

GUIGANG 贵港

Guigang City, also known as Guixian, is situated in the southern part of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in southwest China.

Despite its population of more than 1.8 million people, few outsiders visit Guigang, which is located on the banks of the Yu River, 155 km (96 miles) east of the provincial capital, Nanning. As a result of its comparative backwardness, foreigners who spend time in Guigang are invariably met with interested stares from the locals, some of whom may have never seen a Westerner before.

Guigang is on the trainline towards the Guangdong city of Zhanjiang and Hainan Island. Five trains per day stop at Guigang. Nanshan Park, on the southern edge of the city, is a collection of karst hills, caves and rock formations. Apart from Nanshan Park there is little in Guigang to attract tourists. From a Christian perspective, however, Guigang is home to a fascinating array of precious, needy people. In addition to its more than 70% Han Chinese majority. The city also boasts more than 400,000 ethnic Zhuang people.

The Zhuang are the largest of China's officially recognized minority groups, with a population of 18 million, approximately the same size as Australia. Many

Population:
1,387,939 (1990)
1,865,250 (2000)
2,506,600 (2010)

Province:
Guangxi

Major Ethnic Groups:

Han 70.8%
Zhuang 28.9%
Yao 0.1%
Bouyei 0.1%

Christians:
8,000 (0.4%)

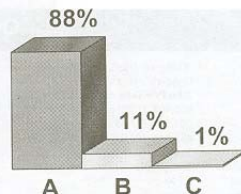
of the Zhuang living in urban areas, however, have lost the use of their mother tongue and now are culturally indistinguishable from the Han Chinese. Indeed, when Chinese authorities approached Zhuang leaders in the 1950's with the suggestion they form a separate nationality, the Zhuang opposed the idea. Of 152 Zhuang clans in Guangxi, all claimed to be Han Chinese, and even falsified documents to "prove" their Han ancestry.

The fear of the Zhuang to be recognized separately stems from centuries of discrimination against them by the Chinese. Today, only about four million of

the 18 million Zhuang in China are able to speak their language, the remainder now speak Chinese. The Zhuang language is from the Tai linguistic family, showing them to be the ancestors of today's far-flung Tai peoples, who are dispersed from southern China to northeast India. The Tai race includes the Lao of Laos, the Shan of Myanmar, and of course, the Thais of Thailand.

In addition to the Han Chinese and Zhuang, there are small communities of Yao (750 people), Bouyei (275), Mulao (178), Miao (166) and Maonan (126) residing in Guigang City. Prior to the 1950's, Guigang was a small, insignificant town. With the opening of the railroad, dozens of factories

Status of Evangelization (Awareness of Christ and the Gospel)



A = have never heard the Gospel or the name of Christ
B = were evangelized but have not yet become Christians
C = Adherents to any form of Christianity



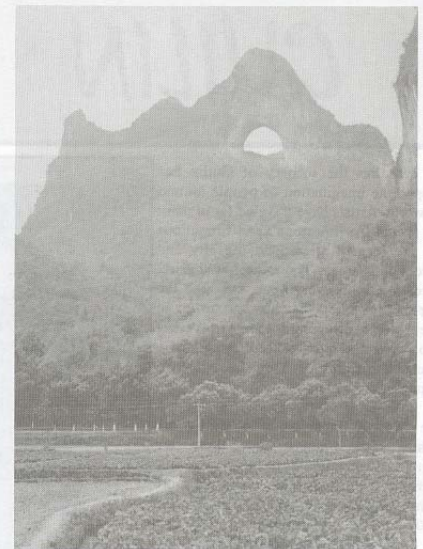
sprang up in southern Guangxi, bringing an influx of immigrants from other parts of southern China. Today, the majority of people (87%) in Guigang are still engaged in agriculture. Interestingly, in 1990 Guigang boasted 50 centurions (people aged over 100 years old). This was more than the entire number of centurions in Beijing, which has a population five times larger than Guigang.

Guigang has a very low divorce rate, and a high birth rate. More than five people per household were recorded in Guigang during the 1990 census, considerably higher than most other cities in China. Guigang also has a very low education rate, with a mere 1,092 people (less than one out of every thousand) enrolled in a university in 1990.

Protestant missions work in Guangxi in the early years was dominated by the China Inland Mission and the Christian & Missionary Alliance. The CMA headquarters, established in 1862, were located in Wuzhou in the east of the province. By 1949 they had established 65 churches, including one in Guigang.

Catholic work in Guangxi started in the 17th century, when French missionaries entered the province from Vietnam. In 1919 the American Maryknoll Fathers commenced work in Guangxi. They agreed to confine their work to the eastern part of the province, leaving the other sections to the French priests.

Although there are estimated to be about 8,000 Christians of all kinds living in Guigang City, this represents a mere 0.4% of the population. Guigang is in desperate need of missionaries and church-planters to live among the people and share Jesus Christ by word and deed. Until Christians obey Christ's command to Go, the people of Guigang will remain unreached and hell-bound.



The countryside of southern Guangxi contains some remarkable karst rock formations. The Gospel has made little impact among the people in this impoverished and mountainous province.

Pray for Guigang

- 1 Guigang is not an attractive tourist city, but God is concerned for its 1.8 million inhabitants. He desires that none would perish. Pray the people of Guigang would soon know Christ.
- 2 Pray the strongholds of atheism, animism, ancestor worship and Buddhism would be broken and that God would pour out His Spirit of revival among the people of Guigang.
- 3 Pray God would call and send Christians from wherever He chooses to share the life of Jesus Christ with Guigang's people.

Overview of Guigang

Pronunciation	"Gwai-gung"
Old Spelling	Kaei-kang
Location	Guangxi Zhuang Aut. Region, southwest China
Population	1,387,939 (1990 census)
Males	716,749 (51.64%)
Females	671,190 (48.36%)
Households	275,088
Average household	5.05 people
Divorced people	>4,175
% of population	0.30%
Centurions (1990)	50 people aged 100 or more
Immigrants to City	2,469 per year
From same province	2,116 (85.7%)
From other provinces	353 (14.3%)

Employed people	: 714,386 (51.5% of total population)
Main Industries	: Agriculture 86.9%; Industrial 4.0%; Professional 3.5%
Educational	: University: 0.1%
Attainment	High School: 28.6%
(highest level attended)	Primary School: 57.5%
Population under 15	: Never attended any level of school: 13.8%; 36.3%
Adult Literacy	: 87% (men 95%; women 78%)
Major Nationalities	: Han 983,988
	Zhuang 402,166
	Yao 742
	Bouyei 274
	Mulao 178
	Others (21 groups): 591
Christians	: 8,000 (0.4%)