

The Watchstander

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Special points of interest:

- Training continues as Worship Notes are translated into Talago
- Have been invited back to teach next year
- An invitation has been extended to speak at the next Pastors Conference at CEM
- In initial talks to speak at the Bethlehem Bible College on the West Bank.

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Worshiping the Living God

India is a country of huge contrasts. One of the developing economies and yet appalling poverty. A country that is highly religious and yet only about 2% of their 1.2 billion people are followers of Christ. This a country that is hungry both for physical food and also for true spiritual food.



MTS Students

This was my first trip to India. God willing it will not be my last. I have found a group of fellow believers who are striving to advance the Kingdom of God in ways that are similar to

mine. And I would love to partner with them to expand the Kingdom here on the sub-continent.

CEM has a Missionary Training School that

trains men for the pastorate and women for bivocational ministry. I have the privilege this trip of teaching in the school.

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Chapel Messages

During the week all of the folks at CEM including adults and children met for chapel at 6:00 AM each morning. During the week I had the opportunity to speak

at one of the chapels.

I spoke on the subject of the "New Song" from



Speaking in Chapel

Psalm 40:1-3.

Worshiping the Living God (continued from page 2)

On Sundays, during their chapel times and often before class they sing with conviction and passion. During our class times we have been studying worship from a Biblical perspective and how true worship develops spiritual formation in the live of believers.

Yesterday we finished an especially hard lesson on the pathways of worship and how it brings us into close communion with Father. After I finished

teaching we had a season of worship that brought tears to my eyes. While I rarely understood what they were singing the Spirit of God permeated the room and I sensed Father's pleasure in our worship of Him. God is alive here in India and I believe that he is raising up a generation of people who will advance the Kingdom in amazing ways for God.

Pray for them as they finish their training and apply what they are



Pastoral Students at MTS

learning in their personal lives and in the lives of their flocks.

Lockstep

I spent a couple of hours getting to know Jaya Sankar the pastor and leader of Chris's Evangelical Missions in India. There was much that we were in lockstep. He has a great passion to reach the urban people of the state Andhra Pradesh. After reading Jay's master's thesis I realized that we were kindred souls. Our passions and our concerns were the same even though we lived and

ministered half a world away.

One quote that Jaya sited was from J. N. Manokaran's book *The Challenge of the Cities*, published by the India Missions Association. "We can't sing 18th Century songs, fol-

"We can't sing 18th Century songs, follow 19th Century methods and have a 20th Century mindset to reach the 21st Century people."

low 19th Century methods and have a 20th Century mindset to reach the 21st Century people." How often

have we continued to use outdated material and methods and complained that God doesn't move like He did in the past!

Holy Cow!

The expression "sacred cows" comes from India. White cows are considered sacred in this culture. It is not unusual to find these animals wandering through the country side, in towns and even in major cities. We watched this Holy Cow wandering through the marketplace in Rajahmundry a city of over 3.5 million



Sacred Cow

people. These animals can be found everywhere

wandering around and eating by the side of the road and even in the middle of crops.

One of the major reasons why India has a hard time feeding itself when it allows these bovines to enjoy dining anywhere and everywhere they desire.

God taught me a lesson half way around the world.

During one of our sessions I was asked about the Biblical meaning of the disciples loosing the binding of the donkey in Luke 19:28-40. Regarding this story of Jesus Triumphant entry into Jerusalem I gave a cast off answer that “sometimes a donkey is just a donkey.”

After the class Naveem, my translator, explained to me the significance of the donkey to the Indian people. In a society where castes still



Naveem (my Translator) and me

affect the daily lives of the people the donkey pictures people who are in bondage. Jesus commands his disciples to “Go” and “Unbind the people who are bound to their lot in life” and finally “bring them to Jesus!”

Well I have to tell you I was humbled by how a donkey taught these people the freedom that Jesus offered and his command to bring the lost to Him.

I told Naveem he

had taught me a great lesson about how the Bible speaks to people in every cultural setting. I was reminded of how the Scripture was simple enough for a child to understand and yet deep enough that no one could fully plumb it’s depth.

I told Naveem that at the start of the next session we needed to revisit the question first thing and I wanted him to teach the class what he had shared with me.

I guess old dogs can still learn new tricks!

God’s Time

I started my journey by having my watch stop an hour before my flight from Detroit to Amsterdam. The chances of picking up a battery before my return to the states is slim and none. So I begin this journey with no phone, on internet and now no time piece.

Could it be that Father wanted me to totally unplug from all that I’ve

known in order to learn a different rhythm during this trip?

I’ve taught on God’s theology of time and the difference between “chronos” and “karos” time. Perhaps I will learn to move to His will and way disconnecting

from the world’s hustle and bustle; to respond to the Spirit’s gentle rhythm as he teaches me his time and will and way.

“my times are in your hands”

Psalm 31:15

“for it is time to seek the LORD”

Hosea 10:12

When I got to Mumbai I was able to buy a Timex watch for 1895 rupees (about \$42.00)

I Just Want to Sleep

I had just traveled all the way across the subcontinent with layovers of more than 8 hours and had flown from Mumbai to Amsterdam. After another 3 hour layover I was looking forward to sleeping on my flight to Detroit. While waiting to go through screening to get back on the flight I met a nice older man

who I found out was a medical doctor. We had a nice conversation and went our separate ways until we got on the plane. Would you believe I was sitting next to this man for the flight and he had lots of spiritual questions. I never slept on the flight but I certainly spent 8 hours talking about God and how He could meet

the needs of a psychiatrist who was searching for redemption. While this doctor didn’t make a decision for Christ he is still seeking and he is getting closer to acknowledging the Creator as his Lord and Master.

Pray for this doctor - Please!

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The watchstander is a nautical term and usually refers to the Chief Officer (or First Mate) who stands in for the captain of the ship. He has three fundamental duties: navigate the ship, safely avoid traffic, and respond to any emergencies that may arise. As one of God's watchmen my responsibilities include navigating the followers of Christ through the seas of post modernity, avoid any kind of traffic that will take us off our course or cause us to founder and be there to address any emergencies that might arise during our journey.

As a trained theologian, teacher and pastor Dr. Vallen Prest observes society and addresses the many issues from a Biblical perspective.

You can follow his blog at <http://AncientFutureMariner.blogspot.com> or view his blog through his website www.vallenprest.com

The Back Story

There is a back story to this journey. 1 Timothy 2:2 tell us to pass on our spiritual wisdom and knowledge to faithful men who will be able to pass this on to other faithful men.

I have not only taught on how worship creates spiritual formation, my notes are being translated into tagalog, the primary language in Andhra Pradesh, India. So your gift will continue to pay it forward for years to come!

Additionally I've been invited back to continue teaching at Missionary Training School (MTS) to teach future pastors next year.

Additionally I have been asked to consider speaking at an upcoming pastors conference at Christ's Evangeli-

cal Missions in 2011. Over 200 pastors gather from many different backgrounds and parts of India for intense training in a number of spiritual disciplines and Biblical issues.

The current plan is for me to teach on *Worship, How It Develops Spiritual Formation*. There is a great need for understanding what true



Jaya and me

worship is and how it impacts every aspect of our lives.

We are also talking about developing a seminar training

pastors on the Biblical model of Servant Leadership.

God is opening many doors for future ministry on the Indian sub-continent.

Please pray that Father continues to unfold His plan for us and the Indian people.