

# THE GREAT PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL



*How God is fulfilling  
His promise to bless  
all the families of the earth*



**Printed and PDF copies of the Great Progress booklet are available at [Go31.org](http://Go31.org)**

## **Building Collaboration to Reach Frontier People Groups**

This generation has an opportunity for “greater works”—building on the faithful work of previous generations. The past 50 years have seen an acceleration toward the fulfillment of God’s unchanging purpose to bless all families and people groups on earth (Gen 12:3, 18:18, 22:18; Heb 6:17; Gal 3:8; Mt 28:19-20, etc.).

This booklet aims to equip influencers like you to help others see the big picture of God’s unchanging purpose (Heb 6:17), and the good works He prepared in advance for God’s people to walk in (Eph 2:10) to fulfill His covenant promise to bless all the families of earth (Gen 22:18), justifying all people groups by faith (Gal 3:8), through Acts-like discipling movements in every people group (Mt 28:19-20).

God’s kingdom has advanced more in the past 50 years—in the number and population of people groups with multiplying households of believers—than in the previous 20 centuries (since Pentecost). This booklet shows the big picture of God’s unchanging purpose, the astonishing progress of the past 50 years, and what remains for our generation to finally start movements to Jesus among the remaining Frontier People Groups containing 25% of humanity.

In 1974 the Lausanne movement reminded the global church of the biblical focus on people groups, and revealed that 60% of humanity lived in overlooked people groups. The global Perspectives movement (also launched in 1974) has sown this focus on overlooked people groups into ever-widening circles. And this awareness has fueled a revolution of prayer and collaboration to send pioneer workers.

In this booklet we present the current situation and opportunity in clear terms supported by graphs and charts. These are open source, freely available for re-use with attribution to “[JoshuaProject.net/GreatProgress](http://JoshuaProject.net/GreatProgress)”.

**We invite you to adapt this material and share it**, then send us your adaptation. We also welcome your suggestions for improving this booklet.

Before submitting suggestions, please check your suggestions against the latest open-source version here:

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We are particularly interested in feedback on any of the following:

- Anything you “bump on,” that you find confusing, inconsistent or troubling.
- Anything you find particularly clear or helpful, that gave you an “Aha!”
- Typos, and any other suggestions you have for improvement.

Feedback is preferred by email to [RobbyQButler@pm.me](mailto:RobbyQButler@pm.me)

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# The Great Progress of the Gospel

Four thousand years ago, God made a covenant with Abraham, saying *“through your offspring all nations (families) on earth will be blessed”* (Gen 22:18). God was promising that all people groups would be made right with Him by faith (Gal. 3:8).

Jesus commanded His followers to disciple all people groups (Matt. 28:19). They began multiplying believing households in non-Jewish people groups through witnesses like Paul, who said: *“It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ has not been named, not building on another’s foundation”* (Rom 15:20). In each generation God calls some, like Paul, to such pioneer work.

In **1792** William Carey worked out that the gospel had spread through cross-cultural witnesses to places containing **25%** of the world’s population. He triggered an explosion of Protestant missions by urging the formation of mission agencies to reach distant lands. In **1974** Ralph Winter figured that **40%** of the world lived in people groups with multiplying households of believers. He challenged the global church to adopt the remaining unreached people groups. Today in **2024**, just 50 years later, the gospel has taken root in people groups containing **75%** of the world’s population.

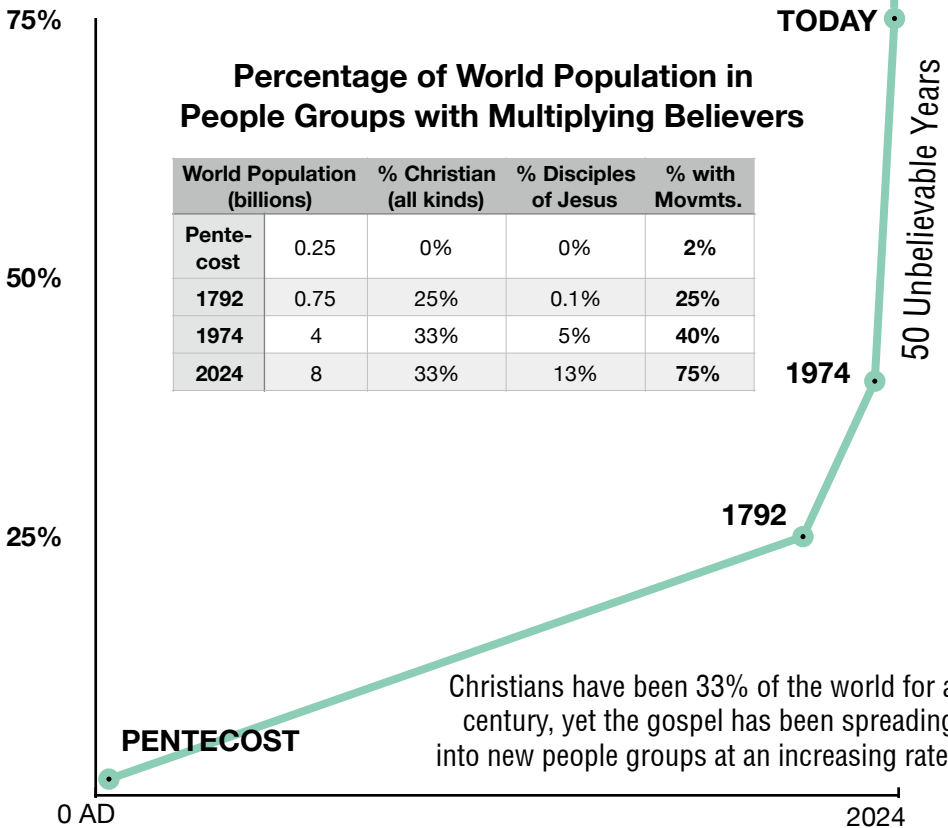


Figure 1: The Accelerating Growth of Jesus’ Kingdom. Used with permission by RW Lewis.

# 50 Unbelievable Years

The greatest gospel advance in history came by focusing on God’s promise to bless *all* the families of the earth (Gal. 3:8). At the first Lausanne Congress, in 1974, it was estimated that 60% of humanity lived in roughly 17,000 people groups without any multiplying households of believers. By 2024 these people groups, now called Frontier People Groups (FPGs), had decreased to 5,000, containing just 25% of humanity. These two charts are sized to reflect the global population doubling in 50 years. During this time, the followers of Jesus increased by 400%, while the global population living in FPGs decreased from 60% to 25%.

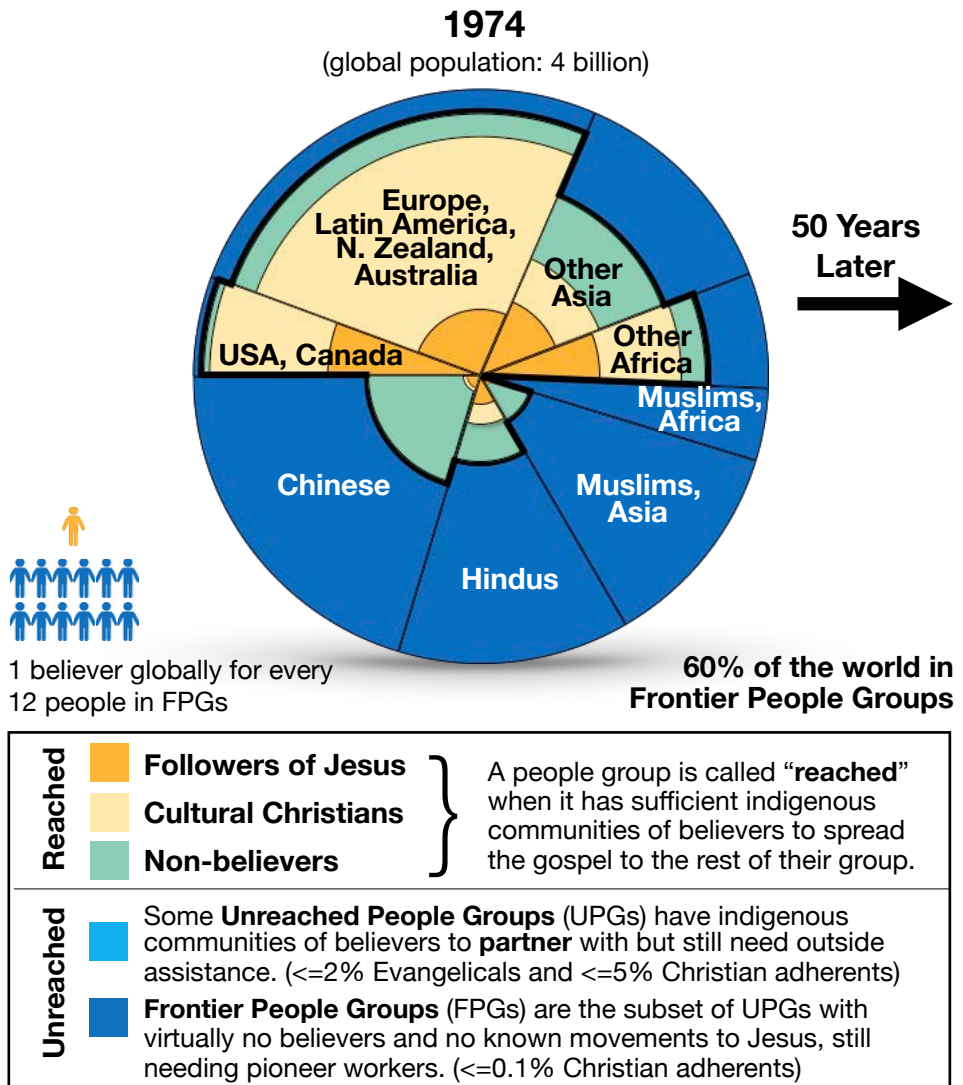
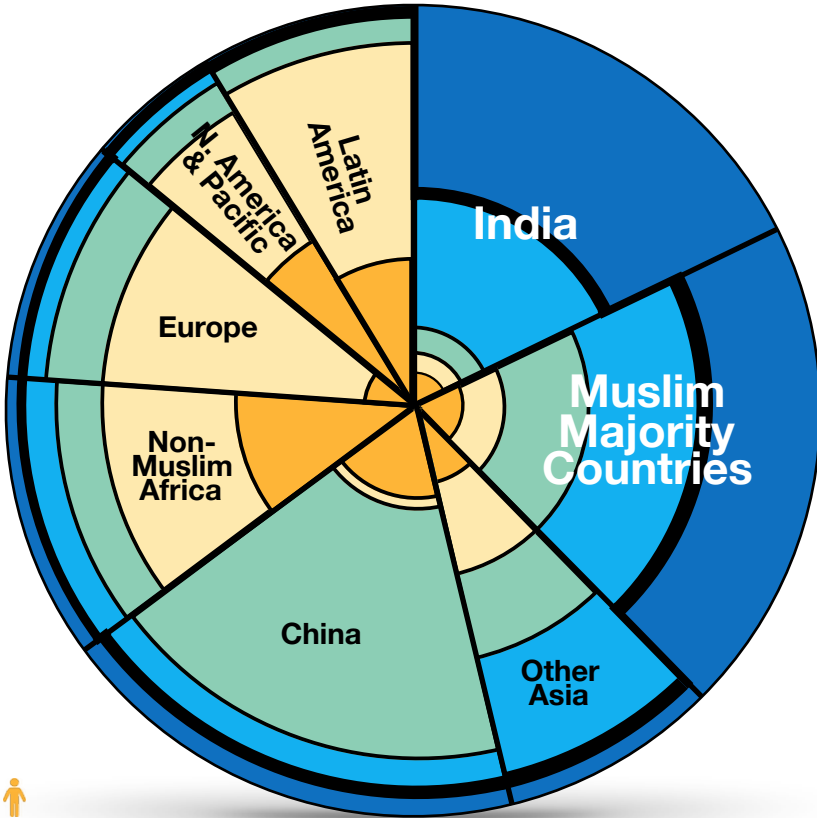


Figure 2: The World in 1974: 4 billion People. From [JoshuaProject.net/GreatProgress](http://JoshuaProject.net/GreatProgress)  
Used with Permission by RW Lewis

# The World Today

2024

(global population: 8 billion)



1 believer globally for every 2 people in FPGs

Only 25% of the world in Frontier People Groups

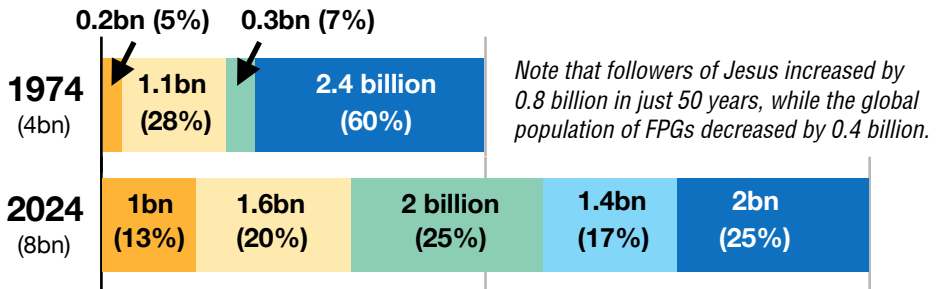


Figure 3: The World in 2024: 8 Billion People from JoshuaProject.net/GreatProgress Used with Permission by RW Lewis and Chris Maynard.

Video explanation in multiple languages available at JoshuaProject.net/Frontier

# Where Would Paul Go Today?

Paul wanted to fulfill God’s covenant by going to people groups where Jesus was not yet known. But today 96% of international Christian workers go to “reached people groups,” where nearly all of the world’s believers live. Only 4% go to Unreached People Groups (UPGs), who still need outside assistance to reach their own people group. Some UPGs have multiplying households of believers that outside workers can **partner** with, but other UPGs need **pioneer** workers to win the first households to Jesus. These *Frontier People Groups*, needing pioneer workers, contain one fourth of the world (2 billion people) yet receive just 1% of workers.

## Location of International Workers Relative to World Population

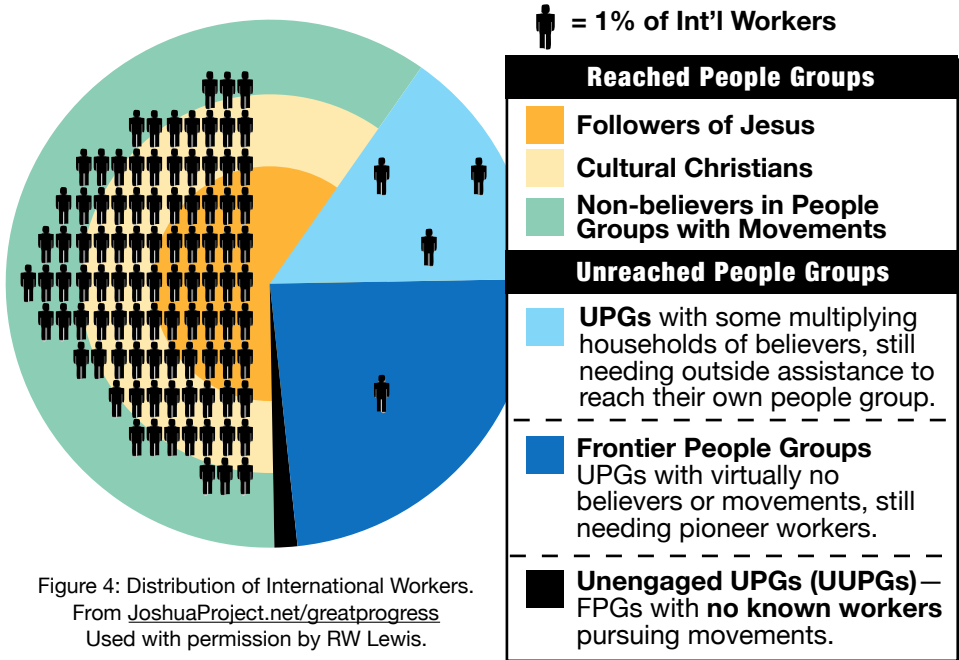


Figure 4: Distribution of International Workers.  
From [JoshuaProject.net/greatprogress](http://JoshuaProject.net/greatprogress)  
Used with permission by RW Lewis.

## International Workers Received: India vs. Africa or Latin America

India’s population (1.4 billion) is nearly equal to Africa (1.5 billion), and more than double the population of Latin America (0.67 billion). India has half of the remaining FPGs, but receives 1/10th the global workers sent to Africa or Latin America.

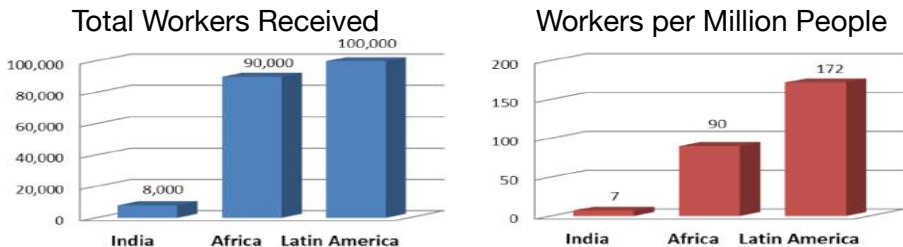
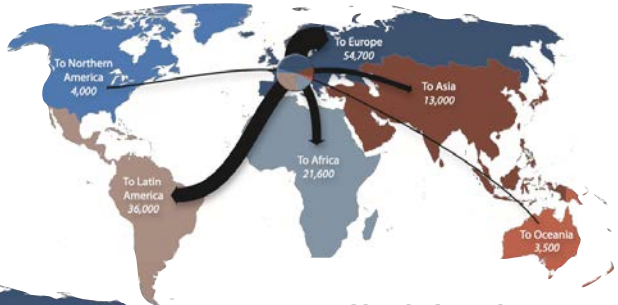


Figure 5: Sources: [JoshuaProject.net](http://JoshuaProject.net), Global Status of Evangelical Christianity (IMBTSBC), *Atlas of Global Christianity* (Todd Johnson), Operation World (Jason Mandryk)

# Where Are Global Workers Going?

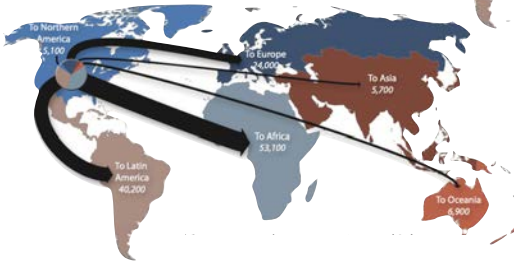
## Workers from Europe:

- 40% to Europe
- 30% to Latin America
- 20% to Africa
- 10% to Asia



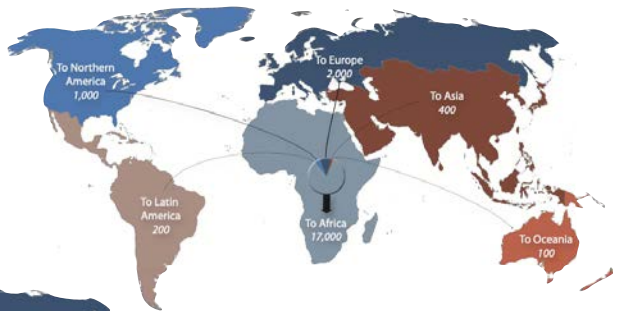
## From North America:

- 40% to Africa
- 30% to Latin America
- 20% to Europe
- 5% to Asia
- 5% to Oceania



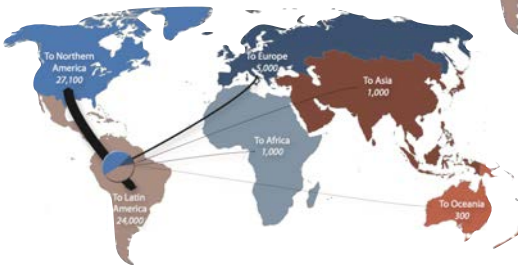
## From Africa:

- 80% to Africa
- 10% to Europe
- 5% to North America
- 5% other



## From Latin America:

- 45% to North America
- 40% to Latin America
- 10% to Europe
- 5% other



## From Asia:

- 80% to Asia
- 10% to Europe
- 5% to North America
- 5% other

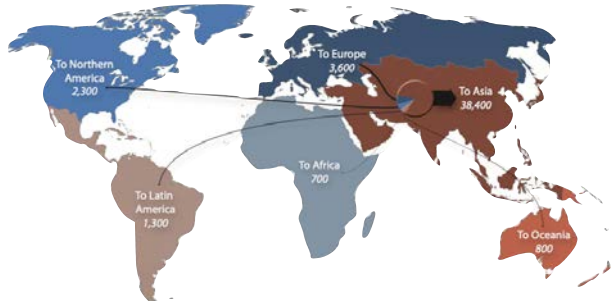


Figure 6: 2010 Distribution of foreign missionaries (Oceania omitted), from the *Atlas of Global Christianity*, pp 262-3 (Edinburgh University Press). Used with permission by Todd Johnson.



# Fulfilling God’s Promise: Today’s Great Opportunity

Over the last 50 years, new movements to Jesus have developed mostly in Buddhist or atheist people groups in Asia, or tribal groups with ethnic religions. These people groups, with multiplying households of believers, are still considered “unreached” until at least 2 out of every 100 people (2%) are Evangelicals.<sup>1</sup>

All Unreached People Groups need more Christian workers. But Frontier People Groups (FPGs), those UPGs with no known movements, still need cross-cultural pioneer workers trained to disciple the first households to follow Jesus together.

**Where is the greatest need today?** About 70% of the global population of Frontier People Groups (1.4 billion) live in South Asia. Half are in India alone (1 billion). Of the global FPG population, 97% are either Muslim (56%) or Hindu (41%). Significantly, 80% of the population of all FPGs (1.6 billion) live in just under 300 mega-FPGs, each containing over one million people. Due to their size and influence, these groups are especially strategic. These mega-FPGs are shown below by their geographic location and religions—almost all are Muslims and Hindus. (The world’s agnostics and atheists do not appear here because they mostly live in reached people groups, where there are many Christians.)

## 300 Mega-Frontier People Groups by Religion

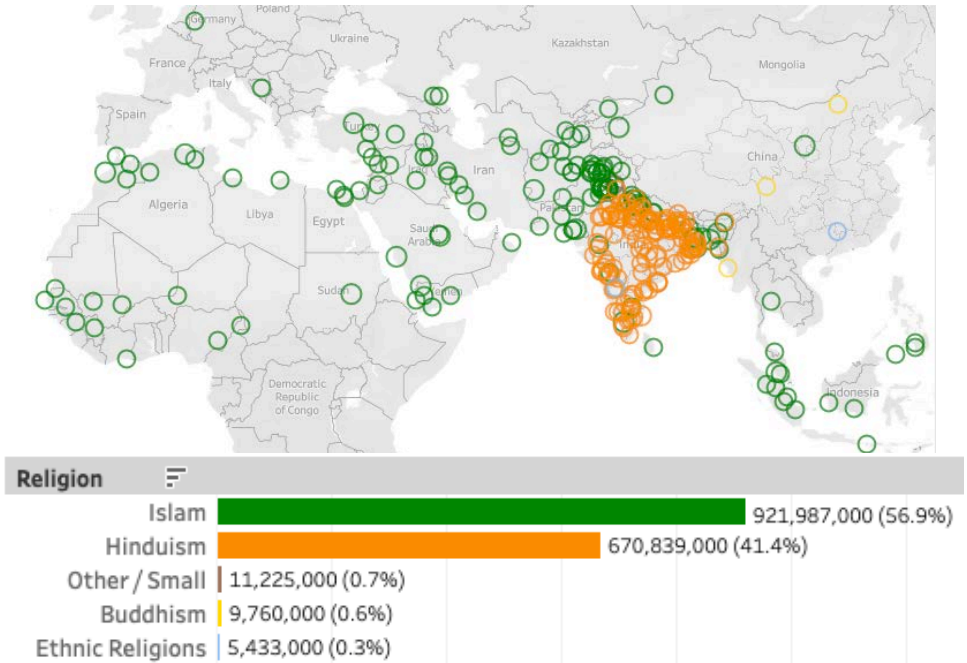


Figure 7: 300 Mega-FPGs April 2024. Used with Permission by JoshuaProject.net  
[JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive)

<sup>1</sup> UPGs are defined by Joshua Project as “less than or equal to 2% Evangelical Christian and less than or equal to 5% Christian adherents.”

## Key Languages of Unreached People Groups

What languages can new workers learn for greatest access to Frontier People Groups and other Unreached People Groups? Seven of the top ten languages spoken by FPGs and other UPGs are South Asian languages. Furthermore, Hindi and Urdu are so similar that learning either language equips the learner to work among the 700 million people who speak one of those languages.

### Top Heart Languages of FPGs and UPGs (by population, in millions)

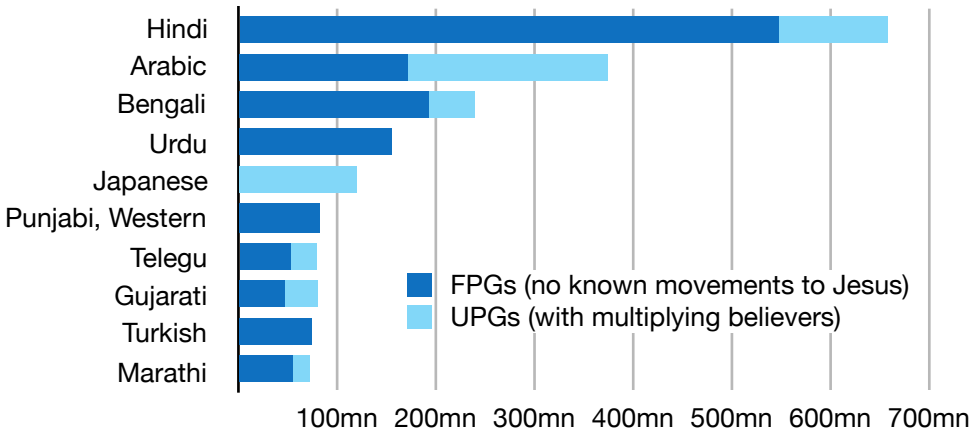


Figure 8: Top Languages of FPGs and UPGs. Based on data accessed March 2024 from [JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive). Used with permission by RW Lewis.

The 300 mega-FPGs are distributed among just 40 of the world's 200 countries. More than half of these Mega-FPGs are in India. Pakistan runs a distant second, with 41 mega-FPGs. Other countries with Mega-FPGs each have eight or less. This tells us where more pioneer workers are most needed.

### Countries with 5 or More Mega-FPGs (by count of "mega" FPGs—over one million in size)

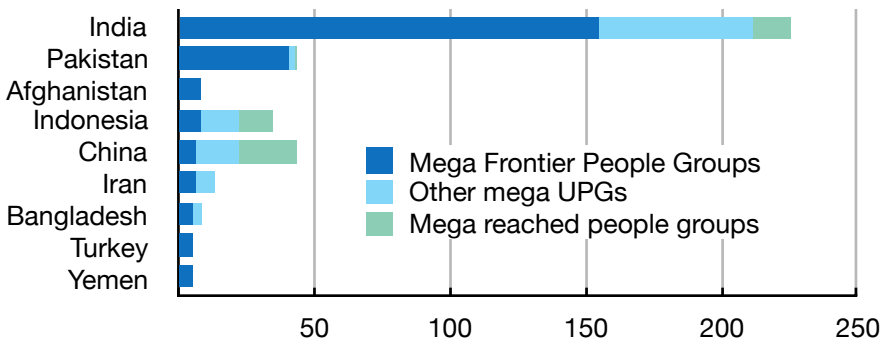


Figure 9: Top 10 Countries of Mega-FPGs. Based on data accessed May 2024 from [JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive). Used with permission by RW Lewis.

## Prioritizing the Mega-Frontier People Groups

Rapid progress can be made toward fulfilling God’s promise to bless all the families of the world by starting movements to Jesus in 300 mega-FPGs (each over one million in size)—1.6 billion people, 80% of the total population of all FPGs. Within this 1.6 billion, **almost a billion live in the 37 largest FPGs** (over 10 million in size, up to 135 million).<sup>2</sup> A prayer guide for *The Thirty-One Largest Frontier People Groups* is available at [Go31.org](http://Go31.org) and [BlessFrontierPeoples.org](http://BlessFrontierPeoples.org).

### Breakdown of All Frontier People Groups by Population

5,000 people groups with no movements (2 billion, 25% of humanity)

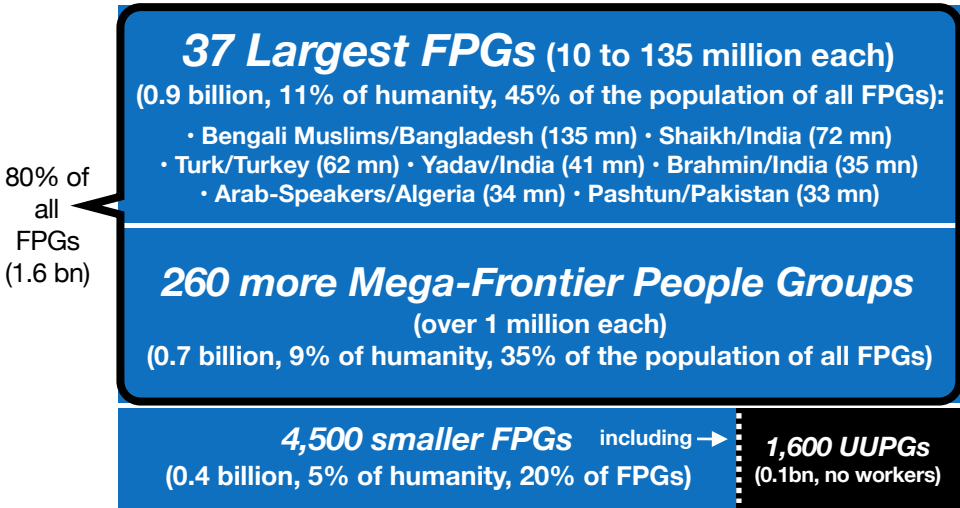


Figure 10: Peoples in Global Perspective. Based on data accessed March 2024 from [JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive](http://JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive) Used with permission by RW Lewis.

## Movements with Potential to Spread to Frontier People Groups

The 24:14 Coalition reports that there are now thousands of movements to Jesus (sometimes called Church-Planting Movements or CPMs) with potential to spill over into Frontier People Groups that speak the same language.

Frontier People Groups (no known movements)	Count	Population
FPGs in the same country as a CPM that speaks their language (no country or language barrier).	1,042	607 million
FPGs in a different country from a CPM that speaks their language (country barrier).	1,819	1,064 million
FPGs with no known CPM that speaks their language.	2,113	314 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,974</b>	<b>1,985 million</b>

Figure 11: Adapted from [MissionFrontiers.org/pdfs/27-29\\_MF\\_46-2\\_MAR-APR-24\\_PARKS.pdf](http://MissionFrontiers.org/pdfs/27-29_MF_46-2_MAR-APR-24_PARKS.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [JoshuaProject.net/the31](http://JoshuaProject.net/the31) and [BlessFrontierPeoples.org](http://BlessFrontierPeoples.org)

# Movements Can Spread Through People Group Clusters

The mega-Frontier People Groups have tremendous influence. The Rajput people groups are a good example of FPG clusters, where movements started in larger groups can lead to movements in smaller related groups. As seen in Figure 12, there are 218 Rajput FPGs—some Muslim and some Hindu. Of these, one is over 10 million in population and 10 more are over 1 million in size (largest circles). Once movements begin in the largest Rajput groups, they can send believers to the 207 smaller Rajput FPGs of the same religion.

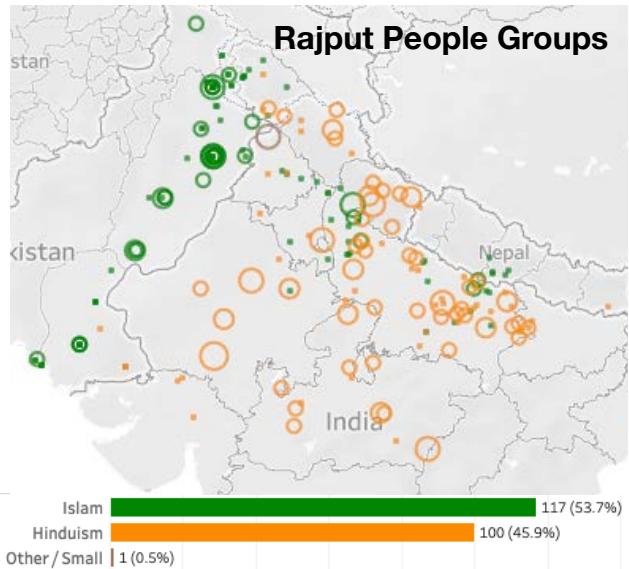


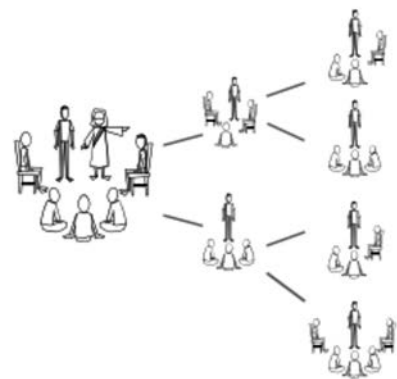
Figure 12: 218 Rajput FPGs Accessed February 2024 on [JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive)  
Used with permission by Joshua Project.

Dozens of similar clusters exist, like the Brahmin, Jat, Malay, Yadav, Dhobi, and Pashtun. The Brahmin, for example, have 1 group over 10 million, 9 others over 1 million, and 121 smaller groups, 2 in diaspora (all Hindu). Such clusters reveal why sending additional believing families to work cross-culturally among these 300 mega-FPGs is a priority for the global church.

## Defining Movements

A people group is considered to have an indigenous “movement to Jesus” when believers within that group are rapidly winning households to Jesus. When there is a movement, groups of disciples are multiplying from household to household and the number of believers is growing faster than the overall population.

Movements to Jesus flow mostly through same-culture witness within a people group. Movements cultivated among the 300 mega-FPGs can hopefully flow over into many related smaller FPGs and UUPGs.



Disciples Making Disciples.  
Used with permission from Zume.training

## Bringing God's Blessing to UPGs in Mega-Cities

Today's mega-cities draw people from rural homelands or other countries. Most diaspora immigrants in the West come from reached people groups. However, the 110 cities below include people from many Unreached People Groups, including Unengaged and Frontier People Groups. These immigrants are often isolated in ethnic neighborhoods with their own networks. Urban churches in these cities have the opportunity, by praying for the UPGs there and pursuing movement training, to start households of believers multiplying within UPG languages and communities.

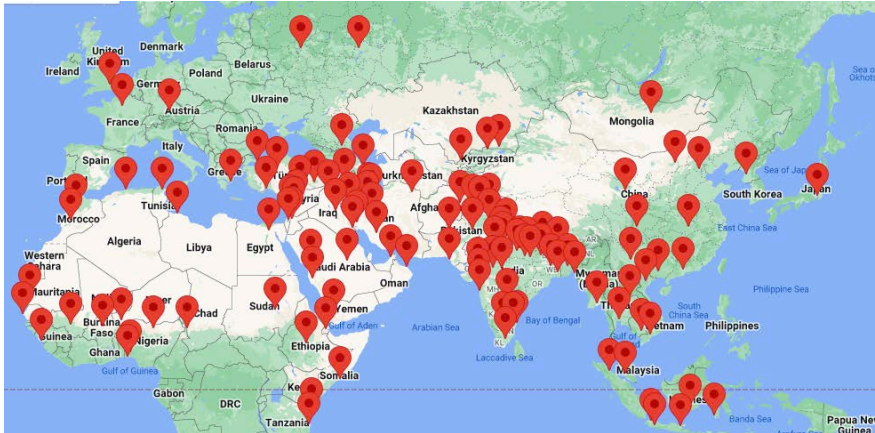


Figure 13: 110 Mega-Cities Map Accessed February 2024 on [110Cities.com/map](https://110Cities.com/map) Used with permission.

## Encouraging Movements in Urban Ethnic Communities

In mega-cities it is common to gather believers together from Christian people groups into multi-ethnic churches using English or trade languages. The gospel rarely reaches the families of UPGs and FPGs, such as Muslims and Hindus.

Most cities are filled with distinct communities of family and friendship circles. Traditional church planting seeks to attract people from their existing communities into a church as a new social circle.

The significant language and cultural barriers of UPG communities means few will be comfortable joining a multi-ethnic church. If they do, their communities often reject them rather than embrace Jesus.

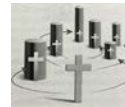
However entire UPG communities can be engaged when the gospel is introduced into families and pre-existing communities, in household-based discipling movements.



**Family and friendship circles**



**Traditional church planting**



**Movements in pre-existing Communities**

Figure 14: Adapted from *Contagious Disciple Making* by David and Paul Watson (Thomas Nelson)

## Progress of the Gospel in Mega-Cities

The 18 largest cities from the map shown in Figure 13 have very different levels of gospel progress. In some mega-cities, most of the native people groups are already reached (having more than 2% Evangelicals). Believers there can reach out to families in Unreached People Groups.

However, in countries like India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, the mega-cities are full of people from Frontier People Groups. Other cities, like Tokyo and Bangkok, have a large native UPG population, with some indigenous communities of believers to partner with, but also immigrant groups that are FPGs. These cities need many international witnesses.

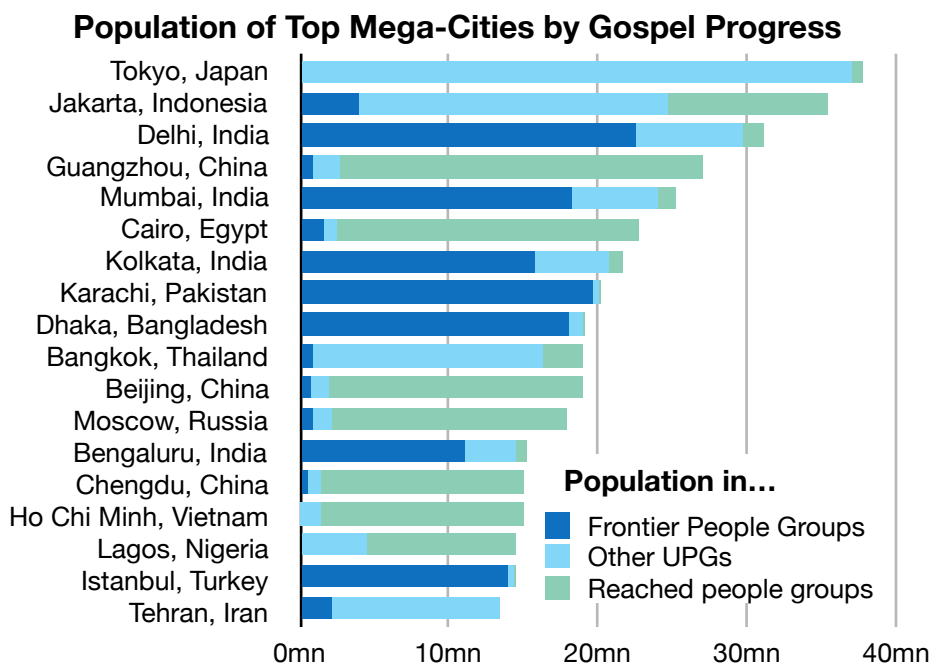


Figure 15: Population of top cities in 110 Cities prayer focus. Based on data accessed May 2024 from [demographia.com/db-worldua.pdf](https://demographia.com/db-worldua.pdf) Used with permission by RW Lewis.

## Global Prayer Movements for UPGs and FPGs

God is raising up global prayer movements for Unreached People Groups, especially Frontier People Groups, including prayer for the 110 cities (Figure 13). The 300 Mega-FPGs are also being adopted for prayer. A prayer guide for 31 Mega-FPGs over 10 million in size can be downloaded at [Go31.org](https://Go31.org) and with a phone app from [BlessFrontierPeoples.org](https://BlessFrontierPeoples.org) (See appendix for links to global prayer initiatives).

In answer to these prayer initiatives, believing households are multiplying among UPGs and beginning to impact some FPGs that are culturally and linguistically nearby. Once households of believers are multiplying within a FPG, with at least 1 out of 1,000 identifying with Christ, that UPG can be removed from the FPG list!



# Introducing Jesus to Those With Layered Identities

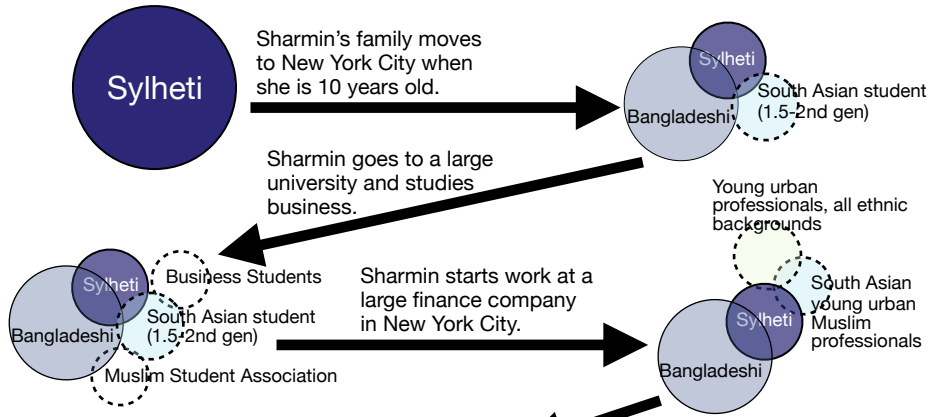
Less than 3% of the population of Frontier People Groups live in diaspora locations (outside their homeland). UPGs living in diaspora often have hybrid or layered identities and are part of multiple social groups. Sharing Jesus with diaspora individuals through their affinity groups has broader impact when those individuals and their households are disciplined to follow Jesus in their core or family identity.

## A Journey into Layered Identities



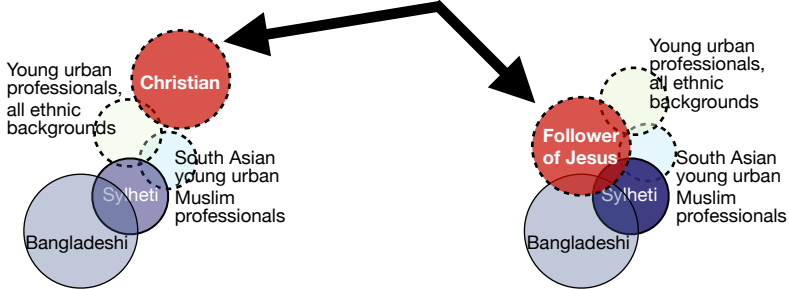
**Sharmin** is born in a Muslim family in the Sylheti people group in Bangladesh

Darker colors show stronger community that shapes worldview and beliefs  
 Borders show fixed communities (solid borders) and fluid affinity groups (dashed borders)



**A Chinese-American co-worker leads Sharmin to Christ**

Two (of many) possible paths in Sharmin's journey with Jesus



### Sharmin joins a Multiethnic Fellowship

Working in New York City, Sharmin is disciplined in English within an American worldview. Her Sylheti family and friends back home still think she is a Muslim. She is not sure how to share her love of Jesus with them or connect it to her other identities. Marriage is a looming problem.

### Sharmin's faith reaches her family

Sharmin's NYC friends encourage her to bless her family and share her faith journey with them. She finds an online Sylheti community of believers. They help her discuss her faith and study the Bible in her heart language and integrate a Biblical worldview into her core identities. Some of Sharmin's family and friends also decide to follow Jesus, and may start multiplying households of believers.

Figure 16: Layered Journey. Used with permission by Chris Clayman of [JoshuaProject.net](http://JoshuaProject.net)

## Contrasting Gospel Progress in Different Regions

Some areas of the world show little progress. In other regions indigenous movements have moved many people groups out of the “frontier” category, yet they remain UPGs until at least 2% of their people group follows Jesus.

For example, 55% of Indonesian UPGs no longer need specialized cross-cultural **pioneer** workers to win the first households to Jesus. And in the Sahel region, 50% of sub-Saharan UPGs are no longer FPGs. These UPGs have multiplying believers that international workers **partner** with to reach their own people.

However few UPGs in South Asia show such progress. Only 15% of South Asian UPGs are no longer FPGs. That is, 85% of South Asian unreached people groups still need pioneer workers to establish the first multiplying households of Jesus followers (so these UPGs are still FPGs).

**The contrast by population is even greater.** About 85% of the population of Indonesian UPGs have multiplying households of believers in their own people group. And 75% of the population of UPGs in the Sahel have multiplying believers. In South Asia, however, only 20% of the population of all UPGs have multiplying households of believers, leaving 80% in the Frontier People Groups sub-category.

- **Indonesia:** 55% of UPGs no longer need pioneer workers (85% by population).
- **The Sahel** (sub-Sahara): 50% of UPGs are no longer FPGs (75% by population).
- **South Asia:** Only 15% of UPGs are no longer FPGs (20% by population).

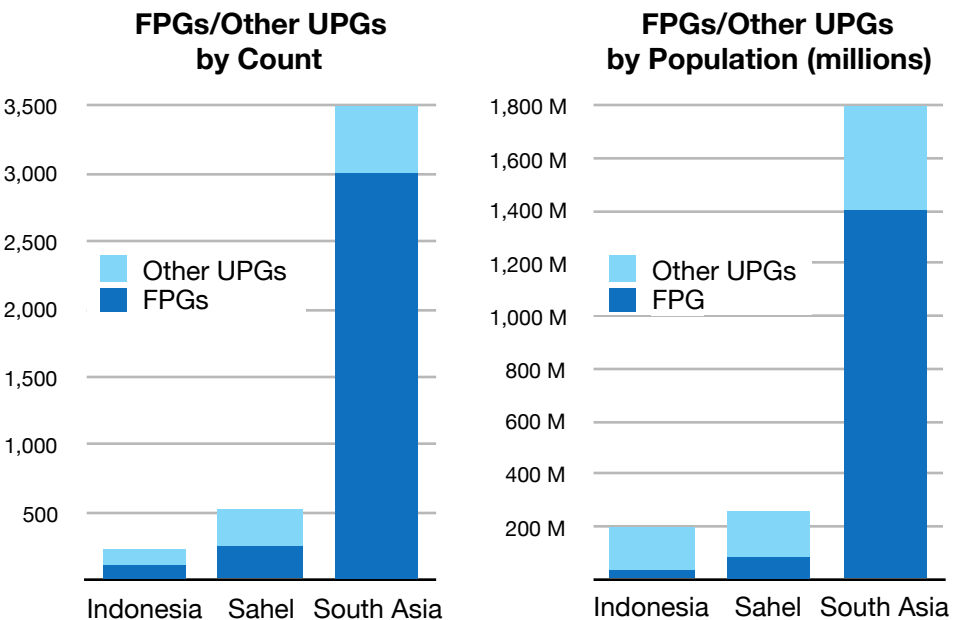


Figure 17: Data from [JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive)  
 Accessed March 2024. Used with permission by Joshua Project.



## The Surprising Challenge of India

Forty percent more people live in India (1.4 billion) than in North America (0.4 bn) and South America (0.6 bn) combined—nearly as many as in all of Africa (1.5 bn). The Ethnologue lists 4,000 languages in India, using multiple alphabets.

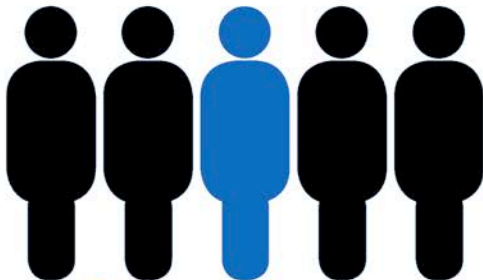
To date, multiplying households of believers in India have spread mostly among the tribes and lowest classes, leaving thousands of Frontier People Groups still isolated from the gospel.



- India has more UUPGs than the next 40 largest UUPG countries combined!
- India and Pakistan together have more FPGs than all other countries combined.
- India has 400 times as many people living in Frontier People Groups as the USA.

YET:

- India receives only one-fourth as many international workers as the USA receives.
- Only 1 in 5,000 (0.02%) of all international workers serves among India's FPGs.
- Outside India there is 1 international worker for every 10,000 people in Frontier People Groups. Within India there is only 1 international worker for every 250,000 people in FPGs.



**1 in 5**  
of all people on earth live in India.

Figure 18: Adapted from the May/June 2019 issue of *Mission Frontiers*

## Why India Has So Little Progress

India has a lower percentage of Christians than almost any other country of the world, in spite of nearly 2000 years of some Christian outreach. The barriers to the spread of the gospel in India are unique.

In most of the world, people groups are concentrated by geography—with everyone in a tribe or village sharing a common identity and interacting in ways that facilitate the spread of the gospel. But in India people groups or castes (except in the tribal areas) were traditionally defined rigidly by profession, and therefore are spread throughout the country and layered in villages. The castes continue to maintain distinct identities even with changing professions. Strong prejudices hinder social interactions and spread of the gospel, even within the same village.

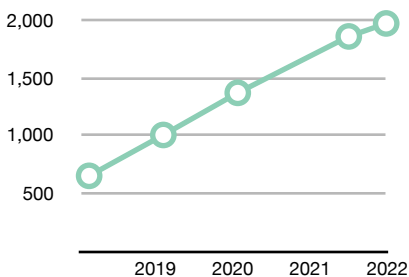
India has more Muslims than the Middle East (200 million). Even India’s Muslim people groups are categorized into castes based on their traditional professions. Over 40% of the Frontier People Groups are Hindu—virtually all of them in India.

### The Good News: Movements are Multiplying, Even in India

Households of believers are multiplying among Dalit (outcaste) people groups through some Indian villages. Unfortunately Dalits are considered “unclean” or “untouchable” by caste Hindus. If a village is 10% Dalit, and only Dalits are following Jesus, then the other 90% of that village (in upper caste or “Other Backward Caste”/OBC households) may conclude that Jesus is not for their people group. Caste Hindus are thus often resistant to the gospel because they perceive Jesus as a “god” just of the “outcaste” Dalits.

Nevertheless, Christward movements are forming within some higher castes. In fact movements of households coming to Jesus appear to be multiplying around the world, even in some areas with fierce opposition. Most of these movements are fueled by worship patterns grounded in frequent discussion of and obedience to God’s word within households. Many movements to Jesus are doubling every three to five years, growing much faster than the population. An estimated 2% of the world is now involved in movements to Jesus.

### Reported Acts-like Movements



### Movement Locations in 2022

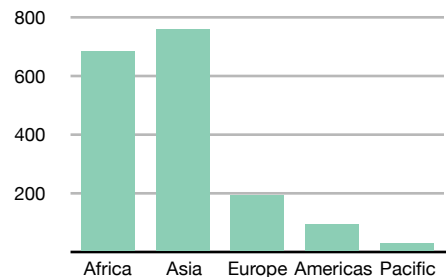


Figure 19: Distilled from 2018-2022 *Mission Frontiers* covers, and from [2414Now.net/resources](https://2414Now.net/resources)

# Blessing All Peoples: God's 4,000-Year Old Promise

*God wanted to make the unchanging nature of His purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, so He confirmed it with an oath (Heb 6:17).*

## The Promise

God promised Abraham twice (Gen 12:3, 18:18) that all the family-lines of earth would be blessed through Abraham's seed, Jesus. **God then confirmed this promise with the oath referenced above:** *"I swear by myself," declares the LORD, "... through your offspring all ethne<sup>3</sup> (people groups) on earth will be blessed..."* (Gen 22:16–18).



The **Old Testament** repeatedly refers back to this promise: *all ethne will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed (Ps 72:17)... the ethne will invoke blessings by Him and in Him they will boast (Jer 4:2).*



**Peter** sees the Spirit's empowering at Pentecost as fulfillment of this promise: *And you are heirs... of the covenant God made with your fathers... "Through your offspring all ethne on earth will be blessed" (Acts 3:25).*

**Paul** identifies this promise of God as the gospel itself! **Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham:** *"All ethne will be blessed through you" (Gal 3:8). I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery... Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the ethne has come in (Rom 11:25). Paul applies this: It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation (Rom 15:20).*



**Jesus** relates His mission, and even His daily presence with us, to this purpose: *All authority... has been given to Me. Therefore go and **disciple all ethne**... And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age (Mt 28:18-20)... And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as **a testimony to all ethne**, and then the end will come (Mt 24:14).*



Finally **John** foretells the fulfillment: *with Your blood You purchased for God persons from every tribe, language, people and ethne (Rev 5:9)... a great multitude... from every ethne, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb... (Rev 7:9)... All ethne will come and worship before You... (Rev 15:4). On each side of the river stood the tree of life... And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the ethne. (Rev 22:2).*



---

<sup>3</sup> The word "nations" in the New Testament is mostly the Greek *ethne*—people groups that resist outside influences and maintain their distinct lineage through intermarriage and shared customs. The Septuagint (LXX)—the earliest Greek translation of the Old Testament—uses this same word *ethne* **700** times, including this promise in Genesis.

## Conclusion

Because the percentage of the world's population that is Christian has remained around 33% for the last century (see graph below), most people miss the fact that the gospel has been spreading into new people groups at an exponential rate. Progress is accelerating rapidly toward the fulfillment of God's promise to bless all the families of the earth, justifying all by faith in the Lord Jesus. In the last 50 years, a new awareness of God's concern for *all* people groups has dropped the percentage of the world's population still needing pioneer work from 60% to 25%.

- Today God is sending workers to least-reached people groups from many countries that were considered mission fields just 50 years ago.
- Global prayer networks have arisen for UPGs (including FPGs).
- Ministries and whole denominations are collaborating more fruitfully.
- Movements are already present within people groups that are geographically, culturally, and linguistically near to some Frontier People Groups.
- God has entrusted His body with many new technologies, including real-time translation, instant communication, rapid travel, and online communities.

*Starting movements to Jesus in the 37 largest Frontier People Groups (greater than 10 million in size) would impact almost 1 billion people! This number increases to 1.6 billion (80% of people in FPGs) when movements to Jesus spread to the rest of the 300 mega-FPGs (greater than 1 million in size). Through the global church, God is fulfilling His promise to bless all the families of the earth!*

### Percentage of World Population in People Groups with...

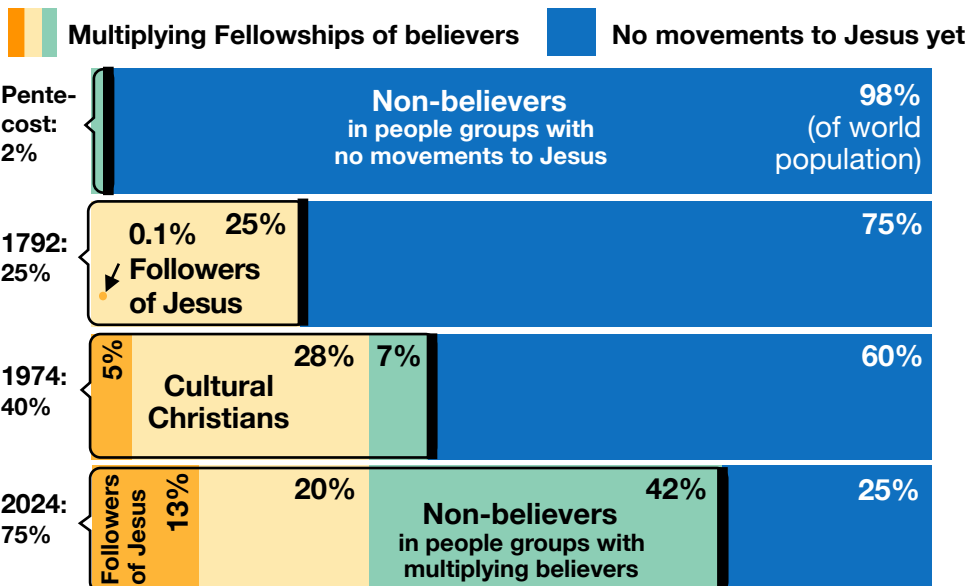


Figure 20: The Increasing Progress. Used with permission by RW Lewis.

# Resources for Finding Your Role

## 1. Learn and Share



7-min **video**: *Understanding the Remaining Mission Task*  
[JoshuaProject.net/frontier#videos](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier#videos)  
(in multiple languages at this link)



**Frontier People Groups**  
[JoshuaProject.net/frontier](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier)



**31 Largest FPGs monthly prayer guide**  
(listen/read/pray/share)  
[TelosFellowship.org/go31](https://TelosFellowship.org/go31)



Attend or host a **Perspectives class**  
(in any of 9 global languages)  
[PerspectivesGlobal.org](https://PerspectivesGlobal.org)



A global **network** seeking to raise up workers to start movements among UUPGs  
[UnengagedPeoples.com](https://UnengagedPeoples.com)



## 2. Adopt a Frontier People Group for Prayer



**Interactive Map**  
[JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive)



**Connect** around your FPG adoption  
[Go31.org/pray](https://Go31.org/pray)



### 3. Unite with others in Prayer



**BLESS  
FRONTIER  
PEOPLES**

Site/App for 31 Largest FPGs  
[BlessFrontierPeoples.org](http://BlessFrontierPeoples.org)



Find your **Prayer Circle**  
(prayer networks for many interests)  
[JustinLong.org/pray](http://JustinLong.org/pray)



Start or join a **Prayer Focus**  
[Pray4Movement.org](http://Pray4Movement.org)



### 4. Work with Others



Frontiers: One of many agencies  
that train and send to **Muslims**  
[Frontiers.org](http://Frontiers.org)



One **agency** that pursues movements among all  
UPGs (including **Hindus**)  
[Beyond.org](http://Beyond.org)



One **network** pursuing God's blessing for all  
earth's families  
[TelosFellowship.org](http://TelosFellowship.org)



A global **coalition** pursuing movements in all  
unreached people groups and places  
[2414Now.org](http://2414Now.org)



**NOPLACELEFT**

A global **network** pursuing movements  
everywhere [NoPlaceLeft.org](http://NoPlaceLeft.org)



## 5. Ministries for Blessing Households/Communities



Learn to work with Addiction Ministry globally to bless whole families and communities.  
[Teen Challenge GlobalTC.org](http://TeenChallenge.org)



Learn how to teach literate adults to teach other adults to read their own language in 4 months. Literacy Evangelism International  
[LiteracyEvangelism.org](http://LiteracyEvangelism.org)



Help with medical, humanitarian aid in war zones among unreached peoples, especially the Middle East:  
[FrontierAllianceInternational.co](http://FrontierAllianceInternational.co)



Regenerative farming eliminates toxins and unsustainable agricultural to reveal God's design and character. [Farming-Gods-Way.org](http://Farming-Gods-Way.org)  
 Also: [EchoCommunity.org](http://EchoCommunity.org)



## 6. Training for Field Effectiveness



Global Frontier Missions  
 Online and field based mission training  
[GlobalFrontierMissions.org](http://GlobalFrontierMissions.org)



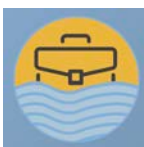
Studio Internship training to work with Muslim people groups.  
[www.StudioInternship.org](http://www.StudioInternship.org)



Training in entrepreneurship for effective access to communities, promoting movements and blessing families.  
[SmallSimpleProfitable.com](http://SmallSimpleProfitable.com)



Training to reach UPGs in inner city New York with the Equip program:  
[InternationalProject.org/Long-Term-Missions](http://InternationalProject.org/Long-Term-Missions)



Use your vocational calling to fulfill the Great Commission: [TeamExpansion.org/Go/Immerse](http://TeamExpansion.org/Go/Immerse)





## Your Invitation to a Frontiers-Focused Fellowship

History shows increasing acceleration toward the fulfillment of God's unchanging purpose to bless all families and people groups:

- In the late 1700s, the Holy Spirit began using the clarity William Carey brought forth (regarding the religious state of the world's countries) to spread Evangelical faith to most countries over the next 180 years.
- Fifty years ago the Holy Spirit began using the clarity Ralph Winter brought forth (regarding the biblical focus on people groups) to advance Jesus' kingdom more in the past 50 years than in the previous 2,000!

Today we have further clarity regarding the dwindling number of people groups still needing specialized pioneer work. *Is the Holy Spirit preparing Jesus' body to finally start multiplying disciples among **all** the remaining Frontier People Groups?*

### Your invitation

This booklet aims to equip you with insights to share in your sphere of influence and guide your collaboration with others. FPGs are a key front in the battle against the god of this world, and central to the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a testimony to every people group (*ethne*), and then the end (*telos*) will come" (Mt 24:14).

Regardless of whether your primary focus is discipling believers, winning nominal Christians or the lost in your own culture, or working cross-culturally, if you sense God stirring you with this vision, we welcome your fellowship in serving a new wave of unprecedented kingdom advance. We can help you equip and motivate your sphere of influence—to rejoice in what God has done, and to join in praying and following Jesus in His plan for discipling and blessing all nations.

If you sense the Holy Spirit's leading to collaborate in pursuing a new global focus on pursuing God for movements among all Frontier People Groups, starting with the 300 Mega-FPGs, join us in the Global Great Commission Community, in the FPG group:  
[connect.ggcn.org/groups/fpgs](http://connect.ggcn.org/groups/fpgs)



In this Global Great Commission Community you can collaborate on anything related to UPGs and ask questions, access free resources developed by others, and contribute your own resources for the use of others related to FPGs.

This is a free community but you'll need to register. (If you need help registering, text or email Robby, at 360 420-5634 or [RobbyQButler@pm.me](mailto:RobbyQButler@pm.me))

May the Holy Spirit bless you and your ministry, with growing awareness and enjoyment of Jesus' presence, love and power, as "the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" (Eph 4:16).



**4000 years ago God promised to  
bless all the families of the earth.**

**2000 years ago He promised again that  
many from every tribe, tongue and people  
will be praising Him together in heaven.**

**50 years ago movements to Jesus had  
spread to people groups totaling 1.6 billion  
people (40% of world population).**

**Today movements are spreading among  
people groups totaling 6 billion people  
(75% of world population).**

**Join God in blessing those people groups  
still needing their own movements to Jesus—  
the Frontier People Groups!**

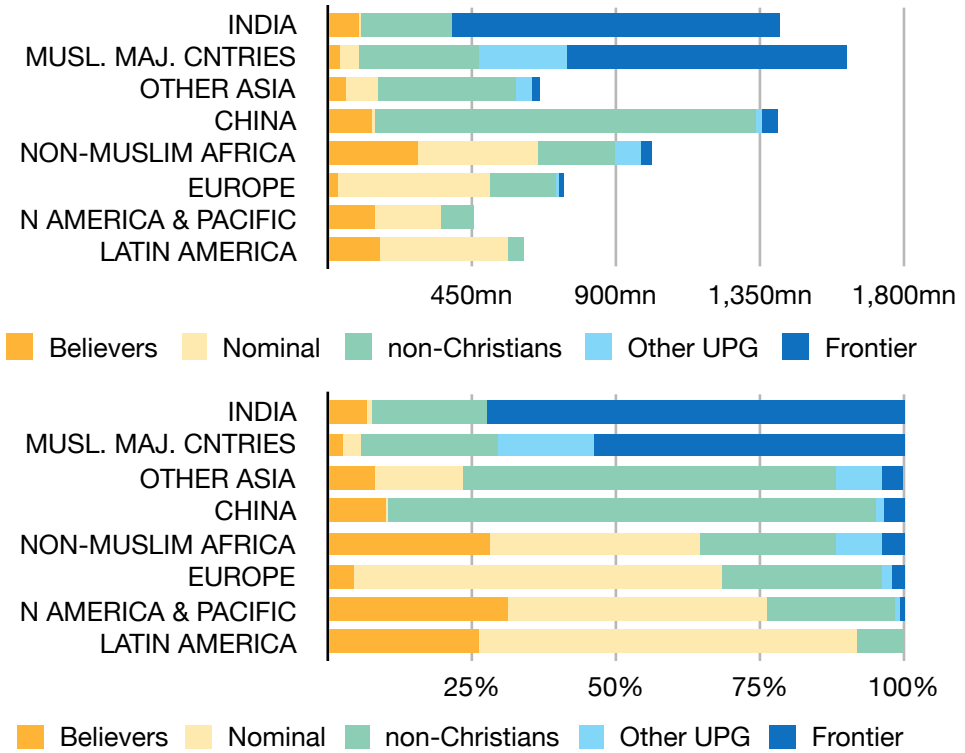
# Rough materials not printed in the booklet

(viewable at [JoshuaProject.net/GreatProgress](http://JoshuaProject.net/GreatProgress))

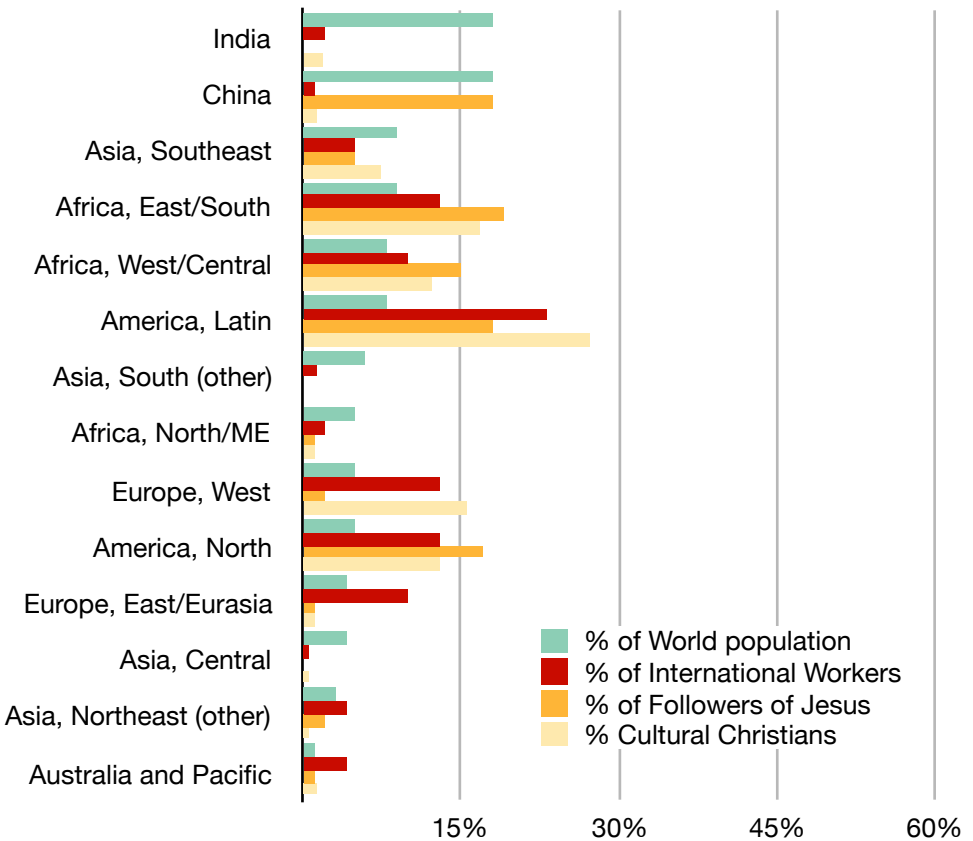
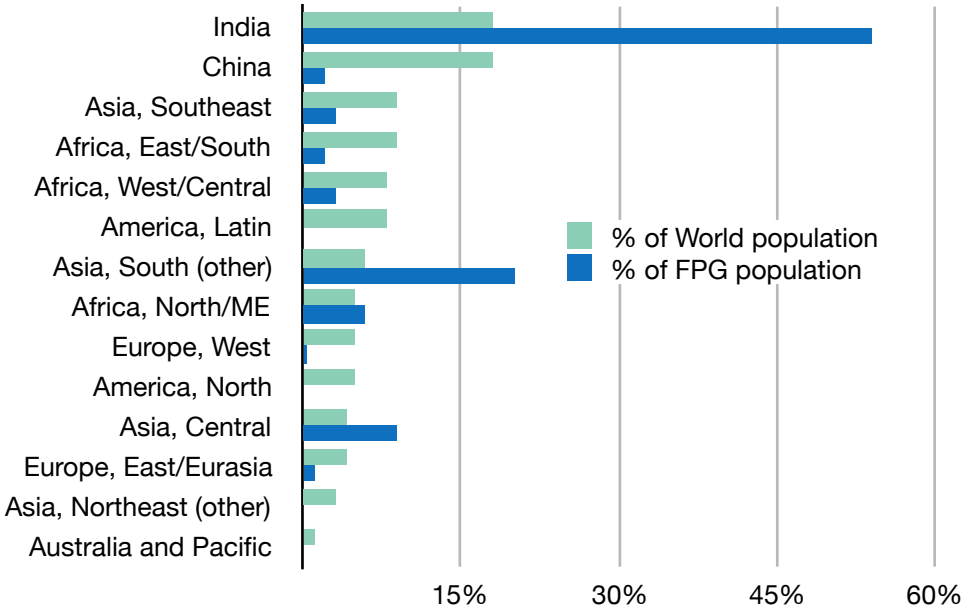
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# Global Distribution of Need and Resources



## Pie Chart Data In Bar Charts



**Unused Cover Designs**

**Next few pages**

# THE GREAT PROGRESS OF GOD'S BLESSING

"I swear by myself," declares the LORD, ... "through your offspring all people groups on earth will be blessed..." (Gen 22:16-18)

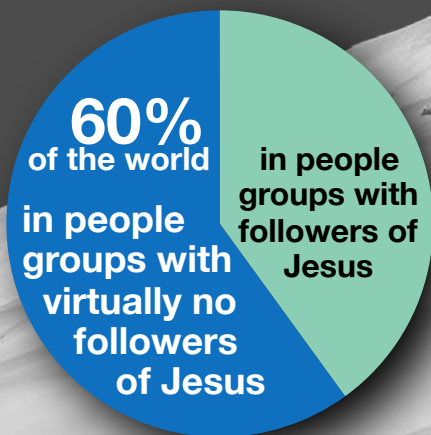
## *And the Remaining Pioneer Task*

*It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation (Rom 15:20).*

Where would Paul go next, now, today?

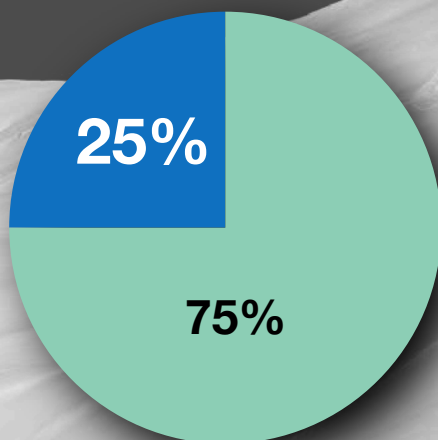
**1974**

Nearly 2000  
Years after  
Pentecost



**2024**

Just  
50 Years  
Later

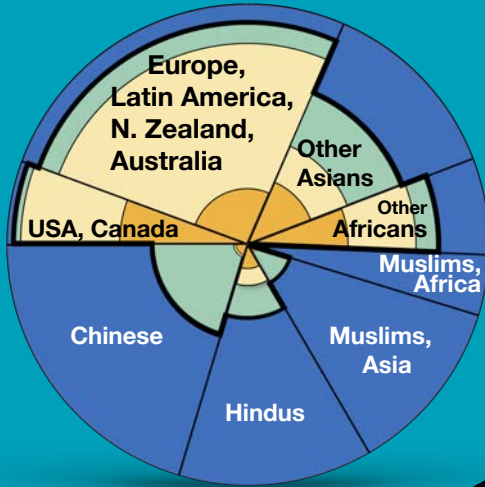


Are you missing out on  
the blessing Jesus  
created you for?

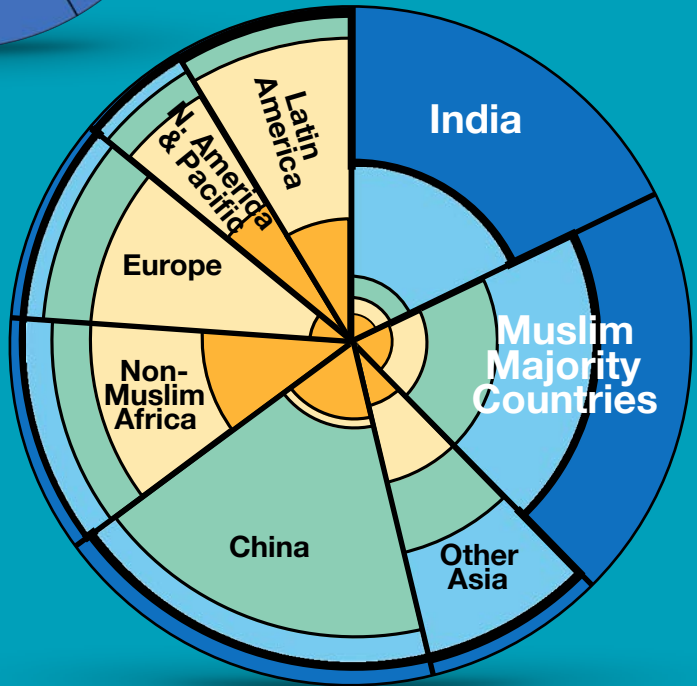
# THE GREAT PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL

*AND THE REMAINING PIONEER TASK*

1974



2024





# GOD'S BLESSING FOR ALL PEOPLES

1974-2024: 50 YEARS OF EXTRAORDINARY PROGRESS  
AND THE REMAINING FRONTIER MISSION TASK

## Pentecost: Empowerment for World Mission

250 million people on the planet

33

98% of the world needed cross-cultural pioneer workers, like the apostle Paul, to go *where Christ was not known ... [not] building on someone else's foundation* (Rom 15:20).

1792

## 1792: Birth of Evangelical Missions

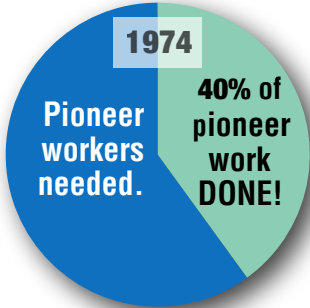
750 million people: 75% still needed pioneer workers.

## 1974: People Group awareness

(introduced via Lausanne and Perspectives)

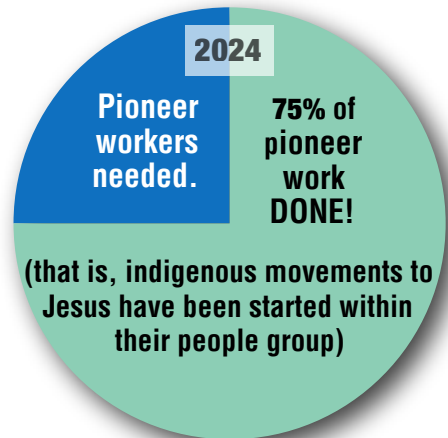
4 billion: 60% needed pioneer workers.

Area of circles  
scaled to reflect  
world population



## 2024: Just 50 years later

8 billion: **Only 25%** need pioneer workers!



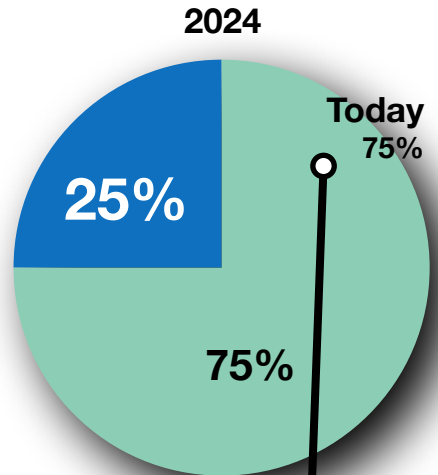
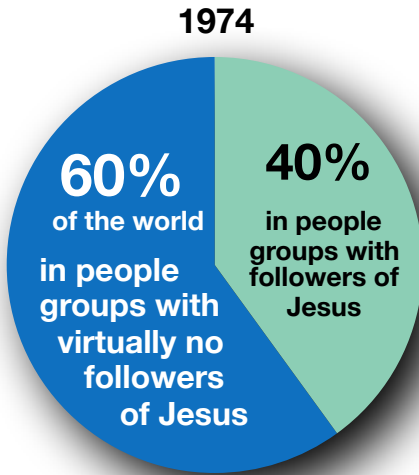
Jesus:

“This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all people groups, and then the end will come”

(Mt 24:14).

We may never *finish* discipling all people groups.  
However we can finish *getting started* in *every* people group.

# THE GREAT PROGRESS OF GOD'S BLESSING



Do *you* know how the Lausanne and Perspective movements triggered the greatest gospel advance in history?

1974  
40%

Where would Paul go next, now, today?

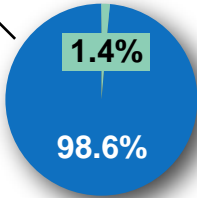


# SEEING THROUGH GOD'S EYES

## THE DESTINATION, AND RECENT BREAKTHROUGHS

33 AD

In 1974 the gospel had taken root among **40%** of the world. Just 50 years later in 2024 this has increased to **75%**! The *discipling* of all peoples may be never-ending. **Yet we can finish "getting started" in every people group.**



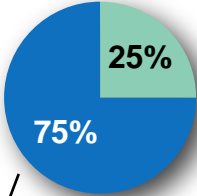
**Empowered by the Holy Spirit** (at Pentecost): To disciple all people groups

**Percent of world population in people groups where:**

- Pioneer workers are needed to *start* a discipling movement
- Pioneer work has been *completed*

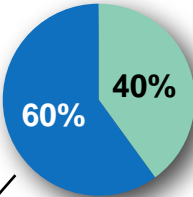
Timeline

18 Centuries later



**New Structures:** Protestant mission structures emerged (focused on political countries)

2 Centuries later

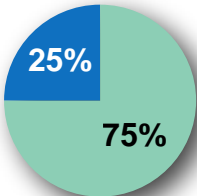


**Strategic Insight:** Attention shifted from political countries to overlooked **people groups**

***We have just lived through the most amazing advance of the gospel in all of history!***

1792

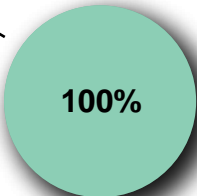
50 years later



**The Final Lap...** Will ours be the generation that finishes pioneer work among **all** remaining people groups?

1974  
2024

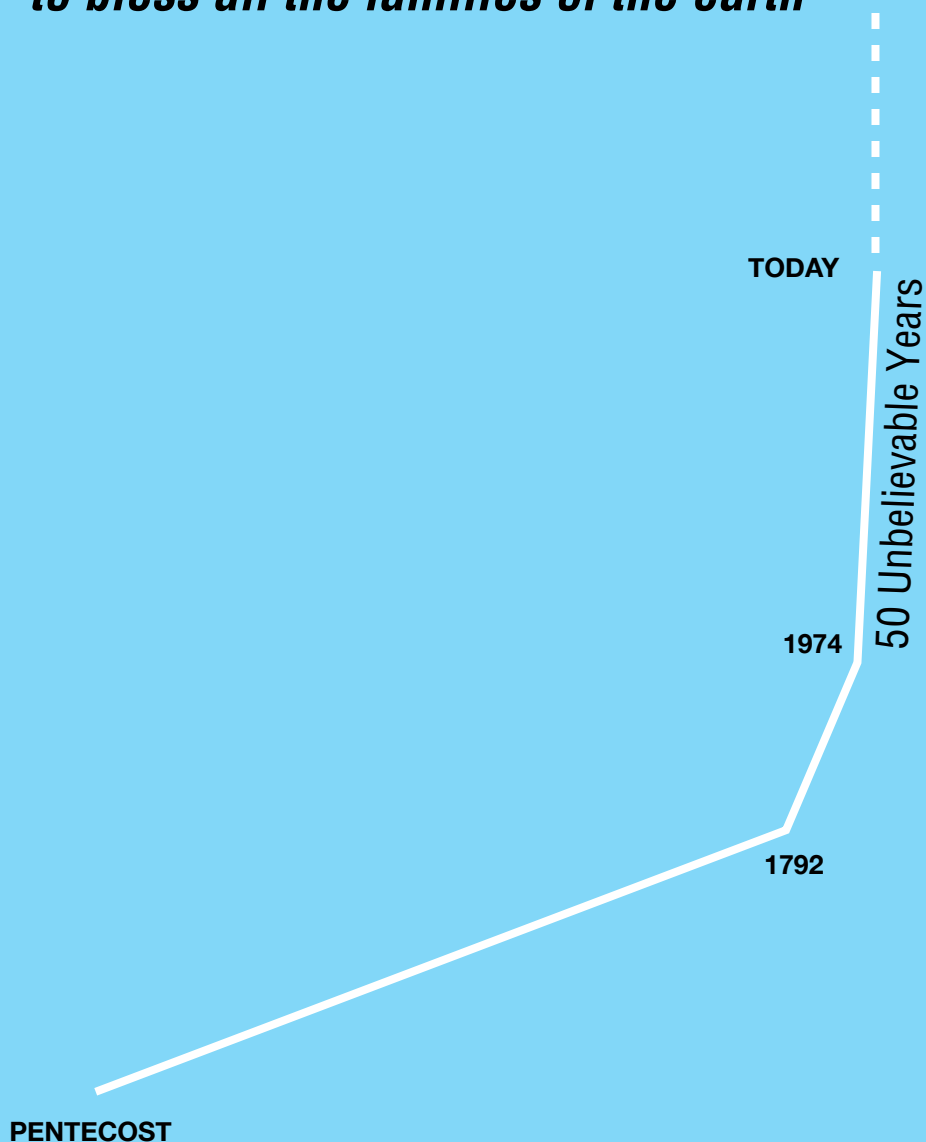
????



**Jesus:** ... *And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all **people groups**, and then the end will come* (Mt 24:14).

# THE GREAT PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL

*How God is fulfilling His promise  
to bless all the families of the earth*



# THE GREAT PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL

BLESSING ALL THE  
FAMILIES OF THE EARTH







# **THE GREAT PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL**

**BLESSING ALL THE  
FAMILIES OF THE EARTH**



# **THE GREAT PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL**

**BLESSING ALL THE  
FAMILIES OF THE EARTH**

**Other Graphic Pages**  
**Following pages**



# The Largest FPGs as a Percentage of World Population

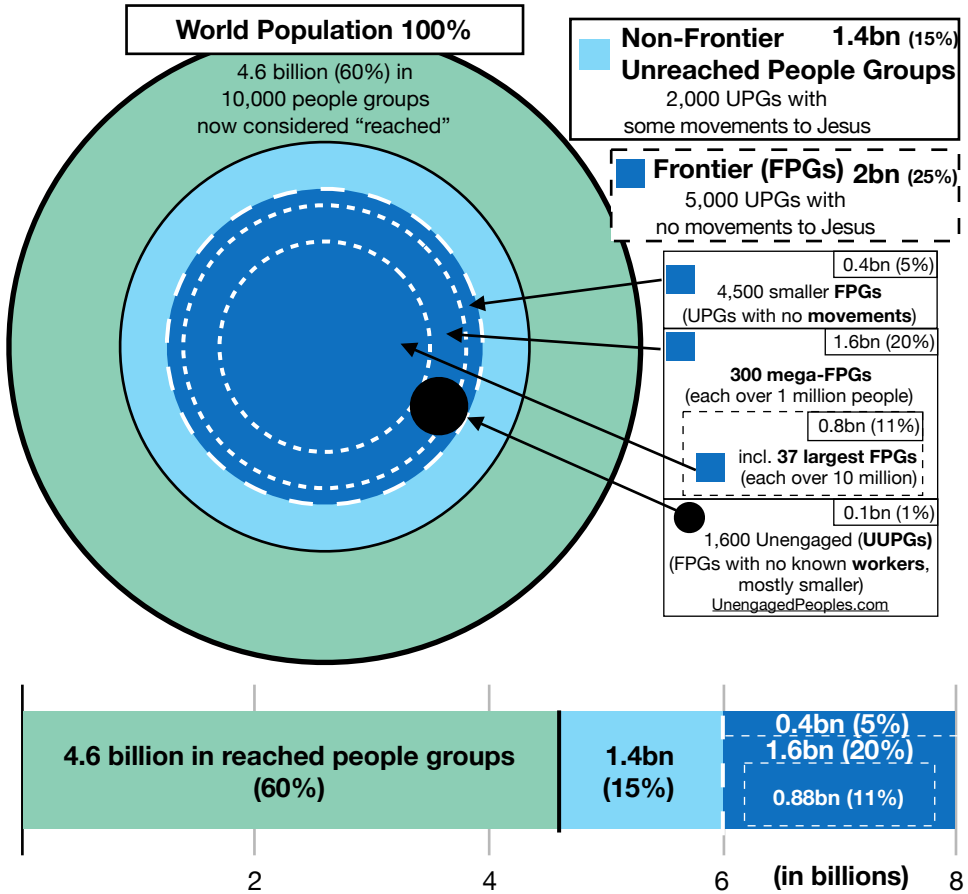


Figure xx: Peoples in Global Perspective. Based on data accessed March 2024 from [JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive) Used with permission by RW Lewis.

## Percentage of World Population in People Groups With ...

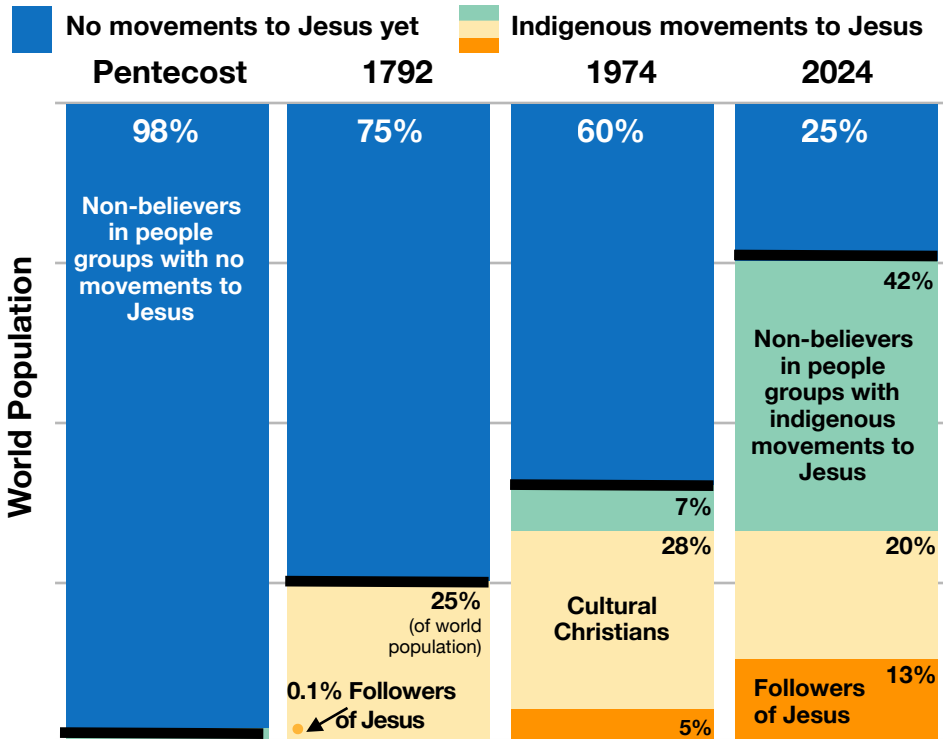


Figure xx: The Diminishing Pioneer Task. Used with permission by RW Lewis.

## 50 Unbelievable Years: 1974-2024

In 1974, indigenous churches and movements to Jesus existed in people groups with a total population of **1.6 billion** people. That left **2.4 billion** (60% of the world) lacking indigenous fellowships in their own people group, so those people groups still needed pioneer workers.

At the first Lausanne Congress, Ralph Winter awakened believers to the need for pioneer workers among these overlooked people groups.

Today the gospel has incredibly taken root among people groups with a total population of **6 billion** people. Believers have multiplied **5-fold** since 1974, and the percent of the world needing pioneer workers has been cut by more than half—from **60% to 25%** (**2 billion**, see figure xx).

### Classifying People Groups<sup>1</sup>

Where has the gospel has already spread?

Where hasn't the gospel spread yet?

Where are more workers needed?

For such questions it helps to consider the world in categories of people groups:

**Reached People Groups** (60% of the world, 4.6 billion people) include:

- Followers of Jesus (with a living faith): 1 billion (13% of the world)
- Cultural/nominal Christians (needing renewal): 1.6bn (20%)
- Non-believers in these same groups (needing witness): 2.4bn (27%)

Influenced by the gospel, the “barrier between peoples” has been reduced (Eph 2:14), and these reached peoples interact more freely with other peoples.

**Unreached People Groups** (40% of the world, 3.4 billion people) include:

- UPGs with progress, but needing workers: 1.4 billion (15% of the world)
- Frontier People Groups with no progress: 2 billion (25% of the world)
- UUPGs (a small subset of FPGs with no known workers)

Unreached people groups retain a strong sense of shared identity, and often resist outside influences or marriage outside their people.

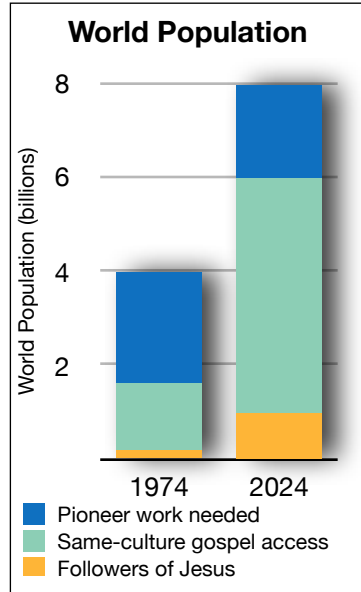


Figure xx: 50 Unbelievable Years. Used with Permission by RW Lewis [JoshuaProject.net/greatprogress](http://JoshuaProject.net/greatprogress)

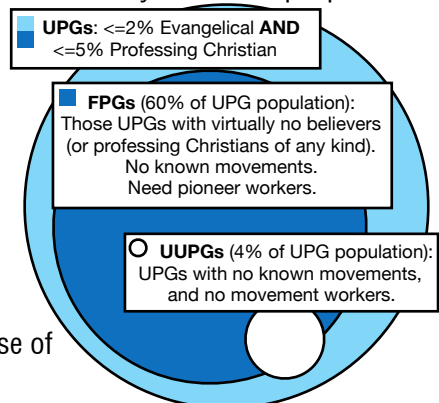
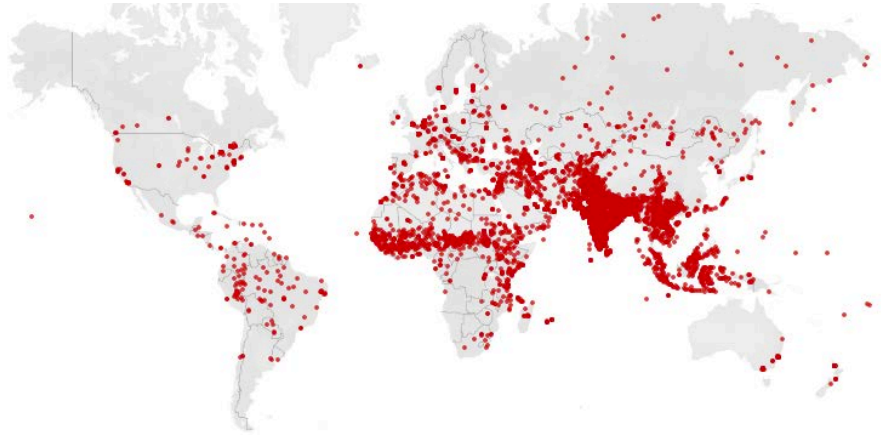


Figure yy: UPGs, FPGs, UUPGs. Used with Permission by RW Lewis

<sup>1</sup> For consistency, this material uses data and definitions from [JoshuaProject.net](http://JoshuaProject.net), except as noted.

## Distribution of Unreached and Frontier Peoples

UPGs and FPGs are not evenly distributed. In fact, 70% of the total FPG population (i.e. 1.4 billion) live in South Asia—India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and other island nations. Furthermore, half the overall population of Frontier People Groups (1 billion) lives in India alone. While great progress has been made among Buddhists and tribals, 97% of the total FPG population remains in two religious groups: Muslims (56%) and Hindus (41%).



## Distribution/Size of All Frontier People Groups by Religion

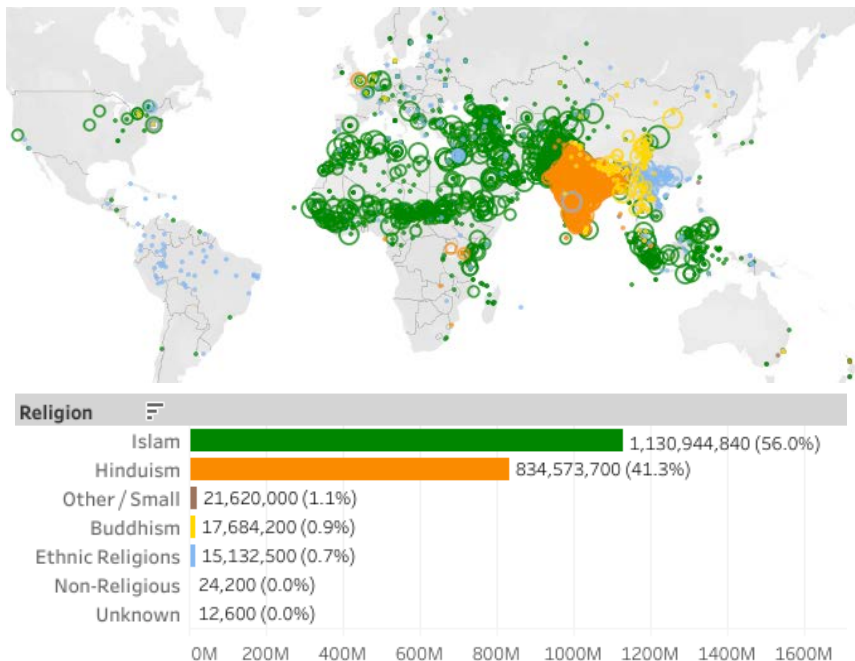


Figure xx: All Unreached and Frontier People Groups. Accessed April 2024 on [JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive) Used with permission by Joshua Project.

## Which People Groups Most Need Pioneer Workers

Many Unreached People Groups remain, even though the population of “reached” people groups has nearly tripled since 1974! These remaining UPGs can be separated into those with a movement to Jesus, and those Frontier People Groups still with no known indigenous movements to Jesus.

Most of the progress of the last 50 years occurred through movements in China and other parts of Asia among Buddhists, and in tribal groups in Oceania and Latin America. Many of these are still UPGs—having not yet passed the 2% threshold.<sup>2</sup> However, those UPGs that have local believers and a movement to Jesus no longer need pioneer workers, as foreign workers can partner with these local believers and disciple them to pursue movements.

## Where Frontier People Groups Are and What They Believe

FPGs are not evenly distributed around the world. In fact, 70% of the total FPG population (i.e. 1.4 billion) live in South Asia—India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and other island nations. Furthermore, half the overall population of Frontier People Groups (1 billion) lives in India alone. While great progress has been made among Buddhists and tribals, 97% of the total FPG population remains in two religious groups: Muslims (56%) and Hindus (41%).

### Population of All Frontier People Groups by Religion

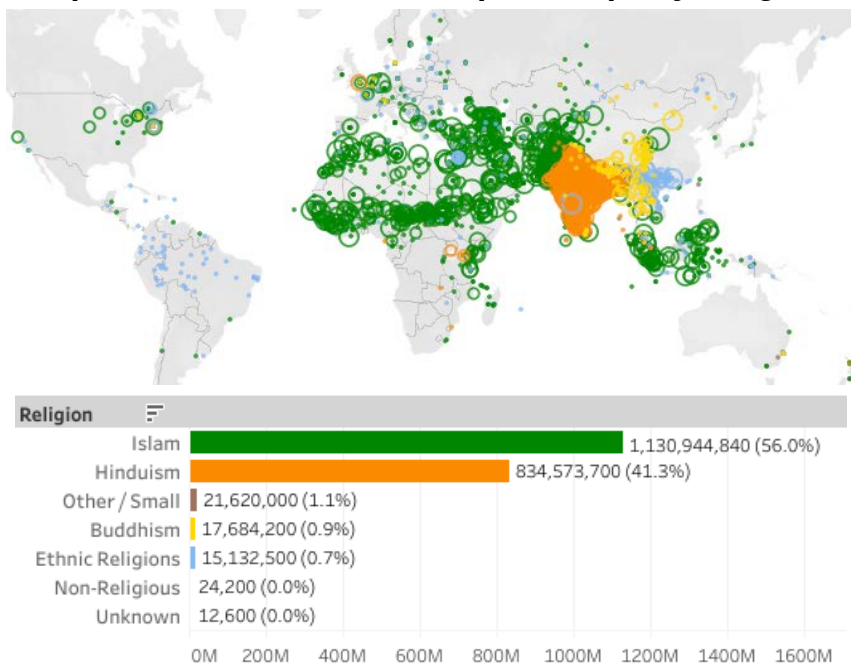


Figure xx: All Frontier People Groups. Accessed April 2024 on [JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive) Used with permission by Joshua Project.

<sup>2</sup> UPGs are defined by Joshua Project as “less than or equal to 2% Evangelical Christian and less than or equal to 5% Professing Christians.”

# Global Distribution of Workers and Funding

If the global allocation of workers and funding reveal the Church's true priorities, we must question whether our priorities are aligned with those of Jesus. Only 1% of workers are focused on pioneer work among the remaining 25% of the world in Frontier People Groups. And more money is embezzled from Christian causes each year than is directed to all global mission work, of which only a small fraction goes to pioneer mission work.

## The Great Imbalance

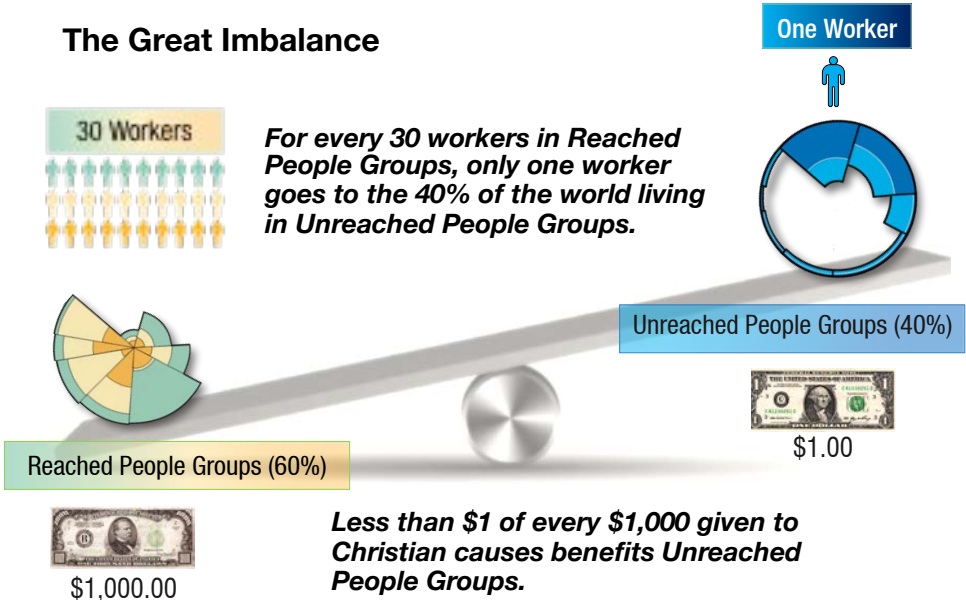


Figure xx: Distribution of Workers and Funding. Adapted from the prayer guide for the 31 Largest Frontier People Groups. Used by permission [JoshuaProject.net/the31](http://JoshuaProject.net/the31)

## Largest Muslim and Hindu Frontier People Groups

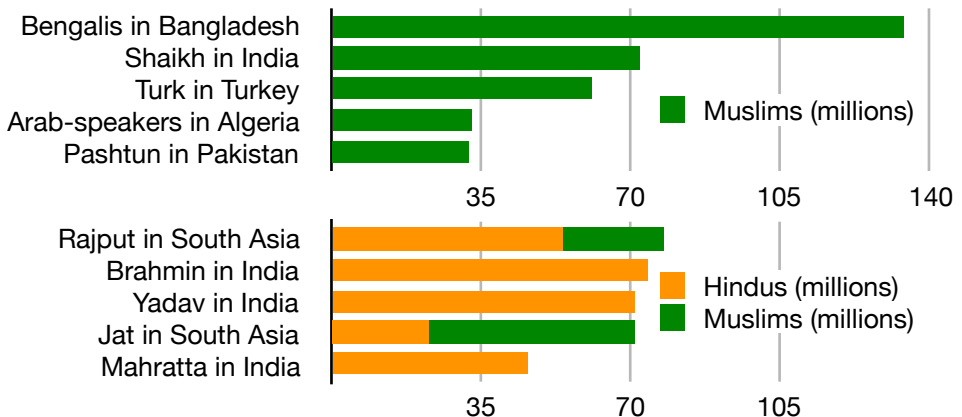
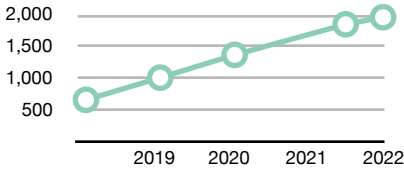


Figure 11: Largest Muslim and Hindu FPGs. Data from [JoshuaProject.net/filter](http://JoshuaProject.net/filter) Accessed April 2024. Used with permission by Joshua Project.

# Good News: Movements Are Multiplying, Even in India

The book of Acts is becoming a global experience, with household churches multiplying rapidly even amidst fierce opposition. Frequent discussion of and obedience to God’s word (similar to Acts 19:9-10) is fueling movements to Jesus in every region of the world. Many movements to Jesus are reportedly doubling every three to five years, growing much faster than the population. An estimated 2% of the world is now involved in movements to Jesus.

## Known Acts-like Movements



## Movement Locations in 2022

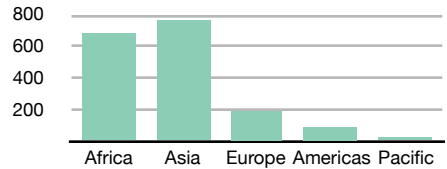


Figure yy: Distilled from 2018-2022 *Mission Frontiers* covers, and from [2414Now.net/resources](https://2414Now.net/resources)

## Prayer is Starting Movements Even in Some FPGs in India

Prayer for the peoples of India has risen since the Apostle Thomas arrived there in the first century. In 2018 a prayer focus was launched for the overlooked Frontier People Groups, particularly the 31 largest ones (over 10 million in size), half of which are in India ([Go31.org](https://Go31.org)). Strengthened by increasing global prayer, movements in India are growing despite political and religious opposition.

The “listening” movement is one of many movements God has raised up in India in response to prayer. It is reported to be spreading in households (*oikos*) among 300 people groups across 16 states (more than half) of India. Each *oikos* has said “yes” to Jesus and is following Jesus. And as they’re being disciplined to Jesus, they’re told, “Freely you have received, so freely give.”

As they discuss Scripture, often daily, and move in obedience to Jesus, they’re out sharing. And if they’re Yadav, for example, they’re sharing with the people that they know best, primarily other Yadav. But the Spirit may also prompt them to share with an *oikos* in another people group.

Often when one *oikos* takes baptism their next-door neighbors or closest relatives are also ready to take baptism, because the first *oikos* taking baptism has been sharing with that other family all the Bible stories they’ve been learning.

In this one movement, three million people are now baptized, with tracked chains of 16, 17, and 20 *oikos* among a wide variety of people groups, each leading the next to follow Jesus. Among the Bania, only one family is known to be following Jesus so far. Pray for all that Jesus is eager to do in that people group. However there are many other large Frontier People Groups where movements are developing—including *oikos* among Brahmins, Other Backward Castes (OBCs), and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SCSTs)—Thakors, Jats, Rajputs, and Valmikis. Among the Yadav people group in particular, there were 30,000 baptized a couple of years ago, and that continues growing.

## 50 Extraordinary Years: 1974-2024

Prior to 1974, workers overlooked the biblical emphasis on languages and *ethne* (people groups) and focused on political countries.

Then in 1974, Billy Graham gathered evangelists from around the world to discuss what it would take to spread the gospel to the whole world. Ralph Winter introduced people groups there—and in what later became the Perspectives course—and showed that if every believer were to win to Jesus all their friends, family, and neighbors in their own people group, **60%** of the world would be left out. That is, **60%** of the world lived in **people groups needing** specialized, cross-cultural **pioneer workers**.

By 2024 we celebrate amazing progress—today less than **25%** of the world remains in people groups needing cross-cultural pioneer workers.

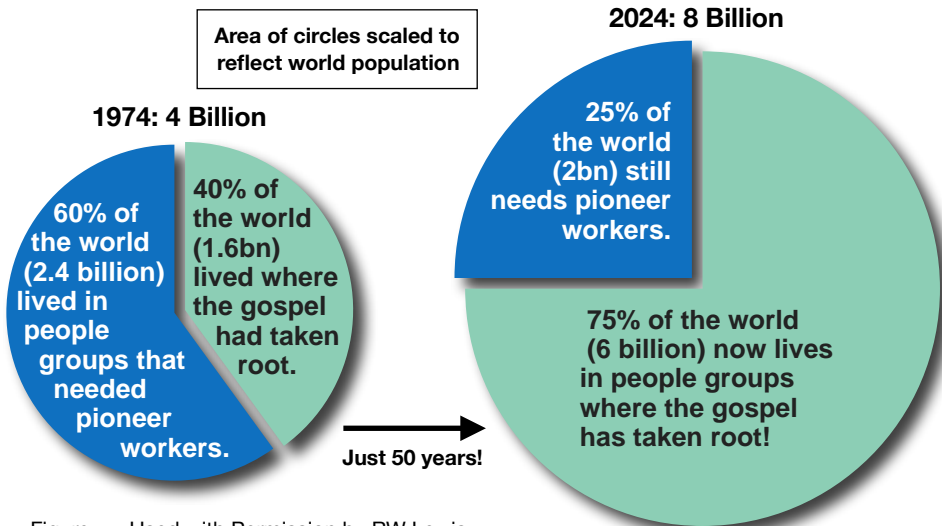


Figure xx: Used with Permission by RW Lewis

### Take a moment to let this sink in...

In 1974 (nearly 2,000 years after Pentecost) only **40%** of the world could come to Christ through normal, same-culture witness. Now, just 50 years later, **75%** of the world can come to Jesus through same-culture witness.

**Praise God** for this working of His Spirit, through the cross-cultural pioneer workers He sent out, in response to the prayers He prompted, in response to this return to the biblical emphasis on people groups (*ethne* in Greek).

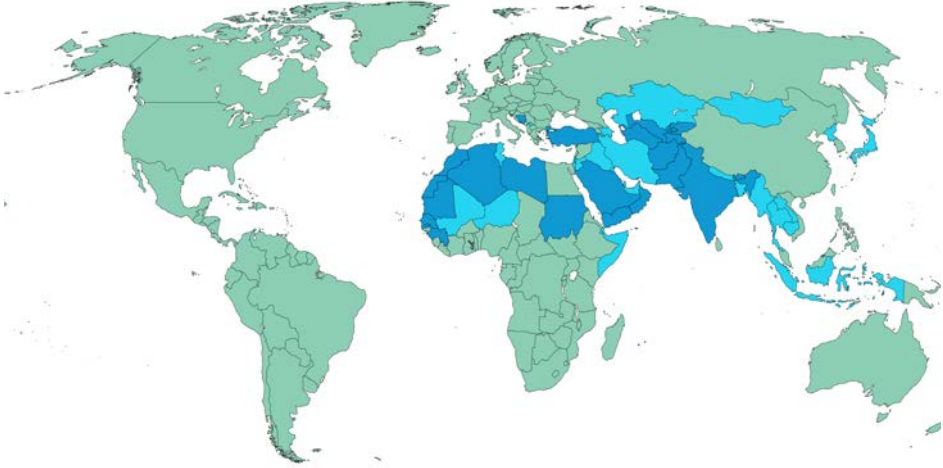
In this booklet you will find visual representation of these major points:

- Assessing the need for pioneer workers.
- The remarkable progress of the gospel over the past fifty years.
- Which people groups most need pioneer workers.
- Where mission workers are mostly being sent.
- The strategic importance of the 300 mega-Frontier People Groups.



# Seeing the World More Clearly

## The World as you Know It



Countries colored to show the predominant kind of people group:



Frontier UPGs



Other UPGs

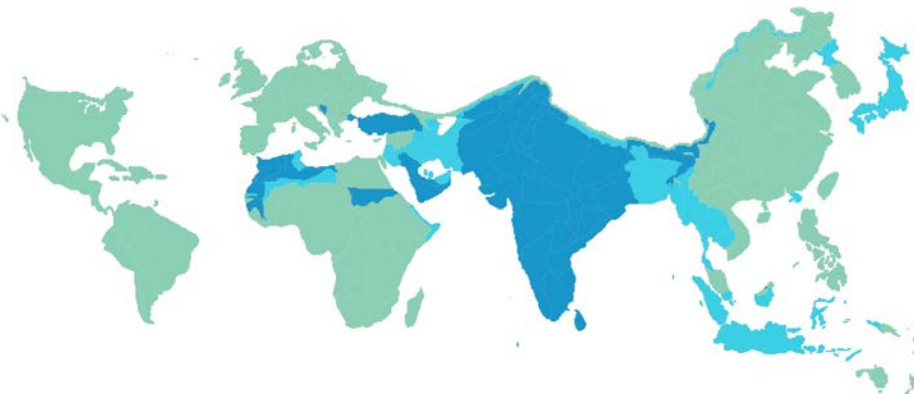


"Reached" peoples

Figure xx: Traditional World Map Projection. Used with Permission by [JoshuaProject.net](http://JoshuaProject.net)

We are used to seeing the world in terms of geography. In the map above, large regions of Russia, Canada, and Greenland stand out even though very few people live there. Adjusting the area of each country to reflect its actual population highlights the hidden opportunity in the concentration of FPGs in South Asia.

## The Same Countries, Sized to show their Population



Countries colored to reflect the predominant category of people group:



Frontier UPGs



Other UPGs



"Reached" peoples

Figure yy: Population Projection. Used with Permission by [BarbetMedia@gmail.com](mailto:BarbetMedia@gmail.com)

## Population of FPGs by Region

Adjusting the area of each region to the population of its Frontier People Groups makes the uneven distribution of FPGs even clearer. The South Asian FPG population is more than double the whole rest of the world combined!

The few FPGs in North America and Europe are primarily immigrants in “diaspora.” Just 2.5% of the global FPG population are in diaspora. Most of the Muslims in diaspora are in other Muslim countries. Very few Hindu FPGs are in diaspora (mostly in other S. Asian or African countries) and many South Asians in diaspora are not from FPGs.

Most immigrants in the United States, including almost all recent immigrants, are from “reached” people groups.

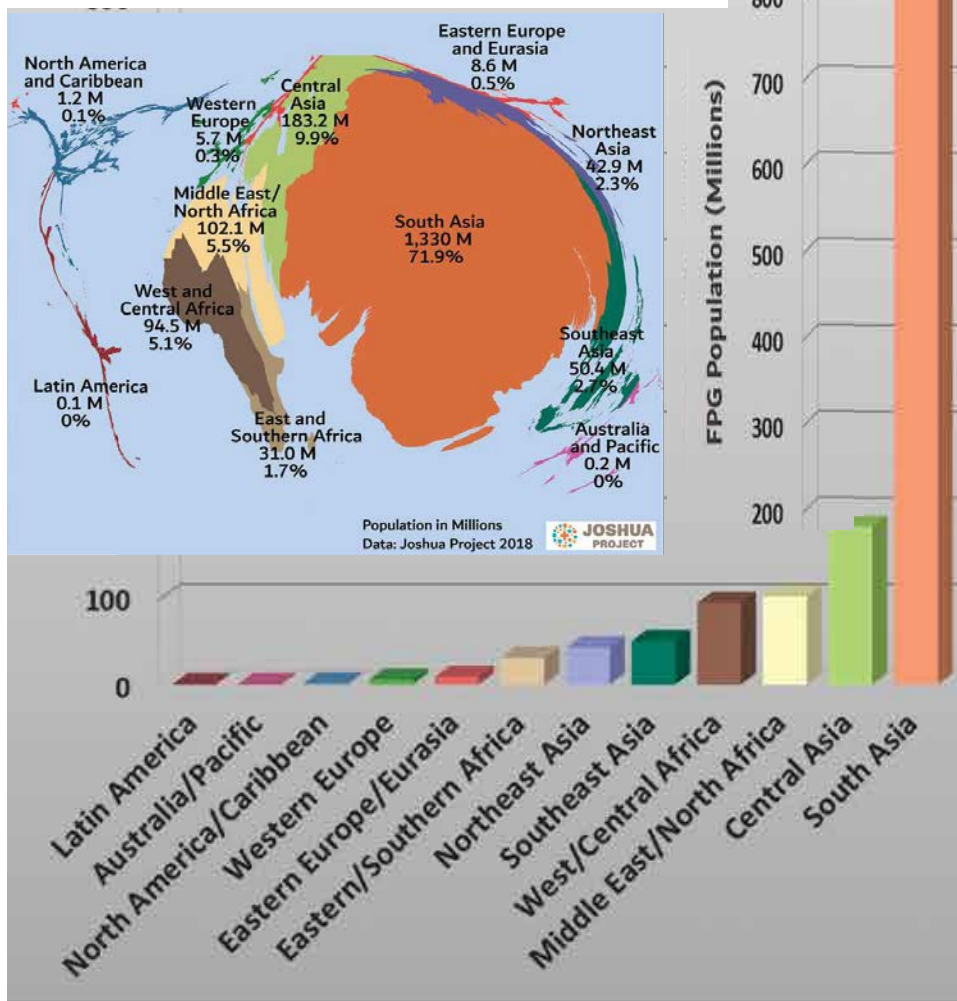
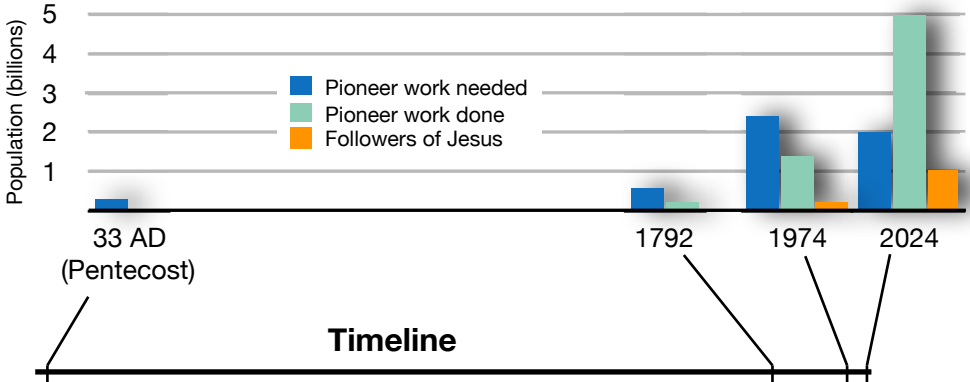
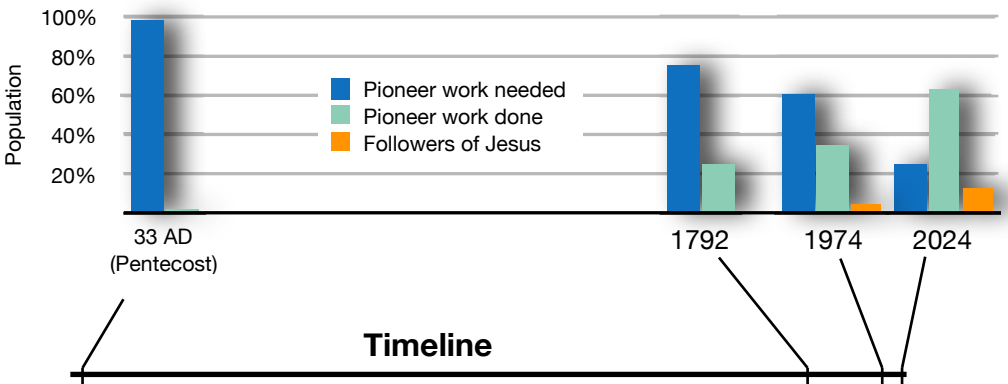


Figure xx: Reprinted from the Nov/Dec 2018 issue of *Mission Frontiers*

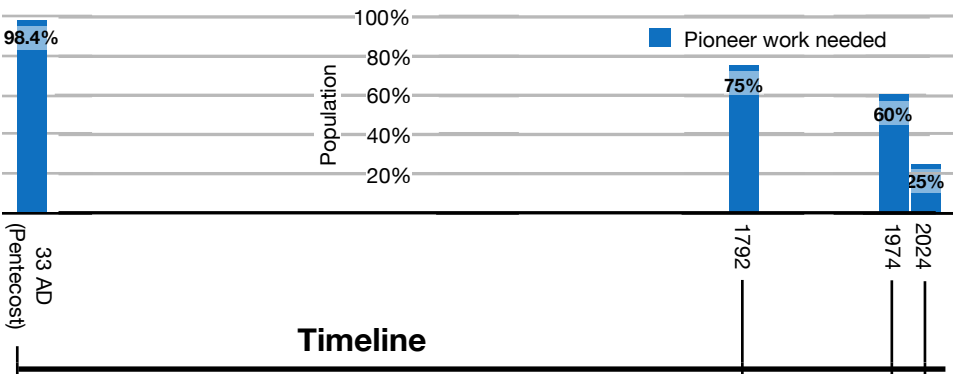
## Global Population in People Groups Needing Pioneer Workers



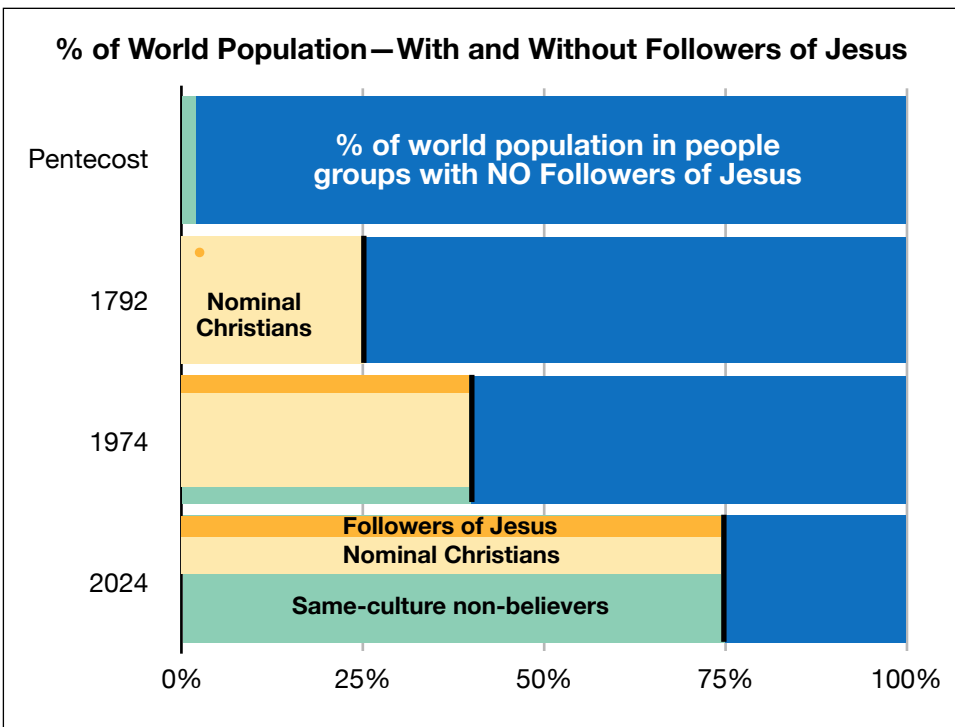
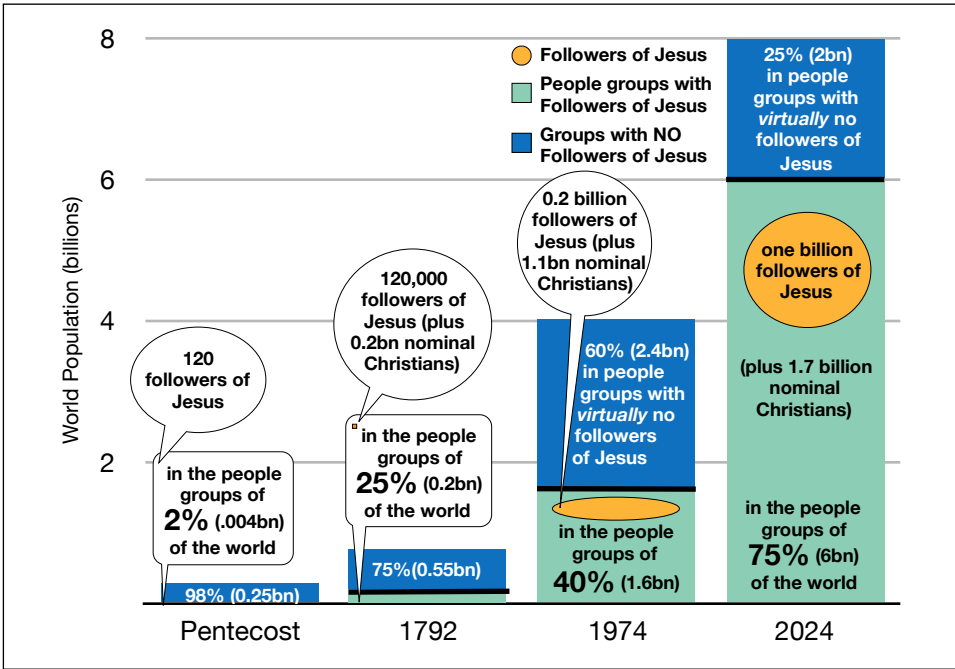
## Percent of the World in People Groups Needing Pioneer Workers



## Percent of the World in People Groups Needing Pioneer Workers



# World Population With and Without Followers of Jesus



## How our Generation Can Finish Starting in *all* People Groups.

In 1974, nearly 2,000 years after Pentecost:

- 🏠 1 in 20 households followed Jesus (globally).<sup>3</sup>
- 🏠 7 of the 20 households could see what it looks like to follow Jesus from others in their people group. They don't know Him yet, but their doors are open.
- 🏠 12 of the 20 households all needed pioneer workers to lead households to be the first in their own people group to follow Jesus and obey all He commanded. Their doors are closed to outside influences, behind the barrier between peoples that Jesus came to destroy (Eph 2:14).



Then in 1974 a new awareness of God's concern for every people group began accelerating pioneer work, with breakthroughs that continue building momentum toward leading the first households in **every** last people group to follow Jesus!

Now, as of 2024, with increasing prayer and pursuit of Acts-like movements:

- 🏠 1 in 8 households follow Jesus (globally).
- 🏠 5 of the 8 households can learn to follow Jesus within their own people group.
- 🏠 2 out of 8 households remain isolated in people groups with virtually no



followers of Jesus. This 25% of the world still needs pioneer workers.

<sup>3</sup> This page adapts [JoshuaProject.net](https://www.joshua-project.net) data to the biblical emphasis on households, in line with God's promise to bless all people groups.

## If Not Us, Who? If Not Now, When?

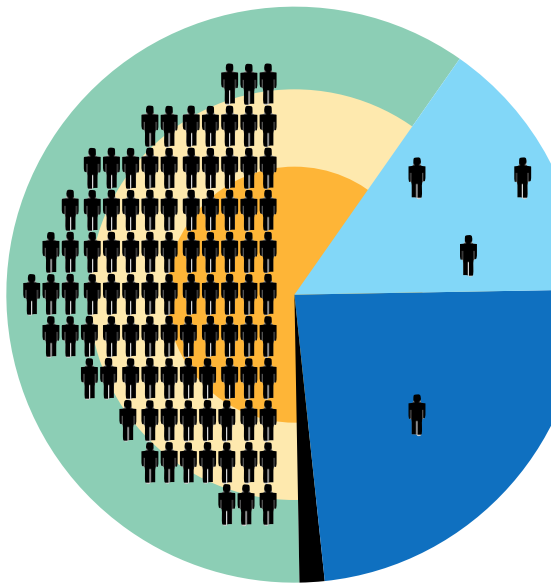
Many generations have faithfully run the race before us.







The finish line is now in sight.

Will our generation finish starting indigenous, multiplying communities of believers among every last remaining Frontier People Group?

### Distribution of International Workers

 = 1% of Int'l Workers



Partnership Workers Needed	
	Followers of Jesus <span style="float: right;">75%</span>
	Cultural Christians
	Non-believers in People Groups with Believers
	UPGs (<=2% Evangelicals and <=5% Christian adherents) with sufficient believers to partner with.
Pioneer Workers Needed	
	Frontier People Groups <span style="float: right;">25%</span> subset of UPGs (<=0.1% Christians), needing pioneer workers to start movements.
	Unengaged UPGs—FPGs with no known workers pursuing movements.

	75% of the world	25% of the world	
Rough Estimates	6 billion	2 billion	Population
	12,400	5,000	People Groups
	99.99%	0.01%	% of all followers of Jesus
	99%	1%	% of all int'l workers
	7,500	450,000	Non-believers per worker
	<b>Gaining Ground</b>	<b>Losing Ground</b>	<i>Increase of believers vs population growth</i>

Figure xx: Distribution of International Workers. Used with permission by RW Lewis.

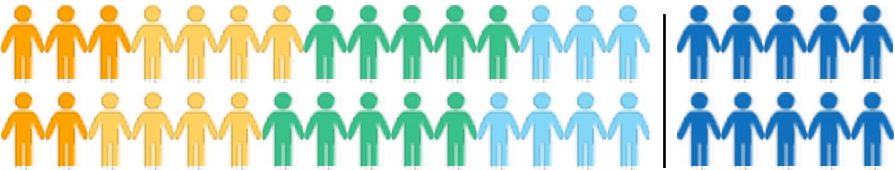
## The World in 1974






(4 billion people)

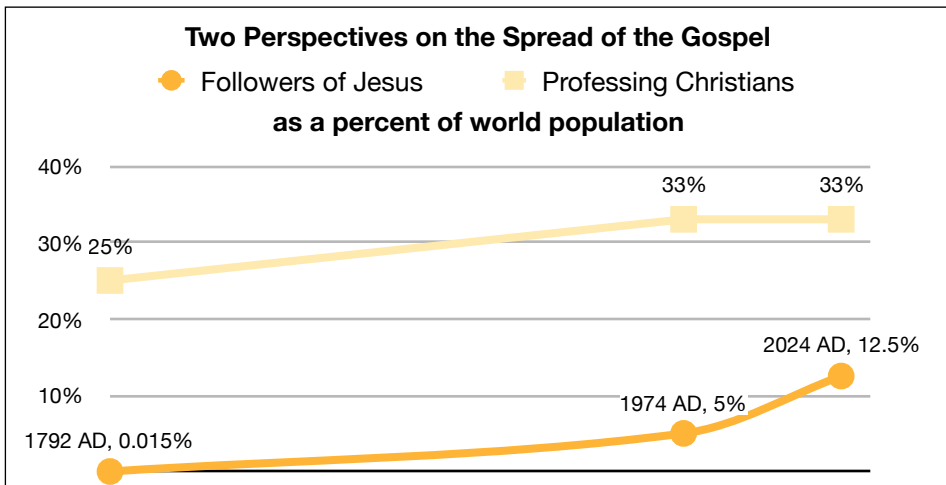


## The World in 2024

(8 billion people)



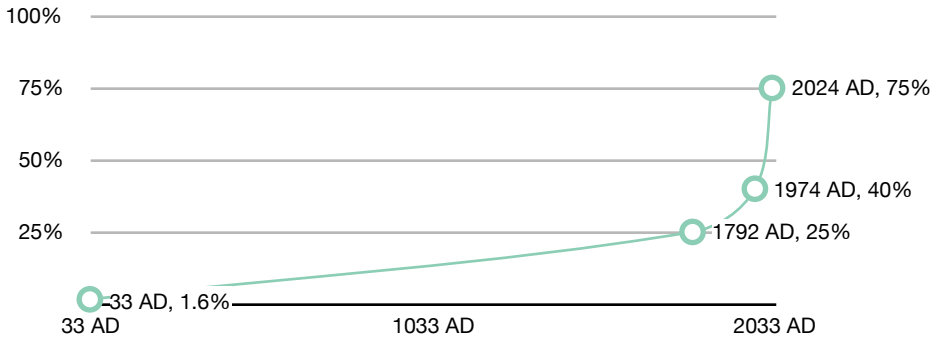
<b>Reached</b>	 <b>Followers of Jesus</b>	} A people group is called “ <b>reached</b> ” when there are sufficient indigenous communities of believers to spread the gospel to the rest of their group.
	 <b>Cultural Christians</b>	
	 <b>Non-believers</b>	
<b>Unreached</b>	 Some <b>Unreached People Groups (UPGs)</b> have indigenous communities of believers to <b>partner</b> with but still need outside assistance. (<=2% Evangelicals and <=5% Christian adherents)	
	 <b>Frontier People Groups (FPGs)</b> are the subset of UPGs with virtually no believers or known movements to Jesus, and still need pioneer workers. (<=0.1% Christian adherents)	



# THE GLOBAL STATE OF THE GOSPEL

Since 1974, a focus on God's covenant to bless **all people groups** has led to the greatest advance of the gospel in all of history. In 1974 40% of the world lived in people groups which showed gospel progress. As of 2024, 75% live in such people groups!

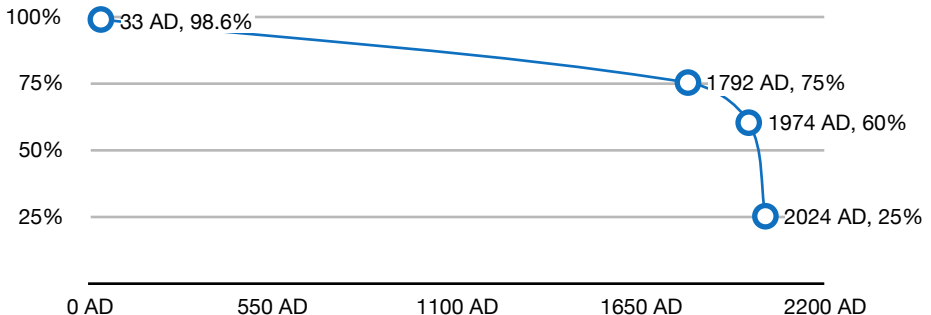
**Percent of world population in people groups showing gospel progress.**



World population has doubled since 1974, yet **believers have increased 5-fold** while the population of **people groups** needing **pioneer workers** declined from 60% of the world to 25%.

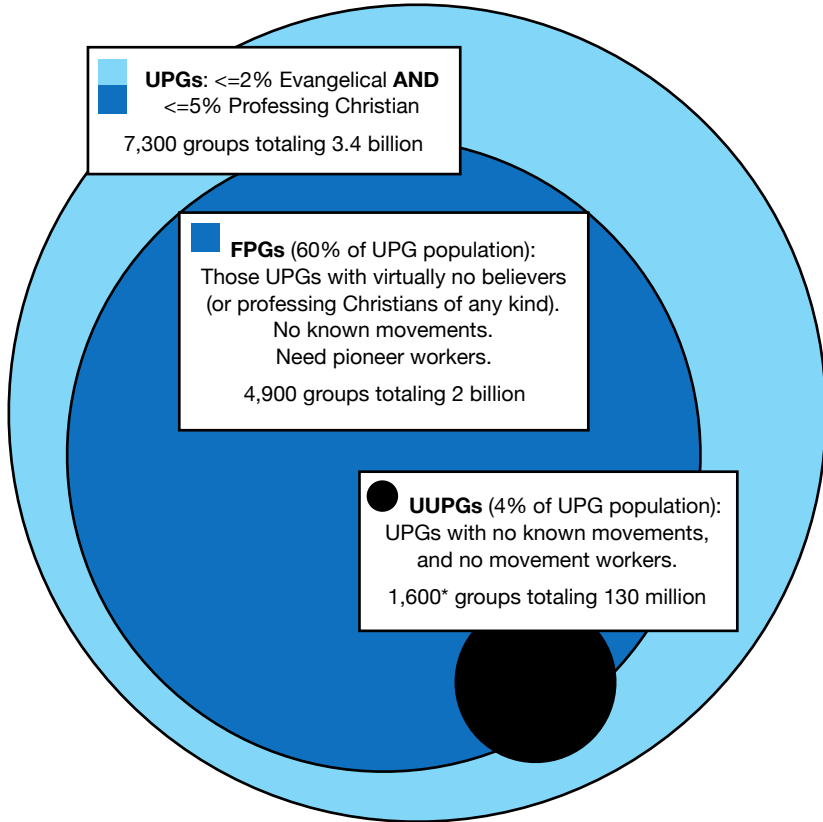
**Pioneer workers** (like Paul in the New Testament) go to people groups where there is no gospel progress—to lead and disciple the first households there to follow Jesus and begin multiplying.

**Percent of world population in people groups needing pioneer workers.**





## Classifying Unreached People Groups



**UPGs: Unreached People Groups** (40% of the world, 3.4 billion people) \*\*  
UPGs have “no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize their people group without outside assistance.”  
These are approximated as “less than or equal to 2% Evangelical Christian and less than or equal to 5% professing Christians.”

**FPGs: Frontier People Groups**  
(60% of UPGs, 25% of the world, 2bn)  
The subset of UPGs that have **no gospel progress**—virtually no followers of Jesus and no known movements to Jesus, and still need *pioneer* cross-cultural workers (approximated as 0.1% or fewer professing Christians).

**UUPGs: Unengaged UPGs**  
(2% of UPG population)  
Mostly FPGs that have **no known workers** pursuing “self-replicating churches and movements within the group,” \*\*\* In the Engaged Network’s definition of UUPGs, the majority of UUPGs are FPGs.

\* See [UnengagedPeoples.com](http://UnengagedPeoples.com) ([PeopleGroups.org](http://PeopleGroups.org) offers an alternate perspective)

\*\* Derived from [JoshuaProject.net](http://JoshuaProject.net), except as noted. Used with Permission.

\*\*\* Definition of UUPG accessed February, 2024 on [UnengagedPeoples.com](http://UnengagedPeoples.com)

Figure xx: UPGs as defined at Joshua Project. Used with Permission by RW Lewis

## Classifying People Groups<sup>4</sup>

Where has the gospel already spread? Where hasn't it? Where are more workers needed? To find answers to these questions it helps to consider the world in categories of people groups (see opposite page):

**Reached People Groups** (60% of the world, 4.6 billion people) include:

- Followers of Jesus (with a living faith): 1 billion (13% of the world)
- Cultural/nominal Christians (needing renewal): 1.6bn (20%)
- Non-believers in these same groups (needing witness): 2.4bn (27%)

Influenced by the gospel, the “barrier between peoples” has been reduced (Eph 2:14), and these reached peoples interact more freely with other peoples.

**Unreached People Groups** (40% of the world, 3.4 billion people) include:

- UPGs with progress, but needing workers: 1.4 billion (15% of the world)
- Frontier People Groups with no progress: 2 billion (25% of the world)
- UUPGs (a small subset of FPGs with no known workers)

These various kinds of unreached people groups retain a strong sense of shared identity, and often resist outside influences or marriage outside their people.

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<sup>4</sup> For consistency, this material uses data and definitions from [JoshuaProject.net](http://JoshuaProject.net), except as noted.

## Where Would the Apostle Paul Go Today?

Nearly all believers are in the 75% of the world living in people groups where the initial pioneer work has been completed and there are growing communities of believers. Believers are increasing faster than the population these people groups. The other 25% of the world lives in Frontier People Groups, with virtually no followers of Jesus or movements to Jesus. All Unreached People Groups need more workers. However FPGs receive only 1% of the Christian workers sent internationally from all countries.

### Progress and Workers Are Not Evenly Distributed

Some regions show more progress among Unreached People Groups than others. In the three regions listed below, for example, Indonesia shows significant progress while in South Asia few UPGs are showing progress:

- **Indonesia:** 55% of UPGs no longer need pioneer workers (85% by population).
- **The Sahel** (Sahara): 50% of UPGs are no longer FPGs (75% by population).
- **South Asia:** Only 15% of UPGs are no longer FPGs (20% by population).

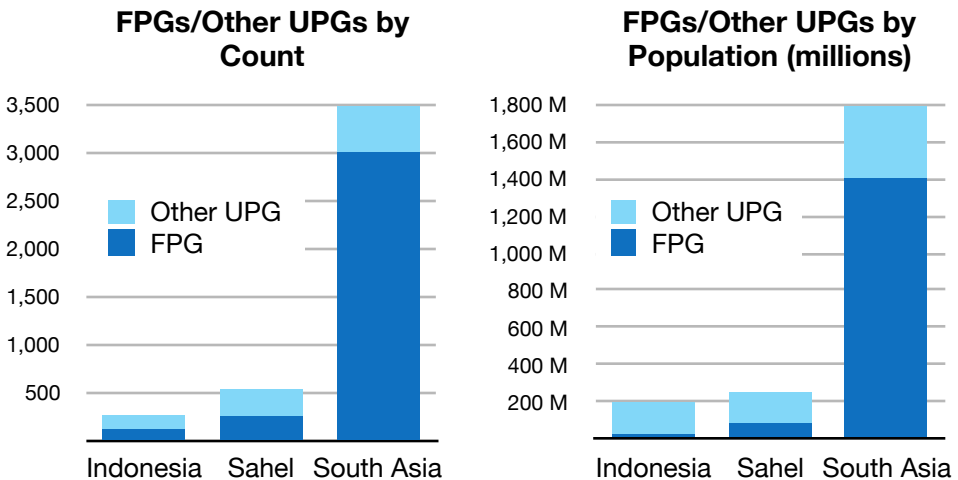
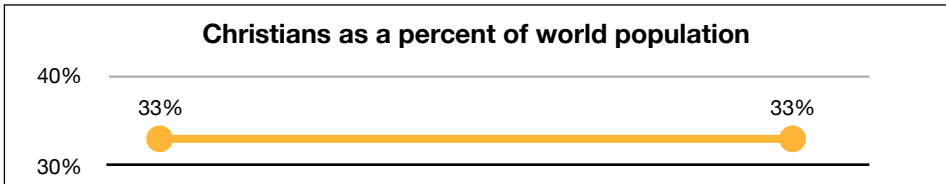


Figure xx: Data from [JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive)  
Accessed March 2024. Used with permission by Joshua Project.

## The Great Progress of the Gospel

**Some** see NO progress of the gospel over the past 50 years?

- In 1974, one-third of the world identified as Christian.



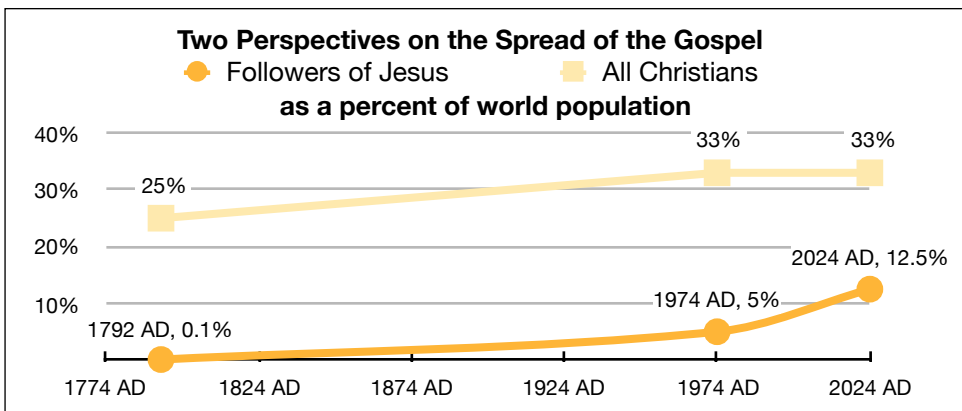
- Today, one-third of the world identifies as Christian.

Furthermore, the distribution of workers hasn't changed much:

- In 1974, most missionaries worked in partnership with existing churches—in people groups with established, growing church movements.
- Today, most workers still work in partnership with existing churches—in people groups with established, growing church movements.

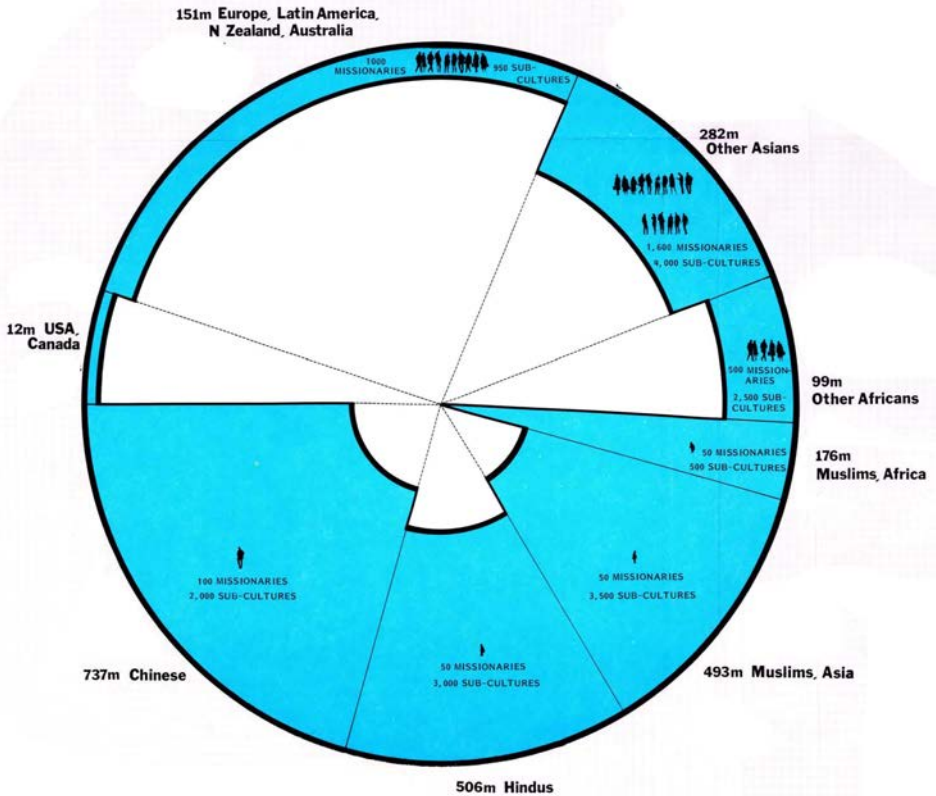
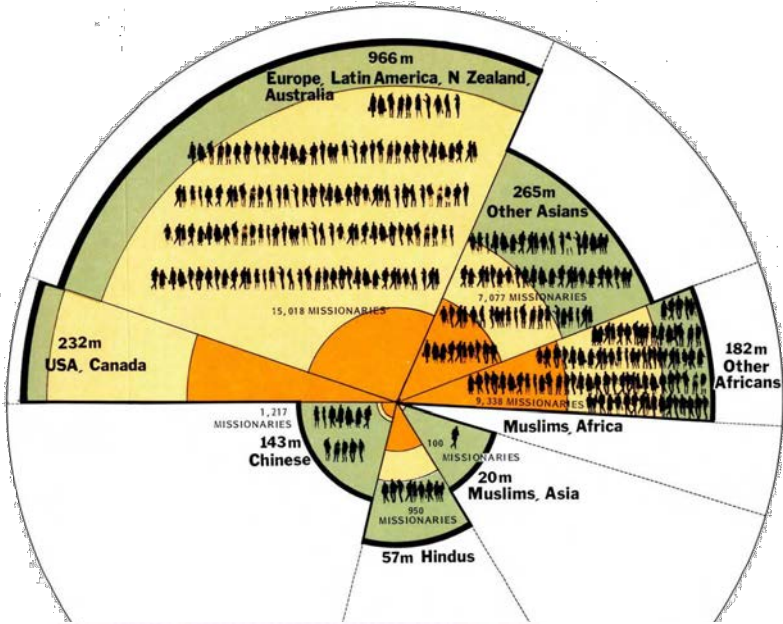
**However** 50 years ago, in 1974, Ralph Winter began awakening those interested in world evangelization to the centrality of God's covenant promise to bless all people groups. First at the original Lausanne Congress sponsored by Billy Graham, then through what became the global Perspectives course, Winter showed, 50 years:

- The centrality in Scripture of people groups,<sup>5</sup> rather than political nations.
- That 60% of the world lived in people groups without movements to Jesus.
- That most workers were sent to people groups with existing movements.

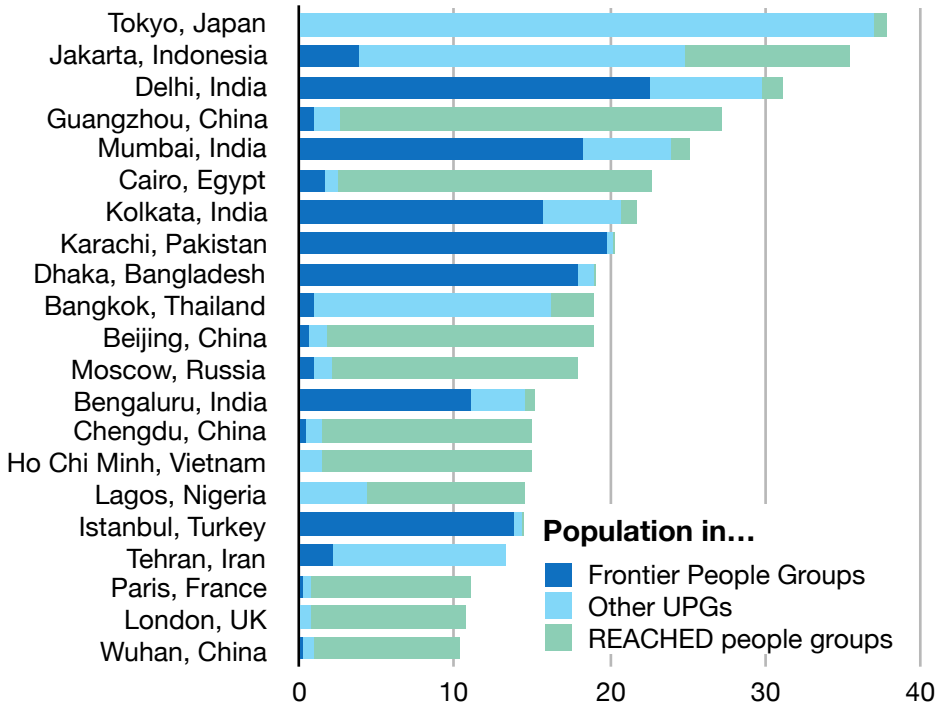


<sup>5</sup> People Groups (*ethne* in the New Testament and the Greek Old Testament/Septuagint) are the broadest network of households united by enduring loyalty to a shared heritage and identity.

# Distribution of American Protestant Workers in 1974



## Mega-Cities of the “110Cities” over 10M in Population



## Distribution of Mega-FPGs and UPGs by Country

(by count, each over one million in population)

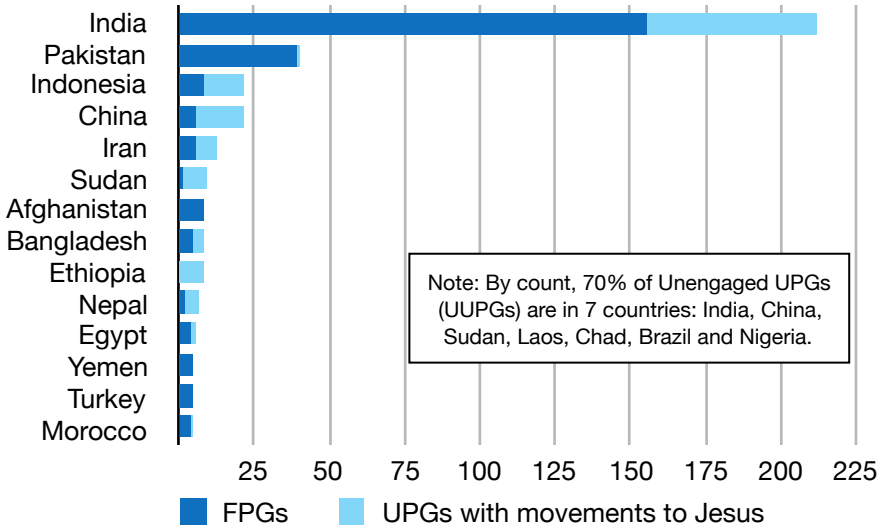


Figure xx: Top 10 Countries of Largest UPGs and FPGs by Count. Based on data accessed March 2024 from [JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive](https://JoshuaProject.net/frontier/interactive) Used with permission by RW Lewis.

## Successful Pioneer Work Results in Partnership

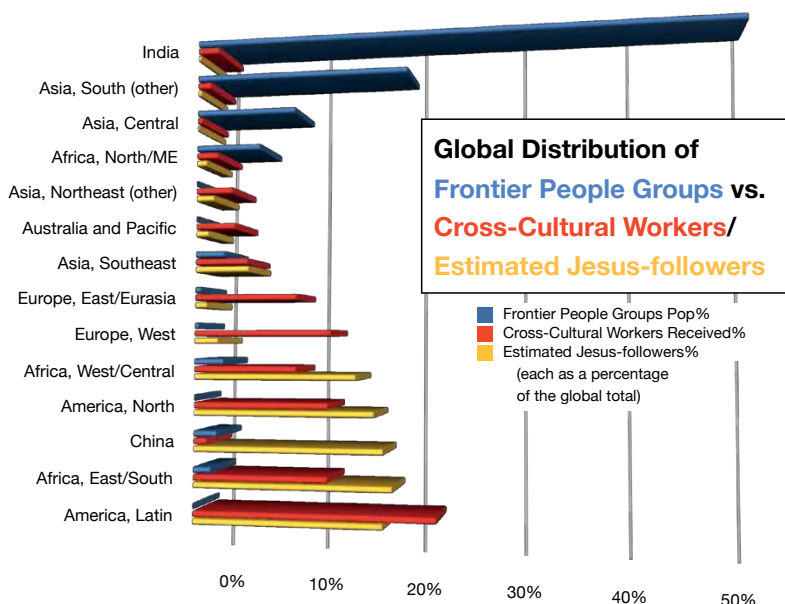
As pioneer work bears fruit, it generally transitions to partnering with the fruit of its labors—the resulting communities of new believers. This is natural and healthy, yet it shifts the focus of sending—from pioneer work to partnership.

Partnership is part of the abundant harvest that follows pioneer work. Fruit is more rapid, abundant and less challenging. Those who partner with local believers receive natural encouragement and support with language and cultural adjustments, as well as immediate fellowship.

Reports from ripe harvest fields draws more workers. And the needs of new believers stimulate prayer and attention from Christ’s global body. Many sending-base churches—unaware of the remaining need for pioneer workers—require those they send to partner with local believers. This hinders workers from pioneer work in new fields.

These factors all favor Unreached People Groups where the gospel has taken root, and lead to neglect of the urgent opportunity for pioneer work among those people groups still with no community of believers. For clarity, researchers have recently identified the subset of UPGs still needing pioneer missionaries as Frontier People Groups.

Many partnership workers may not have the gift or calling for pioneer work, but they can play a strategic role in equipping apostolically-gifted local believers for cross-cultural pioneer work. All UPGs still need many more workers, yet the shortage of pioneer workers among FPGs is even more evident:



Regional totals, Frontier People Group populations and estimated Jesus-followers all from JoshuaProject.net (2019). 2015 Cross-Cultural Worker figures from: *World Christian Database*, Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, eds., (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed March 2019).

Figure xx: Reprinted from the May/June 2019 issue of *Mission Frontiers*

# THE PROGRESS OF GOD'S PROMISE

The Holy Spirit empowered those first disciples to multiply rapidly, even amidst persecution—from household to household with no dedicated buildings for worship.

The cross-cultural pioneer work carried out by Philip, Peter and then Paul took the gospel to more and more ethne. Some estimate that those first century believers increased at 20% per year!

Luke documented this first explosive movement to Jesus:

- “And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly ...” (Acts 6:7).
- “So the church ... walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, multiplied” (Acts 9:31).
- “But the word of God increased and multiplied” (Acts 12:24).
- “So the churches ... increased in numbers daily” (Acts 16:5).
- “So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily” (Acts 19:20).
- “[Paul continued] proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ ... without hindrance” (Acts 28:30–31).

By 1800, world population had only tripled and the number of people needing pioneer cross-cultural work had doubled. However the gospel had spread to countries with one-quarter of the world, and believers had multiplied 1,000-fold through various “awakenings.” But this took more than 17 centuries.

Then God stirred a young cobbler named William Carey to publish a country by country assessment of the world’s spiritual state, urging the formation of small teams committed to tackling specific parts of the Great Commission.<sup>6</sup>

Many prayerfully embraced this new awareness, and over the next 150 years churches were established in nearly every country.

Yet they overlooked a key aspect of God’s purpose...

## 33 AD: 0.25 Billion People

- 120 Followers of Jesus
- 250 M needing pioneer workers



## 1800: 0.75bn People

- 110 K Followers of Jesus
- 190 M Professing Christians
- 550 M needing pioneer workers



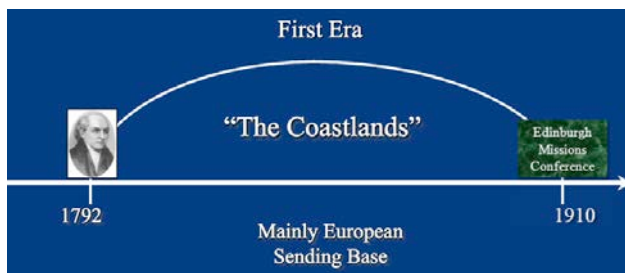
<sup>6</sup> William Carey’s *Enquiry*: [WmCarey.edu/carey/enquiry/anenquiry.pdf](http://WmCarey.edu/carey/enquiry/anenquiry.pdf)



# THREE ERAS OF KINGDOM ADVANCE

God’s kingdom advance from 1800 to the present can be seen in three stages:

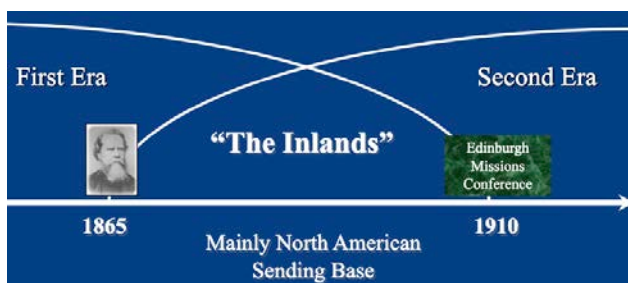
- **Coastlands**—The awareness and new structures prompted by Carey’s *Enquiry* stirred an era of focus on the coastlands of the great continents. There was no limit to the work there, yet what about the masses in the interiors of these



continents?

- **Interiors**—Around 1850 God burdened the young Hudson Taylor with the spiritual needs of China—then the most populated country on earth. Taylor published an assessment of the needs of that great land, and many prayerfully embraced this new awareness, sending workers for an era of focus on the interiors of the great continents.

Taylor, like all pioneer workers, shared the Apostle Paul’s great ambition—“to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else’s foundation” (Rom 15:20). Taylor and his mission birthed the largest movement to Jesus in history, still growing among the Han Chinese



today.<sup>7</sup>

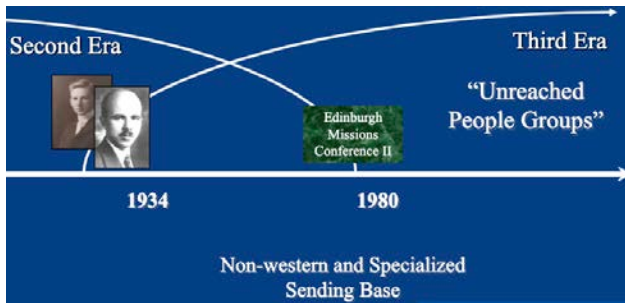
<sup>7</sup> [path2prayer.com/famous-christians-their-lives-and-writings-including-free-books/j-hudson-taylor-pioneer-missionary-to-china/hudson-taylors-spiritual-secret](http://path2prayer.com/famous-christians-their-lives-and-writings-including-free-books/j-hudson-taylor-pioneer-missionary-to-china/hudson-taylors-spiritual-secret)

By the 1930's, the agencies birthed in these two eras of rapid advance were rejoicing that the church was now present in nearly every country on earth. There was even talk of bringing missionaries home and letting the local churches finish evangelizing their own countries.

Yet God wasn't finished ...

- **Peoples**—Cameron Townsend and Donald McGavran noticed a key aspect of God's purpose that had been mostly overlooked: God's plan isn't simply to establish a presence in every political country; His purpose and promise is to disciple and bless every *ethne*.

This insight launched the current era of unprecedented advance.

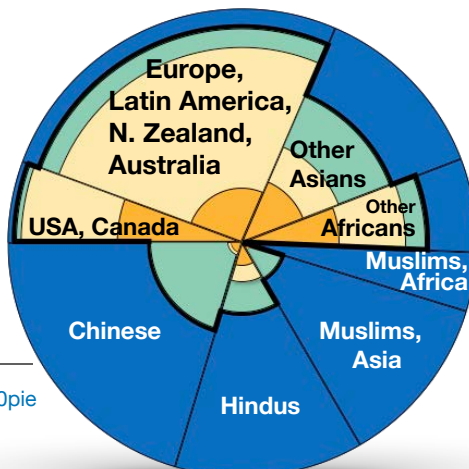


Ralph Winter applied this biblical emphasis on *ethne* to develop a new analysis of the remaining task—60% of the world lived in *ethne* still needing pioneer workers, yet most missionaries were working in *ethne* where the gospel had already taken root, in partnership with believers.<sup>8</sup>

In 1974, Winter presented his analysis in the precursor to the current Perspectives course, and at the first Lausanne congress.

## The World in 1974: 4 Billion People

- 0.2bn Followers of Jesus
- 1bn Other professing Christians
- 0.4bn Other lost, in *ethne* with communities of believers
- 2.4 Billion in *ethne* needing **pioneer** workers



<sup>8</sup> [JoshuaProject.net/1980pie](http://JoshuaProject.net/1980pie)

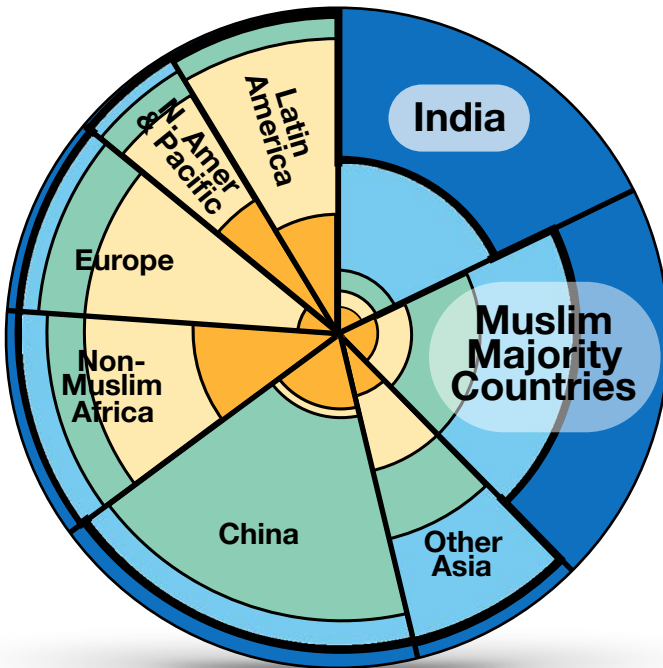
# The Great Leap Forward

As Winter later observed, most individuals are not truly independent thinkers. One of Satan’s primary influences over individuals and their households is through the perceptions and expectations of their people group. Each people group perceives Jesus as only for other, “Christian” peoples until they see a community of their own people identifying with Jesus—however imperfectly. As Paul modeled in Acts, the first community to identify with Jesus in each people group is the foundation for all of God’s further blessings among that people group.

Many began calling attention to the need for more pioneer workers among overlooked people groups. Soon, many believers around the world prayerfully embraced this new awareness—in both historic sending bases and recent mission fields. God stirred widespread prayer adoption of Unreached People Groups, then responded by thrusting out new waves of pioneer workers. And the Holy Spirit did abundantly more than most could imagine—birthing thousands of Acts-like movements to Jesus, in many people groups worldwide.

## The World in 2024: 8 Billion People

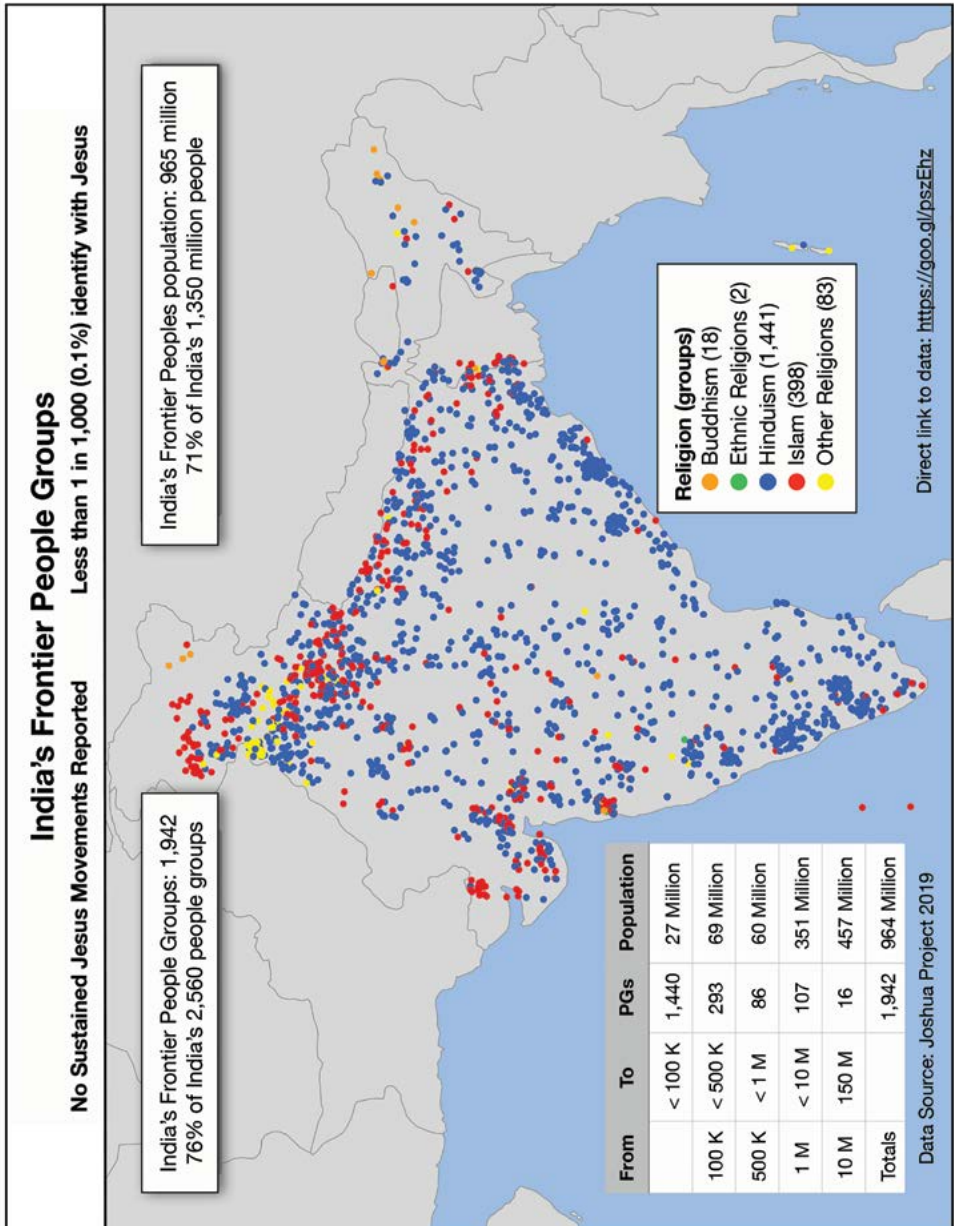
- 1bn Followers of Jesus
- 1.6bn Other Professing Christians
- 3.4bn Other lost, in *ethne* with communities that identify with Jesus
- 2.0bn in **Frontier ethne**, still needing **pioneer** teams



**Emphasis on India**  
**Following pages**

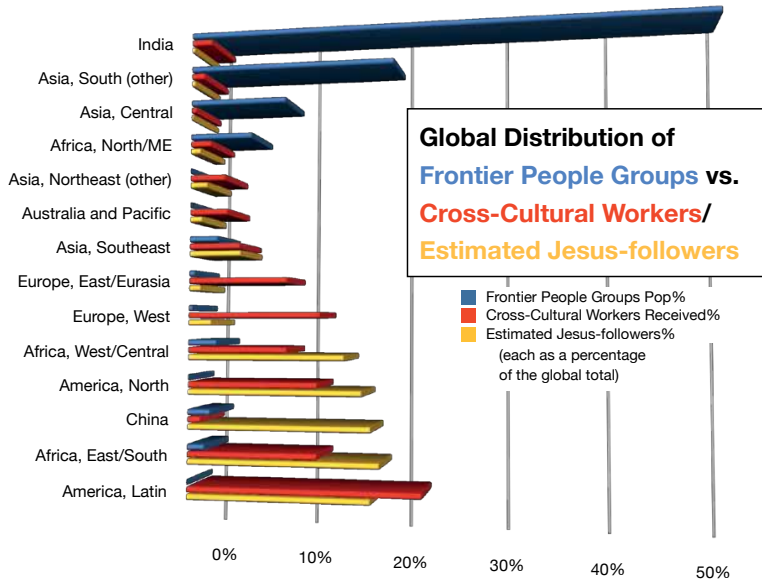
# 2019 Map of India's FPGs by Religion

MISSION FRONTIERS MAY/JUNE 2019



# Graph/Table of Workers/Believers/FPGs

MISSIONFRONTIERS.ORG



**India has 1,000 times as many people in Frontier People Groups as the USA. But the USA alone receives 4 times as many cross-cultural workers as India.**

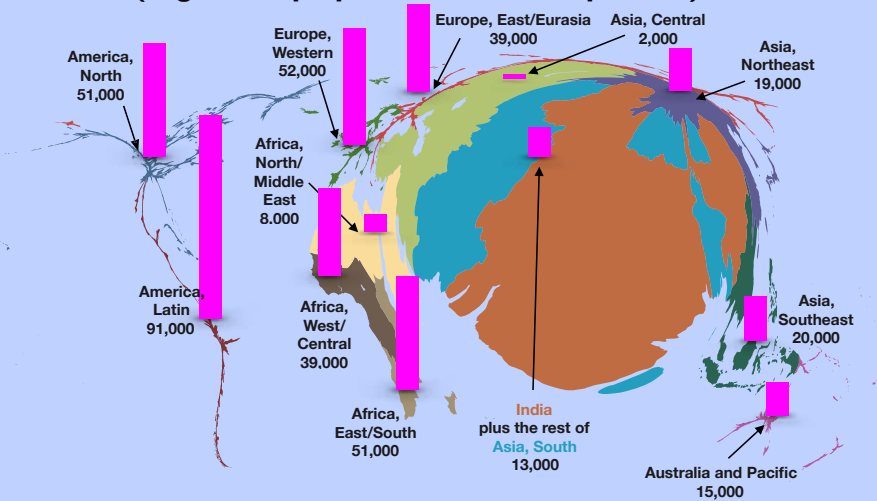
Region	World		Frontier People Groups		Estimated Jesus-followers		Cross-Cultural Workers Received	
	Population (Millions)	%	Pop (M)	%	Pop (M)	%	Thousands	%
India	1,350	18%	970	54%	1.5	0.3%	8	2.0%
Asia, South (other)	420	6%	360	20%	2	0.3%	5	1.3%
Asia, Central	285	4%	170	9%	1	0.2%	2	0.50%
Africa, North/ME	370	5%	110	6%	5.5	1%	8	2.0%
Asia, Northeast (other)	230	3%	0.1	0.01%	10	2%	14	4%
Australia and Pacific	40	1%	0.2	0.01%	7	1%	15	4%
Asia, Southeast	660	9%	50	3%	30	5%	20	5%
Europe, East/Eurasia	340	4%	9	1%	6.5	1%	39	10%
Europe, West	400	5%	6	0.3%	13	2%	52	13%
Africa, West/Central	520	7%	50	3%	90	15%	39	10%
America, North	400	5%	1	0.1%	100	17%	51	13%
China	1,410	19%	40	2%	105	18%	5	1%
Africa, East/South	570	8%	30	2%	110	19%	51	13%
America, Latin	600	8%	0.1	0.01%	105	18%	91	23%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7,595</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,796.4</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>586.5</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100%</b>

Regional totals, Frontier People Group populations and estimated Jesus-followers all from JoshuaProject.net (2019). 2015 Cross-Cultural Worker figures from: *World Christian Database*, Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, eds., (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed March 2019).

# FPG Distribution Vs. Workers (Cartogram)

MISSION FRONTIERS MAY/JUNE 2019

## Population Distribution of Frontier People Groups (FPGs) (Region size proportional to FPG Population)



## International Cross Cultural Workers by Region (See bar graphs above)


Region	FPG Pop (Millions)	Total CC Workers	CC Workers*/M in General Population	FPG Population/ CC Worker*
India	964.7	13,000	7	101,193
Asia, South (other)	363.9			
Asia, Central	166.3	2,000	6	94,508
Africa, North/ME	108.5	8,000	21	14,186
Africa, West/Central	52.9	39,000	75	1,157
Asia, Southeast	49.5	20,000	31	2,439
Asia, Northeast	42.9	19,000	12	2,204
Africa, East/South	29	51,000	90	566
Europe, East/Eurasia	5.6	39,000	116	223
Australia and Pacific	0.2	15,000	365	13
America, Latin	0.09	91,000	161	1
Europe, Western	5.6	52,000	90	108
America, North	1.2	51,000	125	24
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,790</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>4,475</b>

\* 2015 total Cross-Cultural Worker figures from: Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, eds., *World Christian Database* (Leiden/ Boston: Brill, accessed March 2019).

These are full-time workers who identify with Jesus in some way, working for two years or more to bring God's blessing where they themselves are not citizens.

Only 1 in 100 of these missionaries is estimated to actually work among Frontier People Groups, and even fewer are pursuing Jesus movements to multiply God's blessing.

\* General and Frontier People Group population data from Joshua Project ([JoshuaProject.net/frontier](http://JoshuaProject.net/frontier)).

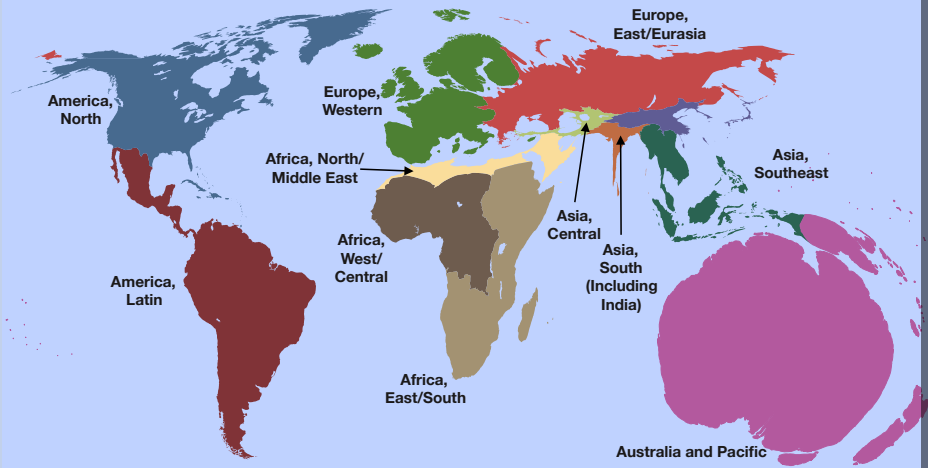




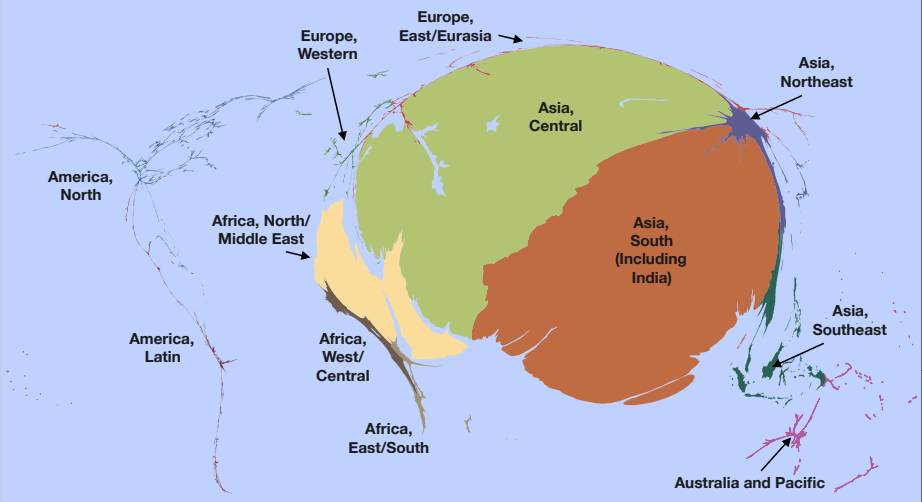
# Relative Need for Workers Among FPGs (Cartogram)

MISSIONFRONTIERS.ORG

**Distribution of Cross-Cultural Workers\***  
 (Region size proportional to Workers / Million in the General Population)



**Relative Need for CC Workers\* among FPGs**  
 (Region size proportional to FPG population / Cross-Cultural Worker\*)



**Additional Narrative Pages**  
**Following pages**

## **Wm Carey's Introduction (Shorter and Modern)**

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? —Romans 10:12-15

Jesus taught us to pray to our Father: Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth. We show our deep desire for all the families of the earth to experience His promised blessing by using every means possible to disciple all people groups.

To complete our commission we must study where the gospel has spread, and where it hasn't. Ultimately we have to confirm that all are offered God's grace by demonstrating the Spirit of Love flowing from God Himself, and that they too can be adopted into His family through Jesus Christ.

Since the Fall, the children of men have suffered the influence of evil, though it changes its appearance into thousands of forms in history and places. It constantly opposes the will and the designs of God. Through the ages, all peoples have been overrun by contempt for or ignorance of God, serving the created not the creator, through idolatries of gods and beasts, or through "enlightened" idolatries of the mind, or lustful idolatries of the body (Romans 1). Yet we know God has promised to defeat the power of the devil, destroying his works, and to extend His blessing and kingdom to all of earth's peoples (ethne).

For this very purpose the Messiah came, died and rose again, that all who believed might be justified through Him (Gal.3:8, Rom. 3:26) and reconciled to their heavenly Father. Many servants of Jesus have laid down their lives in the past 2000 years to bring God's blessing to distant peoples. Today disciples from former dark places are eager to dedicate their lives to help fulfill God's promise, but they don't know who still has not heard the message.

### **To that end, we encourage all disciples everywhere to:**

- 1) See God still calling us to be his messengers of His promised blessing,
- 2) Praise Him for all those in each generation who, in spite of fierce opposition, brought Jesus and the living Word to distant people groups,
- 3) Understand the present state of the world, especially those places and peoples where the gospel has not yet taken root,
- 4) Consider strategic ways to move forward, and
- 5) Gladly give their own lives for this great calling.

# How the Need for Pioneer Workers Is Assessed

Great work of all kinds is being done globally in pursuit of our commission to disciple all nations (Mt 28:16-20). And much more work of all kinds is needed. This booklet focuses on the one **finishable** task in that commission—the **pioneer** work of pursuing God for a movement within each people group, starting with the first believing households to remain within that people group. To clarify where pioneer workers are still needed, we start by considering the world in two broad categories of people groups:

- 1. Reached People Groups:** 60% of the world, 4.6 billion people blended together:
  - Followers of Jesus (with a living faith): 1 Billion (13% of the world)
  - Cultural/nominal Christians (needing renewal): 1.6bn (20%)
  - Non-believers in these same groups (needing witness): 2bn (27%)
- 2. Unreached People Groups (UPGs):**<sup>9</sup> 40% of the world, 3.4 billion people with few believers or other professing Christians. UPGs can be further classified by considering the absence of **believers/movements** (Frontier People Groups or FPGs), and absence of **workers** (Unengaged UPGs, or UUPGs).

The need for pioneer work then becomes clear with these additional insights:

- **What the Bible refers to as “nations” are not the countries of our day.**  
The New Testament Greek word *ethne*,<sup>10</sup> often translated in English as “nations,” refers to “people groups” united by loyalty to a shared heritage and identity. Historically people groups maintain their identity through resistance to outside influences and a high commitment to intermarriage, shared traditions, and conformity with other expectations of their people group.<sup>11</sup>
- **Pioneer work lays the foundation for all further discipleship.**  
Few households can even conceive of following Jesus together until they see other households in their people group doing so. The finishable first step toward reaching every people group is discipling the first households to follow Jesus together in a movement to Jesus, *while remaining one with their people*.
- **The remaining need for pioneer work is widely overlooked.**  
Most believers live in countries and people groups with lots of other believers, where households can choose to follow Jesus without strong resistance from their people group. Thus most of us find it hard to conceive of the social pressure FPG households experience against following Jesus, and their need for pioneer workers. Believers in other people groups often share their needs, but FPGs are unlikely to ask believers for help. Sending church policies often require those they support to partner with local believers (which excludes FPGs). Thus workers tend to go where the pioneer work has already been done—where believers are already present to provide immediate fellowship, and to assist new workers with language, logistics, etc.

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<sup>9</sup> For consistency, this booklet uses data and definitions from [JoshuaProject.net](http://JoshuaProject.net) except as noted. The Southern Baptists present an alternate set of statistics at [PeopleGroups.org](http://PeopleGroups.org) based on definitions for UPGs and UUPGs that include groups with more than 5% professing Christians.

<sup>10</sup> *Ethne* appears 160 times in the NT, and nearly 700 times in the LXX (Septuagint) the Greek translation of the Old Testament which preceded the writing of the New Testament.

<sup>11</sup> Only after significant numbers within a people group find their identity in Christ do that people group's expectations relax—opening the door for multi-ethnic churches and marriages.

# 1974–2024: THE ASTONISHING HALF-CENTURY (ARE WE ON THE BRINK OF COMPLETING OUR COMMISSION?)

In people groups where there are faithful disciples, they multiply—like yeast in dough—until they reach a saturation point and plateau or start declining.

How then have followers of Jesus managed to multiplying 5-fold globally in the last 50 years, with no sign of slowing down?

50 years ago, a dramatic shift of perspective began rapidly increasing the number of people groups among which the gospel has started to spread. Over these past 50 years the population of all reached people groups (where disciples are multiplying) has increased nearly 4-fold!

However 25% of the world still lives in people groups where followers of Jesus are not yet multiplying. And only 1% of international workers go to these Frontier People groups.

After His resurrection, Jesus commissioned us—His disciples—to pursue a simple two-step process in every people group:

1. **Pioneer:** Go, lead the first households to become His disciples.
2. **Partner:** Train and equip those disciples to obey all that He commanded (including this 2-step process).

At Pentecost, Jesus empowered His disciples to pursue this commission, and so fulfill our Father’s promise through Jesus. This is our “Commander’s Intent”: “All people groups will be blessed [through you]” (Gen 12:3, 18:18, 22:18, Acts 3:25, Gal 3:8, Heb 6:17, Rom 11:25, etc.).

## With Every New Generation:

- We followers of Jesus are becoming more numerous and more active.
- The number of groups waiting for **pioneer** work is declining more rapidly.

In just the last 50 Years, 1974–2024, world population doubled. Yet...

- **Followers of Jesus multiplied 5-fold**—to 1 out of 8 people worldwide.
- For the very first time the global **population** needing pioneer work declined.
- The **portion** of the world needing pioneer work dropped by 60%.
- The estimated **number of people groups** needing pioneer work dropped 70%.

Some generation will finish the remaining pioneer work.

## Why Not Us? Will our Generation Finish the Pioneer Task?

## **Over the past 50 years, from 1974 to 2024:**

- **Same-culture gospel access nearly doubled.**

In 1974, only 40% of the world lived in people groups where more than 1 in 1,000 (0.1%) were followers of Jesus.

In 2024, 75% of humanity lives in people groups where more than 0.1% of households are followers of Jesus.

- **FPGs (as a % of the world) decreased more than 50%.**

In 1974, 60% of the world lived in people groups with virtually no followers of Jesus or movements to Jesus, needing pioneer workers.

In 2024, only 25% of the world live in Frontier People Groups.

- **Followers of Jesus increased globally by 400%.**

Evangelicals, Charismatics and Pentecostals consistently grow faster than the population, like compounding interest.

In 1974, an estimated 200 million followers of Jesus (one in 20 people globally) lived mostly in Europe and North America.

In 2024, there are an estimated one billion followers of Jesus (one in 8 globally).

## **Today:**

- The remaining FPGs need informed prayer.
- Nearly all international workers (99%) go to people groups where the foundational pioneer work has already been completed.
- New clarity about the least reached of Unreached People Groups.

## **What drove**

### **Three key insights were introduced in 1974—at the first Lausanne Congress—and spread widely through the Perspectives course:**

The centrality in God's global purpose of blessing all people groups (ethne).

Most mission workers are sent among people groups that already have indigenous communities of believer and growing church movements.

The need for specialized pioneer workers among 60% of the world, living then in people groups with virtually no followers of Jesus or movements to Jesus.

These insights stirred widespread prayer and sending of workers to . contributed to reducing the percentage of the world without same-culture access to the gospel, from 60% in 1974 to 25% in 2024:

With united prayer, collaboration, new technology and insights gained from the past 50 years, getting started among the remaining 25% could occur even much more than the 35% progress of the past 50 years. Yet lack of clarity

Since 1974 God has also used the Perspectives course, started that same year, as a primary vehicle for multiplying awareness of these key insights.

Much of the global increase in followers of Jesus is geographically, culturally and linguistically close to Frontier People Groups.

, reducing the global need for pioneer workers from 60% in 1974 to 25% in 2024

just 50 years that 60% of the world has been reduced to 25%, while believers have increased by 400%! And most (80% of the 25%, or 20% of the world) are in just 300 large mega-Frontier People Groups.

We are working to introduce this new awareness to the global church to inspire a new global, collaborative effort to finish starting pioneer work in every remaining Frontier People Group.

Some today see no progress of the gospel over the past 50 years:

In 1974, one-third of the world identified as Christian.

Today, one-third of the world identifies as Christian.

In 1974 most missionaries worked in people groups where there were already

## What data is this understanding of FPGs based on?

For the past 30 years, Joshua Project ([JoshuaProject.net](http://JoshuaProject.net)) has collaborated with other Evangelical ministries to clarify which people groups most need outside assistance for the global church is to faithfully pursue our commission to disciple all people groups.

Joshua Project data incorporates input from a variety of sources, some with slightly different focuses, including:

- **Operation World** (a country-based prayer guide): [OperationWorld.org](http://OperationWorld.org)
- The **Ethnologue** (a catalogue of people groups and their languages developed connected to Wycliffe Bible Translators): [sil.org/about/endangered-languages/languages-of-the-world](http://sil.org/about/endangered-languages/languages-of-the-world)
- The **Southern Baptist** database of people groups (which discounts the presence of historic Christian traditions): [PeopleGroups.org](http://PeopleGroups.org)
- The **World Christian Encyclopedia** and **Center for the Study of Global Christianity**: [GordonConwell.edu/center-for-global-christianity](http://GordonConwell.edu/center-for-global-christianity)
- **Etnopedia**, which encourages crowd-sourced prayer profiles for the world's people groups: [Etnopedia.org](http://Etnopedia.org)

Joshua Project also incorporates information and feedback from:

- Local researchers in many parts of the world.
- 400,000 visitors each month.

## How accurate is this data?

Over the past 50 years, increasing global awareness of and prayer for Unreached People Groups has created a feedback loop that is accelerating progress at a rate that is difficult to track accurately as the Holy Spirit responds to these prayers.

Joshua Project takes a conservative approach to reporting that is more likely to under-represent than to exaggerate the presence of Evangelicals and other Christian adherents in specific people groups.

Further research is needed on ministry strategies for specific people groups.

Joshua Project may be slightly outdated, however it provides a fairly accurate overall picture of the global progress of the gospel by people group.



This draft booklet presents graphics to help followers of Jesus see and share:

- God's global plan to bless all of earth's families.
- The astonishing progress of the past 50 years.
- The remaining need for pioneer work in 25% of the world.
- The strategic significance of the 300 mega-Frontier People Groups.

This booklet is the collaborative effort of many who have given our lives to pursuing Jesus for the completion of pioneer work, toward the fulfillment of God's promise to bless all the family-lines of earth.

You are welcome to share and adapt this material to fuel:

1. **Awareness** and **understanding** of the extraordinary progress in pioneer work over the last 50 years, and the remaining need for pioneer workers.
2. **United prayer** to the Lord of the harvest, for workers to be thrust out where the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few (Mt 9:38, Lk 10:2).
3. **Collaborative obedience** among Christ's global body toward completing pioneer work among all remaining FPGs for the fulfillment of God's purpose to bless all of earth's people groups (Gen 22:18).

To share this booklet with others electronically, point them to the latest version: [JoshuaProject.net/GreatProgress](http://JoshuaProject.net/GreatProgress)

You may also print and give (or sell) copies, or request printed copies from [Go31.org/free](http://Go31.org/free) (free or by donation)

Please contact [RobbyQButler@pm.me](mailto:RobbyQButler@pm.me) if:

- You need text or graphic elements for creating your own presentations.
- You would like to pursue collaboration toward completing the pioneer task.
- You create a presentation you want to make available to others.