



touching lives, transforming communities

Ambassador Manual



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Welcome to India Gospel League!

Thank you...

for your willingness to serve the ministry of India Gospel League as an Ambassador. We appreciate your eagerness to advocate for the millions in India living in extreme poverty, most having never even heard the name Jesus. As an Ambassador for India Gospel League, you will educate friends, small groups, churches or community groups about India's physical and spiritual needs as well as provide opportunities for partnerships and sponsorships. Please take the time to read this manual and understand the commitment and responsibilities involved.

As always, thank you for your continued support to India Gospel League!



A Brief History of India Gospel League

From the President, Reverend Samuel Stephens

My great grandfather was the first Christian in my family. He became a Christian in the 1800s during the very early years of the Salvation Army's ministry in India. Street preaching was a very effective way of communicating the gospel at that time. During one of their street meetings, a young man named Raju Munisamy heard about Jesus for the very first time in his life. He weighed what was being said about the One True God and His Eternal Love against his own faith, traditional beliefs and superstitions. Raju decided right there to accept Jesus into his life as his Lord and Savior.

He went home and told his family about this new experience expecting that they would also turn from their superstitions and pagan faith. To his surprise, they thought he had brought disgrace upon their family by becoming a Christian. From that time onward they constantly tried to dissuade Raju from continuing in his new belief. They took away from him the Bible that had become his obsession. The 'black book' as they called it was to be destroyed before any of the other children could get a hold of it. Raju begged the missionaries to give him another Bible, and without the knowledge of his parents, started memorizing large portions of scripture. Nothing could stop Raju from growing in the Lord and in his new Christian faith.

Raju finally became convinced that it was time for him to take a public stand for the Lord through baptism. There was great turmoil in the family. His parents would not even consider thinking of anything like that happening to one of their sons. As hard as he tried, none of them could be convinced. Facing great opposition and persecution from his family, he was baptized. The missionaries gave him a new name because he had the name of a very ugly and fearsome Hindu god called Munisamy. His new name was

“From that time onward until his death, he went from village to village winning people to Jesus Christ.”

Stephens. He was now a totally changed person that included his name as well!

For Raju's parents that was the last straw. They thought nothing worse could have happened to the family than one of their children embracing a religion other than Hinduism. It was worse than death itself. Though they were fairly well educated and wealthy, they were fanatic. They decided that it was better to kill Raju than let him live as a Christian. One day without his knowledge they poisoned his food. Raju's younger brother, who did not agree with the others, quietly warned him about this. With his help, Raju ran away from home.

The fact that his own parents tried to kill him brought Raju closer to the Lord than ever. He decided that he would live for Jesus. From that time onward until his death, he went from village to village winning people to Jesus Christ. He lived the rest of his life as an itinerant evangelist.

Raju's three sons became pastors. One of them was Devaprasad Stephens (my grandfather). In his lifetime, the Lord used him mightily. He was responsible for planting many churches in many districts in south India. He established schools and hospitals in many places. Emma Eaton, an American missionary originally sent by the Church of the Nazarene, met Devaprasad Stephens and was greatly challenged by his ministry. Together they went from village to village proclaiming Jesus and planting churches.

My father, Rajah, the oldest son of Devaprasad Stephens, received his call to full-time ministry while he was training to be an air force pilot in north India. He left immediately to join seminary and upon completion of his Bible training, he joined his father in the ministry. He became instrumental in organizing the work mostly as it stands today.

God had placed His hand upon my father, Rajah Stephens, and had used him in phenomenal ways throughout the 40 years of

his ministry. He was a civic leader and a powerful Christian witness to the entire community. His ministry and influence extended widely over south India and in certain other parts of this country. He was a man with a vision for the unevangelized and lost. The Lord raised him up as a pioneer to bring the message of the gospel to the people in untouched villages. He made the scripture verse one of the motivating forces of his life and ministry. It also became the motto of India Gospel League.

My parents were married in 1948. After three daughters were born they prayed asking the Lord for a son. I was born in 1954 and my parents named me Samuel, dedicating me to the Lord to be His servant. I committed myself to the call of full-time ministry while in college. After three years of seminary studies in a very conservative evangelical school, I returned with a Master of Divinity degree to join my father in the ministry in 1976. I worked with him for 12 years until he went to be with the Lord in 1988. The leadership of India Gospel League fell upon my shoulders when I had least expected it, but the Lord had prepared me adequately through my father and many other practical experiences for this sudden change. In my 12 years of ministry until 1988, I had been a village evangelist (bare-foot pastor as we call it now), and walked every square foot of the area covered by our ministry preaching, teaching and planting churches. To practically live in most of these villages at that

time was a very rare and special experience for me. It gave me the opportunity to move with the masses and get a true Christian perspective of their spiritual, physical, material and emotional needs.

That was truly the period when the Lord was breaking my heart for the people of this country. The Lord also started the process of melting and molding and creating in me a vision for the future. It was also a period of deep confirmation of my call to be His servant and the framing of modalities for my future ministry.

The Lord also allowed me the privilege of serving as a pastor during which time I received my ordination. That was followed by a period of assisting in administrative responsibilities and a lot of travel in order to promote and financially establish the ministry. The Lord opened many avenues in every direction to expand and extend the frontiers of our outreach in this country during that period.

Before his death, my father's very last words to me were "Son, don't lose the vision!" I remind myself of these words afresh as I begin each day praying and asking the Lord to help me not to lose the vision. It is my present conviction that economically, socially, politically and religiously our country has come to the end of the line.

Today, the hope of India rests in her response to the gospel and the claims of Jesus Christ.

Praise the Lord for enabling us to convince many of this fact and help them turn to the Savior for salvation and peace. It is so rewarding not only to see individual lives touched and changed by the gospel presented through our ministry, but also entire communities and villages revolutionized

as they turn to Jesus. Please pray with us as we endeavor to lift up the cross of Christ and bring men

and women to be convinced of the words of the Lord declared through the prophet Isaiah: "Turn to me and be saved all the ends of the earth. For I am God and there is no other." Isaiah 45:22.

"That was truly the period when the Lord was breaking my heart for the people of this country."

A Brief History of India Gospel League in the U.S.

Purpose Statement:

India Gospel League, North America (IGL-NA) exists to promote and establish the kingdom of God through the ministry of India Gospel League, India.

India Gospel League (IGL) is an indigenous missions organization with a primary purpose to bring the gospel and love of Jesus Christ to unreached peoples, and, through effective discipleship, extend God's reign over the nations.

India Gospel League's [headquarters](#) are located in Salem, Tamil Nadu, in south India. It has been in existence since 1948 and currently the outreach includes 21 of India's 29 states and a growing ministry in Sri Lanka. The ministry focus is on India and Sri Lanka's rural populations. India Gospel League has grown to include a relationship with 8,000 pastors who have helped plant over 40,000 churches.

IGL has always recognized the importance of establishing supportive relationships with churches and individuals in the United States, and has enjoyed support from the U.S. since the 1970s. In 1984 IGL established a mentored relationship with Project Partner For Christ, a U.S. based mission agency in Springboro, Ohio. The relationship helped introduce IGL to many new friends and churches.

After 10 years under Project Partner's guidance, IGL established India Gospel League, North America in 1994, as a 501(c)(3) corporation that would seek to represent the ministry officially in the U.S. In 2000, the ministry established an independent North America office in the greater Cincinnati area.

In 2005, in conjunction with a re-evaluation of goals for the first decade of the new millennium, the offices were relocated to northeast Ohio under the direction of Jim Colledge.

[The mission of India Gospel League, NA](#) is to raise awareness and encourage involvement and support among the people of North America for India Gospel

League's evangelism, discipleship, church planting, education, agricultural assistance, economic empowerment, child care and medical programs that reach out to rural India and Sri Lanka.

It provides information, raises financial support, establishes prayer coverage, sends training and medical teams, and secures U.S. sponsors for Children's Gospel Clubs, children, families, pastors, Bible students, villages and even entire regions where the Gospel has not yet penetrated.

India Gospel League, North America exists to support the work of the India Gospel League in India. A group of committed professionals comprise its Board of Directors, all of whom have visited India one or more times to see the missions work first-hand and to participate on a short-term basis.

The staff in the U.S. office is kept purposefully small in order to maximize resources for the ministry in India. Each of the members of our team offer qualifications beyond the scope of their positions, but have chosen IGL because of their commitment to its purpose and whole-hearted dedication to the advancement of the gospel in India.

In addition to regular donations from its donor base of churches and individuals, IGL-NA has received grants ranging from \$50K to a 4-year \$900K grant from Christian foundations.

The ministry is a member in good standing with the Evangelical Council on Financial Accountability, which serves as an indicator of the depth of our commitment to financial integrity, stewardship and accountability.

Statement of Faith

God:

We believe in One God, Creator and sustainer, perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom, measureless in power, eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who in the Bible and in Jesus Christ has revealed Himself to be the living and true God. We rejoice that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer and that He saves from sin and death all who come to HIM through Jesus Christ.

Christ:

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's eternal Son, our Lord, the only Mediator between God and man who, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, fully shared and fulfilled our humanity in a life of perfect obedience. By His death in our place, He made a sacrifice for the sin of the world and by His bodily resurrection gained victory over death and the powers of evil. He ascended into heaven where He intercedes for His people and rules as Lord over all. He will personally and visibly return to the world to consummate His Kingdom.

Holy Spirit:

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who came to renew our hearts, calling us to repent of our sins and confess Christ as Lord, thereby receiving the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life, being justified through faith in Jesus Christ. The work and gifts of the

Holy Spirit enable the believer to live a holy life, to witness effectively to the Gospel, and to serve responsibly in the world.

Scripture:

We believe that the Bible, composed of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, written by men divinely and uniquely inspired, is the Word of God, the only infallible, absolutely trustworthy authority in all matters of faith and conduct. Scripture is to be interpreted according to its context and purpose and in obedience to the Lord, who speaks in living power through each book.

Man:

We believe in the dignity of man created in the image of God for fellowship with the Creator and to share responsibility towards the creation. Tempted by Satan, man rebelled against God. All men are sinners by nature and by choice, estranged from God and subject to His wrath, depraved and apart from Grace, incapable of returning to God. All men are sons of Adam, made of one blood, and have equal access to God in the church of Jesus Christ.

The Church:

We believe in the Church, the universal Body of Christ, the new redeemed humanity which is being called out of the whole human race and formed in every culture and transforming every culture and which is summoned to worship God and to serve Him by preaching the Gospel and disci-

pling the nations by striving for social justice and relieving human distress and need. To enable the Church to fulfill these ministries, God gives gifts to the members of His Church for tending the flock and equipping the saints for ministry. We believe that proclaiming the Gospel to all people is the first priority in the mission of the Church between the Resurrection and the Second Coming of Christ.

Christ's Coming:

We believe in the personal and visible return of Jesus Christ to complete God's work of redemption and Judgment. We believe that those who believe in Christ as Savior and Lord will rise to live and reign with Him forever in a new heaven and new earth. We believe that judgment and separation from the presence of God awaits those who do not believe. This motivates our service in expectation of Him who makes all things new.

Christ's Commission:

We believe in Christ's Commission: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age," (Matthew 28:19-20). The supreme mission of the people of God in this age is to preach the Gospel to everyone.

The Role of the Ambassador

As an IGL Ambassador, you play a key role in educating your church in missions. One of the best ways to influence others is talking one-on-one or in a small group setting about your involvement in missions. Anytime you might be able to spend with your senior pastor, mission's pastor or mission's team is always a good use of time.

Being an Ambassador is a unique volunteer position that is self-initiated and self-scheduled. Although connected to an IGL staff member you will personally manage your own time commitment and activity.

The following Ambassador goals provide a suggested framework as you seek to advocate for the people of India. Our hope is that you will grow in your knowledge of missions, further your dependency on God and become more Christ-like in all you do. Your role may require that you step out in faith in ways that are new and perhaps uncomfortable. We know that God is faithful and will provide you with the strength and resources you need. Speak from the heart and the Lord will do the rest.

Ambassador Responsibilities

- Complete the Ambassador application process. The application process serves as a way for us to get to know our advocates as well as make sure the program is a good fit. An IGL staff member will contact you after receiving your application.
- Read the Ambassador Manual and all IGL printed materials sent to you.
- View the video and review the website at www.iglworld.org.
- As an Ambassador, you will be in contact with an IGL staff representative who will answer your questions, give encouragement and provide assistance in reaching the Ambassador goals.
- Pray for IGL and the people of India.
- Strive to learn and teach others about missions.
- Commit to advocating for IGL for one year.
- Strive to meet eight of the 10 Ambassador goals.

Ambassador Annual Goals

- Educate yourself and others in missions
- Follow-up with current IGL supporters at your

church

- Share with one pastor about IGL
- Share with one small group about IGL
- Share with one children's Sunday school class about IGL
- Represent IGL at one conference, missions fair or Perspectives Class
- Host a mission's prayer meeting focused on the work of IGL
- Invite three friends to be Prayer Partners for IGL's ministries
- Post IGL's promotional materials in a strategic location
- Invite one friend to participate in sponsorship

Ambassador Qualifications

- Be a walking and committed Christian who is involved in a local church
- Be eager to share India Gospel League's mission with others
- Have a desire to grow God's kingdom and have a heart for missions
- Have the willingness and ability to ask others to get involved with IGL
- Have an open and willing heart!

Educate yourself and others about missions

As an IGL Ambassador, increasing your knowledge in missions will increase your confidence in dialoguing with others. Here are a few reading suggestions:

- Mission Frontiers Magazine: www.missionfrontiers.org
- Joshua Project: www.joshuaproject.net
- Operation World: www.operationworld.org
- Dalit Freedom Network: www.dalitnetwork.org
- India Gospel League: www.iglworld.org
- The World Bank: www.worldbank.org
- Perspectives On World Missions: www.perspectives.org

Visit www.iglworld.org/59 for information on India Gospel League short-term opportunities.

Understanding God's Love for the Nations

Revelation 5:9 -"You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation."

Since Christ's death was inclusive, purposefully not withholding His sacrifice from any group of people, then His invitation to accept His sacrifice must include all peoples from every tribe, every language and every nation.

What is a people group and how is it defined?

"A people group is the largest group within which the gospel can spread as a church-planting movement without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance." People groups are typically defined by shared language, ethnicity, region, social relationships and religion.¹

What is the definition of unreached peoples?

"An unreached people are a people group within which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize their own people group."² Some researchers have adopted the term "hidden people" or "frontier people group."

When is a people group reached?

"A people group is considered reached when they have a viable indigenous community of believing Christians who are reaching their own people without outside assistance."³

Worldview

Psalms 96:2-3: Sing to the Lord, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

Natural disasters, government infrastructure, international trade policies and personal factors all can contribute to poverty and its devastating effects. Often not talked about is the powerful role that worldview holds with respect to the effects of poverty in the life of an individual and a nation at large. What an individual believes to be true about the world in which they live deeply affects their life and the choices they make.

For example, in India, often those of the lowest caste feel they are not worthy to achieve a better life for themselves or their children. Their belief system heavily steeped in Hinduism teaches them to be content with their status in life since it is based on karma (deeds carried out in a previous life). "Karma is used to explain all suffering: If a person is deformed, it is because of karma in his past life; if a person wants to have happiness in a future life, he must work for it right now, regardless of the situation in which he is placed."⁴

The millions of low social status people are to accept the sufferings that life brings. An opportunity for a child to attend school may be passed up if the family believes pursuing education will jeopardize the child's status in the next life. Education, of course, is an important step in a family's ability to progress beyond daily economic hardship.

The worldview that is held by the majority of individuals and family units of a nation always influences the cultural, economic and political makeup of that very nation. When the worldview negatively affects their economy then the nation at large suffers. We see the affects of the Hindu worldview played out in the rural villages in India in the countless lives who are struggling to survive.

Presenting IGL to a Target Audience

God loves the poor

1 John 3:16-18: This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with action and in truth.

India has more unreached people groups than any other country accounting for one third of the world's total unreached groups and has more people living on \$2/day than any other country in the world.

Putting your Knowledge and Passion to Work

There are multiple opportunities to use your passion and knowledge for missions as an Ambassador for IGL. The following are examples of ways to help progress God's love for India. These are not the only ways to work as an Ambassador. Put your skills and passion to work in other ways that interest you!

1) Follow-up with current supporters at your church or in your area. Find out:

- In what ways has your involvement with IGL benefitted you or your family?
- In what ways has your involvement with IGL benefitted India?
- Do you receive our e-newsletter? If not, would you like to receive it? Direct them to our website to join the mailing list.
- Follow up with any information that was requested.

2) Present IGL to the church or missions pastor. Example dialogue:

AMBASSADOR: I am a volunteer Ambassador for India Gospel League. Are you familiar with IGL?

- If not, briefly educate them about IGL's mission.

Ask a partner church: In what ways they have supported IGL. (Jot down the ministry areas in which the church has partnered with IGL)

- Be sure to listen to the answers and relay positive and negative feedback via email.

Ask a Pastor who is not familiar or only slightly familiar with IGL:

- Tell me about your current involvement in missions.
- Listen and understand where the church's interests and passions lie.

A good place to start with a church that isn't familiar with IGL is to explain the four pillars:

In India, there is a great spiritual need with over 2,200 unreached people groups. The good news is that there is great openness to the Gospel like never before. IGL is an indigenous church planting movement that has planted over 70,000 churches in India through what we call barefoot pastors.

EVANGELISM & CHURCH PLANTING is primarily carried out by barefoot pastors. Currently there are 6,000 church planters who are taking the Gospel to villages. Every month, hundreds of churches are being planted. Small groups are formed in the villages for bible study, prayer and worship. Villagers build a "prayer shed" until the funds are available to build a Life Center which is a multipurpose facility for church gatherings, community training and daycare.

MEDICAL CARE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CHILDCARE & EDUCATION come after the church is established in a village. One of the unique things about IGL is that good works do not precede the church but the church is planted first and then out of the church comes the various ministries such as child sponsorship programs, village health clinics and industry skill training.

Here are some potential ways that IGL can be presented by leading a discussion, presenting a teaching or using a part of a meeting to give a brief introduction to the ministry. As with any presentation, give thoughtful consideration to the audience, their ages and their interests. If you are willing to be the presenter, please make sure you have been given the leader's or pastor's approval.

Planning an Event

Step 1: Decide your target audience for your event

Step 2: Decide your event style:

- Dessert and Discussion (Ideas: Injustice, Poverty, Worldview)
- Sponsor a Child Party or Church Launch
- Home Group Bible Study
- Children's Sunday School Presentation
- Open House – My Trip to India
- Prayer Meeting for the people of India

Step 3: Choose the date, location and time for your event

Step 4: Invite people. Pray that God would stir the minds and hearts of those you invited

Step 5: Develop presentation and PowerPoint and/or Video

Step 6: Order materials needed from your IGL Staff Representative – please allow three to four weeks

Step 7: Plan for nametags, pencils, refreshments...

During the Event

Step 1: Greet guests

Step 2: Introduce yourself and your involvement with IGL

Step 3: Give presentation and share PowerPoint or video (if applicable)

Step 4: Pass out printed information and a sign-up for the e-newsletter

Step 5: Answer questions

Step 6: Follow-up with any additional information and let us know how the event went!



Thank You...

Thank you for your commitment to India Gospel League and the people of India. Because of Your Advocacy You Will See... “a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb,” Revelations 7:9-10



Endnotes:

1, 2, 3 U.S. Center for World Missions, Joshua Project, Colorado Springs, CO, <http://www.joshuaproject.net/definitions.php#peoplegroup>

4Thirumalai, Sharing Your Faith with A Hindu, p. 52.