

SUIZHOU 随州

Suizhou City, located in north-central Hubei Province, is home to approximately 1.9 million people. Located at the juncture of three rivers: the Yunshui, Juehe and Fuhe, Suizhou is little-known despite its significant size. Few tourists have reason to include Suizhou on their itinerary, although visitors can view a huge meteorite which fell in the suburbs of Suizhou on February 15, 1997. Some tour groups use Suizhou as a base for visiting the Hongshan Mountains, 62 km (38 miles) southwest of the city. Hongshan contains a host of limestone caves as well as attractive mountain scenery.

Population:
1,439,770 (1990)
1,934,900 (2000)
2,600,300 (2010)

Province:
Hubei

Major Ethnic Groups:

Han 99.7%
Hui 0.1%
Tujia 0.1%
Zhuang 0.1%

Christians:
7,500 (0.4%)

Apart from 1,000 Hui Muslims, Suizhou is practically completely comprised of Han Chinese who speak a variety of Mandarin. In China, each province is characterized by other Chinese people in different ways. Hubei's 57 million inhabitants are generalized as being argumentative, difficult to do business with, and not very trustworthy.

The 1990 census revealed Suizhou to be a predominantly farming community, with more-than 80% of families gaining their income through the agricultural sector. An additional 65,000 people in the city are employed in industrial work. Suizhou is slowly developing into an industrialized manufacturing city, but for now it retains a

rural atmosphere.

An interesting sidelight is that not a single person living in Suizhou in 1990 was aged over a hundred. This is uncommon in China. Most cities the size of Suizhou have a dozen centuries or more.

Although missionary work got underway in Hubei Province in the 1860's, work advanced slowly among the suspicious people in the province. When the Boxer Rebellion broke out in 1900, most foreigners were able to escape before the trouble caught up with them, but in some parts of Hubei the sickening violence took its toll. Ironically, it was missionaries fleeing south from Shanxi Province who got caught in Hubei. James and Marti Hefley recount what happened....

"One group of fourteen included two families with six young children and four single women.... Mobs followed them from one village boundary to the next, hurling sticks and stones, shouting, 'Death to the foreign devils!' Robbers stripped them of everything but a few rags. Emaciated from hunger and thirst, shoeless, barebacked in the scorching heat, desperately trying to hold up filthy, torn Chinese trousers, they staggered from village to village half alive. The young children displayed remarkable insight and faith. 'If they loved Jesus they would not do this,' seven-year-old

Jessie Saunders reminded her parents.... A few days later Jessie's baby sister, Isabel, died from beatings and exposure to the hot sun. As Jessie grew weaker, she cried for a place of rest. Her wish was granted a week after Isabel's death. The two children were buried beside the road.



Hattie Rice



Mary E. Huston

(Hefley, *By Their Blood*, p.25)

On July 12 Hattie Rice collapsed in the heat. A mob began stoning her and a man ran a cart over her naked body to break her spine. Her companion, Mary Huston, shielded her body until shamefaced men came with clothing. When she was again clothed, they took her from Miss Huston to a temple and consulted their gods about her fate. When a priest announced that the gods would let her live, the men carried her back to the other missionaries on a stretcher. She died a short time later."



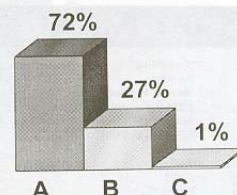
Suizhou is an urban city with a rural feel. For centuries the people of Suizhou have gone about their business without any awareness of Christ or the Gospel that can save them from hell.

Pray for Suizhou

- 1 Pray the Holy Spirit would soften the hearts of people in Suizhou to seek Him. Pray evangelists and church-planters would not be mocked and attacked, but would find hungry hearts for God.
- 2 Loving missionaries have spilled their blood in Hubei Province, but One greater than they spilled His Blood that they might be reconciled to God. Pray the people will soon hear the Good News.
- 3 Ask God to send evangelists to Suizhou who are more stubborn in their commitment to God than the city is to stay bound in its sin.



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

Today, people in the countryside of Hubei are still considered among the most violent and superstitious people in China. They are also among the most unreached.

Suizhou has a small church today, but most people in the city have never been witnessed to and know nothing about the merits of Christianity. Suizhou remains a large, needy and hell-bound city with little exposure to the Light of the Gospel.

Overview of Suizhou

Pronunciation : "Sway-joe"
Old Spelling : Sui-chou
Location : Hubei Province, central China
Population : 1,439,770 (1990 census)
Males : 736,830 (51.17%)
Females : 702,940 (48.83%)
Households : 352,004
Average household : 4.09 people
Divorced people : 4,718
% of population : 0.33%
Centurions (1990) : 0 people aged 100 or more
Immigrants to City : 3,823 per year
From same province : 1,885 (49.3%)
From other provinces : 1,937 (50.7%)

Employed people : 850,795 (59.1% of total population)
Main Industries : Agriculture 80.8%; Industrial 7.6%; Commerce 4.4%
Educational : University: 0.1%
Attainment : High School: 39.8%
(highest level : Primary School: 39.9%
attended) : Never attended any level of school: 20.2%
Population under 15 : 18.0%
Adult Literacy : 76% (men 84%; women 68%)
Major Nationalities : Han 1,438,634
Hui 900
Tujia 81
Zhuang 39
Manchu 35
Others (15 groups): 81
Christians : 7,500 (0.4%)