

Autumn 2011

BIBLE FAITH MISSION, INDIA

Bible Faith Mission's motto is to reach is to reach the unreached and to seek the lost. We emphasize this motto because of the commission of the Lord. The Dalits and the tribal people of India constitute more than one-third (almost 400 million) of the total population of India. These people are scattered everywhere in India. They are the most receptive people to the Gospel.

Unfortunately their socio-economic and educational condition are deplorable. The Hindu religion which sanctifies the caste system and untouchability greatly hinders the Dalits and tribes from developing in any way. Moreover, the government provides some protective benefits if they remain in the Hindu faith, making it a difficult choice for many Dalits to outwardly except Christ even if they love Him in their hearts.

Church Buildings

Kottukonam is 13 kilometres from the BFM headquarters. There are 35 families coming to worship the Lord. On June 20 we dedicated this church. The people were suffering a lot for not having a church of their own to worship the Lord. The church committee cooperated a lot to collect some local money to finish the work. On the day of the inauguration of the church the people celebrated it as a festival. In my speech I stressed the role of the church in two ways, the "church in the church" and the "church for the world." As a church in the church, we have duties such as Sunday school, youth ministry, women's ministry, and the administration of the church. The church to the world is a witnessing church, a caring and sharing church.



BFM church members take part in a family retreat

Palackal Church is located 25 kilometres northwest of the BFM campus. A few years ago when we started the work in this area, the people were living deplorable lives. They did not follow any of the values of a Christian life. Through the Sunday school, youth programs, and women's ministry we have seen a great change in the lives of the church members. We started to construct the building in June. The inauguration will be held as soon as the plastering and painting work is complete. At least 15 other fellowships are waiting for church buildings.

Guesthouse Renovation

We praise God for the resources for the renovation of the guesthouse. BFM is nearly 30 kilometres away from Trivandrum's city centre and airport. It is very hard for our visitors and guests to stay in the city and come to the office to visit. During the morning and evening when there is traffic it can take nearly three hours to make this round trip.

By the grace of God, your gifts helped provide small refrigerators, coffee makers, cupboards, air conditioners, and new mattresses to the rooms so that our guests will be comfortable.

Bibles

The BFM believers are marginalized and oppressed by the government and the upper caste people in society.

When they come to church, it is a great source of help and encouragement to provide them Christian literature and Bibles.

Whenever we receive some funds for Bibles, we are so happy to distribute them to needy people. Thank you for meeting this special need.



Bishop Swamidas (left) distributing Bibles

Ministry in North India

With a burden to reach the Dalits with the Gospel, BFM has been pursuing greater ministry in states beyond Tamil Nadu, Orissa, and Kerala. With this vision in our hearts, two years ago we began working in the border areas of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Rajasthan States. At present we have six workers conducting worship in six centres.

Valsingh Ninama is the leader of the ministry in these areas of North India. Last year he visited the BFM headquarters and we exchanged ideas and the strategies of reaching the North Indian people through the ministry of Bible Faith Mission. Valsingh has a wife and three children. He has a congregation of 30-35 people who come for worship in his church.

In addition to the Sunday regular worship they have Sunday school, a youth ministry, and women's ministry. The people in Valsingh's village are drunkards. After drinking they quarrel with each other. They worship the spirits of their forefathers and idols. Agriculture is their major occupation. They depend on the seasonal rain. When there is no proper rain the whole village suffers a lot. This is a very difficult area for ministry. Please pray for Valsingh and his team.

Children's Ministry

As the world continues to progress in terms of technology and education, if the already marginalized Dalit children are not given the opportunity for a quality education their future will be filled with darkness and hopelessness. The Dalit Christian students who are denied their rights to education, employment, and other benefits just because of their faith in Christ are provided an opportunity for quality education through our school. The BFM residential English medium school was started in 2003. Today, we are able to provide Central Board of Secondary Education level education to the Dalit children as well as high-caste children.

The school was pursuing three affiliations, one each for the primary school, secondary school, and senior secondary. By God's grace we have all three now. This year we were able to expand to the eleventh grade. By the grace of our Lord we are almost finished with all the necessary infrastructure facilities to run a senior secondary school. We have more than 700 students in our school.

Each student needs a good sum of money at the opening of school each year so that they can have the books, uniforms, and school supplies they need. Many parents struggle to provide such materials in addition to their monthly school fee and transportation charges. It has been a great source of help for those students who received school supplies because of your gifts. Thank you so much! We provided books, bags and other education materials like pens, pencils, and erasers.

The ChildAid program is another major ministry of BFM. It helps almost all the Sunday school children of our Mission in one way or another. Every school year we provide their education materials. We also take care of their health and provide a small amount of savings in their accounts. Children are also taught biblical stories, songs, and Christian ethics.



Women's Consultation and Training

In January 2011 we had a Community Health Education (CHE) consultation and training at the BFM campus. Fifty delegates participated, including 35 from BFM and 15 from the Indian Christian Research Organization. The main goal of the training was to train rural women leaders to impart the knowledge of the Gospel through health education. They learned very valuable health lessons that covered every stage of a woman's life. Through this course the women learned responsibility, prevention techniques, and the use of local resources. They also learned how to share the principles with others which will further multiply the impact of the training.

Thank you for your faithful support and prayers for the ministry of Bible Faith Mission. May the Lord richly bless you.

PLEASE PRAY:

- For the restoration of the constitutional rights of Dalit Christians.
- For God's provision for church building funds.
- Praise for the 700 children in our school. Pray they would grow in wisdom and love for the Lord.
- For God's blessing on the expansion of our ministry in North India.
- For the women who attended the CHE training to multiply what they learned to others.