

XINING 西宁

Approximately 900,000 people inhabit Xining City in northwest China's Qinghai Province. With many immigrants flooding into Xining from other parts of China, the population of the city is expected to rise to more than 1.26 million by 2010.

Xining is the only city or town of any significant size in the entire Qinghai Province. Qinghai, which means 'Blue Sea', is a vast, sparsely populated plateau. Nomadic Tibetans and Mongols, plus a significant number of Muslims, are the main occupants of Qinghai outside of Xining. The eastern part of the province is a grassy plateau that rises to between 2,500 to 3,000 meters (8,200 - 9,840 feet) above sea-level.

Most of Qinghai was formerly part of the Tibetan Empire, known as Amdo Province. Except for areas around Xining City, the province was not incorporated into the Chinese empire until the early 1700's. Qinghai has a reputation as a desolate and harsh backwater of China. It is the location of many Chinese labor camps, where many political and common prisoners have been forced to do hard labor. Many of the current Han Chinese in the province are former prisoners, or the descendants of former prisoners, who, having been released with no documents or papers, have little choice but to settle down

Population:
697,780 (1990)
937,750 (2000)
1,260,200 (2010)

Province:
Qinghai

Major Ethnic Groups:

Han 85.1%
Hui 12.2%
Tibetan 1.0%
Manchu 0.7%

Christians:
8,000 (0.9%)

in Qinghai.

Xining has been a major Chinese town and a military garrison since the 1500's. It is located on the edge of the Tibetan Plateau. Xining City itself is 2,200 meters (7,216 feet) above sea-level, causing visitors to experience some dizziness and other symptoms of high altitude if they have arrived from lower regions. Today, Xining is a major stop on the trainline from Lanzhou to Urumqi. In many ways Xining is overshadowed by Lanzhou, just a few hours away by train.

Although 85% of Xining's population are Han Chinese, there are significant minority communities also scattered around the city. More than 85,500 Hui Muslims live in the center of Xining. The Great Mosque, located on Dongguan Dajie Road, was built in the 14th century and is one of the largest in China. More than 6,600 Tibetans call Xining their home, as do more than 5,000 ethnic Manchu, 2,200 members of the Tu nationality, and more than 1,900 Mongols. In all, Xining contains people from 36 of China's 55 official minority groups.

Xining is a gateway of the interesting Tu nationality, the majority of whom are located in Huzhu County, a short distance north of Xining. The more-than 200,000 Tu are followers of Tibetan Buddhism, yet they speak a language

from the Mongolian family. They are believed to be the descendants of a Mongolian garrison who were stationed in the area during the Mongol Empire of the 13th and 14th centuries. Other interesting minority groups south and southwest of Xining include the Turkic-speaking *Salar* (113,000), the 12,000 Mongol-speaking *Bonan*, and the 2,000 members of the *Wutun* ethnic group, who are not officially recognized by the Chinese authorities.

Although Xining City itself is relatively new by Chinese standards, the surrounding areas contain many strongholds of Tibetan Buddhism. Ta'er Monastery, just 26 km (16 miles) southeast of Xining, is recognized as one of the six great monasteries of the Yellow Hat sect of Buddhism.

The history of missionary activity in Xining is noticeable for its lack of workers. China Inland Mission's Easton and Parker arrived in Lanzhou in 1877, and by 1885 had succeeded in opening up Xining to missions work. The first church was planted in 1889. The early focus for the missionaries were the Tibetans and Muslims, but the work gravitated towards the Han Chinese. Few laborers ever lived in Xining for any length of time, however. In 1949, there were only about 400 known Christians in all of Qinghai Province. Since then, the church in the province has grown to approximately 30,000, of which an estimated 8,000 live in Xining City. Despite this encouraging growth, the total number of believers in Xining still represents less than one percent of the total population.

There are still large sections of society in Xining that have remained practically untouched by the Gospel, especially among the Muslim and Tibetan peoples. Although there are several ministries quietly trying to reach the Hui in Xining, work has been slow and most of the effort so far has been relationship-building for a later harvest.



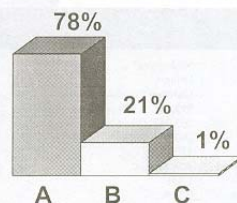
More than 200,000 Tu people live north of Xining in Qinghai Province. They are an unreached people who zealously follow Tibetan Buddhism. Xining is an ideal location from which to target the Tu.

Pray for Xining

- 1 Pray all the people of Xining would soon have a chance to hear the Gospel in an intelligible manner. Pray thousands would be added to the church.
- 2 Ask God to call and prepare workers to go throughout their city and reach out to the several unreached people groups who live near Xining.
- 3 Pray the Christians in Xining would be faith-filled and zealous evangelists among those who do not know Christ.



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

Overview of Xining

Pronunciation : "Shee-ning"
Old Spelling : Hsi-ning
Location : Qinghai Province, northwest China
Population : 697,780 (1990 census)
Males : 362,078 (51.89%)
Females : 335,702 (48.11%)
Households : 129,410
Average household : 3.89 people
Divorced people : 6,324
% of population : 0.91%
Centurions (1990) : 2 people aged 100 or more
Immigrants to City : 16,016 per year
From same province : 9,884 (61.7%)
From other provinces : 6,128 (38.3%)

Employed people : 363,865 (52.1% of total population)
Main Industries : Industrial 34.5%; Professional 15.7%; Agriculture 13%
Educational : University: 3.1%
Attainment : High School: 60.6%
(highest level) Primary School: 26.0%
attended) Never attended any level of school: 10.3%
Population under 15 : 21.1%
Adult Literacy : 87% (men 93%; women 81%)
Major Nationalities : Han 593,843
Hui 85,455
Tibetan 6,661
Manchu 5,030
Tu 2,188
Others (32 groups): 4,603
Christians : 8,000 (0.9%)