



GET FED BY THE FAITH OF
THE PERSECUTED CHURCH



Open Doors

Serving persecuted Christians worldwide

"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

1 Corinthians 10:31 (NIV)



CENTRAL ASIA

Our menu suggestion: coffee and cake

Why? Because in some Central Asian countries Christians meet secretly to avoid arrest. But the church is still present and alive. One group of women hide in plain sight by meeting in a coffee shop. It looks like they are enjoying coffee and cake, but they are actually praying and talking about the Bible. (You can read the full story on one of our placemats.)



CHEW ON

Fast Food is a six-part series during which you share a meal with others, serve up stories of the persecuted Church and take away a fasting challenge. (For more on this series see p. 4). In this final issue we're looking at Central Asia. Here, Christians are seen by the government and their Muslim communities as either a sect or traitors. As **Fast Food** ends, we hope that you've found the journey to be exciting, challenging, inspiring and even tasty! Even though this series has ended, we hope that you will stay with us, to continue your journey with persecuted Christians: a journey of love, care, prayer, and, above all, hope.

THE MENU

1. Serve the meal

Serve coffee or tea and cake. Visit www.opendoors.org.za/fastfoodsix for some recipe ideas.

2. Chew it over

Reflect on your last **Fast Food** challenge (Issue Five). How did it go? What did you find difficult? What did you find easy? How did God speak to you through the experience? How has it helped in your understanding of the persecuted Church?

3. Feast your eyes

Show the video. This video tells a story of Bible smuggling and literature distribution in Central Asia. Find the video on our website at www.opendoors.org.za/fastfoodsix

4. Food for thought

Talk about persecution in Central Asia. Use the Bite Size facts opposite. Share the stories on the placemats. Take the 'Know Your Place(Mat)' quiz (www.opendoors.org.za/fastfoodsix).

5. Pray

Pray for believers in Central Asia. (Use the Bite Size section and Prayer section to help you pray.)

6. Take up the challenge!

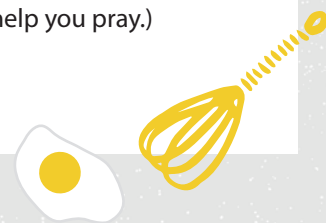
THE CHALLENGE

YOU ARE GOING TO FAST FROM... THE BIBLE

In Central Asia, and, indeed, in many countries around the world, the Bible is banned. People have to keep the Scriptures hidden. In some places, they do not have enough Bibles to go around. Sometimes all people have are handwritten passages, which they keep well hidden. So choose a Bible verse of particular significance to you. (Our placemats include some Bible passages that you might find helpful.) Write out your chosen verse on a piece of paper. Carry it with you, well hidden. Pray it as a prayer each day.

GO LARGE

What if you couldn't even write it down? What if it was too dangerous even to have the words on a scrap of paper? In many countries around the world, the only safe place for Christians to carry the Scriptures is in their heads. So if you want to go large, memorise your chosen passage. Then destroy the piece of paper and see if you can remember the passage accurately, day by day.





BITE SIZE

FAST FACTS ABOUT PERSECUTION IN CENTRAL ASIA

- The Central Asian region contains Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. (Visit www.opendoors.org.za/wwl to read more about these countries.)
- In these countries, many Christians live under government surveillance. House churches are raided. Christians face fines for owning a Bible or even just having Christian songs on their phone.
- Some of these places operate a policy where all religious activities must be state-sanctioned and run. Many Christians risk arrest on charges of destabilising the state because they are seen as a threat to the existing ethno-religious identity of the country.
- Believers from a Muslim Background often face pressure, intimidation and even physical violence from their families and communities. Sometimes they are expelled from their communities. Women who leave Islam risk being kidnapped and married off to a Muslim against their will.

"Thank you so much for visiting us and sharing God's love with us. Greetings and gratitude to all those who are praying for us and helping us in our needs!"
 –Pastor of a secret church in Central Asia

PRAYER

- Pray for wisdom for Christians to know whom to trust – high levels of surveillance mean that even private meetings are monitored.
- Pray for protection for Believers from a Muslim Background, who often face eviction from their home or beatings from their families and communities if their new faith is discovered.
- Pray that the state would allow Christians to freely access Bibles and Christian literature.





HOW IT WORKS

Fast Food is a resource based around several meals. Each meal comes from a different country where Christians are persecuted for their faith. And every second month you do three things...

1 SHARE A MEAL WITH OTHERS

Every two months you share a meal with family, friends, your church group or small group. One time you might have a curry, the next time you might have a tiny, plain bowl of rice. Each meal links to a country where Christians are persecuted.

2 SERVE UP STORIES OF THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

During the meal, you'll explore the challenges that Christians face in that country. To help you, we've provided six menus, suggesting what food to serve, and giving stories and prayer points about the country. There are also videos, downloadable placemats, and recipes on our website at www.opendoors.org.za/sgig

3 TAKE AWAY A 'FASTING' CHALLENGE

At the end of the meal you will be challenged to 'fast' from something or to give something up for a while. It might mean 'fasting' from comfort and sleeping on the floor, or giving up money and trying to cope on a very limited budget. You might even be challenged to 'fast' from speaking! Each challenge gives a taste of what life is like for persecuted Christians around the world. Every second month (or whenever you choose) you can reflect on what you have learned, and how God has spoken to you. And then it will be time for another meal – and a different challenge!

Fast Food is family friendly!

One of the best ways to do **Fast Food** is to share the meals and take the challenges as a family. The menus are easily adaptable for family discussions.



Church Leaders

Fast Food is great for churches. Not only is it ideal for home groups, it's a great way for families to be involved. If members of your church are doing **Fast Food**, how about giving them a few minutes in the Sunday service to share what they are doing?

Fast days

All around the world persecuted Christians know the value of fasting and praying. If you wish, you can make the day of the meal a fast day. Participants can abstain from food during the day, and gather together to break their fast in the evening.



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