

Weigh In

Weighing the facts about the Democratic Republic of Congo

1.

There is an average of nearly six children per household in the DRC, showing that Congolese citizens tend to have large families.

2.

Only 21.5 percent of the DRC's population has access to electricity. The Congolese have adapted their lifestyles so their dependence on electricity is minimal.

3.

An "internally displaced person" (IDP) refers to an individual who has been forced to leave their home, though they remain within their native country. In the DRC, an estimated 5.5 million people are internally displaced.

4.

Christians in eastern DRC encounter heavy persecution from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) – a dangerous group of Islamic terrorists. The militants' goal is to cause terror in these communities.

Corresponding Question Points:

(1) In your opinion, why do you think the people of this culture value large families? Could it be related to their vocations, cultural heritage or something else? What are the pros and cons of having a large family?

(2) Personal Challenge: Either individually or as a family, try going one full day without the use of electricity. Afterwards, write about your experiences. Did you encounter any unexpected challenges? What were the best and worst parts of the experience? Could you adapt to this challenge for the long term?

(3) Imagine you were quickly forced to move to another province, leaving with only the clothes on your back.

What challenges would you face? Think about how other factors (such as the weather and climate, language, local traditions, food, etc.) would contribute to these challenges. How does this information help you to pray for believers in the DRC who have been forced to flee?

(4) Christians have a choice between letting fear dictate their actions or opting to trust in God when determining their steps. Is it possible to be fearful but still walk by faith? Share some examples from Scripture and your own life experiences to support your answer. Ask God to help you discuss your answer with someone else this week, using it as an opportunity to share your testimony.

One Way

Religious Comparison: Compare & Contrast What the Bible Says

Syncretic religion is a blending of two or more religious belief systems to create a new one. In the DRC, various occultic tribal practices have been merged with Christianity. Culturally, these traditions are considered normal. Although they are linked to an individual's tribal identity, Biblically, these practices do not line up with Jesus' teaching.

The New Age worldview, which has gained popularity in Canadian culture, is a syncretic element that has influenced a large number of Christians in the West. New Age practices – including the

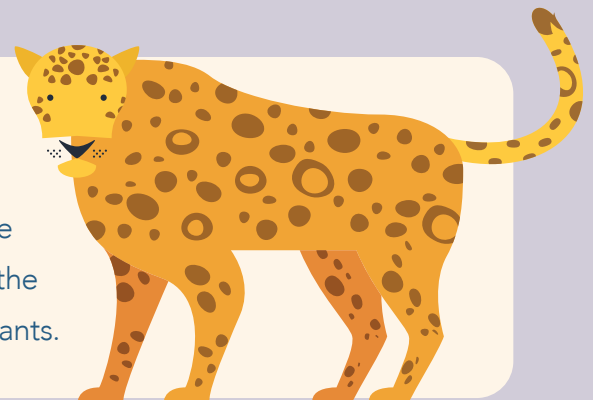
use of astrology, crystal energy, meditation, spirit healing, yoga, and consultations with psychics – are considered forms of witchcraft in the Bible.*

Christians worldwide are commanded to live as the Bible teaches. This includes the avoidance of all harmful occult practices (Deuteronomy 18:10-12). The Apostle Paul gives a strong warning in Galatians 5:19-21 to those who practise the occult. Therefore, we must follow the principles outlined in God's Word when determining how we are to live, rather than follow values that are culturally acceptable.

If one of the above-mentioned practices is causing a feeling of defensiveness to rise up within you, be honest about that feeling. Then consider bravely taking this recommended challenge: Open your computer's browser and enter the words "spiritual origin/roots of _____" (adding the name of the practice you're feeling defensive about). Does this practice represent a Biblical worldview or that of another source?

Fun Facts:

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has the second-largest rainforest in the world. Many special animals live there, like chimpanzees, gorillas, bonobos, okapi and leopards. Five of the country's national parks are listed as World Heritage Sites. It is the African country with the most diverse species of animals and plants.



<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook>

<https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/persecution/countries/drc/>

<https://www.christianity.com/wiki/christian-life/what-does-faith-over-fear-really-mean>

<https://www.equip.org/articles/infiltrated-recognizing-and-responding-to-occultism-in-your-church/>

<https://www.afrodiscovery.com/country/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/democratic-republic-of-the-congo-religion/religious-diversity-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-exploring-faith-traditions-and-practices/>

https://kids.kiddle.co/Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo