

# SUINING 遂宁

Although few people have ever heard of Suining City in the central part of Sichuan Province, it is nevertheless one of the largest cities in southwest China. The city has a population of almost 1.7 million people, which is expected to rise to well-over 2.2 million by 2010. Suining Prefecture includes one district and two counties, which have a combined population of 3.58 million. Suining is located about half way between Mianyang City (profiled in this book) and Chongqing. Newly-constructed roads have made Suining more accessible to both cities than ever before, but the main mode for transportation of goods remain by boat.

**Population:**  
1,259,604 (1990)  
1,692,800 (2000)  
2,274,900 (2010)

**Province:**  
Sichuan

#### Major Ethnic Groups:

Han 99.7%  
Yi 0.1%  
Tibetan 0.1%  
Wa 0.1%

**Christians:**  
11,000 (0.7%)

Despite its size, Suining is just one of about a dozen similarly-large cities in eastern and central Sichuan. Until recently, Sichuan Province contained around 110 million inhabitants. In 1997, however, the Chinese authorities cut Chongqing Municipality out of Sichuan and formed it into a separate administrative unit. This move has lowered the population of Sichuan down to around 85 million.

Suining is overwhelmingly Han Chinese. The only minority groups with significant representation in Suining are the 800 Yi, 400 Tibetans, 300 Wa, and 250 each from the Dai and Hani nationalities.

Suining is located on the Fujiang River. The area is known throughout China as the Sichuan Rice Bowl because of its extremely favorable land and abundant food production. This is reflected in the employment statistics for Suining, which show more than 86% of the city's inhabitants are employed in the agricultural sector. Suining is a key base for the production of grain, cotton, oil, pork, silk, fruit, natural gas and bittern.

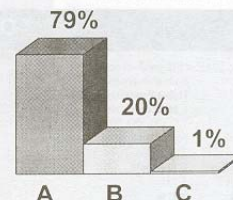
In recent years the city has grown quickly. New buildings have been erected. The textile, food processing, machine building and chemical industries have all experienced rapid growth.



Bicycles are the main transportation in most Chinese cities.



#### 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

In ancient times Sichuan was home to minority peoples such as today's Yi, Tibetans and Qiang who still inhabit the more remote areas in the province. Chinese settlers flooded into Sichuan in such huge numbers that the minority peoples had no hope of retaining their land or culture. Most retreated to isolated mountain hamlets, where they could continue to practice their customs and speak their language in relative peace. Those who chose to remain on the plains were quickly absorbed into the Han scheme.

In the later part of the Han Dynasty (around 200 AD), the Sichuan Basin became a Daoist theocratic society for a time. The Daoist rebellion of 189 AD, led by Zhang Daolin, gained control. The priests controlled the region until Han troops marched upon them and defeated them in 215. This era gave birth to what some writers have termed a succession of Daoist Popes, a line of rulers that extended until the early 1900's.

The first Protestant missionary to arrive in Sichuan was Griffith John in 1869, some 230 years later than the Catholics. The China Inland Mission was active in Sichuan, including the areas around Suining, as were the Conservative Baptists and the American Baptists. The missionaries opened schools, hospitals and orphanages and generally did all they could to make Christ known to the people, but the advance of the Gospel was slow. Sichuan Province received a boost when evangelists from house-church movements in eastern China obeyed God's call and commenced work in Sichuan in the 1980's. Although their efforts have caused the number of believers in Sichuan to grow by as many as 200,000, Suining has not been affected by this movement, which has generally been confined to rural areas among impoverished farmers. Only about 0.7% of Suining's population profess to follow Jesus Christ today.



Suining is an agricultural-based city in the heart of the Sichuan Rice Bowl. The city is well-watered and fertile, but few people in Suining have ever heard the Gospel in a clear and life-transforming manner.

#### Pray for Suining

- 1 Lift up the 1.7 souls in Suining City before God's throne in Heaven. He loves them and wants to know them intimately. Pray Suining will soon be impacted by the power of God's Word.
- 2 Ask God to glorify the Name of Jesus Christ among the people of Suining. Pray He would cause many to hunger and thirst for the Truth.
- 3 Pray Christians from all over China would heed God's call to take the Gospel to the people of Suining.

#### Overview of Suining

Pronunciation : "Sway-ning"  
Old Spelling : Sui-ning  
Location : Sichuan Province, southwest China  
Population : 1,259,604 (1990 census)  
Males : 644,356 (51.15%)  
Females : 615,248 (48.85%)  
Households : 341,090  
Average household : 3.69 people  
Divorced people : 4,670  
% of population : 0.37%  
Centurians (1990) : 14 people aged 100 or more  
Immigrants to City : 5,895 per year  
From same province : 4,566 (77.5%)  
From other provinces : 1,328 (22.5%)

Employed people : 759,811 (60.3% of total population)  
Main Industries : Agriculture 86.6%; Industrial 5.5%; Professional 3.0%  
Educational : University: 0.2%  
Attainment : High School: 27.7%  
(highest level : Primary School: 53.9%  
attended) : Never attended any level of school: 18.2%  
Population under 15 : 27%  
Adult Literacy : 80% (men 89%, women 71%)  
Major Nationalities : Han 1,256,524  
Yi 807  
Tibetan 402  
Wa 296  
Hani / Dai 243 each Others (34 groups): 1,089  
Christians : 11,000 (0.7%)