

# INDEPENDENT CHURCH IN INDIA

*Our Mission is to Find the Lost  
Souls and Lead them to Jesus...*

www.indchurch.org

*"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).*

## NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2007 - VOLUME 31

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# FINDING LOST SOULS

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### Children's Notebook Outreach

The Lord is touching thousands of children's lives with his love. Independent Church in India's Gospel team goes every week proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and teaching the children in the remote villages the Word of God, Christian songs, and how to pray. An ICII supporter provided 10,000 notebooks and pencils for poor children in the remote villages. The ICII teams have been giving and will continue to give out notebooks and pencils in dozens of villages. The children are always very happy to receive them. The notebooks all have Bible verses on them. The children's parents are also touched because after the fees required for their children to go to school, many are too poor to even buy them cheap notebooks. By giving out even so small a gift as a notebook and pencil means so much to the poor people and best of all it proclaims that Jesus cares. In India, education is very important because only through proper learning can a child have any hope at all to rise above the severe poverty and hardships of normal village life.

Here are a few testimonies of what both kids and adults shared how they were touched by this act of love:

One child shared, "My father is always drinking alcohol and beats my mother. He won't give any money to us to buy the things we need in our home. When I go to school my teacher will beat me because I never have a notebook. Every time I pray to Jesus, I asked him for the notebook. Now He gave me a notebook. Thank you, Jesus!"

One village leader said, "I have never seen anybody offering this many note books for our village kids. Thank you for these notebooks. Thank you for teaching about Jesus and praying for our kids. I believe that Jesus will bless our kids to have good future lives".



*Joshua, one of ICII's native missionaries, teaching Christian songs to the children at a remote village.*

We give our deepest thanks to the ICII supporter that made this outreach to the kids possible. Please see the enclosed flyer to learn how you can get involved in our upcoming remote village Christmas gift outreaches for poor kids.



*These kids are very happy to receive a notebook for school.*

A few of the children's parents shared, "We were sad that we couldn't provide notebooks for our kids, since we must work each day just to eat. Thank you for your help with the notebooks".



*Receiving notebooks!*

**ICII's Native Missionaries are Impacting Lives!** - ICII is helping to support, either fully or partially, 17 full-time native missionaries and five part-time missionaries.

These missionaries go every day for long hours preaching the Gospel, holding Bible studies, praying for the sick, doing children ministry and outreaches every day of the week. There are approximately 150 adult and children's Bible studies going on per week. Each of these Bible studies may have anywhere from 15 to 80 people or more! Each week the word of God is reaching 1000's! What motivates ICII's native missionaries? It is the fact that they love Jesus with all of their hearts and they want to reach as many lost souls as they can because they don't want anyone to slip into eternity without hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They have a call of God upon their lives that burns deeper each day to reach the lost and dying. God is using each one of them, and every one of them has their own unique testimony in how they accepted Christ into their life and began to follow His plan. Read how the Lord raised up Pastor Samuel, one of ICII's native missionaries and branch pastors, as a mighty man of God to follow the true plan for his life.



*ICII's native missionary Priya, praying with the children at a remote village.*



*Pastor Samuel standing with his family.*

**Pastor Samuel's Testimony: From Hindu Priest to Mighty Man of God** - "I was born and brought up in a Hindu family and my father was very devoted in Hinduism. He trained me as a Hindu priest in the village. All the people in my village would come to me for healing and to solve all their problems. My job was to take care of the idol temples so the village people could come and worship the Hindu idols. Unfortunately, one day when I was walking on the road a stick got into my right eye. My eye began to swell up very big. They took me to the doctor, but all the doctors told me that even if we operate, you will be blind in your right eye. So the village people began to tell me that I had done something wrong against the Hindu gods, so the gods were punishing me. One day, I was so totally frustrated that I didn't want to live anymore. I planned to commit suicide by jumping off of the cliff near my village. The whole day I was trying to jump from the hill, but I felt something was stopping me from doing that, even though I wanted to die. I decided to approach all the Hindu gods and see if any god is real and if any would help me. So the whole day I began to call on the Hindu gods. I tried to

say the mantras and all the customary things to approach the Hindu gods, but I didn't get any answer from them. Finally, I decided to call on Jesus, the God whom the Christians are worshipping. I began to call on Jesus, crying, "If you are the true God you have to show yourself or I am going to commit suicide now". Suddenly, I saw a light in the sky, and my right eye began to see clearly. I heard a voice saying; "I am the way and the truth, and I died for your sins, and you have to believe in me. I have a plan for your life". Right after this, I could see again with my right eye. I was filled with joy! Immediately after this, I began to tell the people in my village that Jesus is the true God. A few days later, Pastor Britto and Pastor Richard and their team came to my village to preach the Gospel. When I met them, they taught me from the Word of God and preached the Gospel to me on how I have to be saved. They gave me a Bible to read. After this, I joined with them in the ministry and they trained me to reach many villages and I began to testify that Jesus is the true and living God. The whole Gospel team stayed in my home for the next few weeks and we started the church in my village. Soon after this, I went to Bible school and then I continued God's work in my village. God is using me now in many different villages".



*Pastor Samuel preaching!*

Pastor Samuel's new life is not an easy road. It has been filled with many trials and tribulations. One incident that happened during Pastor Samuel's village ministry was one day he went to a Hindu village and preached the Gospel. The Hindu leaders of that village beat up Pastor Samuel and another team member. Samuel was put in jail for five days after the Hindu leaders lied about why he had been at their village. The judge eventually came to see his church, and after this he dismissed the case because they found no fault in Pastor Samuel. God has a miraculous way of working all things out for good. Years later, forty people accepted the Lord through Pastor Samuel in the village that persecuted him, and they are going to church faithfully! As of now, Pastor Samuel only has one sponsor. He should have at least three or four more sponsors that would give \$30 per month. This would provide for his family and would buy important Gospel tools for his ministry. *You can get involved right now by sponsoring a native missionary that will boldly preach the Gospel every day and that will have an impact on thousands of lives.*



*The Smiths' with one of ICII's missionaries Pastor Isaac, with one of his children's groups.*

**ICII Rebuilds Huts Destroyed by Fire** - One night, around midnight, in a village called Muthanampatti near the city of Dindigul, three families were rudely awakened by fire. They quickly grabbed their sleepy small children and ran outside as fast as they could as their hut and everything they owned in this world was burned up. These families didn't have much, but what they did own was crucial to survival. All their clothing, cooking supplies, everything was destroyed by the fire. Now these three families who were called "dalits" or "untouchables" didn't have much hope about what would happen next. They would have to sleep on the streets and beg from their poor neighbors...

The next day, by divine appointment, ICII's Gospel team went to Muthanampatti to have their weekly Bible study. The families quickly informed the Gospel team what had happened to their homes. That day the Gospel team comforted the families and prayed for the Lord to provide all their needs. Through ICII's "Good Samaritan fund" and some missionaries who were staying nearby, the Lord has provided the needs to rebuild these three huts. After the huts were built, the families were sharing with great joy, *"We believe that Jesus is the loving God who cares for us. We didn't know what we were going to do because we had nothing. But now God has blessed us with the new huts. We give thanks to God who loves us. Also we give thanks to those who helped us"*. Want to help families like this in similar situations? One hundred percent of your gifts towards ICII's "Good Samaritan Fund" will help to provide for families and individuals who are in urgent and desperate need...



*Through ICII's Good Samaritan fund this family and two other families received a new hut.*



*Packing tomatoes to be given out to the poor and needy.*

**The Promised Land Brings Forth Firstfruits** - Even before He provided the land for the Home of Compassion leprosy community, the Lord gave ICII the vision to grow their own crops to provide much-needed food for both the resident Leprosy Friends and for needy and undernourished people in the villages. After ICII was enabled to purchase the beautiful eleven-acre parcel in January through the gifts of loving supporters, they began to act on that vision. With much work to be done and a desire to help poor area residents, they offered jobs to local villagers, who began plowing and preparing the land for planting, and the fields were sowed. Now, bountiful crops of tomatoes, brinjals (Indian eggplants), corn, coconuts, and mangos are ripening and being harvested. ICII teams have been distributing this food among the needy in the villages. At ICII's Home of Compassion Orphanage, the children are also partaking of the harvest. Most of all, thanks be to God that ICII's precious Leprosy Friends, once hungry, homeless, outcast,

even treated as slaves, are now enjoying nourishing meals with fresh fruits and vegetables from the fields of their own home. *"And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them"* Ezekiel 34:27.



*Francis, and ICII missionary is giving out bags of tomatoes to families at a remote village.*



*A man at a neglected leprosy colony. This man has to sleep on the floor on a mat in a very hot room filled with other lepers.*

**New Project - Reaching the Leprosy Colonies with the Gospel** - The Lord has provided another new vehicle through an ICII supporter for an upcoming and very important project. ICII is planning to reach leprosy colonies all over Tamil Nadu, India with the good news of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. This vehicle will take at least four native missionaries, a gift for each leprosy victim, medicines for neglected sores, and film equipment to show one of ICII's Gospel movies to the colonies. The goal is to preach the Gospel to those who are known as untouchables. They are the poorest of the poor, the most desperate, the most forsaken, the most hurting people - those with the most dreaded disease in India - leprosy. The last two months two of ICII's missionaries have been traveling and getting permission and information from leprosy colonies in Tamil Nadu to come to preach the Gospel and give a gift (a blanket), apply medicine to the neglected wounds, and pray and minister to these forgotten people with leprosy. Even though man may have forgotten them, God has not, and He wants them to hear his Gospel and give them the gift of salvation. ICII is praying that through this new project thousands of leprosy victims will receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and receive His precious gift of everlasting life.



*A man with leprosy at a colony in Barugur. This man has lost his fingers.*



*Pastor Britto and Kathy preaching the Gospel at a leprosy colony named Barugur.*

**How ICII Got Started** - We have had some requests from some of our supporters to occasionally share what is needed here in the US so the work in India can continue. We are overjoyed to see what the Lord has done in the work of Independent Church in India over the past five years. A ministry that has started very small with no support has grown over the past five years at a rapid pace. And as a family we give all of our praise and glory to the Lord, for without Him it would never have been possible. The Lord has done incredible things and has answered the many prayers we have prayed. We believe that the Lord is going to do even more incredible works in the upcoming years. Before we go on and share our needs here in the US, first we want to briefly share how our teamwork in India got started.

**The Smith's Testimony** - I, my wife Kathy, and our two young children have been missionaries to India for nearly five years. Before then, we were living comfortably near Lebanon, PA, and had no plans to go on the mission field. Then God supernaturally brought us into contact with Pastor Britto of Independent Church In India, and our lives and ministry were changed forever. Pastor Britto and his brother Pastor Richard were young native pastors living in a very poor and difficult situation in South India, but they were the most committed and self-sacrificing men we had ever known. They could barely afford to live, subsisting on rice, yet every day they were riding their bicycles or walking long distances to the remote villages, enduring the tropical heat to preach the Gospel to literally thousands of Hindu villagers. Even in the face of extreme hardship and persecution, they were grieved by the suffering and darkness in the land, and determined to reach them with the love of

Christ. In their past eight years of ministry, we learned that God had used them to reach tens of thousands with the Gospel and pioneer eight churches in their state of Tamilnadu. Yet they were both so humble and totally sold out to serve Jesus. Then God opened the door for us to visit their ministry for ten days in 2002, and our whole world changed. We were so amazed to see how God was using these men to reach souls, and how many were being saved. Yet no one was helping them or supporting them. We knew that God had a call on our lives to go to India and work with them in reaching the multitudes. We also knew that we had to help them get support for their work because God would very greatly increase the harvest if they had resources. We now spend half of each year in India preaching the Gospel and ministering along with Pastors Britto and Richard, and the other half in the States sharing in churches and with folks about the need in India and how God is greatly moving through Independent Church in India".



*Lowell serving the lepers food at the weekly medical and food outreach.*

**Your Help is Needed to Make a Difference!** - Since the Lord gave the Smiths the great privilege to share the vision with others, the funds have been provided each year and the ministry is growing. These past five years up until now, Kathy has been working full time doing administration work, newsletters, sponsorships, the website, the videos and much more, and Lowell has been keeping the computers and equipment running for the videos and website and helping with the administration, emails and other important paper work. On top of that, Lowell had been working any job he could get during the time the Smiths stay in the US so they could live. Each week they are traveling to churches or Bible studies groups to share about India. For the last five years the Smiths, and a few part-time volunteers have been doing all these things themselves so they can put all the gifts coming in towards India work because they know of the great need there. The ministry has grown so much now that the Smiths are now both working full time to keep the ministry running smoothly and to work towards enlarging the ministry. There are many lives that are depending on ICII, such as the orphans, leprosy friends, and native missionaries, and souls that need to find Jesus. ICII has a board consisting of eight members that help make decisions for the ministry. But more help is needed here in the US. We are praying that the Lord would raise up more people living right here in the States to have a burden to share in the churches and with others about the great need in India. If anyone reading this would like to get more involved, we could use your help. For example, when more people join together to share the needs, so much more can be done. If more of us work together more souls can be reached and more needs provided for the poor and needy people. There are many things we still cannot do that are so greatly needed, because of lack of funds. The Lord could use you in a mighty way. We ask anyone who is reading this to prayerfully consider doing a fundraiser for one of the areas listed on the enclosed sheet. You could have a bake sale, a car wash, a quilt auction, a spaghetti supper, or anything the Lord has gifted you with to provide any of the following needs. When you provide a need in India, remember this need would not have been met without you, and it will bless many desperate people and we know that you will be blessed greatly of the Lord. Also, if you know any church that might be interested in having Pastor Britto speak, you could be very useful in helping us get a speaking engagement which may lead even more people here in the US to get involved in the work. Whatever the Lord would lead you to do to help us here would make a big difference in the many desperate lives in the nation of India.

### **REMINDER!**

**You Are Invited to ICII's Third Annual Banquet on September 15th.**

**Bring along your family and friends for a night out, and help support the poorest of the poor in India. Please fill out the enclosed flyer and return it by September 10th. The buffet-style dinner will feature both Indian and American dishes.**