



— A 3 / DAY —
PRAYER GUIDE

Introduction

Thank you for joining in for a month of prayer for the peoples of Vietnam. Our hope is that this prayer guide will serve people and churches who are passionate about reaching all of Vietnam with the gospel.

Please spread the word and pass this guide on to mobilize more people to pray with us. You are welcome to forward this guide to others, print it, and distribute it to your church. Please ask permission before doing any editing of this guide.

As you join us on this 31-day prayer journey, you will discover that the peoples of Vietnam are incredibly diverse and unique. The country has 74 people groups with their own languages and cultures! We will introduce you to a few of these groups, including the Kinh majority group and several of the minority unreached people groups. You will also get a glimpse of culture and religion in Vietnam and have the opportunity to pray for people in all walks of life. Use each day to pray for God's name to be glorified among every people group in Vietnam.

If you would like for someone to share more with your church about how God is working in Vietnam, please email info@prayforvietnam.org.

PrayForVietnam.org is a great resource for more stories and prayer requests for the peoples of Vietnam. You can also follow us on Twitter @ **PrayForVietnam** for regular requests and updates.

Why Vietnam?

Vietnam has **74 different people groups**. Of those groups, only **3** are considered to be reached, while **48** are **unreached with the gospel**. An overwhelming **23** **people groups are considered to be unengaged and unreached**, meaning that there is no one currently working to reach them.

About **50 percent** of Vietnamese people consider themselves to be Buddhists, but almost all Vietnamese practice ancestor worship or worship of the spirits of the dead. Only **1.8 percent** of Vietnamese people are Evangelical Christians.

Christians sometimes face persecution from the government and their families, including excommunication, estrangement from communities, and sometimes even beatings. This is more prevalent in rural and mountainous areas. For many Christians in Vietnam, persecution is a reality.

Join us this month in praying for the peoples of Vietnam.



Week One

Day 1 **BEATEN BUT NOT BROKEN**

Pastor Dun* lay on the ground covered in his own sweat and blood. Authorities ordered him to sign a paper promising to never return to the village to worship God. He refused again, and they brought out the electric batons, beating him over the head and shattering his knee. As his shrieks echoed through the village, Dun's wife rushed into the room to stop the beatings. Soon she was also on the floor, unconscious, after being pushed against the wall.

Despite severe beatings from morning until afternoon, local authorities could not break Dun and the other Christians. It was their last effort in silencing a growing church movement in the rural village. Previously, officials had refused to register the church and collected names of all the members for several rounds of interrogations. Many were afraid and abandoned the faith, but others would not be intimidated.

Pastor Dun and other Christians knew that their fellow believers needed support, so they came from a nearby village to worship and encourage the church. Dun was no stranger to the authorities, especially after being a part of several church plants in the area. Though they sought to tear him down and silence the movement of God among the villagers, officials could not deter Dun and his fellow believers from worshipping God. Today, there is still a church in this village and believers remain faithful to the Lord despite persecution.

Pray for church leaders like Dun to be bold in their faith and encourage their congregations to stand up for Christ no matter the obstacle.

Pray for the gospel to continue to spread in remote areas like Dun's village and for more churches to be planted.

*Name changed

Day 2 **THE GIAY PEOPLE**

In the remote areas of northern Vietnam live the Giay people (pronounced "Zay"). The Giay migrated from China about 200 years ago and are animists, practicing spirit worship. Twice a year the Giay people sacrifice animals in order to appease the spirits of their villages. Mostly farmers, of the over 55,000 Giay people, there are fewer than 10 known believers in Christ.

Pray for the Giay people to have Scripture in their own language. Currently, they have the Jesus film in a language similar to theirs.

Pray for the small number of believers to grow in faith and to reach out to their own people with the gospel.

Day 3 **HONORING THE DEAD**

Most Vietnamese people are very spiritual. Though about half of the people identify themselves as Buddhist, the core of Vietnamese spirituality is ancestor worship and honoring spirits of the dead. Nearly every household contains an ancestor altar where Vietnamese pray to the spirits of the dead, burn incense, and offer up food or money to their ancestors. People who decide to leave this traditional lifestyle to follow Jesus face severe persecution from their families and are labeled as ancestor traitors.

Pray that God would destroy the spiritual bonds of ancestor worship that hold Vietnamese people in darkness and reveal His truth to them.

Pray for Christians to have boldness and strength to show love and honor to their families without worshipping ancestors.

Day 4 RICH AND POOR

Vietnam has a rapidly developing economy. Over the past 20 years, Vietnam has seen a remarkable improvement in poverty reduction. However, the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen. In the remote rural areas where over half of the impoverished people live, many still struggle to have enough food and clean water. Children in these areas experience health problems such as malnutrition, respiratory disease, and internal parasites.

Pray that God will save wealthy and influential people in areas such as business, education, government, and healthcare, and inspire them to help the poor.

Pray for Christians who are working to help reduce poverty among rural people in Vietnam to be allowed to help and to have opportunities to share the gospel.

Day 5 VIETNAMESE BUDDHISTS

Buddhism practiced in places like Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, gets most of its influence from Chinese Buddhism because of the thousand years of Chinese control over Vietnam. Though it is called Buddhism, like many other religions in Vietnam, the practice of Vietnamese Buddhism draws from many different things, from fortune telling to animism to ancestor worship. About 50 percent of the over 90 million Vietnamese people identify themselves as Buddhist.

Pray for the millions of Buddhists in Vietnam to find true joy and peace that can only come from God. Many go to temples hoping to find happiness.

Pray for Christians in Vietnam to have many opportunities to share the gospel with Buddhists in a way that will speak to their desire for spiritual fulfillment.

Day 6 STREET LIFE

On a typical work day for Sai,* she could walk miles of city blocks with her shop on her shoulders. Her hopes of a meal for the day depend on emptying the two baskets dangling from a bamboo pole. Like many in large cities, Sai operates a portable store, selling anything from drinks and cigarettes to fresh fruit and spring rolls. Street vendors like Sai work long hours and have difficult lives.

Pray for street vendors in Vietnam to find the provision and love offered in a relationship with Christ.

Pray for Christians in Vietnam to take every opportunity to show love and share the message of salvation with street vendors.

Day 7 TRAINING TIMOTHYS

One of the biggest challenges in the Vietnamese church is training and equipping leaders. The communist government has typically restricted the church's ability to train pastors, especially those from rural areas. In recent years in northern Vietnam, Christian churches have had more freedom to educate leaders in seminaries and send teachers to provinces to train pastors.

Pray for more rural pastors and leaders to have the opportunity to be trained and equipped and to reach out to the communities around them with the gospel.

Pray for the Vietnamese church to have favor with government leaders and to be allowed to continue training leaders and growing the church.

*Name changed

Week Two

Day 8 IS THE WORLD WATCHING?

According to Open Doors International, Vietnam has moved to the #16 spot on the World Watch List for persecution of Christians. So what does this mean?

In 2014 violence against Christians continued with reports of church buildings and Christians' homes being destroyed. Many Christians in rural areas experience threats from officials and oppression from their communities. Producing and distributing Christian materials can be difficult and is highly restricted. The Communists still see Christianity as a foreign influence and keep tight restrictions.

Pray for Christian leaders and pastors, especially those in the north and central highlands where authorities keep a close watch on their activities.

Pray for Christians who have been persecuted to remain strong in their faith and to boldly proclaim the gospel.

Day 9 THE HMONG PEOPLE

In the 1990s, word spread that several hundred thousand Hmong people had accepted Christ as their Savior. Many Hmong heard the gospel through evangelistic short-wave radio broadcasts. Today, the Hmong people are considered to be a reached people group! Praise God that His gospel has reached the Hmong people! May more Hmong come to Christ and be able to attend church trainings.

Pray that the Hmong will be used by God to share the gospel with the other people groups around them.

Pray that Hmong Christians will have access to God's Word. In some villages there are only one or two Bibles.

Day 10 RELIGIOUS BLENDING

Common to Vietnamese religious life is the mixing of multiple religions or belief systems into one religion. This practice is often called *syncretism*.

Syncretism is especially prevalent in Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism, which are considered to be "three religions from the same source" to many Vietnamese people. Along with these three, Vietnamese combine other gods and idols into their personal beliefs and religious practices.

Pray for Vietnamese to emerge from the confusion of combining many religions and understand that there is no other name by which they will be saved except Jesus.

Pray for Christians in Vietnam to boldly proclaim the gospel and the exclusive nature of Jesus as Lord.

Day 11 HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Vietnam is both a source and a destination for human trafficking of men, women, and children. Several countries, including China, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea, and the United Kingdom, receive Vietnamese who have been trafficked for sexual and labor exploitation. Vietnam also is a destination for children who are trafficked for the sex industry.

The causes of human trafficking in Vietnam are vast. Many people are tricked into false marriages; others are enticed out of a situation of poverty or inability to find work. Lack of awareness and a low education level also contribute to the dire situation of human trafficking in Vietnam.

Pray for the victims of human trafficking to escape their lives of slavery and to be able to recover emotionally and physically.

Pray for victims and perpetrators in the human trafficking industry to be changed forever by the gospel of Christ.

Day 12 THE STUDENT

Trung* is the oldest of four children in his family. He was so excited to move to the city to begin college, though he worried about being 50 miles away from his family. Now Trung sits in the corner of the room late at night reading by flashlight and hoping not to wake his room-mates. It is his only time to study since he works every day after class. He is glad to have a room within walking distance to campus and his job at a coffee stand, although he does share it with several other guys like him. It was the only way they could all afford rent on their small, part-time job salaries and still be able to study.

As his last year in college approaches, Trung must do his best to finish and find a job in the city. He longs to be back in the quiet, green countryside where his family lives, but his sister will begin college shortly after he graduates. As in many families, Trung will be responsible for supporting all of his siblings as they come to study in the city. With so much riding on Trung's shoulders, he has little time to think about spiritual things that so easily get pushed to the side among a sea of worries about school, work, and family life.

Pray for students like Trung, that as they learn in school they will also learn the most important lesson in life—that Jesus Christ died for them so they might have eternal life.

Pray for Christians in cities to take notice of college students and spend time with them, reaching out with the message of salvation.

*Name changed

Day 13 BONES OF THE DEAD

The burial of a family member is often not a one-time process in many Vietnamese families. Because the worship of ancestors is so important, many Vietnamese people go to great lengths to preserve the bones of the dead. The body is first buried in a regular casket at a location given by a fortune teller. After three years, the body is exhumed and the bones are cleaned, perfumed, and placed in a small ornate box for reburial.

Pray for God to reveal the truth about the eternal resurrection of the dead to the Vietnamese people, and for Vietnamese Christians who must decline traditional rituals to find ways to show the love of Christ to their families.

Pray that God would destroy the bondage of superstitions and idol worship and reveal HIS truth to them.

Day 14 UNIFIED IN THE FAITH

As more Vietnamese people come to faith in Christ, the need for unity among believers is crucial to getting the gospel to more people and planting more churches. Already churches are working together, praying for each other, joining in trainings, and supporting one another. As divisions in the church arise, it is crucial for problems to be resolved in such a way that God gets the glory.

Pray for church leaders from all types of churches to support one another in love and work together to spread the gospel in Vietnam.

Pray for churches in rural areas to build one another up and provide support when other churches face opposition from the community or the government.

Week Three

Day 15 **OPPOSITION AT HOME**

Christians not only face persecution from the government in Vietnam, but they also meet resistance at home. When Tan* became a Christian, he stopped following the traditional ritual of worshipping his ancestors. His family distanced themselves from Tan because he was rejected by the community and faced opposition from the authorities. Finally, under unrelenting pressure from the local authorities, Tan's family kicked him out. Tan and his wife were left alone with no job and no way to support themselves.

Pray for God to strengthen Christians like Tan who face persecution from their families.

Pray for families to see the hope and joy that a relationship with Christ brings and to desire to know Jesus too.

Day 16 **THE FACTORY WORKER**

For many people, living in large cities is a necessary inconvenience. Factory workers often live and work in large cities in Vietnam without their families, who stay behind in their villages. Workers spend long hours for a paycheck that they send back to provide for parents, spouses, or children. For many workers, the only opportunity to return home to visit family is during the lunar new year festival once a year. There are hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese in the export labor force working in factories overseas.

Pray for factory workers in cities to find true hope in life through Jesus Christ, and for churches to be started among them that can multiply to their home villages.

*Name changed

Pray for returning export workers who have become believers while working in factories overseas to be able to overcome persecution from family and local authorities and to stand firm in their faith and boldly serve God.

Day 17 **SPIRITS ALL AROUND**

Throughout Vietnam, the fear and worship of spirits grips the hearts of many. Mirrors or strips of cloth above doorways ward off evil spirits. Sacrifices and rituals invite the spirits of trees, houses, harvests, etc., to bless the people. This is called animism, or the belief that spirits occupy everything from animals to nature to man-made objects. It is an old practice in Vietnam that keeps many people in bondage.

Pray that the people of Vietnam would choose a life without fear by placing their faith in Jesus.

Pray that Vietnamese Christians would share their testimonies of being set free from fear and bondage through a relationship with God.

Day 18 **SUICIDE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**

Lien* quietly rolls up the mat she slept on and steps over her husband and children who are still sleeping. It's 4:30 am, and like every day, Lien must prepare a meal before she goes to the fields for work at 5:30. She wonders if her husband even remembers stumbling up the stairs last night as she soothed her frightened children to get them to sleep.

When she arrives in the field, a few other women are huddled together whispering and shaking their heads. As she draws near to the hushed voices she hears what she felt was true: another friend has taken her own life. With knowing

glances and pats of reassurance each woman walks into the field to begin the day's work. Lien starts the methodical work and lets her thoughts drift to ask herself, "Could I be free?"

As the sun slips away behind the trees, Lien arrives at her home covered in dirt and sweat from a long day's work. Her husband is gone, but he left a trail of empty rice wine bottles on his way out. Her children are off at the neighbor's house. Today she doesn't call them to eat. She simply climbs the wooden stairs, grabs the bottle she's been hiding, and takes a big gulp of the insecticide another lady gave her. She closes her eyes and hopes for the freedom her friend found the day before.

Pray for Vietnamese women who spend long hours every day working and taking care of their families. Many of them are without hope and some even resort to suicide.

Ask God to send someone to share the hope of Christ with village ladies so that they can have true freedom and eternal life.

Day 19 THE MUONG PEOPLE

The Muong are animistic, worshipping numerous spirits, including the spirits of their ancestors, local heroes, the village, and the land. Out of more than 1.6 million Muong people, only a small number are believers; however, church planting efforts have begun among this people group.

Pray that Muong believers will grow in their faith and overcome their fear of gathering together to worship God.

Pray that Muong believers will share the gospel boldly and that there will soon be groups of believers in every Muong village worshipping the Most High God.

*Name changed

Day 20 A CULTURE OF IDOLS

Idols and altars abound throughout the country of Vietnam. Small bowls filled with food and burning incense sit outside the entrance to most restaurants. Larger shrines with photos of deceased ancestors and their daily offerings are the focal point of many homes. Nearly everywhere you go, the smell of burning incense is not far away.

Pray for the millions of people seeking hope, answers, salvation, etc., through idol worship. Ask the Lord to fulfill all their needs through Jesus Christ.

Pray for God to send Christians to share the gospel with Vietnamese people so that they might know the truth.

Day 21 BUILDING A REPUTATION

Though the church faces opposition in Vietnam, they are not remaining silent. Christians are showing Christ's love to others around them in many ways. In some parts of Vietnam, believers have begun ministering to people who struggle with drug addictions. Some pastors have been allowed to visit prisons and minister to the inmates there. Through these ministries, more Vietnamese people are coming to Christ and the government sees that Christianity can be helpful in society.

Pray for more Christians to find favor with government officials and be allowed to minister to Vietnamese people.

Pray for churches to form from the people who have heard the gospel and believed through the current ministries.

Week Four

Day 22 PERSECUTION

When asked about how Christians around the world could pray for the persecuted believers in Vietnam, Te,* a church leader and trainer, simply said, "We don't pray for [persecution] to go away or for freedom... We pray for the gospel to have freedom to break through barriers."

Another believer added, "We pray for God's will to be done, and when persecution does come we pray for the believers to stand strong and be bold."

Pray with Te for God to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable" in Vietnam so that believers will not become complacent in sharing the good news.

Pray for believers to continue to grow spiritually and be bold witnesses for Christ.

Day 23 THE SAN DIU PEOPLE

The 146,000 San Diu people living in the northern part of Vietnam are unreached. They worship their ancestors and are also animists who worship a myriad of deities and spirits, holding annual rituals to pray for abundant blessings over their planting and harvesting. The San Diu have rich traditional folksongs and possess a unique treasury of stories in verses.

God's Word promises that people from every tribe, nation, and language will worship around his throne in heaven. Pray that the San Diu can have God's Word in their language.

Pray for the small number of San Diu believers to grow in their faith and in their vision to reach their people, so that many San Diu can hear the gospel and be drawn to follow God.

*Name changed

Day 24 COMMEMORATING LOST REDUDED ONES

Hao* welcomes waves of people into his home today. Friends crowd his sitting room sipping on the hot green tea his wife prepared for them. He smiles and nods at the turnout, feeling honored that so many have come to honor the death anniversary of both his father and his older brother.

After having tea and exchanging a few words with everyone, Hao leads his guests next door to his brother's house where more guests have arrived. They all head upstairs where an ornate cabinet holds the family altar. Situated on the altar is a bountiful arrangement of fruit, rice wine, beer, cigarettes, candy, and a full meal of boiled chicken and rice. Pictures of Hao's father and brother adorn both ends of the elaborate altar.

Hao begins the ceremony by bowing and worshipping the spirits of his loved ones, then he watches as each of his friends do the same. The smell of burning incense fills the room as people pay homage to the dead.

Afterward Hao joyfully serves his guests a nice meal as they exchange fond memories of the deceased. Every year, Hao and his family will commemorate the death anniversaries of those who have gone before. In some Vietnamese families, these anniversaries are more important than birthday celebrations.

Pray for Vietnamese people who daily worship the spirits of their ancestors. Ask that God will reveal the truth of the gospel to them.

Pray that one day Vietnamese people will celebrate eternal life found only in Jesus Christ rather than the anniversaries of death.

Day 25 MAKING ENDS MEET

Restaurants line virtually every street in major cities like Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Reaching every socio-economic level, restaurants serve everyone from the wealthiest to the poorest. Whether a cook or server in a nice restaurant or a coffee maker at a roadside stand with plastic stools, restaurant workers have long hours that leave them exhausted with barely enough money to live on. Many wish for better jobs but have a hard time finding work beyond the restaurant business.

Pray for the many restaurant workers to find love and strength from God as they work their long-hour shifts.

Pray for Christians to share the gospel with restaurant workers as they eat out and to show them the love of Christ.

Day 26 VIETNAMESE CATHOLICS

Tu* attends weekly Catholic mass where she lifts hopeful prayers to Mary. Every morning she helps her mother kneel at the family altar to Tu's father who has passed away. On her way to school, Tu stops by an altar to the tree spirit to ask for a blessing on her day. Like many Vietnamese Catholics, Tu's religion is a blend of many different beliefs, and she hopes that one of her efforts will make a difference.

Catholics represent less than 10% percent of the population of Vietnam. Pray that Vietnamese Catholics will open their hearts to salvation through Jesus Christ alone.

Pray for a renewal of Bible reading to occur among Catholics so that they will hear clearly the true message of salvation.

*Name changed

Day 27 SANCTITY OF LIFE

To many young Vietnamese people today, abortion is just another means of contraception. About 40 percent of pregnancies in Vietnam end in abortion according to a report by doctors in Hanoi. The concept of the sanctity of life is not widely taught, and overall, abortion is not taboo in Vietnamese society. Though the government's two-child policy has been lifted, the effects of such ideals still influence families to have selective gender abortions. These are sad reminders that Vietnam has one of the highest rates of abortion in the world.

Pray for Vietnamese people to learn that life begins at conception. Ask that families will cherish each child they are given no matter what gender.

Pray that the gospel would transform Vietnamese young people in the way that they think and act when it comes to sexual immorality and abortion.

Day 28 PERSECUTION TRAINING

Many Vietnamese Christians begin facing persecution within 24 hours of believing in Christ. For this reason, church leaders spend time teaching new believers how to withstand persecution. Through trainings, new believers know that persecution is a reality and they can only stand firm if they faithfully spend time with God in His Word and prayer. Persecution is not treated as an extraordinary phenomenon, but rather as a normal part of every Christian's life.

Pray for new believers to stand firm in their faith as they begin facing persecution.

Pray for more believers to receive training on handling persecution and to have a supportive Christian community.

Week Five

Day 29 THE TAY PEOPLE

The Tay are the largest ethnic minority people group in Vietnam, with a population of more than 2,000,000. But with only a few dozen believers, they are among the most unreached. The Tay have a deep fear of the spirits of their dead ancestors, and they believe that these spirits can come back to harm or bless them. They also visit the local shaman in times of sickness or bad luck. The Tay greatly value relationships and aim at living in harmony.

Pray that God would raise up more laborers to widely spread the gospel seed among the Tay. Also pray that Tay believers would hunger for God's Word and would grow in their faith, and that they would reach out to their own people with the gospel.

Ask that the Holy Spirit would prepare the hearts of the Tay people to receive Jesus, and that God would reveal Himself to them.

Day 30 FAMILY MATTERS

In many Asian cultures, family is integral in most parts of life. This is also true in Vietnam where multiple generations often live in the same house. Traditions, customs, and spiritual beliefs are passed down from generation to generation quite fluidly as grandparents, parents, and children live under the same roof. When one family member chooses to follow Christ, conflict will often arise and might even cause the new Christian to be cast out of the family.

Pray for whole families to make the decision to follow Christ and to pass the gospel on to future generations.

Pray for churches to start from families who become followers of Christ.

Day 31 OVERSEAS VIETNAMESE

Over 3 million Vietnamese people live outside Vietnam with 1.7 million in the United States alone. Many leave their remote villages to find work in factories in nearby countries. Others travel farther for school or work. A great number of these "overseas Vietnamese" have heard the gospel and turned to faith in Christ! Now many have the desire to return to their country and share the gospel with other Vietnamese in their home villages.

Pray for these "overseas Vietnamese" to take the gospel back to their homes and for the gospel to spread like wildfire among large cities and small villages in Vietnam.

Pray that Christians in Vietnam would train these returning believers to be effective in their ministries and to be prepared for persecution.

*Name changed

Thank you for joining us in prayer this month. We are humbled by your commitment to intercede for the peoples of Vietnam.

We believe that God is working in Vietnam, and we ask that you continue to pray with us. Through PrayForVietnam.org, you can continue to read about and pray for the peoples of Vietnam.

When Vietnamese people follow Christ, Satan rises to attack. Within 24 hours, most new Christians begin facing persecution from families, communities, and the government. Please continue to pray for these believers as they face trials and tribulations.

God is faithful. May we be faithful to pray for our brothers and sisters in Vietnam. May we be faithful to pray for the unreached people groups to hear the gospel and turn to Christ. May the peoples of Vietnam and Vietnamese people around the world praise the One True God. To Him be all the glory!

WHEN HE SAW THE CROWDS,
HE HAD *compassion* ON THEM,
BECAUSE THEY WERE HARASSED AND HELPLESS,

LIKE SHEEP WITHOUT A SHEPHERD.

THEN HE SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES,
"The harvest is plentiful
BUT THE WORKERS ARE FEW.

ASK THE LORD OF THE HARVEST,
THEREFORE TO *send out workers*

— INTO HIS HARVEST FIELD. —

MATTHEW 9:36-38



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When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Therefore, to send out many workers into the harvest field, pray to the Lord of the harvest."

PRAY FOR Vietnam

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