

# Unfinished

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## Falling in love with India

How we can bring the people of this vast nation into our hearts

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**Cover photo:**  
Among the people of India—a land of incredible diversity and complexity—Christianity is growing at a remarkable rate.

## Join us in The Mission

When you partner with The Mission Society, not only do you join us in The Mission to offer Christ to the world, but you join us in embracing our core values.

### Our vision

The kingdom of God advancing among all peoples bringing about redemption and reconciliation through Jesus Christ

### Our mission

The Mission Society exists to mobilize and deploy the body of Christ globally to join Jesus in His mission, especially among the least reached peoples.

## Our core values

### INCARNATION

The Mission Society seeks to minister to others by following the example of Jesus, who fully entered the human experience. In our cross-cultural ministry, we are committed to learning the local language, living among the people, ministering in culturally appropriate ways, demonstrating love for God and neighbor, and disciple-making among the nations.

### INTEGRITY

The Mission Society desires to reflect the holiness of God in all we do. Personally and corporately we endeavor to make the character of Christ manifest in our lives and our ministry.

### PASSION

We are not complacent about the One who matters supremely or the work God has given us to do; nor is our ministry prompted simply by duty, or even obedience. Our life together and our ministry are marked and motivated by passion for God and God's mission. We are passionate about Jesus, our mission, and all those involved in the journey with us.

### PEOPLE

The Mission Society believes that people are of primary value. Because people matter to God, people matter to us. Our cross-cultural workers, staff, donors, volunteers, prayer partners, and those we seek to reach are of greatest worth to us. Because "relationships" and not "formulas" are our method, The Mission Society exudes an entrepreneurial culture where every member is encouraged to discern and pursue God's unique direction for his or her ministry.

### PARTNERSHIP

Since it is the kingdom of God that we are called to express and extend throughout the world, our ministry is about more than ourselves and our organization. We believe that working together enhances our witness and strengthens our ability to make disciples of all nations. The Mission Society therefore pursues partnership in ministry endeavors – with churches, nationals, Christian organizations, and individuals.

### PRAYER

It is only through the power and presence of the Spirit of Christ that we can live up to the high and holy intentions embodied in these values. We acknowledge our absolute dependence on God and seek both His guidance and His strength each day. Therefore, The Mission Society is a praying community.

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–John Wesley



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## FROM THE OFFICE

### President Dick McClain announces his retirement

The Mission Society has announced the retirement of Dick McClain, its president and longest-tenured staff member, effective May 2014. Elected to the presidency in 2009, he first came to The Mission Society in 1986.

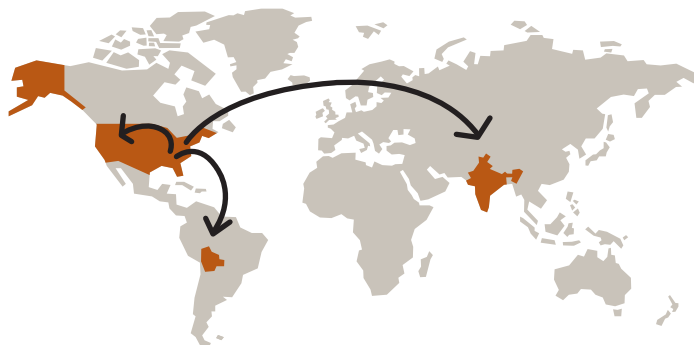
During McClain's tenure as president, The Mission Society adopted vision and mission statements to guide the ministry's renewed efforts toward least-reached communities. Over his 28 years of service, the number of cross-cultural workers increased from 14 to 225, many of whom serve today among people groups identified as the world's least reached.

The announcement of McClain's successor in February 2014 will allow the new president to work with McClain in a transitional period. McClain's retirement is effective May 31, 2014. He plans to move to Colorado, where he will continue active engagement in ministry and missions.

### The Mission Society co-hosts event with Word Made Flesh in Bolivia

The Mission Society co-hosted an International Mobilization Conference with Word Made Flesh outside of La Paz, Bolivia September 1-4, 2013. Word Made Flesh is a Christian non-profit organization committed to service among the most vulnerable of the urban poor.

Dr. Darrell Whiteman, vice president for mobilization and training and resident missiologist, along with Dr. Denny Heiberg, a Mission Society missionary, expanded the group's understanding of worldview, cross-cultural ministry, and discipleship. Andy and Andrea Baker, Mauricio Meneses, and



Erlan Gonzales with Word Made Flesh, spoke about local tensions and realities.

The conference was attended by 135 pastors, missionaries, and church leaders representing 95 different congregations from throughout the country.

Dr. Whiteman commented after the conference, "On the last night, 20 pastors pulled me to the side with a request. They were all from the Oruro area, three hours south of La Paz. They said that they had never heard this kind of teaching before, but that it touched on real challenges they faced in their churches. They agreed to cover all the expenses if we would come back next year, and said they would have at least 200 participants. We are working to make that happen."

### The Mission Society trains newest missionaries for service

The Mission Society conducted the H.T. and Alice Maclin Mission Training Institute for a new group of missionaries and guests July 3-20, 2013 at the South Asia Institute for Advanced Christian Studies (SAIACS) in Bangalore, India. This year, the attendees included 15 Mission Society cross-cultural workers, 12 children, and 25 guests from India who participated in the training.



## FROM THE FIELD

### Agricultural ministry strengthens local churches' witness



Doug Neel, the lead agricultural specialist with The Mission Society's Global Resource Team (GRT) met Rawindra Dongerdive in 2005 while they were both attending Asbury Theological Seminary. Dongerdive is the founder of Life Light Ministries in Aurangabad, India. It trains local Christian leaders, operates an orphanage and Christian school, and ministers to the poorest of the poor. Neel assisted Life Light with agricultural aspects of its ministry and had the privilege, also, to pray with a Hindu who is contemplating giving his life to Christ. The pastors had been discipling this man for some time. This was a demonstration of how the GRT partners with local church leaders to strengthen their ministries.

### African ministries thrive



"The Mission Society is seeing its work in Africa continue to grow and thrive," writes Mary Kay Jackson, The Mission Society's regional consultant for Africa, who herself serves in Ghana. "While much of the work continues to focus on providing hope to the least reached, gone are the days of creating dependency by giving hand-outs. Locals are being taught to take charge of their own lives—whether it is learning new farming methods, starting small businesses, or treating water to make it safe to drink. At the same time, community members are being disciplined to place hope for their future solely in Jesus Christ, not in their governments or foreign aid. Those of us privileged to walk beside our African brothers and sisters are, ourselves, being transformed as we learn from them."

### Mission-sending forces expand in Latin America; The Mission Society helps



"I believe that in the next decade, we will see a tipping point in the mobilization of a great Latin American mission force," says Steve Wilson, director of missional communities and regional consultant for The Mission Society's Latin American mission team. Wilson, who served in Mexico, reports that about 15,000 missionaries are being sent out from Latin America (compared to 1,000 25 years ago). Mission Society laborers are working alongside Latinos to equip and mobilize a mission-sending force in Brazil, Mexico, and Peru.

### Workers help equip Asians to reach their own for Christ



"In East Asia and Southeast Asia, the current trend in missions is working with local believers to empower them to reach the unreached," writes The Mission Society's regional consultant for Asia, who is himself a missionary in China. "Many missionaries of The Mission Society are working with local church networks to encourage and equip believers as they cross into Muslim, Tibetan, Buddhist, and animist cultures. Missionaries are also working directly with these groups, sharing about God's love with them, many of whom have never before heard God loves them. These cross-cultural workers are helping people experience God's love by caring for orphans, loving the poor, and helping those in need. In other words, God isn't only leading us to *tell* about His love, but to help people *encounter* His love as well."



## India in our hearts

Affection for India comes naturally for President Dick McClain. His first neighbors were Indian. His first words were Hindi. Here he tells why *all* Jesus-followers should have India in their hearts.



“If Christ’s Christianity was to be preached then the whole world would become Christians.” –Mahatma Gandhi

Unless you count the six weeks between when I was born and the day we boarded a ship to depart Canton along with many other missionaries who were evacuating China in 1949, India was my first home. It was Bangalore, to be exact, the same city in south India where The Mission Society held its annual H. T. and Alice Maclin Mission Institute this summer. I didn’t live in Bangalore too long, however. After a year or so, our family was transferred to Lucknow, a city nearly 1,900 kilometers to the north. For my parents, the result of all these moves was that they had to study three totally distinct languages during their first term on the field: Cantonese, Kanarese, and Hindi.

Our family’s ministry in India was cut short by an illness that almost took my mother’s life. Well into her pregnancy with her third child, she contracted

endocarditis, a heart disease that at the time was almost always fatal. By God’s grace and in response to countless prayers from intercessors around the world who had been alerted by telegram to my mother’s condition, God healed her. He also spared the life of the baby she was carrying, my kid brother, Doug, who, apart from a miracle, could not have survived Mom’s devastating illness. As soon as Mom was well enough to travel, our family relocated to the States, where we lived for the next five years until God once again uprooted my folks and sent us to Hong Kong. (The next time you ask a missionary kid where he or she is from and you’re met with silence and a blank stare, remember my story. For many years I had no idea how to answer that question!)

I was a little over three years old when we left India, so I only have a

couple of vague memories of that land. I’m actually not sure if the images I do have from those early years are in fact my own memories, or stories I heard often enough in the ensuing years that I just think I remember them. My parents have told me that I spoke Hindi before I spoke English. Alas, my Hindi didn’t survive our move to the States. I wish it had! Our oldest son’s wife, Amita Agrawal McClain, is from Nepal, and Hindi is one of the four or five languages she and her family speak. If I remembered my Hindi, I could tell Amita’s mom in her own language what a fabulous cook she is and what a remarkable daughter she raised.

Having left India in 1952, I didn’t return for 45 years when I visited Mission Society missionaries Peter and Esther Pereira in Hyderabad. Several years previously, Peter had challenged us to “put

## How to use this issue: read, pray, love

The vastness and complexity of India can seem overwhelming. How do we dive in to participate in what God is doing among one billion people? Dr. Ravi David (*see page 16*) recommends to pastors in India who feel overwhelmed, "Return to your calling. If you were called to teach Bible studies, teach Bible studies."

So as you approach this issue, what is your calling? Do you sense a leading to serve in India? If so, be sure to see pages 23 and 36. If you are involved in short-term mission ministry, see the book recommendations on pages 12 and 28. If you are a church /mission leader or educator, don't miss the articles on pages 6-17. If your gift and practice is giving, notice pages 17 and 22 (how your gifts to The Mission Society are being used to deploy missionaries and help encourage India's church leaders).

We can all pray. And throughout this issue, we've sprinkled prompts to help guide your prayers. Thank you for joining us in praying that God would draw hearts of the people of India to Himself.

"Prayer does not fit us  
for the greater work;  
prayer is the greater work."

—*Oswald Chambers*

India back on the map" in terms of The Mission Society's ministry. Partnering with Peter and Esther was the first step in our doing just that.

### **Incredible sight**

At one point during that trip, Peter and I were flying into Mumbai. The largest city in India, Mumbai is home to more than 12 million people (more than 20 million if you include the entire metro area). As our plane approached the airport, for as far as my eye could see, there was only city. Building. Roads. More buildings. And people, people, people.

"God, how do you reach one billion people?" I prayed. (With 1.3 billion inhabitants, India is second only to China in population.)

How indeed?

Today, we can rejoice that there are over 71 million Indian followers of Jesus! But with more than 2,611 distinct people groups (88% of them unreached) and 456 languages, India is the most ethnically diverse country on the planet, and has more still-unreached people

groups and more people who are not presently followers of Jesus than any other nation.

### **Wonderful reality**

The wonderful reality of missions in the 21st century is that it is no longer just the churches of North America and Europe that are sending missionaries. To-

Today tens of thousands of cross-cultural workers have been sent out by the Majority World's churches. Included in that number are thousands of Indian believers who have moved from their homes to witness for Jesus in less-reached areas within their country.

day tens of thousands of cross-cultural workers have been sent out by the Majority World's churches. Included in that number are thousands of Indian believers who have moved from their homes to witness for Jesus in less-reached areas within their own country. Just like their Western counterparts, they have to learn

new languages, eat different food, and adjust to new cultures.

Today The Mission Society has 18 cross-cultural workers in or on their way to India. A few are beginning pioneering work among people who have had little, if any, exposure to the good news. Others have joined Indian colleagues who have launched their own ministries among India's unreached peoples.

In the pages that follow, you'll get a glimpse into what God is doing across India today. I hope you'll come away with a better understanding of this fascinating land and its amazing people. I trust you'll be encouraged as you read about people's lives being touched by Jesus. More importantly, I hope you'll commit to pray for an outpouring of God's Spirit in India. More than 1.2 billion people in India still do not know Christ. †

**The Rev. Dick McClain** is president and CEO of *The Mission Society*.

# Welcome to N the





# new O I A

From northern India, Mission Society cross-cultural worker Judy\* tells the story of two Indian boys (in 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades) from a high caste, Hindu home who became “true believers.” Now “after everyone goes to bed,” the boys tell, “we sit with a flashlight to study our Bible and pray together.”

Without any adult mentoring, these two young Jesus-followers have begun to reach out. They started a ministry to the marginalized communities in one of the poorest slums of their neighborhood. They teach reading, writing, math, and the Bible to a group of boys three days a week. Judy writes, “The boys will tell you that God has answered every prayer, even in providing a place to teach their students.”

Stories like these are heard again and again. Christianity in India is spreading—not only among lower castes and marginalized communities, which has been the case for years—but among middle and high caste Indians and among India’s young people. Mission scholars and practitioners agree that Christianity is growing at a remarkable rate.

This is an “era of exciting gospel receptivity,” observes Dr. Prabhu Singh, an anthropologist from India. But this remarkable receptivity to Christ is just one of several themes that mark today’s India. Here, Dr. Prabhu Singh explains, and also details the waves of Protestant mission history in this, the 8<sup>th</sup> largest Christian nation in the world.

# Five dominant themes that define today's India and

## 1. Era of *Glocal* Complex Connectivity

India opened up its economy in 1991, and that has unleashed a new era of *Glocal* (global and local) complex connectivity. The rise of globalization and its impact on the economy, the invasion of foreign media, massive urbanization (nearly 400 million), rapid westernization as well as intense resistance to it—all are shaping the contemporary context. There are fresh efforts to focus on (i) urban missions, a shift away from the rural and tribal (ii) the growing middle class(es) (nearly 250 million); as well as (iii) specialized creative work among young people (50 percent of Indians are less than 24 years old). The “Google generation” and “Twitter teens” are huge consumers of global popular culture and are shaped more by MTV and social media.

## 2. Era of Heightened Cultural Sensitivity

Reacting to the rampant westernization and threatened local identities, there is a desire among many to return to their roots and understand what it means to be an authentic Indian. *The Anthropological Survey of India* identifies at least 4,693 communities in India. This presents a missional imperative to be culturally relevant in communicating and living out the gospel within those communities. Otherwise, Christianity will continue to be viewed as a foreign faith.

## 3. Era of Exciting Gospel Receptivity

The Spirit of God is blowing across the land in fresh ways as many “Christward movements” are occurring. In these movements, people may not be moving toward the “Church” or “Christianity” as we know it, but they’re moving towards Christ. There have been movements among, not only tribal and rural communities, but also among high castes and other groups that have historically not been very receptive. *Insider movements\** are also happening among some communities. These new movements motivate us to rethink our traditional missional approaches. [\*Movements of believers in Jesus from other religious backgrounds who do not refer to themselves as Christians.]

## 4. Era of Alarming Religious Animosity

While India has always had a religiously plural ethos, contemporary India is polarized along religious lines for varied reasons. The rise of Hindu nationalism has been accompanied by the persecution of the Church in different parts of the country. While in some places things seem to be normal, there are pockets of strong resistance and violent reaction to the Christian faith and its missional endeavors. This calls for fresh thinking in gospel articulation. My Ph.D. research has been in the area of the persecution of the church in India.

# Three waves of Protestant missions in India

*Dr. Prabhu Singh uses the word “waves” to describe the Protestant mission history in India because, he says, these are not clear-cut, perfectly compartmentalized eras. There is much overlapping.*

## I. Foreign cross-cultural era in Colonial India [1706 – 1946] [Colonial]

- Protestant missions in India starts with the arrival of Bartholomew Ziegenbalg in 1706.
- Mission efforts are advanced primarily by foreign personnel and resources, even though many Indians were also involved.
- Understanding of missions is mono-directional (West to East) and mono-cultural.

## II. Indian cross-cultural era in Post-Independent India [1947 – 1990] [Post/Neo Colonial]

- After India’s independence (1947), foreign missionaries phase out of the country.
- The question becomes, “How will Christianity survive in India?”
- Indian cross-cultural mission movements spring up, primarily from south India and other places, focusing predominately on tribal populations in north and central India.

# its missional challenges:

## 5. Era of Widening Economic Disparity

Post-liberalized India has grown richer, but the gap between the rich and the poor also seems to be widening. For instance, while Mumbai boasts of the world's most expensive home (\$2 billion) built by one of India's foremost industrialist, it is also host to Asia's largest slum in Dharavi. Amartya Sen, Indian economist and Nobel laureate, writes that the 20-year span (1991-2011) of economic liberalization and globalization has seen the GDP grow, but many of the benefits have not reached the poor. While the number of billionaires has dramatically increased, there is also the tragic fact that in the last 15 years, 250,000 farmers have committed suicide in India, due to various reasons. This has also facilitated the rise of violent Maoists movements. The Church needs to courageously and compassionately stand in this gap.

India is rapidly changing, and the nation is in flux. It is diverse and complex. As one Indian scholar writes, "The singular thing about India is that you can only speak of it in the plural." We need to be aware of this complexity as well as the tectonic shifts that are happening in contemporary India. The need of the hour is to "understand the times" (I Chronicles 12:32), "interpret the times" (Luke 12:56), and serve appropriately in "such a time as this" (Esther 4:14). †

### III. Indigenous era in Post Liberalization India [1991 – present] [Global]

- The economy becomes liberalized. Massive economic, cultural, political shifts take place. Rise of Hindu nationalism and persecution of the Church.
- Focus on Indian cross-cultural movements shifts to indigenous (local) movements. Christianity is still considered "foreign" in some places as the Indian cross-cultural witnesses ended up planting their form of Christianity.
- New innovative forms of missions emerge, where focus is more on urban than rural and tribal.

## Quick facts



### POPULATION

1.237 billion (2012)

### LANGUAGE

Hindi 41%, Bengali 8.1%, Telugu 7.2%, Marathi 7%, Tamil 5.9%, Urdu 5%, Gujarati 4.5%, Kannada 3.7%, Malayalam 3.2%, Oriya 3.2%, Punjabi 2.8%, Assamese 1.3%, Maithili 1.2%, other 5.9% *NOTE: English enjoys associate status but is the most important language for national, political, and commercial communication*

### GOVERNMENT

India's capital is New Delhi. (Its biggest city is Mumbai.)

India is a constitutional republic and representative democracy (the biggest democracy in the world). It is a federation composed of 28 states and seven union territories.

### RELIGION

Hindu 80.5%, Muslim 13.4%, Christian 2.3%, Sikh 1.9%, other 1.8%, unspecified 0.1%

### CHRISTIAN HISTORY

The Christian Church has been present in India since the first century. It was planted by Thomas, one of Jesus' disciples. It is believed that Thomas journeyed to the Indian region to preach, arriving in the Kerala state of India in 52 AD.

### TRENDS

- 70 percent of Indians are under age 35.
- More than 31% of India's population lives in urban setting. Fifty-three of India's cities have one million or more residents, and three have more than 10 million. (*From India's 2011 Census*)
- 97% of 757 teenagers surveyed in seven of India's key cities have a social networking account. On an average, they open an account at the age of 13. (*From McAfee's Secret Lives of Indian Teens, 2012.*)
- Hunger and deprivation affect 260 million in India. It is home to 40 percent of world's underweight children (almost twice that of sub Saharan Africa).
- In the last 15 years, nearly 250,000 farmers have committed suicide in India. This is said to be "the largest wave of suicide in human history."



# 'Give us friends'

Relationships in the global Church can be strained. Attempts to partner have sometimes gone awry, producing hurt and separation. It's time we come together.

*An interview with Prabhu Singh Vedhamanickam, Ph.D.*

American Christians go to India. They see extreme wealth side by side with incredible poverty. They return to the States and come up with a plan to “help India's poor.” This happens a lot. But is this serving God's kingdom?

“More than 100 years ago,” writes Indian anthropologist Dr. Prabhu Singh Vedhamanickam, “a South Indian Tamil Christian created much consternation in the historic World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910. Azariah—probably the most influential Indian Christian leader in the first half of the 20th century—concluded his speech at the conference with these words, “Through all the ages to come, the Indian Church will rise up in gratitude to attest the heroism and self-denying labors of the missionary body. You have given your goods to feed the poor. You have given your bodies to be burned. We ask for love. Give us friends.””

Evidently, in spite of the great sacrificial service for the Lord demonstrated by the Western missionaries, writes Dr. Prabhu Singh, “the local indigenous Christians often felt unloved and marginalized as they were not treated equally. They were perceived and paternalized as children and not as friends and partners in the gospel.” That was a long time ago, but “the issues raised by Azariah are still pertinent for the global Church.”

Maybe our perceptions need some adjustment. India has the 8th largest Christian population in the world. The Indian church sends out thousands of its own missionaries. Of its more than 200 mission agencies, many do not receive money from abroad for their missional purposes. For example, one south-India-based mission agency with nearly 2000 workers has an annual budget of almost nine million U.S. dollars, and all its money is raised from Indians, both living in India and abroad.

Despite India's contribution to global missions and the rise of Global South Christianity, global missions continues under the grip of Western influence. How do we help, by God's grace, to rectify this? How do Americans begin to better regard our worldwide brothers and sisters as friends and equals in God's kingdom work? Here, we talk with Dr. Prabhu Singh about how the Indian and American churches can better share in partnership and friendship.

# Forming partnerships through short-term missions

Books like *Effective Engagement in Short-term Missions: Doing it right!*, by Robert Priest, can be invaluable in preparing your team to engage respectfully with other cultures. Also, seek out training.

**The Mission Society offers instruction for short-term mission team leaders.**

For more information, call: 1.800.478.8963 ext. 9048 or email [doug@themissionsociety.org](mailto:doug@themissionsociety.org).



## How does the Church in India view connection with the Western Church?

In my Ph.D. research, I asked this question to many Indian Christian leaders (particularly with regard to persecution): do Western connections help or hinder? I received a wide range of answers. Many viewed partnership with the West as positive, if it is managed well. But some were apprehensive and said that relationship with the West may perpetuate the stereotyping of Christianity as a foreign religion, funded by outsiders. Also, relationship with the West may lead to dependency and cultural domination.

For me, personally, I think partnership with the West is legitimate, although with some caution, for three important reasons.

First is a theological reason. I believe that, since the Church is the body of Christ, the local and the global dimensions of the Church are interlinked.

Hence, we cannot cut ourselves off from the other parts of the body. We are intricately and inextricably interwoven with each other. Most of those I interviewed cited this as their primary reason to have a positive relationship with Christians in the West.

The second reason I think we must have relationship with the West is anthropological. From an anthropological perspective, we often think and talk about insider (emic) and outsider (etic) perspective. If you are an insider, you know more about your culture. But sometimes you need fresh eyes to look at your own culture to see the blind spots. There is a famous Chinese proverb that says, "If you want to know about the water, don't ask the fish." It's kind of counterintuitive, but a fish is so immersed in water it can develop blind spots about it. So, for example, in mission history, while many American missionaries who have come to India have spoken vehemently against the Indian caste system, few would challenge racism in their own land. It is easy to have blind spots about our own culture. So we need each other for our mutual edification and growth.

Third is a pragmatic reason. The world we live in is in-

creasingly becoming global. We can't cut each other off, even if we wanted to. That's the reality we live in.

## What is the appropriate role of American Christians and churches in participating and partnering with Indian Christians and mission agencies?

In my opinion, the role of the American Church should be a complimentary one, rather than a frontline one. There are many different avenues: to work with the poor in India, serve through business endeavors, facilitate training in some needy areas, etc. Financial assistance is also good, as long as it is done in a way that does not lead to dependency and control. Above all, I think the best role would be prayer. That's a major role for both sides. We need to be praying for one another.

Due to the rise of persecution in India and a lot of hate rhetoric against Christianity, and particularly conversion, Western Christians need to be sensitive to on the ground realities. Otherwise, they may jeopardize God's work and endanger local Christians and their ministry.

For instance, consider the short-term mission scenario. Short-term visits by Western Christians can reduce the local Christians to long-term victims if they are not done properly. Because globalization has made travel more easy, short-term missions is growing exponentially. In fact, the number of American short-term "missionaries" grew from 120,000 in 1989 to 2,200,000 in 2006. Americans spent a staggering \$1,600,000,000 on short-term missions in 2006 alone.

Short-term missions is positive in many ways. It can facilitate closer and deeper relationships and help build intercultural partnerships. But there are negatives as well. Often I see short-termers coming in for two weeks with an attitude, "I am in India for two weeks and I want to change it." These short-termers could seriously jeopardize the ongoing work of the Christians in that area.

I would want to remind short-termers that God has been active in India throughout its long history. The gospel has been here for 2000 years. It is always good to work with and

Americans spent a staggering \$1,600,000,000 on short-term missions in 2006 alone.

under the local Christian leadership.

In forming partnerships, there is also this vital issue of equality. In the body of Christ, we all are equal members with only one head, which is our Lord Jesus Christ. When we speak of *partnership*, many non-Westerners may think that this is just another way for the white people to be in control of missions. And it is true that purse strings can become puppet strings, thereby reducing partners to puppets.

The real mark of equality is, in my opinion, reciprocity. Americans—even very young people—come and minister in my country and speak in our churches, and yet it is usually difficult for a non-American or an Indian to speak in an American church. Sometimes, I wonder if social Darwinism [belief that America/Americans is the apex of the cultural evolutionary chain] continues to exist in the churches. Christian missions is not mono-directional, which was the dominant paradigm of the Colonial era. It's multi-directional, “from everywhere to everywhere.”

I think true reciprocity and collegiality will be evidenced when we ask our fellow Christians from other parts of the world: “Is there a word from the Lord?” Not so much: “Tell us your story?” I find that sometimes when I am asked to share my story (my testimony and ministry), I feel I am being subjected to the “trophy syndrome” of the American Church, which is an indirect way of applauding oneself, “See what we have produced.” But when we listen to the other share a word from the Lord, it takes humility and a learning attitude.

Also, in forming partnerships, we need to be aware of the issues of integrity and accountability. One of my friends in Kentucky says that if we were to put together all the reports that come out of India, probably India would have been saved multiple times. Unfortunately, it is true. However, American churches need to examine their obsession with bigness and desire for results-oriented, number-conscious ministry. Many in the non-Western world often hype the numbers in

order to please their Western donors.

The good news is that we are growing in cultural sensitivity, but I keep telling both sides (Indian and American) that we have to create an environment of trust, transparency, and truthfulness. If we are the body of Christ, there should be equality; there should be integrity; there should be interdependence. And a lot of progress is being made, but we need to be constantly moving towards that goal.

### **If you had just one thing that you could say to the Western Church, what would it be?**

We have already talked about much of it. India is complex and diverse. There is a huge need to understand the nation, to work in a way that is culturally sensitive, and to be partners in ways that truly reflect the biblical ideal of partnership, where Jesus is the head. As my good friend and Native Indian scholar Randy Woodley writes, “God’s new song cannot be sung solo. We must all sing it together, embracing—and not restricting—our diversity.” †



**Prabhu Singh Vedhamanickam, Ph.D.,** is a renowned evangelist and trained missiological anthropologist, with a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Intercultural Studies from Asbury Theological Seminary, Kentucky. At present, he is the professor for Anthropology and Missions at South Asia Institute for Advanced Christian Studies (SAIACS), Bangalore, India. He is a consultant and trainer for many Indian mission agencies and also speaks in various revival meetings, seminars, and mission conferences in India and around the world. Dr. Singh lives in India, with his wife, Sheeba, and daughter Prarthna. His wife is the founder of Jeevan Foundation that serves among the poor and marginalized children and women in India, including HIV families and children of sex workers.



## How to pray:

Thank God for making Himself known in India throughout history. Pray for cross-cultural workers in India—both foreign and Indian—to be self-aware, humble learners, true friends, and living witnesses of the character and ways of Jesus. Ask God to open doors to relationships and blessing through godly, profitable business. Listen to the Lord. Is there a word for you and your church through our brother Prabhu Singh?

# India's wounded healers

Local ministers carry the weight of a nation on their shoulders. Member-care specialist, Ravi David, Ph.D. describes the plight of India's Christian workers.

At a seminar for Indian Christian Mission Leaders which I was co-leading along with another mission leader, the general attitude towards “self-care” became evident at the very beginning of the seminar. My colleague had just introduced the subject of self-care and was about to begin her presentation when a senior mission leader interrupted and very forcefully expressed his views that in missionary work, the issue of self-care should not be spoken about as it basically amounts to “selfishness.” Many in the group seemed to agree with him, so we then had to change the seminar focus from the “how” of self-care to the “why” of self-care.

Among Indian workers, self-care is often considered to be selfish, inward looking, and preoccupied with self. For Indian Christian mission leaders, the theology of self-denial and of the putting to death of “self” is much more strongly held than a practice and theology of self-care.

This elevated view of suffering (and an inverse low view of self-care) is just one of the challenges which India's carriers of the gospel face every day.

## Current inquiries

One stressor for Christian mission leaders is the variety and constancy of questions that are posed by contemporary India's changing context. Here are some examples.

**Theological dogma.** In the past, doctrinal modes of understanding the Christian faith were firmly established. But now, as the contemporary context interacts with the Christian dogma, there is tension. Are Indian mission leaders equipped to cope with the ambiguities and paradoxes that the present-day context throws at them?

**Theological worldview.** What theological framework and worldview have undergirded Indian missions? Should those be re-examined? What kinds of leadership styles are required?

**Social concerns.** Is Christian mission only about personal salvation or does it address wider issues faced by communities, such as gender, poverty, etc. How should those issues be addressed? Also, in a multi-faith society, how do India's mission leaders live among and relate to people of other faiths respectfully, while maintaining the integrity of the gospel message?

**Identity concerns.** There are major issues among Indian communities that relate to national, ethnic, regional, linguistic, and religious identity. How are mission leaders equipped to provide leadership in such a context?

## Critical issues

In addition to theological complexities, India's Christian mission leaders also face multi-layered ministry burdens. Here are a few.

**The unfulfilled task.** India is reported to have the largest concentration of unreached people in the world, which weighs heavily on her Christian ministers. In fact, a recent report indicates that of the 86 surveyed retired Indian missionaries (within India), the number-one stressor was the unfulfilled task.<sup>1</sup>

**Overwhelming responsibility.** The objectives of Indian mission agencies include church-planting, pioneer evangelism, literature distribution, training, medical ministry, children and youth ministry, orphanage ministry, educational institutions, and rehabilitation centres. Overseeing and providing leadership for such a wide variety of ministries places significant pressure on the leader, who often functions as administrator, manager, pastor, fund-raiser, and networker.

**Difficult travel.** The geographic spread of the ministry in India is vast, and mission leaders must regularly travel extensively to visit and oversee projects and institutions located in different parts of the country. Often travel is challenging,





Lonely workers: India's Christian mission leaders often operate without a caring community (trusted friends and mentors) with whom they can openly share. Ask God to surround His servants with faithful co-journeymen.

especially travel to the interior and rural parts of the nation.

**Potential danger.** In many areas, there is increased opposition to Christian ministry and risk of persecution for Jesus-followers. Providing leadership in such contexts can result in leaders becoming discouraged.

**Potential resistance.** Contemporary India's changing environment often requires the mission leader to alter ways ministry is carried out. But people tend to respond very slowly to needed changes and, at times, openly resist change. Sometimes the organizational structures and policies make it difficult for the leader to experiment with new ideas. Providing leadership under such circumstances can be frustrating.

**Non-existent community.** Christian mission leaders often operate without a caring community (trusted friends and mentors) with whom they can openly share. Leaders are generally revered and thought to have no personal problems or needs.

**Forbidden self-care.** A sense of guilt is often attached to any self-care practices. The often-understood task of Indian Christian mission leader is to care for the well-being of others and not for one's self. This is believed to be supported by

scripture's call to serve others, to deny oneself, to consider the welfare of others before one's own. The heroic call to India's Christian mission leader is to persevere despite challenges. Great pride is taken in "burning out for God."

### Consequences identified

The effects of the theological and ministry challenges on Indian mission leaders becomes all-too evident. The following are some ways in which these stressors manifest themselves.

**Physical exhaustion.** With so much to do and with inadequate periods of rest and relaxation, the Indian mission leader is often depleted of energy. Serious health problems also result from working under intense stress over long periods of time.

**Depression and spiritual dryness.** The leader must continue to provide leadership and motivation to an entire organization despite the negative impact and frustrations that affect him or her personally. This takes its toll. In fact, the two major pain points identified by Indian missionaries in the personal and emotional context were (1) depression and (2) maintaining spiritual discipline.<sup>2</sup>

**Anxiety and worry.** The Indian mission leader often operates with insufficient support systems. He or she is expected to expand tasks with inadequate training, and do much more, faster, and better—in other words, to fulfill unrealistic expectations in unrealistic time frames. Anxiety/worry is the third major pain point identified by Indian missionaries.

**Family stress.** With inadequate time for rest, vacation, and spiritual retreats, stress affects not just mission leaders, but also their families.

### Care Initiatives

Appropriate member/pastoral care measures to address these issues could include: partnerships, leadership development, a change in mission methods, teamwork, spiritual retreats, frank and fair evaluations, change management, support during periods of change, ongoing personal development, physical rest, mentoring, family time, prayer support, a caring community, encouragement, appreciation, and time for research.

Member care for Christian ministries is relatively new in India. In that sense, mission boards are having to play catch up. Even so, even given all the member-care needs in India, I have been personally challenged by the simple and sacrificial living of many Indian Christians, missionaries, and mission leaders, which has resulted in effective and fruitful ministries in various parts of the country. Most of the stories of these unsung heroes and heroines of faith will probably never be told. †

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Manoharan, Ninan, Ratnukumar, and Raja (editors), *Member Care in India: Ministry Call to Home Call* (Vellore Tamil Nadu, India, Missionary Upholders Trust, 2012) 65.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 61



**Ravi David** currently serves as adjunct professor at SAIACS, in Bangalore, India, and in seminaries in Indonesia. He teaches pastoral theology and counseling, spiritual formation, management, and leadership. He holds a Ph.D.

in practical theology from the University of Auckland, New Zealand. After living for nine years in New Zealand, his family recently relocated to Lawrenceville, Georgia early this year.

Ravi and his wife Mercy are originally from Bangalore, India, and have been married for 30 years. They have four children and one granddaughter. As you pray for India's Christian leaders, please also pray for wisdom and discernment for member-care professionals, like Dr. Ravi David.

"I am leaving these meeting with hope for India's church," said one Indian pastor who attended The Mission Society's annual H.T. and Alice Maclin Mission Training Institute. Held this year in Bangalore, India, the Institute was attended by 25 Indian Christian leaders, in addition to The Mission Society's newest missionaries. A foot-washing ceremony concluded the 15 days of training.

# Strengthening the weary

## How The Mission Society is "coming alongside" India's pastors

The Mission Society understands that it will be Christians in Majority World nations, like India, who will likely be the ones to finish the task of announcing Christ to the world. Our part, as Westerners, is to come alongside our Christian brothers and sisters in other nations. About 10 years ago, The Mission Society began International Mobilization Conferences (IMCs) to do just that. Throughout these four-day events, presenters provide indigenous pastors and church leaders tools for discipleship and for mobilizing their congregations for local, regional, and international missions. These events also help ministers cross cultural boundaries with the gospel. Already, IMCs have been held in 11 countries, including India. In some areas, materials used at IMCs are being used by national mission movements.

Among the conference participants in India this year was a husband-and-wife team who head a 10-year-old ministry that has planted 42 churches in two of India's states and has reached into 15 people groups. Here is an excerpt from a letter from the wife about the IMC training she received:



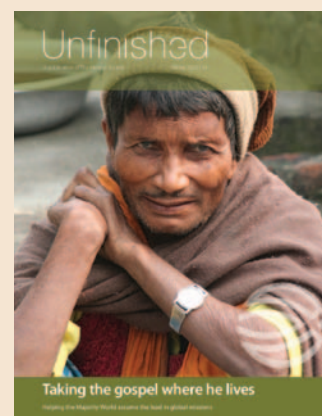
“I believe that this seminar has expanded the horizons of our life and ministry, sharpened the way we think and do missions and focus on the strategic multiplication of churches through ‘intentional disciple-making.’ Thank you for helping us to understand ... the most important lesson of the need of pouring in the pure water of the Word of God and allowing the Holy Spirit to bring the transformation needed in the individual and in a given culture. ...The sessions have indeed stretched our boundaries, crucified our ego-centricism as well as ethno-centricism ...and have also maximized our potential to bless and impact the generations to come.”

In addition to providing IMC training, The Mission Society routinely invites national Christian leaders to its annual, three-week missionary training, held in different parts of the world. This year, the training was held in Bangalore, India, and 25 Indian ministers attended. One minister, who pastors in Dehli, identified his three major takeaways as: inductive Bible study, the importance of ministering incarnationally, and the importance of discipling his leadership team members. “It’s really a blessing to be here,” he said, “In my 15 years, this is the first time I have had 15 days of training. ...

I have never been mentored by anyone. Most of the meetings I go to, I go as a pastor—to do the teaching, not the learning. But this time I came to learn, and I so thoroughly enjoyed being myself, and so I had kind of a breakthrough in my personal life as well.

“It is a blessing to me to get to know all these [Indian] brothers working for different organizations. We feel connected and have already decided that we are going to meet together. I think it will help us in the future to build our ministries together, partnering together. ... I am leaving these meetings with hope for India’s Church.” †

*For more information about The Mission Society’s outreach through International Mobilization Conferences, check out Unfinished, issue #54, available online at <http://tinyurl.com/TMS-UF54>.*





# 20 things that might surprise you about India

We recently asked our cross-cultural workers in India to list a few things they wished people knew about India, or things that might be surprising about India. Here's what a few of them told us.

*"India is a total sensory experience, filled with colors, smells, sounds, tastes, and pressing crowds of people. There's a depth of beauty in the people and the culture(s) that can't be found anywhere else I've ever been. It's seen in the textiles, the art forms, the music, the faces of the people." Becky Stephen, The Mission Society's director of field ministry, is a former missionary to India and the author of India - Culture Smart!: The Essential Guide to Customs & Culture.*

1. India is home to 42% of the world's poor.
2. Although India is a predominantly Hindu nation, an estimated 170 million Muslims live here. That is more than half of the number of Muslims living in the Middle East and North Africa combined. This makes India the second largest Muslim nation in the world after Indonesia!
3. India is home to Nalanda University, which is quite possibly the oldest university in the world.
4. India grows 12 million tons of mangos in a year, which is the weight equivalent to 80,000 blue whales.
5. It is considered a blessing to wash your guests' hands after a meal.
6. In south India, breakfast, lunch, and dinner are spicy rice dishes. Our local greeting is translated as, "Have you had your rice today?"
7. Although many people think of the Hindi language when they imagine India, it currently has 22 official regional languages. However, the Summer Institute of Linguistics Ethnologue recognizes at least 447 distinct living languages in India, and there are thousands of dialects within these!
8. The Indian state of Andhra Pradesh has split into two. (Now 10 of Andhra Pradesh's 23 districts have been detached from the rest and will be formed into the state of Telangana, with a population of 40 million. Taken from *Time*, online, August 5, 2013)
9. India is so wonderfully diverse that Indians traveling in their own country will often experience culture shock with language, dress, food, and religion.
10. Auto rickshaws (three-wheel motorized taxis) have different looks, depending on the city you are in.





11. The movie “Slumdog Millionaire” is not a misrepresentation of India. It is actually very close to reality.
12. India has the world’s most unreached people groups; however, Coca-Cola has reached everyone.
13. India is a land of total diversity. It has mountains, beaches, deserts, and jungles. It has incredible wealth and overwhelming poverty. I’ve heard it said, “The only singular thing about India is that it can only be spoken of in the plural.”
14. George Orwell was born in Bihar (a state in northern India).
15. Everybody asks for directions in India.
16. Many Indian Christians believe that snakes are inherently evil.
17. India is a shame-based culture. This means that if you are an older person or a visitor, it is highly unlikely that anyone will tell you anything they think you don't want to hear. You will hear it a week later from someone else!
18. In India, the concept of personal space includes only that area one occupies inside one’s clothes.
19. Outside of my room, I have found it virtually impossible to be alone. I am within view of a dozen others at all times.
20. Coming to India?  
*Please do not:* wear shorts or tank tops, flush your toilet paper, run into a cow, lose your passport, give money to child beggars, or touch people with your left hand.  
  
*Please do:* try eating with your hand (the right one), travel, ride in a rickshaw, acknowledge beggars, try wearing Indian clothes, carry your own toilet paper, see a cricket match, and eat local food. †

# Meet our team

The Mission Society's team in India has become our largest. In addition to those currently serving (see below), six cross-cultural workers are on their way to India. If you sense the Lord may be calling you—or someone you know—see the adjacent page.

## **Business:**

One couple lives in the most impoverished state in India in an area that is predominantly Hindu and Muslim. Their heart is to use business as a means of incarnational, holistic ministry among the poor. They are currently in the process of launching a textile production company, which will provide for workers—among other things—good-paying jobs, a safe work environment, a meal each day, and the opportunity to be hear the gospel. For more information about this couple's ministry, see pages 24-25.

Another couple has spent the last two years on staff at a children's home, helping to care for, teach, and "parent" 46 kids. This couple is currently transitioning to northern India, where they will learn the language, build relationships, and begin the process of starting a business. Their vision is to "live incarnationally in an unreached area, discipling, and doing life with those around us."

## **Healthcare and counseling:**

In a region in northern India known to be the most difficult for Christian missions, a nurse serves in a hospital that provides medical care for 11 million people. She works among the hospital staff to offer help with case loads and to provide prayer support, spiritual encouragement, and discipleship for staff and patients. See pages 32-33 to learn more about her ministry.

One worker (a licensed counselor), who has just arrived in India, is responding to the need for training in pastoral care and counseling. He works with an Indian-led counseling ministry in Hyderabad, training pastors and counselors so they can better care for their people.

## **Discipleship/spiritual development:**

The heart of the ministry of one couple is discipleship among pastors and women who serve in the tea garden villages of North Bengal among least-reached peoples (who have no written language and not even oral scriptures). This couple also provides pastoral support to two Indian pastors and

their ministries in Andhra Pradesh who are involved in evangelism, church planting, feeding programs, and orphan/widow support. In addition, this couple serves with cross-cultural workers (those preparing to serve and those already serving in India) to encourage and help in whatever way, so that they might thrive and serve healthily and joyfully among India's people.

Another couple and their three children serve in the area of spiritual development. They began their ministry in India in March 2012. Partnering with an Indian organization, they "got their feet wet" by working with children, ministering to the organization's workers, and helping to start a hospital. Currently, they sense God's directing them to a new place in India and are in the process of transitioning to a new area and ministry to serve incarnationally among a Hindu population.

## **Leadership development/compassion ministries:**

Peter and Esther Pereira (for whom India is home) head Hope for Today ministries in Hyderabad, India, through which they are involved in church-planting, leadership training, and compassion ministries. In addition, the Pereiras work with women and children through the Alpha Schools and Homes (orphanages), a vocational training center, medical camps, and a nutritional feeding program. They serve jointly with The Mission Society and the International Leadership Institute (ILI). †

## How to pray:

A reported 97 percent of all Hindus live in India, Nepal, and Mauritius. Eleven percent of all Muslims live in India, the second largest Muslim population. Ask the Lord of the Harvest to send workers who are equipped to speak the words of Jesus and do the works of Jesus to live among them.





## Opening yourself to God's call?

Consider your unique role on a growing team in India

The Mission Society team in India is re-imagining what "team" can look like in their context. Loosely connected and working in various roles across many miles, they are intentionally becoming more cohesive. Despite geography, they are regularly "getting together" over technology or in person to pray, form community, and think strategically about the exciting possibilities for India.

"I'm thinking of that Kenyan proverb, 'If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together,'" one worker in India said, dreaming of what could be. "We are here for the long haul, and we want people to journey with us! We want to have people around who are mutually encouraging. We want to go far—together."

This group is hoping for more to join them in the near future to form localized teams, while still having varied roles in the community. One stated the importance of "those who are more interested in the

people than the ministry." Heart-posture is key for a future teammate—someone who "has a learner's heart, a self-starter attitude, a willingness to work together, encouraging, prayerful, a good sense of humor, and is spiritually and emotionally healthy."

In India, our team is currently reaching Hindus and Muslims through business, compassion ministries, and

by discipling medical professionals and encouraging Christian leaders. Join us in prayer for local (Indian) partners for this growing team, as well as cross-cultural workers who could mesh perfectly with a community like this! (We are always look-

ing for team members to serve in places around the world, as well as specifically in India.)

If you, or someone you know, are sensing God's call to missions, visit our website at [themissionsociety.org](http://themissionsociety.org), then "Go" and "Join a Team" and complete the interest form. For more information, write our team at [mobilization@themissionsociety.org](mailto:mobilization@themissionsociety.org). ☩

# Traveling towards transformation

In an impoverished community where children are often sold as domestic workers or into prostitution, this young missionary couple is planning a business to provide jobs, offer Christ, and uplift the entire neighborhood.

We\* live in a northern state with a population of about 100 million people. It happens to be the most impoverished state in India, with the lowest GDP of all of India's states. Because of poverty, people here are subject to mistreatment and oppression. Many are forced into bonded labor, and children are often sold as domestic workers or into prostitution. We experienced this firsthand when our 6-year-old next-door neighbor was sold, or when our friends have gotten trapped into bonded labor because of corrupt money lenders giving them loans with obscenely high interest rates that are impossible to repay. This great economic need, we believe, is connected to a spiritual reality.

Our area is predominantly Hindu and Muslim, with Christians making up only 0.1% percent of the population! Although the number of Christians is growing everyday by God's grace, in our city there are still no believers from Muslim backgrounds. There are also several large Muslim slums that are completely unreached and unengaged by the believing community in our city.

Our heart is to use business in one of these slums as a means of incarnational, holistic ministry among the poor. We are currently in the process of finding capital to fund the business and applying for all of the proper government licensing and registration. The legal side of things has proven to be a rather bureaucratic, difficult process. In spite of the roadblocks in our path, we are seeing how Jesus is at work

making a way for us! We hope to be up and running in early 2014.

In a nutshell, our dream is to have a textile production company where we produce throw pillows, curtains, tea towels, tablecloths, and other household items for export to the Western world. Having a business centered around production gives us a whole work day to really disciple our employees while we produce goods.

Each morning, we will have the chance to "story" the Bible [tell Bible stories] with our Muslim employees and to pray with them about what is going on in their lives. Also, our business will offer several benefits to our employees that will help to uplift the entire community. Not only will women and men in need have good-paying jobs in a safe work environment, but part of our plan is to provide the fees required for the education of our employees' children, access to medical care, a supportive community, and a healthy meal each

"Not only will women and men in need have good-paying jobs in a safe work environment, but part of our plan is to provide the fees required for the education of our employees' children, access to medical care, a supportive community, and a healthy meal each day."

day. The other fun thing about producing goods for export is that it keeps us connected with people in our home culture. We can produce goods that serve as an educational tool for people at home to learn about the dynamics of poverty and trafficking in the developing world, but also empower you to play a role in bringing freedom, life, and transformation to our community by buying our products and supporting our work!

Although there are many unknowns as we open our



“Through this process of starting our business, we have been caught off guard by how our Muslim friends and neighbors are excited that we will be opening a Jesus-centered business,” say this couple (shown here). “They seem even more on-board, because our business will have a spiritual foundation.”

business and this new adventure is a little scary at times, we feel so blessed to be allowed to serve Jesus in this way. We're excited to see what God does in our community as men and women are able to hear His truth from scripture for the first time, are freed from generational cycles of poverty, and are loved by us and other believers who are partnering with us in the work! So, pray along with us as we wait for Jesus to bring complete transformation in the hearts and lives of our friends here. †

*\*Names are withheld for security reasons.*

*The Mission Society is equipping more and more missionaries like these, who are launching businesses to help communities while announcing Christ. For more information, contact [dbrown@themissionsociety.org](mailto:dbrown@themissionsociety.org).*

## How to pray:

As you pray for this young couple and the community they will serve, consider using I Thessalonians 1:2-1 as a prayer guide:

- Pray for workers to be full of faith, hope, and love.
- Thank God for Hindus who have turned to God from idols.
- Pray that Jesus followers from Hindu and Muslim backgrounds will remain faithful worshippers of the true and living God in the midst of suffering, as they wait for Christ's return.
- Ask the Lord to reveal Himself to Muslims through God's people, God's word, and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

# Dreaming of Jesus

Mission Society laborers in India report of Muslim and Hindu hearts opening to Christ

## Sensing Jesus

Mission Society workers serving among a Muslim population in India tell: “When we were out of town, I got a phone call from a Muslim friend. She said, ‘You have to come home. I miss you guys.’ I said, ‘We miss you, too.’ She said, ‘No, no, no. You don’t understand. When I’m with you, I feel so much peace. And now that you’re not here, I don’t feel that peace any more.’ I said, ‘That peace isn’t really from us; it’s from Jesus. He really is our peace. She kept saying, Yes, yes. That’s why I want you to come back. I want to feel that again.’” †

## Jesus all around!

*One Mission Society laborer is a nurse who serves in a hospital in northern India, where the circumstances for mission work are extremely difficult.*

“Two months ago,” she writes, “a small group of volunteers from the hospital’s staff joined a couple of local mission workers to start a Sunday school in a predominantly Hindu area. The group was thrilled that 20 children attended.

Today the numbers have swollen to more than 100 kids! They have enlisted more volunteers and are rejoicing that the sound of children’s voices singing songs about Jesus can often be heard out in the surrounding communities throughout the week. †

## Blanketed by the love of Jesus

Mission Society missionaries Peter and Esther Pereira head “Hope for Today” (HFT) ministries in India. As part of their outreach, they distribute blankets during the Christmas season. (Temperatures drop below freezing in India during winter.) One pastor asked if the HFT staff could distribute blankets to Muslims also, and the staffers answered, “Of course! We want to show love to all of God’s children.” So the staff was invited to a community center attached to a mosque. The Muslim clergyman introduced them, explaining that the Christians were there to show the love of Isa (Jesus), whom the Qur’an teaches about. HFT staffers shared more about Isa as they distributed the blankets. The following day, there was a banner hanging from the mosque, saying, “Merry Christmas to our Christian neighbors.” †

## Recognizing Jesus

*The Mission Society’s President Dick McClain was ministering in India when he met a woman who shared her testimony with him.*

Avani\* had not heard of Jesus until she was 46 years old. One day she was sharing about some challenges she was experiencing, and happened to be talking to a Christian pastor. He introduced her to Jesus’ teachings, but she thought he was telling her about a foreign god.

Soon after, she met another Christian, an Indian pastor, who told her more about Jesus. She still thought Jesus was a foreign god and avoided the Indian pastor afterwards.

Several weeks later, at 1:00 in the morning, she heard a voice telling her to leave her idol worship. From that time onward, she no longer worshiped idols.

The next night at 10:00, she saw a man dressed in white robes, stained with blood. She recognized Him as Jesus. From that day onward she believed, “He is the one true God” and began to follow Him. †

*Since that time, Avani has seen miracles. Her husband accepted Christ as Lord and has been healed of alcoholism, and the lives of her daughter and grandson were both spared during her grandson’s birth.*

## Wanting Jesus

*One couple serves to encourage Indian pastors and their families. The couple tells about one pastor and wife who planted a church in a slum-colony housing project last year.*

“How did they start a church where there are no Christians? A friend gave them one of the apartments to use for a church. It is about 20 square feet with a small balcony and small toilet room. The pastor and his family just started going there every Sunday morning, and with the door open, they sang praise songs and prayed. Children came first to see what was happening. They started hearing Bible stories about Jesus and learning songs. Then moms came. Then a couple of fathers came. It is now a slowly growing church and very healthy. Last Christmas the church started an after-school feeding program, which currently serves about 50 children. Last Easter, there were about 45 people in church!” †



## Seeing Jesus

*During an exploratory trip to a largely unreached area of India, a Mission Society worker sent back this report of a young Muslim woman's vision of Jesus.*

I found myself overcome with sorrow at the poverty, ignorance, sickness, and injustice that sometimes surrounded me. Then, in the next moment, I would get a glimpse of God's love and mercy working through some of the most humble, dedicated Christ followers I've ever met. Excitement would well up inside me as I saw their passion and vision to introduce Jesus to people in the darkest, most dangerous places of their land. Over and over I heard believers saying, "This is our time. God is pouring out His Spirit over the darkness here." And they are obviously right!

One day we traveled into the city to a slum where 65,000 Muslims were living literally on top of one another in an area roughly one-half square mile. That is where we met Raj.\*

Raj welcomed us into his office located down a narrow alley that was split by an open sewer. The office was a small room (smaller than many bathrooms) containing a bookcase, a small desk with a laptop computer, a wooden platform for seating, and a small area to prepare tea. I can still see this young man standing in the middle of that humble room. He had a grin that was bigger than his face and a twinkle in his eye, evidence that the squalor surrounding him had not been able to touch his spirit. Here's a bit of his story:

Raj moved to this slum 10 years ago, believing that God had called him to minister in this place. He does not provide any official services. There is not much he can provide when, after 10 years, his work has grown to include six employees with a total budget of only \$13,000. Raj's team mainly functions as social workers, connecting people to government

organizations that already offer benefits no one bothers to tell them they are eligible for. His team members also work as advocates, convincing private hospitals to accept some patients for free, helping adults to obtain vocational training and jobs, and finding the means to help parents keep their children in school. The success of Raj's work is evident. For example, the percentage of children in this slum who are enrolled in school has risen from less than 10% 10 years ago to more than 80% today.

Raj, although openly Christian in this completely Muslim community, has won the love, trust, and respect of these people, so much so that he was allowed to take a wife from among them. This is a miracle in itself as a Muslim father allowing his daughter to marry a Christian is unheard of! He told me that he did not try to convert his young wife, but he prayed diligently for her.

He shared that one morning she was very troubled because a robed man came to her in her sleep, called her "daughter," and told her he wanted her to follow Him. Raj listened and prayed but gave no advice. His wife had the same dream a second and third time. He then took her to a Christian church, sat down with her in a pew, and pointed out a picture of Jesus on the wall. He pointed to the picture and said, "This is the man who has been calling you. Ask Him what He wants you to know." After long minutes of sitting with her head bowed and her eyes closed, she looked up at her husband. Raj asked what Jesus had told her, and she replied that He didn't tell her anything; He showed her. She then began to recount the entire gospel story from Jesus' birth to His death on the cross! There are now two Christians in that Muslim slum! †

*\*Pseudonyms are used for security reasons.*

## They are on their way!

### **Margaret Farnsworth** (May 6, 2013)

After serving in Central Asia for 14 years, Margaret relocated to Kenya. She works with World Gospel Mission as the field treasurer and also connects with Mission Society missionaries and ministry partners serving in Kenya. She participates in local Bible studies and Africa Gospel Church ministries.

### **Theresa Anderson** (May 21, 2013)

After serving as an intern with The Mission Society, Theresa returned to Huancayo, Peru as a career missionary. She ministers to women and children and plans to establish a home which will provide care for abandoned children and the elderly.

### **Johannes & Lena Ebner** (June 17, 2013)

Johannes and Lena Ebner are joining The Mission Society team in Namibia to work with Children of Zion Village (COZV). COZV is an orphanage in Katima Mulilo, Namibia. This is a home for nearly 60 children orphaned to AIDS.

### **Unnamed missionary** (June 19, 2013)

A missionary who cannot be named for security purposes departed for the Middle East.

### **Billy & Laurie Drum** (August 12, 2013)

Billy, Laurie, and Sarah Drum left to start a new field for The Mission Society in Spain. The Drums previously served in Peru for five years. They will be serving immigrant and refugee people groups from northern Africa. Laurie and Billy (both certified teachers, trainers, Christian life and leadership coaches, and Christian counselors) also serve their missionary colleagues in a member-care and leadership development capacity.

### **Unnamed missionary couple**

(October 7, 2013)

A missionary couple who cannot be named for security purposes departed for the Middle East.

## GreenLight Interns

### **Onnica Gildersleeve** – Kenya

(May – August 2013)

### **Mary Elizabeth Lowe** – Thailand

(August – December 2013)

### **Brian & Jess Monda** – Peru

(July 2013 – July 2014)

### **Grant Nichols** – Nicaragua

(August 2013 – February 2014)

### **Jordan Thompson** – Kenya

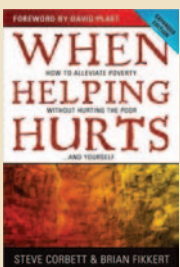
(May – August 2013)

### **Rebecca Westbrook** – Namibia

(June – December 2013)

*For more information about the GreenLight Internship program, see the inside back cover.*

## When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor... and Yourself



The authors of this book, armed with a wealth of firsthand experience, explain why the ways in which North American Christians attempt to alleviate poverty is usually more harmful than helpful. Through real-life case studies and research on the topic, Corbett and Fikkert offer methods for assisting others that can have a long-term impact to help people escape poverty.

This book can help equip your congregation and short-term mission teams to effectively and respectfully offer the gospel in a broken world.



It is never too early for children to fall in love with other people, places, and cultures of the world. This summer, a seven-year old “missionary kid” attended The Mission Society’s training in Bangalore, India. This is a drawing she created to describe her experience. In case you can’t read crayon-ese, here is what it says: “This summer I went to India. There were lots of people. There was black and brown and tan. It was awesome. There was dirt everywhere on the ground.”

## Get the inside scoop



In our monthly podcast, our missionaries describe their ministries, tell about the challenges of living cross-culturally, and the places they see God at work. Listen in at [themissionsociety.org/learn/multimedia/podcast](http://themissionsociety.org/learn/multimedia/podcast)

### Recent podcasts:

#### Episode 60: Miki Chastain – Estonia

Charlie and Miki Chastain reside in Estonia and are starting a prayer retreat center in Tallinn. Here, Miki talks with Mission Network News about her vision for the retreat center and how God led her family to this ministry.

#### Episode 61: Arthur Ivey – Peru

Arthur and Mary Alice Ivey have lived and served in Peru for more than 10 years. In this podcast, Arthur talks with Mission Network News about his family's ministry, which has discipled thousands of people in their Christian walk.

#### Episode 62: Louise Reimer – Peru

Louise Reimer ministers in Huancayo, Peru with The Mission Society team. Here, Louise shares with Mission Network News about the Bible study she co-leads in the local women’s prison.



## Thank you!

After the last issue of *Unfinished* (which was about missionary care) went out, some of you felt inspired to offer homes and time-shares as get-aways for missionaries. Others of you found other generous and creative ways

to care for missionaries. And recently, a hotel owner has been sending \$1.00 to The Mission Society for every room he rents per night. We just want to say thank you for your habits of demonstrating your love for Jesus.



## Our blog has moved!

The Mission Society’s blog, which features posts from staff and missionaries, has moved to a new location. You can subscribe to the blog and receive posts in your email inbox or Feedburner account. It’s a great way to stay current about what missionaries and staff are learning as we join Jesus in His mission: <http://blog.themissionsociety.org/>



## Becoming content

When it comes to personal resources, do you wonder: *how much is enough?* If so, this article is for you.

I've counseled with thousands of families about finances and estate plans, and every family has financial issues that are out of their control. I am able to assure them that they are rich with God's love in Jesus and that having the blessing of a personal walk with Him is worth so much more than financial wealth.

Yet one key question that keeps coming up in my discussions is: "How much is enough for me to live out my life?" I often get two answers: "There is never enough!" or "If I could just have a little bit more!"

When I hear this, I often refer to scripture. In Luke 12:13 – 21, for example, Jesus clarifies for us: "Your true life is not made up of the things you own, no matter how rich you may be." (GNT)

### Living in fear

Nevertheless, some people I've talked to live in fear of running out of money because they do not know how long they might remain alive. Their fear turns them into reluctant participants in life and in the lives of others, holding on to their treasure (money, assets, gifts, etc.) closer and closer to their chest, followed by withdrawing their talent and time.

I've talked to some who want to plan for all possible emergencies and "build bigger and bigger barns," believing that such accumulation will protect them. As you may know, there is not enough money or insurance on the face of the

planet to provide for every horrid contingency that might happen. Perhaps you've noticed like me that no one can buy good health or buy a lifetime of peaceful family relationships. You can't buy such guarantees.

### Living in faith

On the other hand, as believers, we can choose to live by faith and can rest in the promise of God in II Corinthians 9:8 (GNT): "And God is able to give you more than you need, so that you will always have all you need for yourselves and more than enough for every good cause."

"Some people I've talked to live in fear of running out of money, because they do not know how long they might remain alive. Their fear turns them into reluctant participants in life."

God also promises in Malachi 3:10 (GNT): "Bring the full amount of your tithes to the Temple, so that there will be plenty of food there. Put me to the test and you will see that I will open the windows of heaven and pour out on you in abundance all kinds of good things." "Good things" might include peace and harmony, good health, good plans and outcomes, protection from harm, growing investments, etc.

If one is not content with what God has already provided nor with the future promise of good things, adding

"a little bit more" will never be satisfying and never enough. Paul declared in Philippians 4:11-13 (GNT) "...for I have learned to be satisfied with what I have. I know what it is to be in need and what it is to have more than enough. I have learned this secret, so that anywhere, at any time, I am content, whether I am full or hungry, whether I have too much or too little. I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me."

So "how much is enough" for you? This month, review your assets and accounts, and assess how you might stop holding such things so close to your chest. Ask God for wisdom about investing in others so they too can come to know the Lord. If you have a fear of running out of resources, ask God to transform your mind so you can become a person of contentment. And if you are one who is content, consider training, teaching, and encouraging the people close to you so that they too might gain an understanding of why you are financially content.

*The Mission Society offers a free, confidential consultation to assist friends in answering the question of how much is enough. Call our advancement office at 800-478-8963 to request a private consultation about your financial or estate plans.. †*

**Lewis von Herrmann**, *The Mission Society's vice president for mission advancement, is a CFP® from Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc.*



# Do's and don'ts for writing to workers in high-risk areas

By Becky Stephen,  
director of field ministry

Communication is so important to those far from home. But for those living and ministering in countries where Christians face hardship just for being Christians, we need to take special care in communicating.

Transgressing safety guidelines may put at risk not only the worker we know and love, but may also inadvertently put at risk the ministries, families, wages, and even the lives of national believers and seekers. This is NOT an overstatement. So let us love one another in how we write to and about people working in restricted areas.

## For email

Think about email like a postcard: anyone can read it. Even though more than 31 billion emails are sent every day, chances are that every email we write is looked at by someone other than the intended recipient. You would think the sheer volume would be protection enough, but governments, marketers, and hackers are busy 24/7 finding ways to read over our shoulders.

Here are some guidelines to help you correspond when security is an issue.

### DO

- Ask your missionary what and how to write in ways that serve and protect them.
- Use https and/or vpn.
- Write freely about your personal life. Share how God is working in your daily relationships and activities. Ask about your friend's job, studies, living conditions, lifestyle, sightseeing, vacations, etc.
- Be positive and encouraging; respond to some items in your friend's emails or Facebook posts that show that you prayerfully read them.
- Pray for your friends as you write!



### DO NOT

- Forward your friend's email to others without permission. Even if it does not say "Do not forward or post," do not forward or post.
- Mention politics, specific political events, or make negative comments about the government, the culture, or the people.
- Use the full names of any other Christians in the area or otherwise identify them. Use initials or code names instead.
- In any way imply that the person is in this country as a missionary or "for the Lord" or is any way connected with any Christian organization. (See below for a list of words to avoid.)
- Ask about any type of witnessing, Bible distribution, teaching Christ in the classroom, or house-church meetings.
- Refer to "team," since this is a common reference to religious activities that authorities watch for.
- Be offended if you don't get an immediate reply. Internet or electricity may be off for long periods of time. Political or practical reasons may exist for not writing. Keep writing and praying, trusting that your communications are appreciated.

## For "snail mail"

### DO

- Write scripture passages that are meaningful to you or that you believe may encourage and strengthen your faraway friend.
- Send photos of special people, events and places. Birthdays, Easter, Valentine's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas are meaningful times to remember your loved one.

### DO NOT

- Think an envelope keeps it private. Snail mail is routinely read, in spite of official denials.
- Write on church or Christian agency letterhead.
- Forward prayer letters, mission or church magazines, or sermon CDs.



### Terms to avoid

- Evangelism, evangelizing, witnessing, outreach, converts
- Missions, ministry, missionary, foreign mission field, team
- References to financial support or gifts (apart from personal gifts), prayer letters
- Christian organization names

One more DON'T: Don't be anxious! Learning to adjust how we communicate can be stressful. But it's a normal part of the missionary experience! Be thoughtful and prayerful as you write. And trust that the Lord is looking out for His loved ones. ✝



## From graveyard to vineyard

In one of India's most difficult regions for ministry, a missionary continues on, despite great hardship. Why? Wait till you read her answer.



"...to the glory of His name, let me witness that in faraway lands, in loneliness (deepest sometimes when it seems least so), in times of downheartedness and tiredness and sadness, always, always He is near."  
 —Amy Carmichael (1867-1951) who served in India for 55 years

Last November I experienced India for the first time. I went to visit some of our workers there in several different locations across the country. Like most first-time visitors to India, I was struck by the amazing diversity of the country and the masses of people. It is quite the sensory overload. One can hardly speak of "India" as a whole, but must recognize that there are huge differences in culture, economy, and need from one region to another.

One of the most impressionable visits I had was to a hospital in another state where we have a missionary nurse serving. This state has been referred to as "the graveyard of missions" due to the difficult circumstances for mission work. The hospital stands as an island of hope in the midst of an incredibly challenging environment. Since much of

this issue of *Unfinished* gives a picture of the situation in India at large, I want to focus in on this particular place and this particular missionary.

### Heartbreak all around

We could fill the pages of this magazine with stories of heartbreak and hope in this one place. There is the incident of the little baby, discarded due to her gender, found in the grass by a hospital worker. The baby was brought in, nursed to health, and kept by the hospital staff. One of the nurses from southern India, who had reluctantly accepted the assignment to this hospital, ended up falling in love with "little Ruby." She and her husband recently adopted her. A life saved.

There is the preteen girl who was abused by 10 men but rescued by a

hospital employee. The young girl still cringes if any man appears, so the women on staff are treating her as she processes the awful memories. The staff is frequently confronted with the entrenched issues of domestic violence and trafficking.

In addition to the medical challenges, this place is hot. When I was there in November it was hot enough, but in the summer, it is crazy hot—100-120 degrees with high humidity. Our nurse talks about showering in her pajamas before going to bed to help stay cool.

So that leads me to the question I posed to her: "What is it that keeps you here in the midst of overwhelming needs and such challenging conditions?" I anticipated a couple sentences in response, but what I received from her needs to be repeated verbatim as told to

me. I hope it will bless you as it blessed me. Here's what she wrote.

### **Jesus everywhere**

"Hmmm... Why do I stay in this sweltering, filthy, difficult place? It's not as hard a question to answer as some might think. I stay because in the middle of this city, there is a hospital. And Jesus is here in this place. I see Him all around me.

"I see Him in the sparkling eyes of nursing students as they tell me how much better their 12-year-old, wild-eyed, half-starved patient is doing after they prayed for her, bathed her, fed her, and patiently combed the lice out of her matted hair. I see Him in the gentle touch of the nursery staff as they attempt to care for too-small, too-weak infants who are often lying three to a crib. I see Him in the sorrow on a father's face as he sits at the bedside of his child slowly squeezing an ambu bag because there are no more ventilators available.

"I hear Him in the excited voices of the outreach teams as they struggle to find the words in English to describe to me another miracle they witnessed in a village yesterday. I hear Him in the 200 voices wafting out from the chapel early on a weekday morning as they sing 'Tis

So Sweet to Trust in Jesus' and as the school children sing praise songs in both Hindi and English.

"I feel Him with every new experience, every new story, one more baby who won't die in a sack in a drainage ditch, one more woman who won't set herself on fire, one more daughter-in-law who won't be beaten to death, one

*"This is a place where doctors routinely gather together to pray for each other because they are regularly being required to do things they've never done before."*

more child who won't be sold into slavery, one more family laughing, dancing, and rejoicing in their new-found hope in a Savior called Jesus.

"This is a place where doctors routinely gather together to pray for each other because they are regularly being required to do things they've never done before and feel completely inadequate to do alone. But this is a place where they are never alone. A general surgeon (NOT a pediatric surgeon) can take a deep breath, wipe a tear from her eye, and walk into the OR to operate on a three-pound baby. Another can

prop his procedure manual up beside his scrub nurse so they can follow the instructions on how to do a needed surgery. Tutors from the School of Nursing can run into an out-of-control Labor and Delivery Department (where women are now two to a bed), yell out, 'Where do you want me?' and, getting no answer, figure it out for themselves! This is a place where, often, I can DO little, but I can always pray for those who can!

"This is a place surrounded by hardship, discouragement, struggle, and frustration. This is the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus is sweating great drops of blood here, and I want to be with Him."

### **God's people far and wide**

It has been encouraging to see how the Lord is calling His people from within India and from places far away to serve in Bihar. Recently when speaking about Bihar, an Indian professor declared during a chapel service that "The graveyard of missions is becoming the vineyard." Our prayers are to see the fruit of this as God's people respond to His call. †

*Jim Ramsay is The Mission Society's vice president for mission ministries.*



## A whole new world

How one local church began a transformation with just three little words



“A lot of our folks really don’t think internationally,” says the Rev. Carolyn Moore. But that all began to change last year. Today, people like 19-year-old Bryan are profoundly transformed—because the word global caught the imagination of Moore’s congregation.

The Mission Society’s church ministry group assists churches in discovering and advancing their unique missional calling, using a tool we call the GO Process for Local Churches. At an event earlier this year, the Rev. Carolyn Moore, pastor of Mosaic Church in Evans, Georgia, shared how the people of Mosaic moved into a whole new world of strategic, significant outreach by following the GO Process.

I was an associate pastor at Athens First United Methodist Church (Athens, Georgia) some 13 or 14 years ago when Mt. Bethel UMC (Marietta, Georgia) held its very first Global Outreach Weekend. I attended, and that’s when I first heard Dr. Al Vom Steeg (a former Mission Society president) speak. It was sort of like that experience in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, where you

go through the back of the wardrobe and find this whole other world. When Al Vom Steeg spoke about missions, I found this whole other world.

I had already been called to plant a church, but I really had no idea what that was going to look like. But somewhere in that weekend, I got a seed of understanding that local church ministry is not about checking off denominational benchmarks. It is about kingdom advancement.

Mosaic is a little church. We have about 200 people, and about 130 plus have been baptized at Mosaic. They’re folks with no experience of church or a bad experience of church. Many are felons or recovering addicts.

The people of Mosaic like to serve people, and I was encouraging them. So our members were doing a thousand different things, and our outreach was

a mile wide and an inch deep. About three years ago, we realized our problem was not that we didn’t do missions. Our problem was that we did too much of it, and we did it poorly.

### ‘Focus’

We knew we needed to focus, and that was the first word that The Mission Society taught us. They taught us how to focus. I’ll give you one example.

One of our ministries was the Maxwell House. It’s a low- and no-income apartment complex in downtown Augusta for adults with disabilities. There are about 216 apartment units in the fourth-poorest zip code area in Georgia.

We’ve been going down there for several years, but because we do everything a mile wide and an inch deep, we were just doing bingo parties and doing a whole lot of their social work. We were



Pastored by the Rev. Carolyn Moore (shown here), Mosaic United Methodist Church in Evans, Georgia, focuses on reaching people in the margins. In nine years of weekly worship, Mosaic has seen hundreds of professions of faith. A satellite ministry serves adults with disabilities in downtown Augusta.

connecting and being loving, but we really weren't taking seriously the call to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

After we had our Global Impact Celebration (GIC), we discovered that we needed to focus and make something of this. We realized if we could partner with Action Ministries, then Action Ministries could take on the social work side of things. That would leave us to be the spiritual encouragers for our new friends at Maxwell House.

We added Bible studies, and we added more worship, and we added more opportunities for our people to go and pray with people. Last Sunday night we had a wonderful worship service there, and we were remarking that we were beginning to see a change in the spiritual atmosphere at Maxwell House.

Mary, one of the residents, came to me at the end of the worship service and said, "I'm ready to be baptized."

That is what happens when you focus.

### 'Global'

The second word The Mission Society taught us was "global." A lot of our folks really don't think internationally. But we had some missionaries come speak and say, "We're regular people just like you, and in the middle of our lives God yanked us out from what we were doing and put us in the middle of something else."

That got people stirred, and last year we had two international mission trips. Four people went to Haiti, and three people went to India.

One of the people who decided to go to India was Bryan. Bryan is 19 years old. Two years ago he was a nonbeliever who had no real church experience.

Three days into the trip, I preached a message, and at the end I called people forward. People lined up at the altar, and everybody on the team had to pray with people. Bryan had never laid hands and prayed on anybody in his life. But he put oil on his hands, and he laid hands on people, and he started praying for things like healing.

One woman walked up, and he said, "All of a sudden I went blank. I didn't know what to pray for her. I just put my face towards heaven, and I asked God to tell me what to pray. I laid my hands on this woman, and all of a sudden I felt filled with the Holy Spirit, and a language came out of my mouth that was not my own language." He fell to the ground, and he was filled with the most inexpressible joy he has ever known.

This year at our Global Impact Celebration life commitment service, Bryan stepped forward and gave his life to full-time Christian service.

Last year we sent seven people on international mission trips. This year 30 people signed up to go on an international mission trip.

### 'Partnership'

Partnership is how impact happens.

Three years ago we gave \$5,000 or \$6,000 to mission causes. Two years ago we gave \$13,000 or so to mission causes. Last year we gave \$60,000 to mission causes.

I want to tell you about one of those partnerships. It's with SafeHouse Outreach in Atlanta. They serve the homeless in Atlanta, and they're one of the ministries with which we partner.

Joe and Judy McCutchen came from SafeHouse, and they brought their son,

Isaiah. They adopted Isaiah from Africa when they were in their 50s. Isaiah is about 10 years old now.

Isaiah began to soak in what was happening in our Global Impact Celebration. Joe told me that Isaiah has never once in his life expressed an interest in helping the homeless or in being part of SafeHouse. He'd never been with his dad to work.

At our GIC he began to see how important his dad's ministry is to our church. At some point Isaiah asked me if he could pray, and he prayed, "I want to be a better sidekick for my dad."

The day after they went home from our GIC, Isaiah went to SafeHouse and worked alongside his dad the whole day. The next week, Joe McCutchen came back to Mosaic because he just wanted to be in the place where his son got a call.

We're a little church. There are 350,000 churches. What difference does it make if Stan Self comes and teaches our little church how to do outreach? I can tell you that it made a difference in our "Jerusalem" (our local community) with Mary. It made a difference in our "Judea" (our region) with Isaiah. And Bryan is going to the ends of the earth.

*If you would like to check out how the GO Process could be used to make a difference in and through your church, contact the church ministry group by calling 678.542.9048 or by email at [cm.themissionsociety.org](mailto:cm.themissionsociety.org).* †

**Stan Self** is The Mission Society's senior director of church ministry.



## Beckoned to India

More Mission Society missionaries presently serve in India than on any other field, and more people are sensing God's call to serve there. Here are some usually untold stories of how that happens.



Few U.S. missionaries serve in the least-reached areas of India. Join us in prayer for local (Indian) partners as well as cross-cultural workers from the States who could join The Mission Society's growing team.

The Lord of the harvest is calling people...to India. But just how does He do it? How does He communicate in such a way that people know they're called to India, let alone to missions?

A few years ago, I wrote an article about several of the ways that God has called people to missions. Some hear an audible call; some simply reason that they have the gifts and graces to be a missionary, and some have an overwhelming desire to help rid the world of a particular injustice—just to give a few examples. In light of the focus of this *Unfinished* edition, I thought it would be interesting to tell a couple of stories about the way God has called some of our people to India. (Some details have been changed for security purposes.)

### Hearts to do business

Mauricio and Maria were entrepreneurs. They have always been driven people, excelling in school and opening a couple of businesses. Keeping up with their businesses required a lot of time and energy, but they managed to stay engaged in missions through prayer,

financial contributions, and short-term missions trips. It was as a result of these trips and through godly counsel that they both sensed that the Lord would have them sell their businesses and move overseas full-time.

I remember reading their applications and talking with them on the phone. "Richard, we are open regarding our place of service, but we don't want to go to India," they told me. Apparently, they had some negative experiences in the past. But as they moved through the candidacy process, as they began to learn about the strategic significance of working in India, and as they actually visited India, their hearts began to change. Now, they are in the final months of their preparation phase headed to—you guessed it—India.

### Hearts for the people

Unlike Mauricio and Maria, another couple was sure from the very start that India was the place they wanted to serve. Very few couples have prepared like this couple prepared. They took classes, read books, formed intentional relation-

ships with Indians, and joined advocacy groups. The depth of their love for India and its people continued to grow.

Fast forward a few years. While I was in India recently, I had a chance to visit this couple. Because they took their calling seriously, they were exceptionally well versed in the culture. Even their bargaining skills impressed me. What we can learn from this couple is that calling does not stand alone. It requires an obedient and faith-filled response.

### Hearts for justice

And so the calling continues. Just a few weeks ago, my co-worker Kate and I had lunch with a young family who wants to serve in India. Both the husband and wife have a heart for justice issues, particularly the injustices facing girls. Having experienced brokenness themselves, they believe God has given them a sensitivity to deal with such issues. India is the place where they believe their experience matches the need.

It never ceases to amaze me how Jesus—aware of the ripeness of the harvest—continues to call people to India. I invite you to join us in praying that the Lord will continue to call people—not just Westerners—to make Christ and His kingdom known in the world's second most populous nation. *For information about serving as a missionary in India, check out page 23.* †

**Richard Coleman** is The Mission Society's senior director of mobilization and candidacy.



# Go explore. >>>>>

Are you considering a life of cross-cultural ministry? Trying to piece together your education and experience with what God is already doing worldwide? Do you have a passion for people and cultures? But at the same time, are you maybe not so sure where to begin?

**A GreenLight Internship of 2-18 months gives you the go-ahead to explore.**

Explore what it looks like to live, work, and do ministry with people in another culture. Learn from missionaries with valuable experience and perspective. Make friends and engage in conversations that allow you a glimpse of the gospel through their eyes. Immerse yourself in the story that God is telling throughout the world—a story that is bigger than your own.

We are now accepting inquiries for the GreenLight Internship. If you're ready to explore, contact Kate Hilderbrandt at [greenlight@themissionsociety.org](mailto:greenlight@themissionsociety.org).

"I had no idea how much higher and different and better God's plans were for my life. He was working in a foreign place I knew nothing about. He invited me and continues to invite me to be a part of it."

*—Jennie Clements, Monterrey, Mexico*

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