

Bibles for China's Millions

Overview

The United Bible Societies China Partnership (CP) exists to serve and support the Churches in China. Through this project, CP aims to ensure that as many Chinese Christians as possible can own their own Bible.

It does so by providing Bible paper to support the printing and distribution of Bibles to the growing number of Christians in China, and to offer free Bibles to those who cannot afford to buy their own.

The Need

Mainland China continues to be a powerhouse of Christian growth in the 21st century. Although the Chinese government is strictly atheist and party members are prohibited from practicing religion, there are officially 46 million Christians (both Protestant and Catholic) and unofficially 100 million Christians in the country. This represents between 3 to 7 per cent of the population, second only to Buddhists (18 per cent). The demand for Bibles increases each year.

According to Premier Li Keqiang, there are at least 600 million people living on a monthly income of 1000 yuan (USD\$140) which is not enough to rent a room in a mid-sized city, acknowledging that China is a relatively poor country.

Although some Chinese are growing wealthier, many, especially those who live in the rural areas, are still struggling financially as the country continues to see an ever widening wealth gap and income inequality. The majority of the Christian population live in rural areas, and many of them need help to own a copy of their own Bible.

Chinese Christians need to hear and know the word of God. They acknowledge that the Bible is the basis of faith and the means to draw wisdom for their daily life. In the face of increasing threats from false teaching and heresies, the need is pressing for their faith to be firmly founded and strengthened by the Bible.

Project Goals

The goal of this project is two-fold. Firstly, to provide Bible paper to support the Church in China in printing and distributing more Bibles to the growing number of Chinese coming to know Jesus, and to support the outreach efforts of the church by sharing the word of God through the free distribution of Bibles. These Bibles will be more affordable and will help millions of Christians to be able to purchase their own copy. Secondly, this project aims to provide free Bibles to those who do not have the financial means to buy their own.

In 2021, the project gained approval to print 2.4 million Protestant Bibles and 100,000 Catholic Bibles. Bibles began to be distributed in the last part of 2021, and distribution will continue into the beginning of 2022.

Impact

From the establishment of Amity Printing Company in 1987 until the end of 2021, close to 89 million Bibles have been printed and distributed in China.

In 2021, this project supported the cost of Bible paper to print 417,981 affordable Bibles. Also, 148,298 copies of the Bible were supported for free distribution.

Millions of Christians in China will be encouraged by receiving their own copy of the Bible.

They will have the opportunity to grow in faith and to mature in God's word. Chinese Christians also give Bibles to non-Christian friends or relatives as a form of outreach.

Their faith will also be strengthened to resist false teaching and heresy, which is an identified problem in the church in China.

Testimonies

"This is my first Bible. I was a little overwhelmed when I held it in my hands, thinking to myself that this is no ordinary book, it is the word of God!"
- Yuan Guiying, a 65-year-old woman from Hebei Province.

"The Bible points to me my life's direction and goals, I started to read the Bible daily. Through reading the Bible, I learn how to pray and live my life."
- 30-year-old farmer in the north-eastern city of Fenyang

Prayer Needs

- Please pray for smooth co-ordination of the free Bible distribution and that the beneficiaries will be encouraged to read God's word and obey it.
- Pray for many of the poorer rural Christians who still do not have their own Bible.
- Pray for China Partnership's continued strengthening of relationships with authorities.
- Pray that each non-believer or seeker who receives a copy of the Bible has their heart opened to the word of God.