

Dear Friends,

2015 was a year of dramatic growth for the church in South Asia, by God's grace. It was also a year of increasing pressure on Christians.

The political climate in India today has shifted in favor of Hindu fundamentalism, which has led to a noticeable rise in Christian persecution. Eight Christians are known to have been martyred last year, and more than 8,000 reported being attacked or severely harassed by extremists. Reports emerged throughout 2015 of "forced reconversions" – that is, believers in Jesus being forced to conduct worship rituals for Hindu idols. Of course, many attacks go unreported due to ongoing threats. Believers in other nearby nations face similar difficulties.



For this reason, we continue to pray for our God's protection of our network, which now involves more than 85,000 village congregations. **The church in India is growing at such an exponential rate – resistance should come as no surprise to us!** As Jesus explained to his disciples in John 16: "If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you."

The pastors and frontline workers of India Gospel League **are committed to continuing their work** despite increasing pressure from the world. In fact, the difficult political climate and the increase in resistance has strengthened our resolve – we must finish the task Jesus gave us to accomplish, we must see a church planted in every village!



Scan the code on the right to watch a personal thank you message from Sam.



## SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Increasing militancy against the Christian faith underscores a key reason for our strategic approach at IGL. We believe that churches should be self-sustaining, self-led, self-replicating organizations – not dependent on outside leadership or resources.

**Outside support (from friends like you!) is used to help jumpstart important work in new villages and unreached regions, equipping pastors, offering ministry tools, etc.** But once a work has begun in a given area, we immediately take steps to bring the fledgling church to a place of healthy self-sufficiency (or God-sufficiency, to be more accurate). This is one of the reasons we lay such emphasis on leadership training, theological instruction and church-based ministry. We want to empower churches to reach their own communities effectively. However, our church planting pastors are still in need of prayers – from their own congregations and from friends across the world.

## YOUR PARTNERSHIP

When I recount all the ways God was at work through IGL last year, I really stand back, amazed and excited. Jesus is building His kingdom in ways we never thought possible, at a rate we never could have strategized to accomplish.

Although numeric reports can never tell the whole story (as every number represents one precious soul, one person whom God loves deeply), I want to offer you a few statistics to celebrate as we think back to last year. And, for those of you who have partnered with us in 2015, I want you to know that this celebration is yours as much as it is ours. **Because you stood with us, more lives have been touched, more families have been reached, more churches have been planted, more leaders have been trained.** For example, in 2015:



  
**7,494** CHURCHES WERE PLANTED  
*(THAT'S AN AVERAGE OF 20 NEW CHURCHES PER DAY!)*



**3,550** PASTORS WERE TRAINED, ALONG WITH **1,950** WOMEN LEADERS



  
**56,000** YOUNG PEOPLE WERE TRAINED TO LEAD CHILDREN'S CLUBS



**750,000** CHILDREN WERE DISCIPLED THROUGH CHILDREN'S GOSPEL CLUBS



**8,981** KIDS CARED FOR BY IGL, INCLUDING CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND/OR CHILDREN'S HOMES



**14,549** INDIVIDUALS RECEIVED MEDICAL CARE THROUGH IGL'S HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CAMPS



  
**1,173** WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS RECEIVED MICRO-CREDIT LOANS AND BUSINESS COACHING



  
**23** CLEAN WATER WELLS WERE DUG, AND **11** HOMES WERE BUILT FOR THE POOR



**1** MORE NATION HAS BEEN ADDED TO OUR NETWORK; FOLLOWING A MAJOR EARTHQUAKE, IGL BEGAN WORKING IN SOUTHERN REGIONS OF NEPAL. UP UNTIL THIS YEAR, IGL'S OUTREACHES WERE CONCENTRATED IN ONLY INDIA AND SRI LANKA.

These and other statistics seem almost too good to be true! And yet, is this not what we expect when God is at work? He deserves all the glory for what is occurring in South Asia today.



## WHAT'S NEXT?

Looking forward, I want to encourage you to keep praying. Yes, persecution is growing, opposition lurks everywhere, and extremists are feeling empowered to carry out their dark agenda. But right alongside that darkness, a great light is shining. Jesus is building his church, just as he promised.

Every day, on the front lines of the gospel's advance, lives are being transformed. Families are surrendering to Christ. Pastors are following the leadership of the Holy Spirit, forging into areas that have never heard the name "Jesus."

In 2016 we are praying for God to continue exceeding our best expectations, "to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever." (Ephesians 3:20-21)

Looking forward,

Sam Stephens  
President, India Gospel League



*P.S.*

We currently have more than 300 church planters in need of startup support to push into new regions, about 1,500 children who are awaiting sponsorship, hundreds of pastors interested in receiving theological training, whole regions available for adoption – there really are opportunities everywhere. If you'd like to be a part of the IGL story in 2016, we'd love to partner with you, for God's glory. Feel free to email me directly or contact the Hudson office if have any questions about your involvement in the IGL story in 2016.