



## Quick Facts

**Population:** 1,700,000

Eritrea: 1,200,000

Sudan: 400,000

Ethiopia: 100,000

**Lang. Group:** Semitic

**Religion:** Islam

**Believers:** 0.002%

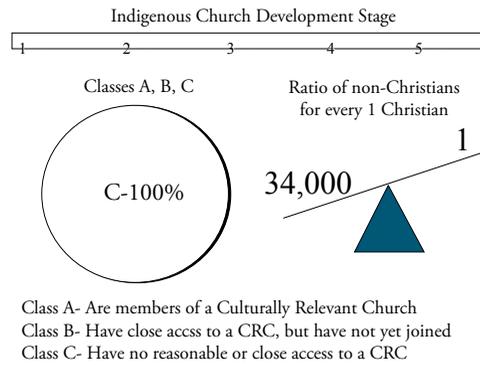
**Scriptures:** NT, OT

**Ministry Tools:** JGRT

**Church Status:** 0

**Mission Status:** 1

**MS Subgroups:** 10+



**Identity:** The Tigre are an Afro-Asiatic group which speak a Semitic language, related to Tigrinya and Amharic. All three descend from the ancient Ge-ez speaking people, a language that is now only used for liturgical purposes. It is believed that they originated from the Arabian peninsula, though they have been in the African continent for at least two thousand years.

**Lifestyle:** There are three major groupings of Tigrinya: those who are nomadic, and travel with their herds of camels, sheep and goats; those who are semi-nomadic and spend part of the year in the highlands with their herds and the other part in their lowland villages, where they engage in a mixture of pastoralism and cultivation; and those who are completely sedentary farmers, growing wheat, legumes, sorghum, barley and corn.

**Customs:** Marriages are often arranged early, even before birth, and are usually

financially driven settlements. Wealthy families typically make arrangements with close relatives to protect their assets. Blood feuds and debts may also be settled through negotiating a marriage agreement. These negotiations frequently involve input and involvement from both sides of the entire extended family.

**Religion:** The Tigre are the only Ethiopic Semitic people to fully embrace Islam instead of Christianity. The first converts could be found on the Tigre inhabited islands in the Red Sea as early as the 7th century. However it was not until the 19th century that the Tigre began converting in mass to Islam. This was due to the missionary efforts of Sufi orders which began to expand from Arabia under the direction of Sufi leader Sayyed Ahmad ibn Idriss, who established flourishing *tariqas* (*Muslim brotherhoods*) all throughout East Africa.

**Christian Outreach:** Efforts to reach the Tigre throughout the last century by

several mission organizations have been hindered by the political instability in the region, and the persecution inflicted upon the Tigre by the majority Christian ethnicities which surround them. This has created a resistance to the Christian message in sufficient measure to keep a disciple-making movement from being initiated or sustained on any long term basis.

## How to Pray:

✞ Intercede for the ancient churches in Eritrea and Ethiopia, that God would so transform the hearts of believers they would reach out with love, grace and reconciliation to the Tigre.

✞ Ongoing drought due to regional climate changes is a persistent problem for the Tigre. Pray for creative ways to help the Tigre adapt using Kingdom principles that will point them to the Savior.

✞ There are many ethnic sub-groups that are in the process of being absorbed by the Tigre, some of which were former slaves. Pray for outreach to every “hidden” people group among them.

✞ Intercede for those Tigre returning as refugees from Sudan, many of which have been receptive to the gospel.

**Every year 15,000  
Tigre die  
without Christ.**