

Unreached Peoples: China's Minority Groups

#7 Naxi, Mosuo, Pumi and Lisu

by Paul Hattaway

The Naxi, Mosu, Pumi, and Lisu people groups in northern Yunnan, China, need to hear the gospel and experience the love of Jesus.

Scripture: Matthew 28:19

Topics: "Missions Work", "Unreached Peoples"

Description

This sermon focuses on the unique spiritual beliefs and practices of the Naxi, Mosu, and Pumi people in northern Yunnan, China, highlighting their need for Christ's light and love. It also shares the inspiring story of the Lisu people who have embraced the gospel and become a strong Christian community in southwest China, serving as a beacon of hope for other unreached people groups.

Transcript

6,000 feet above sea level lies a land quite a ways off the beaten track. This land is home to a group of about 280,000 called the Naxi people. Centuries ago, the Naxi people migrated from Tibet to settle near the first bend of the great Yangtze River.

Tiger Leaping Gorge is the name given to the spot where the river becomes so narrow that tigers can leap across. Yet not many tourists actually make it to this famous Chinese landmark. Further south is the Naxi city of Lijiang.

The heart of Lijiang is the old city, where waterways still run under homes, and centers of worship are preserved in quiet gardens. Meanwhile, the modern has grown up around the ancient. The Naxi dress in functional clothes, trousers and vests of simple blue or black cloth, a visor called a liberation cap is commonly worn by women today, replacing the more elaborate headdress of the past.

Many Naxi women wear a T-shaped cape of sheepskin and quilted material, with straps that cross in the front. Proudly, some women still wear the special firmament cape. Seven round disks with tassels hanging down represent stars with rays of starlight.

Some say these capes represent the diligence of the Naxi, working hard from morning until night. Though this Naxi music may sound discordant to western ears, it is actually composed of rhythmic waves of

sound, which the Naxi believe will help them attain a mystical sense of harmony. The Naxi believe that the sound of the gong echoes to heaven.

It's as though they're trying desperately to attract the attention of a heavenly god. The serenity idealized in parts of their music reflects the influence of Buddhism, but it's the frenzy of sound which is perhaps more symbolic of their true spiritual life. The Naxi follow a folk religion called Bon, which has its origins in the land of Tibet.

Bon has both Buddhist and Hindu roots, but central to this religion is the power that dark vengeful spirits wield over their lives. Many folk religions strive to appease spirits, but the Naxi actually worship giant snake spirits called Naga, and edify a god named Yama, the king of hell. Religious experts suggest that Bon is one of the most evil satanic strongholds left today among the world's belief systems.

True followers of Bon invite possession of their minds by murderous and lustful demons. Some Naxi women still make sacrifice to the mountain goddess of fertility, hoping she will help them bear healthy children. Since ancient times, the odd hieroglyphs in the Naxi written language have been used mainly to record the sacred scriptures of the Bon religion.

How will the Naxi learn that there is a living god who can deliver them from spiritual darkness? Very different in appearance, but yet a subgroup of the Naxi are the over 20,000 Mosu people. The Mosu still follow a matriarchal social system where one woman may have several male partners. Only if she chooses would one of them come to live with her in the matrilineal home that is run by her mother.

The Mosu come from the Lake Lugu area and only occasionally come to the city for shopping. Nearer neighbors of the Naxi are the nearly 30,000 Pumi people of the higher mountain areas. The Pumi have unique cultural traditions and spiritual strongholds of their own.

Ceremonial bonfires burn to honor spirits residing in the forest. Spirits which keep these simple mountain people in darkness without Christ. Few among these people groups in northern Yunnan have ever heard the gospel.

But there is one group who has. The Lisu people have an exciting story to tell. The long labors of J.O. Fraser and others in the early decades of the 20th century have brought forth much fruit.

At least one half of these 575,000 people have responded to the gospel that was shared with them in their own language. Today the Lisu people are the only minority people group in all of southwest China with such a strong witness to Christ and with so many Christians among them. Lisu evangelists, pastors and teachers may someday provide God's missionary key to reach other people groups in northern Yunnan.

As we glimpse the faces of northern Yunnan one more time, think about each people group's unique need for Christ. I finished the work on Calvary and their healings already been done so take my healing to the nations find their broken hearts with love stretch my hand to our creation with this message of my love If your heart is drawn to one of these people groups, your family or church may want to adopt them. To adopt a people group means to be willing to pray, strategize, motivate others and perhaps someday go yourself to bring the love of Jesus and help make disciples among them.

Take my healing to the nations bind their broken hearts with love stretch my hand to our creation with this message of my love that I came to bring light in their darkness and bring joy where there once was pain take my healing to the nations take my healing to the nations take my healing to the nations with love with

love

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