

# Qufu

曲阜

Qufu, one of the most famous cities in China, is home to approximately 650,000 people. Located in south-central Shandong Province in eastern China, Qufu is a city of monumental importance to the Chinese people because it is the birth and burial place of Confucius.

Confucius (*Kong Zi* in Chinese) was born in 551 BC into an impoverished aristocratic family. He had a difficult life when he was young. When he was 50 years old he began to hold some posts as a minor official, and entered politics for four years. Most of his life had been spent as a teacher. His humble existence gave little indication of the impact his teachings were to have on every generation of Chinese to this day. Confucius traveled widely for 14 years, returning to Qufu at the age of 68. Although he hardly ever put pen to paper, his 3,000 devoted followers recorded his teachings and put them into a book, *The Analects of Confucius*.

After his death in 479 BC, Confucius' followers mourned for three years. A follower named Zi Gong built a hut next to the tomb and stayed alongside his deceased teacher for six years. The site became the Confucius Cemetery, which today contains more than 100,000 graves and 20,000 trees.

**Population:**  
594,486 (1990)  
631,947 (2000)  
671,800 (2010)

**Province:**  
Shandong

**Major Ethnic Groups:**

Han 99.5%  
Hui 0.3%  
Manchu 0.1%  
Mongol 0.1%

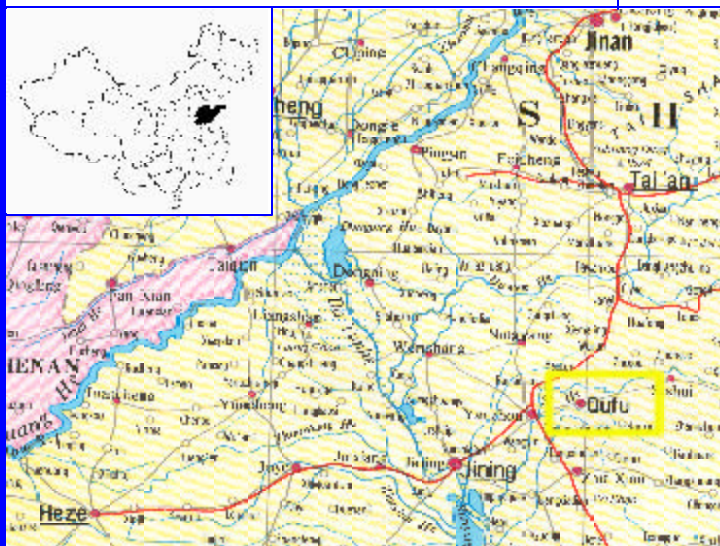
**Christians:**  
11,000 (1.8%)

Although Confucianism is usually not defined as a religion, there is no doubt that for two and a half thousand years Chinese people have adhered to his teachings and conformed their thinking to his principles. His image is worshipped to this day. The Temple of Confucius in Qufu contains a massive idol of the sage. Visitors often prostrate themselves in worship and meditation before the idol.

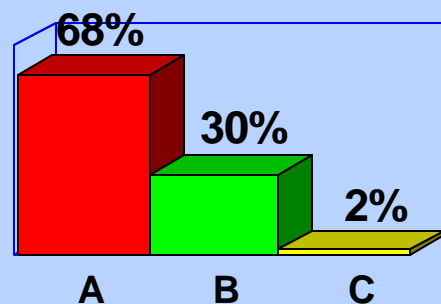
In many ways, Confucian thought has had more impact on Chinese culture than either Buddhism or Daoism.

His teachings advocated kindness and ethics, some of which mirrored the words of Christ, such as "do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire." Confucius founded the idea that governments and dynasties rule by a decree of heaven, and that if they prove to be corrupt, heaven will remove them from power. This teaching greatly contributed to the fact China has never practiced democracy, and affected the overthrow of dynasties and the implementation of tyrannical rulers, who concluded if heaven had placed them on the throne then they had the right to govern as they wanted.

Other Chinese thinking greatly influenced by Confucianism includes filial piety, and the idea that one must work hard and live frugally, helping give rise



## 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 = Adherants to any form of Christianity



to the ambitious Chinese entrepreneurial spirit.

The direct heirs of Confucius continued to unofficially rule over Qufu for 2500 years after his death, until the firstborn son of the 77th generation of the Kong family fled into exile in Taiwan in 1948.

Each year - in spring and autumn - two festivals in honor of Confucius are held in the massive Kong Miao (Confucius Temple) in the heart of Qufu. The temple complex has grown so large that it now occupied about 20% of the downtown Qufu area. Qufu has become a hugely popular tourist destination. Visitors may find the continual hassle of dealing with souvenir sellers and pedicab drivers a burden, but the masses of people coming through Qufu year round offers Christians a rare opportunity to witness to a large number of Christless people from all around China and the world.

Qufu has always been a city that missionaries viewed as a strategic spiritual stronghold, but few were able to make any long-lasting impact with the Gospel. The first Protestant missionaries in the city arrived in 1912. Ten years later they had managed to win only 91 converts to the Lord.

Today only about 1.8% of Qufu's population profess to be Christians. Little Gospel witness takes place in this unreached city.

## Pray for Qufu

- 1** Pray against the spiritual influence of Confucianism in China. Pray God's Word would be honored in Qufu.
- 2** Pray thousands of pilgrims who come to Qufu would hear the Gospel.
- 3** Ask God to bless and strengthen His church in Qufu City.

## Overview of Qufu (based on 1990 census)

Pronunciation	: "Chwee-foo"
Old Spelling	: Kufau, Kufow
Location	: central Shandong Province, East China
Population	: 594,486 (1990 census)
Males	: 305,309 (51.36%)
Females	: 288,577 (48.64%)
Households	: 148,631
Average Household	: 4.0 people
Divorced People	: 1,016
% divorced of Population	: 0.17
Centurions (1990)	: 2 people aged 100 or more
Immigrants to City	: 12,325
From same province	: 9,753 (79.1%)
From other provinces	: 2,571 (20.9%)

Employed People	: 362,005 (60.9% of total population)
Main Industries	: Agriculture 83.0%, Industrial 7.1%
Education (highest level attended):	University: 2.5% High School: 36.6% Primary school: 38.8% Never attended any school: 22.1%
Population under 15:	163,198 (27.5%)
Adult Illiteracy	: 24.5% (men 13.3%; women 36.1%)
Major Nationalities	: Han 592,769 Hui 1,632 Manchu 62 Mongol 5 Others 18 (10 groups)
Christians (2003)	: 11,000 (1.8%)