

## Jesus: Savior Of The Village

What a huge world we live in! Imagine there being 6.5 billion people living on this planet. You may be saying, "Yes, and I see just about every one of them on I-85 on the way to and from work every day!" Well, it does seem that way at times, but such numbers are truly phenomenal when you think about it.

Last week Joyce Sanders gave me a copy of a page from Section B of last Sunday's issue of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. It was a graphic comparing the world's 6.5 billion to a village of 1000 people. Since one billion is beyond my ability to comprehend, comparing it in this way is most helpful to my finite mind. So, I want to share some of these figures with you.

If the 6.5 billion people of the world were illustrated as a village of 1000 the breakdown of "Gender and Age" would be as follows. There would be 503 men and 497 women. There would be 274 children under the age of 14, and 75 people would be 65 years old or older. That means 651 people would be between the ages of 15 and 64. Under the subject of "Health," six of the 1000 have AIDS and 133 are undernourished. What about in the area of "Wealth Distribution?" If the sum total of the people of the earth were a village of 1000 around 400 people live on less than \$2 per day. There is only one person in the village who has over \$1 million dollars in assets.

In the area of people distribution, our earth village of 1000 would look like this: 508 people would be rural dwellers; while 492 would be city dwellers. Of the 1000, the people living in Asia would be about 604. There would be 142 in Africa, 112 in Europe, 86 in Latin America and the Caribbean, and five from Oceania (Pacific Region). There are only 51 of the 1000 in North America.

Certainly the most telling of statistics came in the area of "Religious Distribution." If the world population of 6.5 billion were compared to a village of 1000, in it are 330 people who claim Christianity as a their religious affiliation. Who do you suppose would be next in line? Yes, there are 201 Muslims. There are 144 who claim to be either non-religious or atheists; 133 are Hindu; 59 are Buddhists; and 131 are people of other religions, such as 4 Sikhs, and 2 Jews, etc. Add together just the amount of people who are Muslim and are Hindu and they exceed the amount of "Christians."

In our earthly village of 1000, though there are still more "Christians" than any other religion, that number is in danger of changing. It has been often reported that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world. With its present growth the distribution of religion could drastically change over the next few years. What will it be like in 10 years? 20? Or 30?

How do we stop the global onslaught of religious division in our world-village? How can we get people to stop considering these other religions as viable alternatives to following Jesus Christ? Well, the first thing to remember is that nothing can be done on a large scale. Media and advertisement can not hurt, but the greatest result is going to see true growth on an individual basis. Grass roots efforts, and word of mouth approaches are going to bring about the best results. The thing to remember is that such influence can not be

accomplished simply by bringing people to a worship service. They must be able to see it in your life, and in your example. Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven," Matthew 5:16.

—Scott