Christ, all who would be missionaries, all who would be followers of the Lamb, must take this exhortation to heart. The true Christian’s life is a life of prayer. He can no more prevail in the Christian life without prayer than he can live without breath. Therefore, devote yourself to prayer!²⁷ Pray without ceasing!²⁸ Pray at all times and do not lose heart!²⁹ ●●●

²⁷ Colossians 4:2

²⁸ I Thessalonians 5:17

²⁹ Luke 18:1



Kabwata Missions Conference

A MAN BOWS IN PRAYER DURING THE 2023 MISSIONS CONFERENCE IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA, AT KABWATA BAPTIST CHURCH. THE CONFERENCE FOCUSED ON THE NEED FOR THE GOSPEL IN THE 10/40 WINDOW.

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. 2023.



*FROM THE ARCHIVE:
Sabotage to Salvation.*

Ukraine, 2001

IN ORDER TO REACH THEIR VILLAGE WITH THE GOSPEL, HEARTCRY MISSIONARY **JOHN GIREADA** SET UP WITNESSING POINTS AT THE ENTRIES AND EXITS. ANYONE COMING IN OR GOING OUT RECEIVED A GOSPEL TRACT AND WAS INVITED TO ATTEND THE CHURCH MEETINGS.

ONE NIGHT AFTER THEIR CHURCH SERVICE, A GROUP OF MEN CAME TO THE CHURCH TENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF SABOTAGING THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL. THEY RIPPED THE TENT TO PIECES WITH KNIVES, BROKE ALL THE WINDOWS, AND STOLE THE KEROSENE LAMPS USED FOR THE SERVICES.

ONE OF THE MEN CUT HIMSELF SO SEVERELY THAT BLOOD RAN DOWN THE TENT WALL AND ONTO THE SNOW. BUT IN PROVIDENTIAL IRONY, THERE WERE SIXTEEN CUTS MADE IN THE CHURCH TENT, AND THAT NIGHT SIXTEEN PEOPLE WERE CONVERTED.

JOHN GIREADA WRITES: "GOD SOVEREIGNLY CONVERTED ONE PERSON FOR EVERY CUT SATAN MADE IN OUR TENT."

JOHN GIREADA EXHIBITS THE TEARS IN THE CHURCH TENT IN TEREBLECHE, UKRAINE. 2001.

MISSIONARY SPOTLIGHT:
John Gireada. Ukraine.
October, 2023

JOHN GIREADA STANDS IN FRONT OF
THE CHURCH IN THE VILLAGE
OF TEREBLECHE.

WHERE A TATTERED SURPLUS
MILITARY TENT ONCE SERVED THE
CHURCH AS A PLACE OF WORSHIP,
THE BELIEVERS NOW HAVE A
BUILDING OF THEIR OWN. JOHN HAS
BEEN PASTOR HERE FOR THE PAST
TWENTY YEARS. WITH THE HELP
OF HIS WIFE LENA, HE CONTINUES
TO FAITHFULLY MINISTER TO THE
BELIEVERS IN TEREBLECHE.

THOUGH THEY LIVE IN TUMULTUOUS
CIRCUMSTANCES AS WAR RAGES
AROUND THEM, JOHN AND THE
BELIEVERS IN TEREBLECHE ARE
CHIEFLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE
PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL,
ABOUT MAKING THE NAME OF CHRIST
KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE NATION.



HEARTCRY MISSIONARY SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 7372, ROANOKE, VA 24019

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CPC



HeartCry

MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Commit to Pray for the Nations
www.heartcrymissionary.com/subscribe

Get Updates on Social Media



@HeartCryMissionary