



PRAYER RESOURCES

YOU MAY FIND A MAP OF THE WORLD USEFUL THIS WEEK

Wednesday 9th September

I. Praying for the least reached to hear the Gospel (OM)

Pray for the Sahel

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

John 10:10 (NIV)

The combined population of Niger, Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso and Mauritania, all part of the Sahel region, is approximately 100 million people. Over 95% of the population of these countries follow Islam.

Pray for employment and business opportunities for people living in the Sahel. Many people struggle to support their families, due to economic hardships and instability.

Story:

While the Islam practised in Mali tends to be tolerant and incorporates elements of African traditional religions and superstitions, those who leave Islam to follow Jesus risk violence and pressure from their relatives and communities.

Adama*, the OM team leader in Mali, said that many people are open to hearing about Jesus, but many more suffer persecution or risk persecution if they show interest.

"That's why they take a long time before giving their lives to Christ. They are convinced, but to decide it is difficult because of fear of parents, friends and what will happen."

Issa*, one of the team's neighbours, wasn't interested in hearing anything about God, so the team prayed for him after he left. One day, Issa had a vision in which he saw Jesus.

“He came to us and said he saw Jesus in a vision, calling him,” Adama said. “Since that time, he started listening to us, and three months later, he gave his life to Christ.”

Issa shared with his parents that he had become a Christian. This caused a rift in their relationship, and soon after, Issa's father died.

“He felt great anguish, afraid his father died because of him,” Adama explained. “Some of his relatives accused him of that. I took time with that and helped him understand that it wasn’t his fault, but it didn’t stop there. They continued to persecute him.

“Many people invited him to different villages to talk with them and convince him to turn back [to Islam]. People, even within the community, talked about him and were saying things against him because he became a Christian. It was difficult.”

The persecution took its toll, and the team noticed Issa became very distant, avoiding their meetings. In response, the team prayed for him and then spoke with him.

“He said he felt like a kind of pressure on him that was difficult for him to describe,” Adama said. “He said whenever he followed us to villages, he felt fear in his heart. He didn’t know how to describe that. I said that was a spiritual attack.”

“We decided to fast and pray for him. The whole team fasted and prayed for him. We prayed all night for him. After that, Issa came back. Now, he is part of the team sharing with others.”

*name changed



2. Praying for freedom of religion or belief around the world (CSW)

Pray for freedom of prisoners

He will rescue the poor when they cry to him; he will help the oppressed, who have no one to defend them. He feels pity for the weak and the needy, and he will rescue them. He will redeem them from oppression and violence, for their lives are precious to him.

Psalm 72:12

Over one million Uyghurs and members of other predominantly Muslim ethnic groups have been detained without charge in so-called 'political re-education camps' in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region since 2017. Reasons for detention include acts as basic as having WhatsApp on your mobile phone, having relatives that live abroad, accessing religious materials online, and engaging in peaceful religious activities, including praying or wearing 'Islamic' clothing. Many detainees have been subjected to torture or other forms of mistreatment, and it is estimated that globally one in five cotton garments sold may be linked to Uyghur forced labour.

Around the world there are hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of others who have been detained in connection with their religion or belief, from Cuba to Iran to Laos to Pakistan. Many of them are denied access to lawyers, denied visits from family members, or even denied religious materials like the Bible or the Qur'an.

Appeal to the God of justice, who came to this earth to proclaim freedom for prisoners, to move powerfully even in the most complicated cases of detention and imprisonment. Pray boldly for the release of those who have been detained for exercising their fundamental human rights. Ask God to comfort their families and loved ones in the meantime, trusting that no injustice goes unnoticed.

