

TAKING THE SAVING GOSPEL TO A LOST WORLD

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"...GO INTO ALL THE
WORLD AND PREACH THE
GOSPEL TO EVERY
CREATURE..."

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SOUTH INDIA

Our work in India continues to be very profitable and encouraging. As usual for our January trips my coworkers were **Bryant Perry**, a deacon in the Wylie, Texas congregation, and **Don Oelze** who preaches for the church in Anacortes, Washington. As a special blessing Bryant's family joined him this year. It was great to have with us his wife, **Sonya**, and their teenage children, **Bryanna** and **Dietrich**. Sonya taught numerous ladies' classes and Bryant's focus is always on teaching large numbers of kids in youth camps. The emphasis for Don and me is always training classes for Indian preachers. One week we had intensive studies for over 60 men in **Vijayawada**. This time Don taught the book of **Galatians**—full of important doctrinal matters these men need to thoroughly understand. I was assigned the book of **Acts**—full of important lessons about the church and the work of preachers. The following week we taught the same courses to about the same number of men in another large city, **Visakhapatnum**. We traveled to this city on the Bay of Bengal by road—a 190-mile journey in six hours. This is really good time for India. Most who go to India will testify that any trip by car, on the highway or in the city, is a scary one!

As usual, Bryant, Don and I had numerous preaching opportunities; on Sundays, of course, as well as some evening meetings through the week. **Raja Rao**, the preacher who helps organize our work there, reports that 67 baptisms resulted from these occasions and the classes Sonya taught.

PRAY FOR THE SAFETY OF INDIAN CHRISTIANS

According to a recent report, of the 257 countries in the world, India is the 17th most dangerous for Christians. The Prime Minister, **Narendra Modi** (elected in May of 2014) is a strong Hindu and a serious enemy of Christianity. There has been an increase of persecution, especially in the northern part of India. I have seen firsthand, even in south India where we work, some of the results of this persecution. A few states are now requiring Christians to register with the government. India is taking steps to stifle, and even criminalize, conversion to Christianity. Parliamentarians have announced plans to introduce a bill, ironically called “The Religious Freedom Bill.” It would “prohibit conversion from one religion to another by the use of force or allurement or by fraudulent means.” “Force” is defined as the threat of injury, “including threat of divine displeasure.” All this political mumbo jumbo boils down to this: you could not legally convert some Hindu to Christianity by telling him God would be displeased if he doesn’t change religions or that he will be lost outside of Christ. Let’s pray that this law does not become a reality!

Also, there is a growing threat of **Muslim terrorism** in the nation. On our last Sunday in the country, Don Oelze and I preached at congregations in **Hyderabad**. We arrived there on Saturday. The previous day the police had arrested in the city four terror suspects linked to **ISIS**. They were making bombs and, it is thought, planned their attack on Tuesday during Republic Day celebrations. On the day of their arrest police also arrested ten other ISIS suspects in three other cities. As a matter of interest, the fast-growing Muslim population is the largest minority group in India with 14.2% of the population.

Anyone who would like to help the cause of the Lord in India or help the poor and sick in that land, feel free to contact me for some good opportunities.

Rose and I plan to leave for **Ukraine** on March 4th. As always, we hope to take substantial benevolent help for the needy there. Most of the funds we take are used to make life better for sick, orphaned or abandoned children. You probably are familiar with all of this from past reports. If you wish to help with this good work the money needs to reach me by March 2nd.

Your coworker,

Ronald Coleman