

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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INDIA

Bryant Perry and I have returned from the south Indian state of **Andhra Pradesh**. Bryant is a deacon in our congregation at **Wylie** and this is his 4th time to go to India with me. He has been on mission trips to Mexico and Belize and has worked with me in England and Fiji. He used vacation time for the trip and, regrettably, had to return home earlier than I did because of his job. He was sent by the Wylie church. Bryant is very popular with the Indian Christians. He had preaching opportunities too but the main focus of his work was, as usual, with young people. This year these daytime youth meetings were with the congregation at **Machilipatnam** on the **Bay of Bengal**, about an hour from **Vijayawada** where we stayed. Well over 100 young people participated. The number of **baptisms** where we taught was about 45 and I think 21 of those resulted from Bryant's work with the youth. I had preaching opportunities in the evenings but my chief work was teaching morning and afternoon classes for Indian preachers. These studies were in Vijayawada...Monday through Friday sessions for 30 preachers and then a repeat of the courses for 30 different preachers the next week. I taught **Ephesians** and **The Preacher and His Work**. As usual, our work in India was organized by **Raja Rao** who preaches in Vijayawada. The students came from their villages and towns to spend the week. The extreme poverty of these men makes it necessary that we pay for their transportation and food. Raja's wife, **Kumari**, and some of the local Christians prepare the meals, which seem to consist mostly of large quantities of rice. At night the men just sleep on the floor, the flat roof...wherever they can find an empty spot.

The hottest months in India are March, April and May. The monsoon winds from the Indian Ocean and the accompanying rains *ordinarily* cool things off in June and the following months. This year the monsoon was late, they were desperate for rain and it was still very hot! One day it was 44° Celsius (111° Fahrenheit) and I'm not sure that was our hottest day. It could have been worse. They told me that one day last year in

Vijayawada it reached 50° Celsius—that's 122° Fahrenheit! In my classes I had up to 40 students (more came than were invited) crammed into a non air-conditioned room with 3 fans for air circulation. When I wasn't working I could go back to an air-conditioned hotel room. They couldn't. Two students the second week suffered mild heat strokes. They were treated at the hospital and returned to their homes. We've been in June before but never had such temperatures. However, we had already decided last year that beginning in 2010 we would make our India trips in the month of January. This should keep us from extreme heat like this year and bad floods like last year.

A very generous couple in Wylie gave me \$1000 to use for benevolence. With Raja's help this money was well spent, helping about 20 desperately poor Christian families with urgent needs, including important medical matters. The needs in India are *unbelievable!* It's very distressing not to be able to do more.

My third Sunday I preached at two congregations in **Hyderabad** before flying out on Monday afternoon. To one of them I had brought 50 sets of a correspondence course they use to try to reach those who speak English. There is a great need among the Indian churches for communion sets. We would like to take as many as possible when we return in January. If you know of a congregation that might donate some they no longer use let me know. Also, if you know a congregation that would like to support an Indian preacher I can recommend someone.

On July 30 I will be leaving for **Zimbabwe**, part of a group of 11 workers. This will be an evangelistic campaign and also a medical relief effort. Two or three doctors will be in the team and we will take a large amount of medicine donated by American pharmaceutical companies. I recently saw a Forbes magazine report naming Somalia as the most dangerous country in the world. Zimbabwe was listed as the 10th worst. So please pray for the safety of our team and the success of our work.

Your coworker,

Ronald Coleman