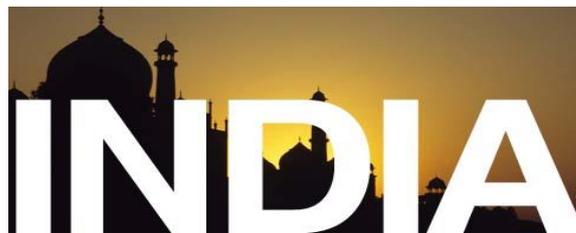


INDIA TRIP – JANUARY 2016

By David Ball with John Farren



India is mostly Hindu. Christians live as a minority - just 4% of the total population, which is now over one billion (one sixth of the world's population!). Distances are vast as India is over 12 times the size of the United Kingdom. So why did we go to India?

1. To provide in-depth training for pastors and church leaders
2. To encourage and support local Christians in a predominantly Hindu culture
3. To obey the commandment from Jesus in Matthew 28:19

This was an exhausting visit. We travelled over 10,000 miles by plane and another 2,500 miles by car on the rough Indian roads. We shared the ministry equally and we each gave an average of two talks on most days, sometimes three talks each in a day. In addition, there was an extensive time of personal ministry and interaction with pastors, church leaders and members. We visited churches in the city centres and trekked into the remotest part of the countryside to support the churches in isolated areas.

These objectives were partly met by us just being there alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ. Of course there is much more to it than that - talks, seminars, meetings, services, fellowship, sharing meals together, prayer and some amazing answers to prayer including some miracles! God was indeed good to us.

Our first week was spent in Bangalore, based at the Hope Bible College. The main part of this ministry was to help in training the young pastors and church leaders. John provided an in-depth study of Romans throughout the week whilst I took a wide-angle look at scripture from Genesis to Revelation under the title "*Bringing the Bible Alive*". We were able to encourage and provide a sounding board to Obed, the pastor and director of Hope Bible College. He showed us his vision for the expansion of the college in new premises near to Bangalore airport. During this time John had serious back pain which threatened to curtail his activities. We shared this concern with you in Bridgnorth and after a prayer-time at the college, his pain just disappeared.



The following week began with a 9-hour car journey from Bangalore to Madurai in the South India state of Tamil Nadu. The availability of a car was a direct answer to prayer as John had not been well enough to make the journey by bus as planned. We were based at the ICGM (India Church Growth Mission) Centre on the outskirts of Madurai where we held sessions for pastor training, ladies' meetings and church elders.

We also visited many country churches in the evenings, some up to 2 hours travelling in each direction. We had some great times of teaching, worship and prayer ministry and saw some clear miracles happen right in front of us. The wife of one pastor who was seriously ill with fever was healed overnight and a girl with a missing ear and an infection was healed. Many others came forward for prayer.



Our final week started with another long 10-hour journey from Madurai to Chennai. We passed a Hindu procession which was 18 miles long and the traffic was chaotic. We were based at the Metropolitan Church run by Pastor Rajkumar who was a brilliant host. We spoke at services at the main church and a church plant in the shanty town (known as the Slum Church). After each service, we ate curries cooked by the local church members and had amazing times of prayer.

People came forward for prayer for healing, debt problems, relationships, employment and educational concerns. The worship was vibrant, their faith was strong and lives were changed!

John Farren and David Ball visited India in January 2016 – Read John’s article written for the Church Magazine before their trip “Reaching Out – India 2016”



<http://www.bridgnorthbaptist.co.uk/reaching-out-india-2016>