



FEBRUARY 2006

*Can you feed 8,000 children today?
It's easier than you think...*

NORTH KOREA

After failing in the 1950's to conquer the southern peninsula, North Korea adopted a policy of diplomatic and economic self-reliance from what its leaders perceived as "excessive foreign influence". North Korea's leadership are desperate to maintain the status quo and portray an image of a successful and thriving country. The reality for its citizens however, is a stark contrast and an open secret around the world.

With a population slightly larger than Australia's, the North Koreans are crammed into a landmass 1/64th the size. This disadvantage was highlighted during the famine of the mid-1990's. Mass starvation was widespread and it finally forced the North Korean leadership to allow international humanitarian aid to avert this disaster.

Despite its heavy reliance, the government reversed their position in December 2005 and terminated most foreign aid. The leadership apparently feared the potential 'subversive affect' foreigners may bring into North Korea, more than its responsibility to feed its people.

Decades of economic mismanagement and resource misallocation, towards a paranoid and excessively large military, have crippled the leadership's ability to care for its citizens. It appears the government's overriding concern is to maintain firm political control over its people.

Education is tightly regulated. Local media outlets are censored by the government and can only repeat the propaganda given to them. There is practically no personal property. Even permission must be sought by officials before moving any great distance. Under these circumstances, it is easy to imagine the strangle hold the leadership has over its citizens - and Christians in particular.

The North Korean government has tried to starve its citizens of freedom and democracy and most importantly, it has tried to destroy believers of Jesus Christ. Yet an estimated 12,000 North Korean Christians meet in secret 'underground' churches every week.

They sing hymns silently – literally mouthing the lyrics without speaking – and sometimes masking them with a government sanctioned tune or melody. While their leaders whisper sermons, congregation members rely on memorized scriptures. Memorised, because to be found with a bible in their possession - would mean an instant 15 years of hard labour in a prison camp. Despite this deadly and dangerous persecution, the number of Christians continue to grow - even the official Government numbers grow incrementally by 50 each year.

Since 1994, as part of the World Harvest Network, LeSEA Broadcasting has operated a short-wave radio station that broadcasts the Gospel into countries like North Korea. With powerful transmitters, far outside the control of anti-Christian governments, we can broadcast the gospel throughout the world. In 2007 we are not only able to share the good news, but we are also able to share food in North Korea.

FTH staff visited North Korea in late 2006 to meet a potential relief partner operating a non-profit bakery. Each day he provides red-bean-paste buns for children in schools in his area. *This kind baker brings buns to eight thousand children everyday.* This is a gift of kindness to the children in a land where the Gospel cannot be preached openly. It is his Christian witness.



The cost to feed 8000 children everyday is a huge sum for the average person living in North Korea, but surprisingly it only equates to AUD\$170.

This humble North Korean baker is dedicated to sharing the *Bread of Life* with the children as he provides their *daily bread*. We can support a Christian witness in a country whose government has long tried to keep Jesus out. We know that God's love can't be restrained by mere human governments - He's always working through His people and sometimes the Gospel light shines brightest in the most unexpected places.

It won't take much to make a difference in North Korea. If you can give \$30 every month, you will be able to feed 49 North Korean children everyday! \$50 will feed 82 children for a month. But if you can step out in faith, \$305 will feed 500 children for a month!

Please prayerfully consider sending a donation to help shine the Gospel light in dark places around the world. Let us help our partner expand this ministry into every major North Korean city raising up a generation of children who will know and love Christ!

Voice for the Hungry,

Benjamin

Benjamin Evans
Operations Manger, Australia & New Zealand
Feed The Hungry

P.S.

February 14th marks the birthday of our founder, Dr. Lester Sumrall. On this anniversary we invite our partners and friends to send in their personal prayer requests. We appreciate our partners, and it will be our privilege and honour to pray for you on this special day. A response form has been included for your convenience. Please contact the office before Feb 14th.