



ADVANCING
NATIVE
MISSIONS

Pray for the Unreached

Nine days of background information, details, and prayer prompts
so you can help reach the world's unreached through prayer

Everyone needs to hear the Gospel



“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

– Matthew 28:18–20

Today, in 2024, **more than 3 billion people** worldwide don’t have access to local churches, pastors, and Bibles in their native languages. They represent **more than 7,000 people groups (“nations”)**, with their own languages, cultures, and traditions.

They need to hear the Good News!



Every Christian can pray



You can help reach the unreached people of the world by praying for them and for the missionaries delivering the Gospel to them.

This guide will help you pray for nine regions of the world, with background information, details about specific unreached people groups, and ways to pray strategically for people in each region.

Use this guide on your own or invite your small group or Sunday school class to join you. Additional copies are available for download at advancingnativemissions.com/prayfortheunreached

Your prayers make a difference!

Pray for Latin America

Total People Groups: 1,470

Unreached: 104

Latin America stretches from Mexico to the southern tip of Chile in South America. Most of the region has been predominantly Roman Catholic for centuries. Many people today practice religious syncretism, mixing Christianity, animism, and the occult. The two largest unreached people groups are Spanish-speaking Jews and Japanese. Evangelical Protestant Christianity is growing rapidly.

Challenges to the spread of the Gospel include rising secularism and consumerism, political unrest and extreme inflation, and widespread poverty. One of the fastest-growing religions in the region is Islam. Many academic communities now have well-funded Islamic "education centers" promoting Islam as a religion of peace and advancement. Muslim activists often emphasize the Moorish influence in traditional Spanish culture with the goal of making Latin Americans respond favorably to Islam.

Unreached people group focus: Spanish-speaking Jews in Argentina

- 175,000 people
- 0.21% evangelical Christian
- Single largest unreached people group in Latin America
- Many fled from Spain during the early modern era because of persecution
- Have access to the Jesus Film
- A close-knit community, with many of its own schools and social organizations
- A mixture of observant Jews and more secularized Jews who consider their Jewishness an ethnic and cultural matter



Pray to reach Latin America

- 1** Pray for freedom from spiritual bondage, whether traditional beliefs, the occult, or secularism.
- 2** Pray for provision for underfunded pastors, church planters, and missionaries.
- 3** Pray for protection for Christian workers facing threats from drug traffickers, oppressive governments, hostile tribes, or religious persecutors.
- 4** Pray for wise leaders who govern with integrity in the midst of economic collapse and corruption.
- 5** Pray for the hearts of the millions of unreached people in this region to be open to the Gospel.



Pray for North America

Total People Groups: 821

Unreached: 159

Northern America includes the United States, Canada, and Greenland (a self-governing part of Denmark). Protestant Christianity predominates, but there are significant populations of Catholics, Jews, and Muslims. The region's unreached people groups represent about 18 million people, including 6.4 million Jews, more than 1 million Arabs, and about 916,000 Japanese. In general, the church is strongly influenced by the culture.

Challenges to the spread of the Gospel include secularism, humanism, and materialism. There is also growing interest in Eastern religions, occultism, and paganism. Many espouse a generic "spirituality," but reject traditional Christianity. The belief that all religions are basically the same is prevalent and popular. Outright persecution is not common, but Christians do face increasing pressure.

Unreached people group focus: English-speaking Jews

- 4.6 million people
- 1,6% evangelical Christian
- Live mostly in urban areas, along the east and west coasts
- Not all Jews are religious; for them being Jewish is an ethnic or cultural identity
- There has been a long history of persecution, even from some calling themselves "Christian." This has caused most Jews to view Christianity as anti-Jewish
- There is a growing Messianic Jewish movement which accept Jesus (Yeshua) as Messiah



Pray to reach Northern America

- 1** Pray for revival in American churches so they can reach unreached people groups in their own communities.
- 2** Pray for more evangelists, church planters, and committed believers to reach the unreached of this region.
- 3** Pray for supernatural revelations through visions, dreams, miracles, and demonstrations of God's power.
- 4** Pray for the exposure of false and misleading influences (secularism, humanism, non-Christian religions, and cults) and for the true Gospel to be proclaimed.
- 5** Pray for the hearts of the millions of unreached people in this region to be open to the Gospel.



Pray for Europe & Russia

Total People Groups: 2,151

Unreached: 577

Many think of Europe as Christian, yet evangelicals are only a small minority. In Western Europe most people are secularized, while in Eastern Europe people often identify themselves with a religious label simply because of their ethnicity. Some unreached people groups number in the millions across the region, including Albanians, Turks, and Bosniaks.

Challenges to the spread of the Gospel include religious traditions, secular humanistic thinking, and ethnic divisions. Still, in some countries, such as France, Ireland, and Russia, the number of evangelical Christians is increasing significantly.

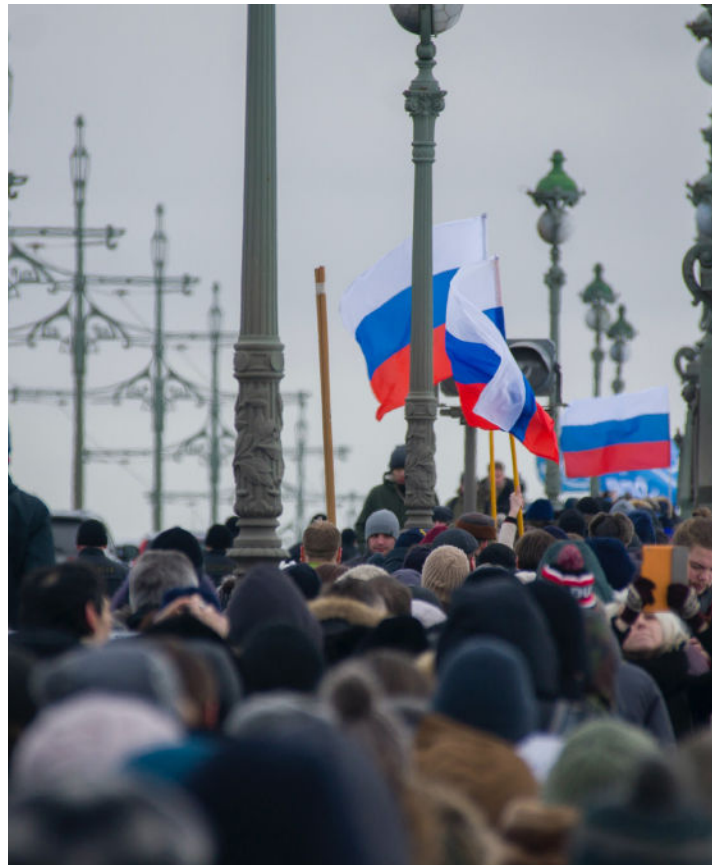
Unreached people group focus: the Tatars of Russia

- 5.4 million people
- 0.49% unreached
- Branch of Turkic peoples living throughout Russia, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe
- Speak Russian in addition to a distinctive language called Kazan Tatar
- Don't have access to a full Bible in Kazan Tatar
- Tribal people who traditionally lived in rural villages but have migrated to cities in recent decades
- Majority Muslim with some remaining influence of ancient shamanistic practice manifesting itself in superstitions such as a common belief in the evil eye
- Tend to be suspicious of Christianity because of historical oppression and forced conversions by the Russian Orthodox Church



Pray to reach Europe & Russia

- 1** Pray for people to be set free from secularism, religious tradition, and false belief systems.
- 2** Pray for more workers for this sparsely staffed mission field.
- 3** Pray for provision for Christian workers where local support is low.
- 4** Pray for growing and successful church planting efforts, as well as meeting places for new churches.
- 5** Pray for the hearts of the millions of unreached people in this region to be open to the Gospel.



Pray for Sub-Saharan Africa

Total People Groups: 3,522

Unreached: 852

Sub-Saharan Africa stretches south from the Arab-influenced countries of North Africa (see “the Middle East & North Africa”). The church is growing rapidly in many countries. Some of the region’s largest ethnic groups remain unreached, such as the Fulani (33.8 million), the Somali (24 million), and the Hausa (52.9 million). Such groups are spread across vast areas and many countries.

Challenges to the spread of the Gospel include widespread religious syncretism (mixing of religious practices and beliefs), entrenched traditional religions, severe persecution in some localities, the growing influence of the Prosperity Gospel, and the continued expansion of Islam.

Unreached people group focus: the Fulani

- 41 million
- Less than 1% evangelical Christian
- Large people cluster that lives across the Sahel, from the Atlantic to the Red Sea
- Greatest concentration is in West Africa, especially Nigeria.
- Comprised of 47 distinct individual groups. All are unreached.
- Semi-nomadic cattle herders. Proud of their nomadic culture.
- Primarily Muslim, with strong ties between Islam and cultural identity
- Mostly illiterate, and reject any form of western education
- There is a small Fulani diaspora in other countries, including the U.S. and Europe



Pray to reach Africa

- 1 Pray for the Gospel to break down the walls of tribalism that divide the church in Africa.
- 2 Pray for Christian believers to remain faithful in spite of severe persecution.
- 3 Pray for sufficient Bibles in local languages, and for access to education so the present and future generations can read them.
- 4 Pray for a well-grounded biblical worldview, especially where syncretism, animism, tribal religions, and the Prosperity Gospel hold sway.
- 5 Pray that African Christianity will become more missional in its church-planting methods, accepting the call of Christ to pioneer new areas with the Gospel.



Pray for the Middle East & North Africa

Total People Groups: 579

Unreached: 389

This region is the historic homeland of Christianity, and some indigenous churches trace their history back to the first century. For many adherents of these ancient churches, though, being "Christian" is largely an ethnic or cultural identity rather than a personal relationship with Jesus.

Islam originated in Arabia in the 7th century and spread quickly. Islam now dominates the region, and the majority of the 265 million unreached people in this region are Arab Muslims. Large populations of Jews, Berbers, Persians (Iranians), and Kurds also live in this region. Many Muslims are now coming to faith in Christ. Newer churches, especially those composed of believers from Muslim backgrounds, are vibrant and active.

Unreached people group focus: Algerian, Arab-Speaking

- Over 32 million people
- 0.01% evangelical Christian
- 95% of the people are Muslim
- The indigenous people of the region are Berbers, but most have become "Arabized"
- These are a difficult people to reach, and most mission efforts have had little success
- The harshness of life in this desert land have cause many to emigrate



Pray to reach the Middle East & North Africa

- 1 Pray for hearts to be open to the Gospel, especially among Muslims, Jews, and nominal Christians.
- 2 Pray for boldness among native Christians as they share the Gospel.
- 3 Pray for God to continue to send dreams and visions to people in this region, as has been happening for decades now.
- 4 Pray for the many Christians enduring persecution.
- 5 Pray for new believers from Muslim backgrounds who need safe housing and other aid when facing persecution from their community, even their families



Pray for Central Asia

Total People Groups: 565

Unreached: 398

Central Asia includes the “-stans” (“stan” means “place of”) as well as Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia. Christianity once flourished here. Armenia was the first country to officially declare itself Christian. Eastern Orthodox and other ancient churches are still present, as are some indigenous evangelical churches. The region is predominantly Muslim. The small minority of evangelical Christians face some opposition from Eastern Orthodox institutions, Islamist groups, and governments. The largest unreached people groups in the region – including Turks, Persians, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, and Azerbaijanis – represent tens of millions of people and are mostly Muslim.

Unreached people group focus: the Azeris (Azerbaijanis)

- 9.9 million people
- 0.2% evangelical Christian
- Have lived in the region of the Caucasus Mountains west of the Caspian Sea since ancient times
- Adopted Islam after its introduction in the 7th century
- Land was part of the Soviet Union for most of the 20th century
- Maintain strong religious ties to Iran
- Historically identified themselves as Muslims first, then Azeri or Azerbaijani
- Turkic people ethnically and linguistically
- Suffered widespread economic hardship after the collapse of the Soviet Union



Pray to reach Central Asia

- 1** Pray that God will reveal Himself through dreams, visions, and miracles.
- 2** Pray for indigenous churches to grow, and for God to raise up native pastors and church planters.
- 3** Pray for encouragement, boldness, and faithfulness for believers facing persecution.
- 4** Pray for revival among ancient, traditional churches in this region.



Pray for South Asia

Total People Groups: 4,032

Unreached: 3,661

South Asia includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. It is a very diverse region, with many languages, religious beliefs, political systems, and cultural practices. The majority of people practice Hinduism, Islam, or Buddhism. South Asia contains about 45 percent of Asia's population and more than 25 percent of the world's population. India alone has a population of 1.4 billion people, with 2,139 unreached people groups. Ninety-five percent of the world's least evangelized people groups live in South Asia. Christians face challenges from Islamic societies in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the Maldives, and increasing restrictions in India, Nepal, and Bhutan.

Unreached people group focus: the Brahmins

- 59+ million people
- 0.0% evangelical Christian
- Found throughout India and among Hindu peoples elsewhere in the world
- A distinct caste in Hinduism – the highest caste of all – made up of priests
- Guardians of Hindu rituals and religious practices
- Typically well-to-do and influential in Indian society
- Tend to be well-educated
- Commonly secularized in their religious belief



Pray to reach South Asia

- 1** Pray for effective Christian witness in the midst of the pervasive influence of Hinduism in India and Nepal, Buddhism in Bhutan and Sri Lanka, and Islam in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the Maldives.
- 2** Pray for workers, funding, and resources to help the church grow in South Asia.
- 3** Pray for safety and provision for Christian workers and their families.
- 4** Pray for comfort and aid for Christians who have endured many recent natural disasters.
- 5** Pray for new opportunities for ministry work when natural disasters and political unrest make conventional methods less effective.



Pray for Southeast Asia

Total People Groups: 1,821

Unreached: 685

Christianity has shown phenomenal growth in Southeast Asia in recent decades. Buddhism is common in these countries, while Islam is predominant in Indonesia and Malaysia. Many people groups also practice ancestor worship and animism. Poverty is widespread.

Some of the region's largest ethnic groups are unreached, including the Burmese of Myanmar, the Vietnamese, and the Thai.

Unreached people group focus: Burmese in Myanmar

- 31.5 million people
- 0.08% evangelical
- Primarily Buddhist, often practicing a mixture of animistic and Buddhist beliefs
- Have a strong belief in evil spirits called nats, who must be appeased daily
- Predominant people group in Myanmar, often considering themselves superior to others
- One of the great challenges for missions is the ongoing civil war in Myanmar
- Have access to the Bible in Burmese, as well as the Jesus Film



Pray to reach Southeast Asia

- 1** Pray for continued unity within church planting movements.
- 2** Pray for Christian workers to overcome discouragement resulting from poverty and persecution.
- 3** Pray for economic opportunities and support for Christian workers in impoverished and isolated areas.
- 4** Pray for unreached people to see God answer their prayers, which native workers say is a primary avenue of evangelism.
- 5** Pray for creative ways for indigenous Christians to show care for people's needs in unreached communities, such as starting schools, digging wells for clean water, or distributing food to the poor.



Pray for East Asia

Total People Groups: 709

Unreached: 525

East Asia includes China, Mongolia, Taiwan, Japan, and North and South Korea – 1.65 billion people total. Buddhism, Shintoism, shamanism, ancestor worship, Sunni Islam, and atheism are all widespread in East Asia. Despite this, Christianity has made a significant impact in some countries, such as China, Taiwan, and South Korea. There is a high degree of persecution against Christians, especially in China and North Korea.

The region's 528 unreached people groups represent more than 301 million people. The Japanese are the largest, with 125 million people. The highest concentration of unreached people is found in China, with 443 unreached people groups.

Unreached people group focus: Uygur

- 11.7 million people
- 0.01% evangelical Christian
- Scattered throughout China, but concentrated in the west, near the Kazakhstan border
- Almost all Uygurs are Muslim
- Ethnically related to the Turkic peoples, e.g. Uzbeks and Kazaks.
- Only a few hundred Christians are known
- Since 2015, the Chinese government has severely persecuted the Uygurs
- Millions have been imprisoned in "Reeducation Camps"



Pray to reach East Asia

- 1** Pray for the translation and distribution of the Bible in the languages and dialects of unreached people groups, especially in communities without any Bibles.
- 2** Pray for faithfulness and bold witness among Christians under persecution in China and North Korea.
- 3** Pray for freedom from materialism in Japan.
- 4** Pray for opportunities for effective ministry among unreached people groups.
- 5** Pray for the hearts of the millions of unreached people in this region to be open to the Gospel.



Unpacking “Unreached People Groups”

By Eric Vess

Throughout the New Testament, Scripture refers to people groups, or “nations” (Greek: *ethnos*), as the primary way of describing the diversity of human life which God created and for which Jesus Christ was crucified and resurrected.

One of the clearest pictures of this people group diversity is in the seventh chapter of Revelation:

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” (Revelation 7:9-10 ESV)

The Bible does not see people primarily as citizens of countries, but rather as members of “tribes and peoples and languages.” Evangelization and discipleship among all peoples are therefore of utmost importance.

There are more than 17,000 people groups in the world today. The Gospel has reached roughly 10,000 of these biblical “nations.” What exactly does that mean? Each of these people groups has an indigenous church capable of evangelizing its own culture. That leaves over 7,000 people groups without a vital, reproducing church. These are considered unreached people groups.

That does not necessarily mean that there are no believers or churches among these people groups. There could be small groups of worshiping believers, but without outside help they would not be able to reproduce the church within their own culture.

An organic term for this kind of reproduction is “church



planting.” The Gospel message is the seed; the people and their culture are the soil; and the church planter or evangelist is the sower of the Gospel seed. Just as in farming, there must be good seed, soil that is prepared to receive that seed, and sowers dedicated to the task. A deficiency in any of these areas will result in a poor crop or in no crop at all.

Any farmer will tell you that preparing a new field for planting is hard work. The same is true when it comes to planting the seed of the Gospel in an unreached people group. Their cultural soil will likely be difficult to till and resistant to the seed. The sowers may be few.

Often just a small patch of field can be planted at first, but with faithful perseverance the planting will expand. The Gospel seed will permeate the people group’s culture, and the church will begin healthy reproduction. A people group is said to be “reached” when the indigenous church is healthy enough to reproduce within its own culture without substantial outside assistance. That’s our goal.

That’s what your prayers are helping to accomplish.

**ANM is a global missions organization
delivering the Gospel to those who still need
to hear the Good News of Jesus.**

We're a little different from the traditional missions organizations you may be familiar with. Instead of sending missionaries to other countries where they have to learn a new language, get used to new ways of living, and make other big adjustments, we support missionaries sharing the Gospel in their own countries.

These native missionaries are making a big impact for the kingdom – you can help.

Learn more at advancingnativemissions.com

