



# **10 DAYS** OF TURNING BACK THE **DARKNESS**

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praying for Ho Chi Minh City

# 10 DAYS

OF LOVING  
THE PEOPLE OF  
HO CHI MINH CITY

**10** FRIENDS

**10** MINUTES FOR 10 DAYS

**10** WAYS TO SHINE

**10** LIGHTS FOR THE PATH

# 10 DAYS OF TURNING BACK THE DARKNESS

Jesus said,

"I have come as a light into the  
world, so that everyone who believes  
in Me would not remain in darkness."

John 12:46 (HCSB)



# PRAY

- ❏ Jesus came to bring light to the world. The light of salvation and hope is found through Him.
- ❏ Today, you carry on that same work of Jesus as you pray to turn back the darkness in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.
- ❏ Stop now and pray that you will hear and see what the Lord desires to show you in this 10-day commitment.



# THE CITY

Ho Chi Minh City, formerly known as Saigon, is located in the southeast region of Vietnam and is the largest city in the country. The densely populated metropolitan area includes 19 urban districts as well as five suburban districts and county areas with a combined population of roughly 10 million people. The city has a very young population, as does most of Vietnam, with over half the population under the age of 35.

New buildings, new investment, new factories and industry continue to pour into Ho Chi Minh City with much growth coming through the technology and electronic manufacturing sectors. Multinational corporations and brands are steadily increasing their presence in the city, both as a manufacturing base and as a market. Rapid development and the dense population have brought a range of challenges to the city. The growing influx of rural migrants seeking work is straining housing, employment opportunities and basic services. Traffic congestion is one major difficulty. With an average of 1.5 motorcycles per

household, there are more motorcycles in Ho Chi Minh City than people in Houston, Texas.

Sadly, less than 3 percent of the people living in Ho Chi Minh City - men and women, boys and girls - have found the hope of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Despite the bright lights and economic development, the true nature of the city is darkness. The people are trapped in that darkness, deceived by the lies of Satan to worship false gods and spirits.



Ho Chi Minh City, indicated by the pin on this map, is the economic hub of Vietnam and a melting pot for people from all over the country.

# 10 FRIENDS

Jesus told us that there is great power in our agreement together in prayer (Matt 18:19). Ask your small group, co-workers, close circle of friends or family to agree with you in praying for the millions lost in darkness in Ho Chi Minh City. Which 10 of these will commit to pray with you? **Ask them and share a copy of this booklet with them.**

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# 10 DAYS OF PRAYER DAY ONE

Today begin 10 minutes a day of prayer for 10 days.

## The cult of the ancestors.

The peoples of Vietnam are extremely spiritual. At the core of their spirituality is the act of worshipping the spirits of deceased ancestors and placating the spirits of other dead from generations past. Virtually every household in Vietnam contains an ancestor altar or areas where the family offers prayers to the spirits of the dead, burning incense to them or sacrificing food and symbolic money or physical property to them. New believers in Jesus Christ are typically branded as “ancestor traitors” and often face severe persecution from their families.

## Read.

Deuteronomy 18:9-14

Matthew 5:10-12, 44

**Pray.** Pray that God will break the spiritual bondage to spirits that holds the people of

Ho Chi Minh City in darkness. Pray that as they make sacrifices and pray to supposed spirits of the dead, seeking spiritual favor, that God will instead reveal His truth to them that they might turn away from their sin and turn to the light of salvation in Jesus Christ. Pray that God will grant strength and boldness to believers in the city as they show love and respect to their families while disavowing the false worship of the dead.

**Respond.**



# 10 DAYS OF PRAYER DAY TWO

## A city full of spirits

Throughout Vietnam the spiritual foundation of animism is roughly equal to that of ancestor worship. Animism is the belief that the spirits of animals, trees, geographical locations or even man-made objects actively influence the physical world. Evidence of animism can be seen throughout the city with mirrors above doors to ward off evil spirits, worship of the kitchen god or sacrifices given to the spirit of a tree or a house spirit. Many Vietnamese live in fear of these spirits, which they believe surround them.

### Read.

Ephesians 6:10-12  
Romans 8:14-17

**Pray.** Pray that the people of Ho Chi Minh City will open their eyes to a life without fear through placing their faith in Jesus Christ. Pray that the spiritual sensitivity of the people of the city will draw them to God and that they will

know that He is more powerful than any spirit. Pray that the believers in the city will have positive testimonies of lives set free through Christ.

**Respond.**

## FEARS OF VIETNAM



### 1 POOR HEALTH.

Suffering from illness or poor health is the top fear among Vietnamese people. This fear is more prevalent among women than men.

### 2 UNEMPLOYMENT.

Many Vietnamese people are afraid of losing their job, making it the second most common fear throughout Vietnam.

### 3 DIVORCE OR SEPARATION.

Divorce or separation from their spouse is the third highest fear in Vietnam.

### 4 LIVING FAR AWAY FROM THEIR FAMILY.

Much as they fear of divorce, many fear being separated from their family.



# 10 DAYS OF PRAYER DAY THREE

## Seeking blessings with Buddha.

The most prominent form of structured religion within Ho Chi Minh City is Buddhism. Buddhist temples and home altars and idols of Buddha abound. Common Buddhist themes and imagery such as the lotus flower are prevalent within the architecture and culture of the city. Young and old in the city will visit a temple to burn incense, light candles, chant, pray and seek blessings, to cleanse their souls, ask for success in business, to pray for health, fertility or other life needs. Perhaps the most common Buddhist figure in the city is the Quan The Am, the Goddess of Mercy, who dominates many temples and especially home altars and idols. Buddhism is growing in the city and a recent survey of the temples here found a majority of them either renovating and expanding or building new and larger structures.

## Read.

Matthew 6:25-34

**Pray.** Please pray with us that those practicing Buddhism in Ho Chi Minh City will see the futility of offering prayers to idols who cannot hear and have no power to respond. Many Buddhists are very moral and seek to live good lives – pray that they may come to understand their inability to be good enough for God and that they need His forgiveness and a Savior. Pray for those Buddhists, including some monks, who have heard the Gospel to respond by placing their faith in Jesus Christ. Pray for God to call out laborers who will focus on sharing the Gospel among Buddhists in Ho Chi Minh City.

## Respond.



The Bitexco Financial Tower is the tallest building in Ho Chi Minh City with architecture designed to reflect the Buddhist theme of a budding lotus flower.



# 10 DAYS OF PRAYER DAY FOUR

## Smorgasbord of spirituality.

Going up and down the streets of Ho Chi Minh City you can find many other religious expressions. Cao Dai is an indigenous Vietnamese religion that combines elements of Buddhism, Taoism, Catholicism and 19th century modernist thought. Hoa Hao temples, Muslim mosques, Hindu temples, Bahai centers and other cults and sects likewise vie for the spiritual attention of the people of the city.

## Read.

Psalm 82:3-5  
Exodus 20:1-6

**Pray.** Pray that the people of Ho Chi Minh City will not be deceived by flashing lights, meaningless rituals and manufactured mystery brought on by other religions. Pray that instead, Believers will rise up to share the truth of hope and salvation found only in Jesus Christ. Pray that among the peoples of every neighborhood where such temples exist, new Believers will come to Christ and form a new

multiplying body of Christ to God's glory.

**Respond.**



Take a virtual prayerwalk through the temples and spiritual sites of Ho Chi Minh City.

Visit [hcmcmap.reachingvietnam.com](http://hcmcmap.reachingvietnam.com) to start your virtual prayerwalk. Each marker on the map here represents a location that you can prayed for – still only a fraction of the spiritual sites in the city.

# 10 DAYS OF PRAYER DAY FIVE

## Millions of altars.

Across the 24 urban and suburban districts of Ho Chi Minh City are literally millions of altars of all types. This goes beyond those found at formal temples or ancestor halls to include altars erected at the bases of trees or on random street corners. Apart from the altars and idols placed in nearly all homes, idols can be found everywhere from the simple cart of the street vendor to shops and restaurants, hospitals, schools, five-star hotels and multinational offices. The smell of incense and the sound of chanting prayers can be found around every corner.

## Read.

Isaiah 5:20-21

Jeremiah 29:11-13

**Pray.** While God hates the sin of unbelief, He reaches out in love to the unbeliever. Each altar and stick of incense represents someone who recognizes there is something missing in their life -

a void which can only be filled by something beyond them. Pray with us today for those spiritually seeking in Ho Chi Minh City. Pray that God will send laborers to share the Gospel with them so that they may know the truth. Pray that the Holy Spirit will convict their hearts and draw them to find out more about a God who is righteous yet offers love and forgiveness through Christ.

## Respond.



# 10 DAYS OF PRAYER DAY SIX

## **Blending all beliefs together.**

A defining aspect of all Vietnamese religious life is syncretism, or the practice of merging multiple religions or beliefs together into one. In Vietnam this is most clearly seen in the common belief in Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, which are considered locally to be “three religions from the same source.” Beyond these three, additional gods and idols are combined in an individual’s personal belief and practice. Even Vietnamese Catholics openly practice ancestor worship both in their homes and at their churches.

## **Read.**

1 Timothy 2:5-6  
Acts 4:8-12

**Pray.** Pray that the peoples of Ho Chi Minh City will emerge from their darkness and the confusion of attempting to combine many different religious thoughts that have no power to save. Pray that they will instead come to understand there is no other name by which we will be saved except

that of Jesus Christ. Pray for believers in the city to be bold to proclaim the exclusive nature of Jesus as Lord.

**Respond.**



# 10 DAYS OF PRAYER DAY SEVEN

## **The final outcome.**

Nothing in the city is sadder than to see the funeral of a follower of these other religions, to see the mourning of the family and know that, separated from Christ as they are, they have no hope. Since the deceased are worshipped there are numerous rituals that accompany such a funeral as well as special times of worship for the deceased loved one on prescribed days and the anniversary of their death. With such a high percentage of the population of Ho Chi Minh City lost without the light of salvation in Jesus Christ, the tragic reality is that many times a day someone dies in the city and goes to spend an eternity separated from God.

## **Read.**

Colossians 1:13

2 Corinthians 1:3-5

**Pray.** Pray that God will turn the statistics around, that more people in Ho Chi Minh City will be reached with the Gospel and find salvation from Hell. Pray that men and women, boys and girls,

whole families will turn to Jesus Christ and find redemption and comfort. Pray for Believers in Ho Chi Minh City to have positive testimonies that highlight the hope they have in Jesus, even in times of sorrow.

## **Respond.**



The idea of 10 million people in one city is mind-boggling. If you do the math however, based on the percentage of lost people and the average mortality rate, you arrive at an alarming statistic. In this city of 10 million people, on average a lost person dies and goes to hell every 10 minutes.

**10 million people – hard to understand**  
**Every 10 minutes – hard to forget**

# 10 DAYS OF PRAYER DAY EIGHT

## Opposition to the message.

In principle, the constitution in Vietnam provides for the freedom of religion. In practice, however, Christians face a great deal of opposition and persecution. Within Ho Chi Minh City, opposition from the government comes primarily through restrictions on meetings, church activities, new church starts and evangelism. This opposition intensified with new regulations implemented by the government in 2013. Individual believers in the city also routinely face persecution from family, employers or other acquaintances for “abandoning” traditional beliefs.

## Read.

Acts 4:19-31  
John 1:5

**Pray.** Pray that Believers in the city will respond to persecution with boldness and increased faith. Pray that they may have positive testimonies to those around them, even when ostracized for their belief. Pray that believers will be faithful to

evangelize regardless of the opposition. Pray for believers to boldly answer God’s call to start and multiply churches across the city regardless of the government’s attempts to restrain this activity.

## Respond.



According to the World Watch List of Open Doors USA, Vietnam ranked 21st in the world for the level of persecution against Christians. To see more check out their website at [www.worldwatchlist.us](http://www.worldwatchlist.us)



# 10 DAYS OF PRAYER DAY NINE

**Winning the lost,  
discipling believers, starting churches.**

The single greatest need in Ho Chi Minh City is for the Gospel. More laborers who will broadly and consistently share the Good News of Jesus Christ through personal evangelism are needed in this harvest field. Believers are needed who will be obedient disciples, training others with what they have learned from God and starting new multiplying churches.

**Read.**

Luke 10:2

1 Peter 2:9

**Pray.** Pray with us for more laborers in Ho Chi Minh City. Pray that God will raise directly up laborers from new and existing believers in the city. Pray that God will call and send laborers from outside the country and that together they will share the Gospel with every person from every district and every population group in this city. Pray especially that New Testament churches, the

body of Christ will be planted throughout the city and multiply rapidly to God's glory.

**Respond.**



Ho Chi Minh City skyline as seen from the Bitexco Tower.

# 10 DAYS OF PRAYER DAY TEN

## Ask Him.

From the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry when He called the first disciples to follow Him and be 'fishers of men' to the end of Jesus' time on earth when He commissioned His followers to "go into all the world and make disciples" – His call to us has been consistent. None are exempt. Where will God's call to make disciples take you today? Perhaps it is within your own home, neighborhood, school, company, town or state. Would you ask Him if He has called you to reach out to the Vietnamese or other people groups living near you? Would you ask Him if He has called you to reach out by coming to Vietnam for 10 days? 10 weeks? 10 years?

## Read.

Matthew 5:13-16

Matthew 28:16-20

**Pray.** Pray for men and women, young and old, who will answer God's call to bring light into the darkness that is Ho Chi Minh City. Pray that God

will grant them strong faith to be obedient as they proclaim the salvation found in Jesus Christ.

**Respond.**





# 10 WAYS TO SHINE

loving the people of Ho Chi Minh City

**What can I do?** How can I love the people of Ho Chi Minh City so that they are reached with the Gospel of Jesus Christ? If you are praying for the city, maybe God is also asking you to get involved. Pray through this list to see how God leads. Maybe they don't all fit you, but some will.

**Learn. Pray. Give. Go. Serve.**

**Evangelize. Teach. Advocate. Start. Volunteer.**

**Learn.** Take some time to learn about Ho Chi Minh City. Browse the site [reachingvietnam.com](http://reachingvietnam.com). Like, follow or connect to receive regular updates. The better informed you are, the better you can be engaged in reaching this city with the Gospel.

**Pray.** Above all else, we desire that you join us in prayer that the peoples of Ho Chi Minh City and all of Vietnam will be reached with the Gospel. Please pray for this work daily.

**Give.** Your tithe and missions support are best placed within your own home church as it supports the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Offering for International Missions and its mission priorities. If God has led you to give beyond this, then there are projects that can use your support.

**Go.** Travel to Ho Chi Minh City for a short-term trip and touch the lives of the people you meet with an impact for all eternity. Share the love of Christ with people who have never heard.

**Serve.** Following God's call, go to Ho Chi Minh City long term and invest your life by serving the people, sharing the Gospel and changing lives.

**Evangelize.** Start where you are. Share the Gospel with the people around you. Look for Vietnamese people living in your city or state and share the Gospel with them. Take a trip to Ho Chi Minh City and share the Gospel with the millions of lost in the city.

**Teach.** One of the most common aspirations among Vietnamese is to learn or improve their English. Travel to Ho Chi Minh City and teach English. You can also connect to a Vietnamese as an internet English partner without ever leaving home. As you teach English, share the Gospel.

**Advocate.** More prayer is needed, and you can be a tremendous help by leading others to join us in prayer for the peoples of Ho Chi Minh City. Pass along our prayer requests to others in your church. Share our posts on Facebook and Twitter to encourage your friends to pray.

**Start.** Begin a #pray4vietnam prayer group in your church or with other Christian friends. Start a regular time to meet and pray over the requests for Ho Chi Minh City.

**Volunteer.** Give of your particular skills, talents and experience to help further the Kingdom work of reaching Ho Chi Minh City. Ask us about volunteer opportunities and let's see where God leads.

# 10 LIGHTS FOR THE PATH

## Place the Good News in the hands of the people of Ho Chi Minh City.

"I've never seen a Bible!" That was the excited response from the young man as we placed a New Testament in his hands. He stopped our conversation and immediately started reading the treasure placed in his hands. For most Vietnamese, the process of turning their lives to follow Christ follows several interactions with believers and introductions to the Gospel. Sharing a Gospel tract, a New Testament or an evangelistic DVD can be a critical help, a light on their path to salvation.

A New Testament in Vietnamese can be provided someone seeking answers at a cost of \$1.50. An evangelistic packet including a Gospel tract and a DVD about Jesus can range between \$3 and \$5 each. You can provide 10 New Testaments for a gift of \$15 or 10 evangelistic packets for between \$30 and \$50 through [IMB.org](http://IMB.org).

"To give:

[IMB.org](http://IMB.org) > Give for explanation of all IMB opportunities to give

[IMB.org](http://IMB.org) > Give > Funding strategic projects>  
**A Light for Ho Chi Minh City**

or, call (800) 999-3113 and mention this fund.

Your word is a lamp for  
my feet and a light on my path.  
Psalm 119:105 (HCSB)



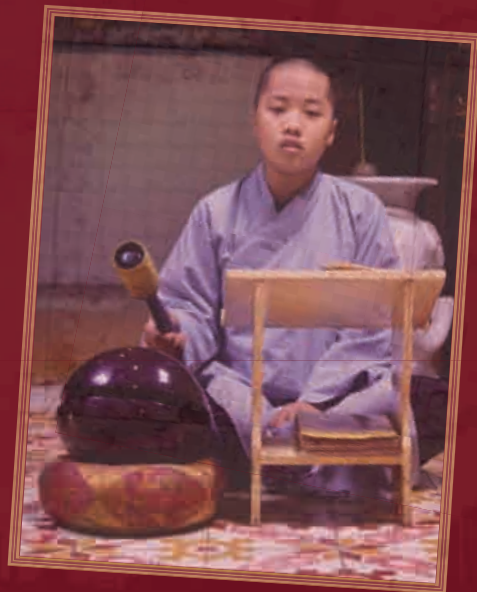
# NOW WHAT?

Now that you've loved the people of Ho Chi Minh City through prayer for 10 days and you understand more of God's heart for reaching them with the light of His salvation, is this the end?

God wants you to be a part of reaching the nations. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- **Lead** your family, your church or small group in making a deeper commitment.
- **Commit** yourself to being available to God wherever He may lead – even to Vietnam and Ho Chi Minh City.
- **Pray** regularly that God will turn back the darkness in Ho Chi Minh City and that His Kingdom will advance.

We're here to help you. Email us at [tenten@reachingvietnam.com](mailto:tenten@reachingvietnam.com)



Find this booklet and more  
resources and links at  
[10days.reachingvietnam.com](http://10days.reachingvietnam.com)

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Southeast Asian  
Peoples