

GIVE LIKE A **NORTH KOREAN**

Experience life in North Korea: Imagine, Pray, Act



SMALL GROUP INSPIRATIONAL GUIDE **ISSUE THREE**



OpenDoors

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

"To crush underfoot all prisoners in the land, to deny people their rights before the Most High, to deprive them of justice – would not the Lord see such things?" – Lamentations 3:34-36

IMAGINE A LAND...

Where natural disaster, economic mismanagement and corruption have led to millions of people being malnourished or suffering from food shortages. A land where citizens are officially ranked into three classes: the core, the wavering and the hostile class, and where only those in the right class are properly fed. A land where despite all of this, those who have the least commit to sharing it with those who have nothing.

This is giving in North Korea.

(For more info on this series see p. 4)



PREPARE THINK TALK



You will need:

- Soup. In North Korea, famine has been so severe that many people end up eating grass. We don't suggest you do that (you might if you are really adventurous!). If you want to try something similar, you could try making a green leafy vegetable soup.

Read: Acts 4:32-37

"Everything they owned was held in common..."

- Why do you think the early Church acted in this way? How do you think they were viewed by the society around them?
- Is this just something for 'that time' or are we still supposed to act on the same principles? If so, how?
- Imagine you had to leave home in a hurry. What possessions would you take with you? Now, think about what you would leave behind: is it things you really need?
- North Korean's have a principle called 'Holy Rice' where they set apart some of the food they have to share it with those who are worse off than them. How could you apply the same principle to your life?

IMAGINE

Imagine that your church is like the church in Acts 4. How would you share goods between one another? What would a 'day in the life' of your church look like if this happened? How can your church apply this principle to help those who are in need in your church or community?



PRAY

Everyday life in North Korea is difficult. An Open Doors in-country source paints a gruesome picture of what it is like...

"In winter everything is frozen and there's nothing to eat. Besides, we had to pay additional taxes including a national construction support fee, a military support fee, and a patriot food collecting fee even though there is too little food rations from the North Korean government. These days our people are suffering with severe starvation and hunger. Most people suffer from malnutrition. Furthermore, we can't use our heating stoves, because there's no firewood."

Please pray for all those suffering from hunger, malnourishment and various other sicknesses in North Korea. Ask God to show you how you can share what you have with one another.

ACT

As individuals: Choose which of the actions you will do this month. (see p. 4).

As a group: North Korean Christians rely totally on each other to meet their needs. This month, could your group rely totally on each other? Perhaps you can provide a shared meal each night? Or commit to deliver a meal to each other once a week? As you do so, give thanks and remember the needs of the North Korean Church.

With Open Doors: Every R260 can help keep 1 believer in North Korea alive with emergency aid and spiritual support. Go to www.opendoors.org.za/giftnk

INSIGHT INTO NORTH KOREA



Holy Rice

One Chinese worker involved in missions among North Koreans says he has been deeply challenged by North Korean believers.

"I work mainly with those who have a Christian heritage. If you ask me to choose one word to describe them, I would pick 'faithful'. Not all of them have God's Word, but thanks to their leaders, they really know God's Word and do God's Word. At the height of the famine a leader felt called to reintroduce the concept of 'holy rice', a practice whereby rice is set apart for use in God's kingdom. Ever since, these Christians don't consume all the food they receive from us. They save some to give to people who are even worse off than them. This gives them an opportunity to build trust and later share the Gospel with these people."

ACTION

Which of these will you do?

- **Holy Rice.**

Follow the 'holy rice' principle. Work out the cost of your food budget for a week or more. Look at the food in your cupboards. How much can you share with those who are worse off than you?

- **Fast for a day.**

Imagine what your life would be like if you had to do this every day. Pray for those in North Korea without enough to eat.



The lives of North Koreans are constantly scrutinised. Every Saturday, citizens attend their local Kim Il-Sung research centre where they study the teachings of the great leaders and take part in 'criticism' sessions to address the ways they have failed the state. Every citizen is also part of the *Inminban* – a kind of neighbourhood watch system. No North Korean person exists outside the *Inminban* system; everyone is a member. The leaders of these *Inminban* groups write reports on their neighbours: Have their members had visitors? Been away from home for any reason? Are the portraits of the leaders kept clean?

For Christians – who believe that there is a higher authority than the nation's leaders – life is perilous. "I was afraid, every day, for my life," said one. This is one reason why Christian parents don't often tell their children about their faith. Children might let something slip, sing a song, say a prayer, which could result in their entire family disappearing, them being executed or more likely sent to labour camps.

Even for those who aren't locked up, life is incredibly hard. The economy is in a state of collapse. And it's estimated that famine has killed between two and three million people in

North Korea since the early 1990s.

While living under such conditions, North Korean Christians and citizens alike need much prayer...

In this resource you will find readings and prayers to help you pray with the underground Church in North Korea. The stories you will read show the hardship, pain and suffering of North Korean believers, but also their joy, courage and faith – because, amazingly, despite the secrecy and pressure and fear, the Church is growing!

But what makes this resource different is that it also challenges **you** to live like a North Korean.

Along with Bible readings and prayers, there are actions that will help you experience a little of what North Korean Christians endure every day. You might end up living without electricity (or food). You might bury your Bible or learn long political thoughts of the 'Dear Leader'. These actions can't replicate the reality, but they can, with prayerful reflection, provide a window into the world of North Korean Christians.



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