



THE SCHLEHLEINS

Missionaries to the Tsongas of South Africa



HOW TO PRAY FOR TSONGA FAMILIES

Pray for the Tsongas | Part 1

The Tsonga people are a peaceful Bantu tribe living in southern Africa. Tsongas love children and having a big family is still a great honor. As the size of a man's family grows, people will tell him: *Xivongo xa kula*, "your surname is growing." With children also grows respect and social standing within the village.

It is normal for Tsonga mothers and grandmothers to care for the kids of extended family like nephews, nieces and grandkids. It is common to see grannies walking the path carrying a grandchild on her back.

Scripture compares children to arrows because of the strength and security they bring. "Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth" (Ps. 127:4). One Tsonga proverb says: "Clay is molded when it is still wet." Thus, "train up a child" (Pr. 22:6).

Pray about the Abortion Holocaust

The Tsonga home has many enemies today. One is the terrible holocaust of abortion. In today's South Africa, specifically since 1994, a woman, regardless of age can murder the child in her womb if she is less than 13 weeks pregnant. The mother has no obligation to inform anyone, including the father or her parents.

Each year, approximately 100,000 South African children—innocent and defenseless—are killed in the womb. As the number of deaths increase, so do the ubiquitous posters in South African towns hailing "Cheap Abortions"—just call Dr. So-and So. Among the seven things God hates, according to Proverbs, are "hands that shed innocent blood."

Pray about Absentee Fathers

Another enemy to Tsonga families is the absence of fathers. Children born out of wedlock is rampant, with the government encouraging this practice by giving grants to poor, unmarried girls. Walk through any of the hundreds of rural Tsonga villages and you'll be shocked at how many kids grow up without the strength of a father at home. One worldwide study surveying two-parent homes put RSA dead last. The numbers are probably even lower in the rural villages. Polygamy, though declining, steals fathers from the home as well, dividing his loyalty to children.

Pray about a Biblical Worldview of the Home

Just as a bicycle is designed to have two wheels, God made the home to have two parents—a husband and wife—that raise their children in love. It is *fathers* that are to raise their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Eph. 6:4).

The Tsonga family unit is a precious jewel in God's sight and it should not surprise us that the Evil One has labored so mightily to destroy it.

Pray that as the gospel penetrates Tsonga hearts, they would see God's beautiful plan for the family. For a father and mother—husband and wife—along with their children walking in the light of Jesus Christ can do as much as anything to change and shape not only the culture, but many generations to come.

For Christ and His Kingdom,
*Paul & Lindy,
 Audrey, Nate, Law, Owen, Juju, Clara, and Luke*