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## **Report about Dan's India trip**

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Dear interested family,

I have been back home from India for just two weeks. There was no culture shock upon my return but I came back much richer for the experience. I do feel that I was able to walk in God's grace for those three weeks as if I were covered in His shadow.

Throughout this trip of 3 weeks, I know people were praying and I had the experience of walking in the answers to those prayers as God was hearing and responding! It's hard to explain but people at home, both in our church in Takilma and those of you who were aware of my trip through our newsletter were praying in generalities for the most part, yet God was answering in specifics. As you will read, the trip turned out far different than we had, or could have planned, and was based on flexibility. At each location there was an obvious directive from God, different than we expected and that required spontaneity and obedience on our part. We'd simply see the next direction from the Lord, pray, asking God for His grace then move on it. What a tremendous experience of walking in Prov. 16:9 and James 4:15.

So, a big "Thank You" is in order to the praying part of our team!

*For the sake of brevity many details will be skipped here but for those interested in a blow-by-blow journal, please send your request via e-mail to [dannlson@cavenet.com](mailto:dannlson@cavenet.com) or a request through our P.O. Box listed above but be warned, it is 30 pages long, single space. The report has 18 pages of ministry details and 12 pages of observations and experiences of the India culture.*

The first change of plans came when Terry Pruett, who I was to accompany and assist, had to cancel his whole trip and challenged me to continue on and take the teaching obligations. This came the day before he was to travel, and while I was in Europe, about to leave for India. Both Terry and Cynthia his wife got extremely sick; Cynthia was hospitalized. Terry has fully recovered but Cynthia is still struggling.

After counsel and intense prayer I felt it was God's will for me to go. I did take the challenge and continued on, though the initial subject of most of the scheduled teachings changed. I met our Indian contact, Siby in Delhi and we flew together to the first area in south India, to the state of Kerala. On the way Siby told me about some of the spiritual problems and condition in India and it soon became very obvious that he had not exaggerated. He told me that the needs we experienced were throughout much of India.

The people have Bibles, and if they don't, they are obtained fairly easily. But the problem has several dimensions to it. Foremost of these is that many pastors are very centered on two subjects, which they pound over and over again. The Prosperity Doctrine and seeking signs and wonders from God, primarily that of healing. According to these beliefs every Christian should expect to be healed from their physical infirmities. Prayer, like a demand for healing as part of our Christian rights, along with the request/demand

that God would cancel all debts makes up most of their Bible experience. These are not found in the Bible as such, so they don't work as a formula. Sadly, those pastors are getting their information from churches in the U.S., but it doesn't work here either. A relationship with God has been reduced to a formula that really excites our covetousness and lust of the flesh. The truth of the Bible has been exchanged for these lies and the result is extreme disappointment, if not total disillusionment with God. If you'd like more of my thoughts on this matter make the request and I'll send what I've written.

Thus, the Word of God is not being taught. I came to see that many of these pastors are untrained in Bible teaching and even Bible study. They are simply following the examples they see from the internet, or other forms of communication.

The next level of the problem is that the people are not reading their Bible and are not encouraged to do so. They really do not know how to learn truth from it. They are simply hearing a message from week to week and accepting it as true, yet feeling that they are somehow missing what it takes to realize those "promises from God."

Also, according to what I experienced as well as heard about, there are good pastors but others are not pastors at all, rather they do the same routine Sunday after Sunday, with a big emphasis on giving, then quickly leave after the service taking the offering with them. They do not care about the people! They do not spend time with the people. Truly, the people are like "...sheep without a shepherd."

I went to India knowing some of this ahead of time, with the thought of teaching young pastors about the purpose of a pastor, by spending time in the Pastoral epistles as well as teaching hermeneutics. My hermeneutics teaching has five basic guidelines for us to apply every time we open our Bible.

So, on the bright side, many of the people genuinely love God and know that they need to gather together as believers. God gives them the grace to put up with some of the men who have unfortunately been placed over them. That genuine love for God seemed to explode with delight as I taught some very basic things from God's word.

As I had the opportunity to teach on those subjects (and more) I watched the people come alive! It's like a light switched on! We had groups that included pastors, young and old that seemed to have never been taught Bible before. It was as if they had been starving, yet unaware of it, then sat down to a meal and ravenously consumed it!

At one YWAM school where I taught I had some students come and ask me to teach these things to the pastors in their area. I was teaching an overview of the Bible and Hermeneutics, very basic stuff. Another student in his mid 20's told me that his dad, a pastor and several other pastors in Kerala decided that they did not want the current things passed on to the next generation of pastors. They see the desperate need for change. They asked if I might come to disciple the young pastors in Bible study and Bible teaching. What a privilege. They have begun falling in love with God's Word, which will deepen their knowledge of God and produce a more pure worship. That is a direct answer to our prayer. Our God loves those people and is most interested in truth!

The other consistent message that I was able to preach was showing the difference between religion and having a relationship with God. It was understood and well received. May the Lord graciously displace the lies with truth. Amen!

By God's grace I was able to share with hundreds of people over the 3-week period on 17 different occasions, in 5 different locations. What a trip!

Pray that the spark ignites a wildfire of desire for truth in God's Word.