



# Reaching Africa Map Set

## Instructional Guide

### 1. The Nations of Africa

Africa is a diverse continent made up of many nations facing tremendous challenges and hardships. Among the world's seven continents, Africa is the second largest in land area and the third largest in population. It has 55 independent countries, the world's largest desert (Sahara, which is approximately the size of the United States of America), and the world's longest river (Nile, which is over 4,000 miles long). The country of Sudan has the largest area. The smallest country is the Seychelles Islands. Nigeria has the highest population. In colonial times Africa was insulted as the "Dark Continent," but today it is becoming the light of the world with explosive church growth and a multitude of decisions for Christ. The Christian church in Africa is growing rapidly because of the sovereign hand of God and the vibrant faith shining through the lives of African Christians, often in desperate situations.

[This base map of the continent of Africa may be used for your personal or ministry notes]

### 2. Population Growth Rate

Even though Africans have faced years of severe suffering, ethnic wars, and have an average life expectancy of only 48 years, the population is still growing. More than 80 cities have a population over one million (Cairo is the largest city in Africa with 16 million people) yet most people live in rural settings. The country of Liberia has the highest population growth rate. Mauritius has the highest population density. Western Sahara has the lowest density. Many factors may reduce the rapid growth rate including AIDS, famine, drought, disease, ethnic wars, distribution of resources, natural, economic and political disasters. Although the population growth rate in Africa is the highest in the world, there are still more critical issues to resolve. They include: distribution of resources, literacy and education, discipleship and leadership training, community development and church planting.

### 3. Children around the World

The Bible says children are a blessing from the Lord, and blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them (Psalm 127:3-5). But one third of all children in the developing world (especially Africa) must drop out of school by the age 10 to help support their families. There is a great need to educate the children of Africa, and minister to them and their families. Pray for the children around the world, especially the multitudes in Africa. The country of Uganda has the second highest percentage of population under 15 years of age in the world. Matt. 19:13-15.

### 4. Muslim & Christian Concentration

Africa is one of the last frontiers where major religions are clashing. Over the centuries Islam has spread from the Middle East to North Africa. Muslims represent 41.3% of the population in Africa, growing at a rate of 2.5% per year (mainly as a result of having large families). Pray that God would open the eyes of the Muslims, and raise up a great harvest of mature Christians, willing to convey Christ's love to more of their Islamic neighbors. Christians represent 48.4% of Africa's population (Protestants are growing at a rate of 4.2% per year and Roman Catholics at a rate of 2.6%).

## **5. Evangelical Growth in Africa**

Christians all over the world are noticing Africa's Christian vitality and praising God for what He is doing on this continent. Over the last 30 years, most of Africa has experienced a strong evangelical growth rate. Over half of sub-Saharan Africa's population claim to be Christian. This is the first time in history that a continent has turned to Christ in this way. In 1900 there were only 8 million African Christians (2.5 million Protestants). In 2000 this had risen to 379 million and 48.4% of the population. Only in the north has there been minimal growth due to oppressive governments and Islamic persecution. The most rapid evangelical growth has been in Côte d'Ivoire. Many African churches and agencies are rising to the occasion to reach outside their own countries for the sake of Christ.

## **6. Missionaries per Population**

Although the church in Africa is growing dramatically, there is still much work to do and a need for missionaries who can work as real partners with the local churches. Some missionaries are invited to help churches train leadership, while others go to countries where unreached people have never heard about Christ, the Savior of the world. Less than one percent of the population in Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Mayotte, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Western Sahara, Comoros, Djibouti, Niger, Senegal, Somalia, and Gambia are evangelical Christians.

Ethiopia, Egypt, Algeria, Nigeria, and Morocco are countries with a high population and a great need for evangelism, whether by missionaries from overseas or from other African countries. Matt. 28:18-20.

## **7. African Gateway Cities**

Cities are the magnets of societies, drawing all kinds of people into them. Each city is a strategic economic, political, social and spiritual center of its respective nation or province. But cities can also be places of loneliness, pain, and spiritual darkness. As part of a strategic prayer focus in 1995, 100 cities in the region called the 10 / 40 Window were selected by a global association called AD2000. Twenty-one of those key cities are in North Africa. Linking believers around a common prayer goal is a central element of reaching cities for Christ. These African cities still need prayer. Each one is a "gate" through which the good news may spread to a whole region or country.

## **8. The Book Famine in Africa**

Books have become so expensive in Africa that churches and schools often lack the resources they need. Even church leaders cannot afford to buy books. The book shortage is so serious it has been called a "book famine". It is affecting every seminary and Bible institute in Africa and hindering the spiritual leadership of this great continent. Read 2 Tim. 2:15.

## **9. Bible Translation Status**

Languages can unite or divide people. With over 3,500 ethno-linguistic peoples and 2,110 languages, Africa is the greatest remaining challenge for Bible translation. An ethnic group or population segment cannot be considered evangelized if does not have access to the Scriptures in some language that is adequately understood. A people without the Bible in its own language or "mother tongue" is easy prey to false teaching. God so loved the world (every tribe and tongue and people and language) that He gave us His Son and His Word (Heb. 4:12 and 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

## **10. The Sicite People of Africa**

The gospel has not spread evenly in Africa. Some people groups like the Sicite of Burkina Faso still have almost no knowledge of God's love and saving grace. We have selected as an example, one of the strategic unreached peoples of Africa. Pray that God would break the demonic strongholds and open the eyes of the Sicite people to the glory of Christ. Will you pray for, go to, or send others to these people in the power of the Holy Spirit? Read 2 Pet. 3:9.