

*New Recruit,
Another First*



New Recruit

In January 2014 Dennis Gage from Benton, AR, Ray White from Sand Springs, OK, David Prentice from Bakersfield, CA and I traveled to India for a month of teaching, training, visiting, encouraging, being encouraged and other tasks that go along with the privileges of the journey. It was another wonderful trip for all of us. For Dennis, Ray and me it was a trip that we have repeatedly made over the years since back in the early 1970's. For David it was a new experience. David was the new recruit.

Since David is on the West Coast and the rest of us are in the Southern part of the USA our travel itineraries wound up being a little different. Dennis, Ray and I were to have met in

Dallas and flown on to London and Hyderabad together. As a result of snow and ice, Dennis did not make the connection in Dallas and I almost missed it. Dennis had to stay a few days at a hotel in Dallas awaiting a later flight. Ray and I traveled on together and arrived in Hyderabad on schedule in the early hours of a Wednesday morning in Hyderabad. Dennis would arrive a few days later.

David was routed through San Francisco and Frankfurt, Germany. He made his arrival in Hyderabad a few hours after Ray and I arrived on that Wednesday morning. David appeared to be no worse for the wear. In fact, David took to India like a duck takes to

and exotic places is truly not for everyone. Those who do not travel have enough challenges and excitement right here in their own backyards. May God bless those who support others in the places where they are not.

He smiles with joy that God has opened the senses to hear, see and feel for others.

Over this letter are spilled tears of both joy and sorrow. And so this traveler smiles as he cries. He smiles with joy that God has opened the senses to hear, see and feel for others. He weeps for those who are in need. He weeps for those who do not realize their need. Thank you LORD for your bowels of mercy, for your love and compassion! May you be praised IN ALL THE EARTH!

A traveling servant,
David Prentice



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am, therewith to be content.” The traveler has the opportunity to learn how to live this contented life.

When one travels to a new place, like India, the senses become alive in ways that command one’s attention.

God gave the human being, what we have called, “five senses”. When one travels to a new place, like India, the senses become alive in ways that command one’s attention. In the same manner, one’s spiritual being has been given senses. He hears the Word of God (My Sheep know my voice, Jn. 10: 27). He sees what is from God (Love comes from God, and everyone who loves is born of God and Knows God. They know this because God is love, 1 Jn. 4:7-8). The Christian senses the needs of others as he/she cultivates compassion (1 Peter 3:8). The Christian learns better how to love and how to be loved. They learn to listen

to the Lord speak through His Word and His people. We learn together how to put others first as we see their needs.

Often we see needs in our own backyards every day. Yet for some reason, we have become less concerned and more critical. In traveling to India, the traveler learns to become more concerned and less critical. In returning home, he resolves to be more compassionate and less caustic. Over the years, here at home, we have become more divisive and less inclusive. In traveling to India, the traveler learns to be more inviting and less rejecting. In returning home, he resolves to be more open and less closed.

May God forgive us for our apathy toward our neighbor. May God be more patient with us as we become more patient with our brothers. May the love that God proved through the death of His Son, teach us that other’s lives are more valuable than our own.

No! Traveling to far away

water. He was engaged and eager from the beginning nearly to the end. All of us enjoyed one day of sickness while in India. Dennis was first. Then Ray and I enjoyed our sickbay together on the day that Ray was supposed to have traveled with David to Eluru. As it turned out, Dennis made the trip to Eluru with David and Brother Edward Rouse. David saved his sick day for one of our last days in Mumbai.

After our return I asked David to write something about his experience and send it to me. In fact, David wrote three things for me. I told him that each of the three comes from a little different vantage point and so I have decided to use all three pieces. I pray that as you read David’s reflections on his India experience that you will be inspired and encouraged. He reminds us of how exciting it can be to travel to a far away land and meet the friendly and loving people. It has always been an experience for all of us who

have traveled there that reminds us of how blest we all are around the world to be a part of God’s kingdom. David also reminds us that we don’t have to travel to a far away land to tell the old, old story. We can begin right in our own backyards.

...lsg

“Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us.’ Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.”

Acts 16:6-10

Another First

I asked how best to prepare myself for this great adventure to a far off land. So the suggestions came forth. Take khaki's because jeans hang too heavy as the humidity and heat rises. Take lots of snacks because you will get hungry between your meager meals. Take copies of all your identification, because you never know if you will be stopped or lose luggage, etc. Also, bring gifts for your hosts as a thank you.

These are just a few of the suggestions that I received in preparation for my first great adventure. I packed my suitcase accordingly with 5 pair of khaki's, 12.4 lbs of snacks and a dozen copies of ID papers with sets for each piece of luggage and extras in my money belt just in case. I also went to the Bible Book store to get a couple of devotional books and 'religious' trinkets to give out as thank-you gifts. I was ready. I even brought along my own pharmacy complete with antibiotics, mosquito repellent, cold and fever meds, aches and pains

meds, medicines in case I have problems with food going in or coming out. (I took it all, even though I have seldom ever needed any such meds before.) Oh, yes, I had my tickets and copies of my travel itinerary as well as shirts, socks and all the sundries.

Now we arrive in India. We begin our two weeks of training preachers. I notice that some of the men look at me and talk among themselves. I don't think much of it, until a few days go by, and we become friends to the point that they feel they can be honest with me. One of the kind fellows points to my khakis and asked (with a grin on his face) if I was a police man. He said that I was wearing police pants and chuckled. It was then that I realized, except for dress slacks worn on Sunday's, the other travelers were only wearing jeans.

The first two weeks went very quickly as we were busy with training from 9 to 4:30 each day. Then in the eve-

New and Challenging

Dear Reader,

Over this letter are spilled tears of both joy and sorrow.

Traveling to far away and exotic places is truly not for everyone. Paul speaks in Romans 12 of various gifts.

Whatever your gift, use it serving the Lord. This traveler, for one, has come to the conclusion that traveling to these places is right up his alley.

Far away is distance from loved ones, culture & one's personal comfort zone.

Far away is more than just distance in miles. Far away is distance from loved ones, culture & one's personal comfort zone. However, this is not required to be a negative thing. To be away from loved ones is to make more loved ones. God blesses the travelers with more people to love

and more people by whom they are loved. To be away from your own culture is to learn the value of others, their culture and the value of your own culture. To be removed from your comfort zone is to learn what you really need.

Exotic is not to be considered extravagant, ornate or fantastic. Exotic is new, challenging and commanding of your attention. In Revelation 21:5 God stated: "I make all things new!" The traveler will find a "new" appreciation for this very verse as he or she opens up his/her life to the experience of 'new places, cultures and ways of doing things.'

Life is so complicated, by American Standards, that the simplicity of living a full and contented life is all but lost. Contentment is the life that Paul seeks for us to understand in Jesus. Philippians 4:11, "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I

similar. As Paul was invited into homes to preach and teach, he must have experienced the same kind of love many times as did we when we entered homes. We were loved and cared for with deep affection and humility. They gave of their best. Whether they had much or little, they held nothing back. When it came to food, they made sure that we were full to overflowing before they ate or allowed their family to eat. It was truly an humbling and eye opening experience.

A truly great lesson and blessing was received as we looked through the eyes and into the hearts of the blessed children of the cottages. To see the joy and warmth of these young people was very inspiring. Our hearts melted as we were greeted in each home with a song and a smile. All the children were blessed to have loving house parents. It was so obvious through observing the children that the love of God was within these parents. They greeted us. They honored us. They loved us. Each of us fell deeply in love with each child and parent as we met them,

looked into their eyes and held them both in our hearts and arms.

If I could:

(1) I would have each person who reads these words put themselves into a position wherein they can experience the same opportunities as we experienced in India.

(2) I would have taken all my family and friends with me.

(3) If you never go as far away as we did, go next door. Go somewhere in your city. Go to your family's home and share the gospel of Jesus Christ. It matters not whether you think people hear what you say. It matters that you speak.

We went to teach and encourage. We came home having been taught and strengthened in our resolve to be a vessel for God's use where ever He calls, to whomever He sends us and whenever He calls.

Your friend and servant,

David Prentice

nings we would travel to a church or home for a Bible study and one other thing. In every location, on every day of our visit, we enjoyed great hospitality by each and every host. Without exception, it seemed, everywhere we went, the attempt to stuff us like Christmas Turkeys was their primary task and goal. We were hand served until our plates were overflowing. We dared not fill our mouth too full for fear that we would be unable to decline more food from being packed onto our plates. As sunlight hit a bare spot upon the plate, our host was immediately there to fill in the gap. We soon learned that 'bus' was our chief ally. For to say 'bus' was not an indication that you wanted to leave, but an indication that you wanted them to 'stop' being so kind and generous. Oh, by the way, I left 12.4 lbs of snacks in the refrigerator when we returned to the States.

We were loved so deeply no matter the amount of time that it took to get to know our many hosts. Whether we visited for days, hours or minutes, we found ourselves

loved, and we loved them in return. We were filled with kindness and generosity by all those in every home and church. I realize that it would be impossible for me to remember each and every person whom I had met while there. However, I would not be surprised that I was remembered by each and every person whom I met. Mind you, this is not because of anything special about me, but rather because of what is special about them. How does one thank such a loving and generous people? I looked at the meager thank you gifts and was embarrassed at my American wealth as it was reflected by such poor gifts.

Of all the things that I brought with me, I knew, without a doubt, that I would have no need of the medical supplies. I have always been healthy and rarely sick. I have had the ability to eat pretty much anything without fear. Week one went by like a gale wind. It was gone before I realized it. There wasn't time to think about sickness, let alone be sick. The second week ended, and reality struck concerning the short-

ness of our trip. With joy and sadness we said goodbye to the preachers as they completed their training and left for their respective homes.

The third week, I noticed two of our party became ill, so it was up to the 2 who remained healthy to head toward the east coast for more training and visitation. It is amazing how much travel, training and visiting you can get done in such a short time. Even given India time...which means we will start at 10, and/or 10:15, and/or 10:30 and/or 11:00, well, ok, we will start when we get there, and we will get done when we are finished. We were back from our travels and preparing to head to the west coast before we knew it.

Week four: Our visit to Mumbai found our clocks moving slower than at any other time during our entire visit. We found ourselves with no one to see or visit until the evening. By the evenings the day's work was completed and people were free to meet. The hospitality (the feeding frenzy) continued without wavering. But by the third

day my body slowed down enough to realize that I was in a foreign land. The one thing I figured that I would have no need of is what I now needed the most. I finally dipped into my bag of medical paraphernalia to find something that would help my body in its final adjustment. All was well within a relatively short period of time. (However, I must interject at this point that God humbled me more upon my return home. It was an interesting first 3 days home.)

All in all, for a first time visitor to the land of India, I found the land to be intriguing, the people loving, the work inspiring and the prospect of returning...I am dreaming of the day!

I would be remiss if I failed to thank IMF and all those in the churches who made this trip possible. The investment you have made is more than worth every penny and every prayer!

...David Prentice
Bakersfield, CA

India Trip 2014

The purpose of our trip to India was 3 fold:

1. To train and encourage young men to preach the Word of God.
2. To encourage the Christians in their homes and as they gathered together as the church body.
3. To inspect and encourage the work done in the Children's Homes (called cottages)

There were other concerns dealt with as well. There was legal work to be completed. Property concerns to confront. There was a cemetery to be inspected for upkeep and repairs. Of course there was always paperwork and financial concerns with which to be dealt. All in all, the annual trip to India is filled with much to do in a very short period of time.

For someone who loves to preach the Word of God, the trip to India is a Godsend of an opportunity. As Isaiah

said, "Here am I, send me!" and God replied, "Go, tell the people!" So we went. Different than Isaiah's experience of a people who would not hear God, we were among a people who were hungry for all things concerning God. There was a joy and anticipation on behalf of these men who longed for the refreshment that comes from the springs of living water. To say that we encouraged them would be a true statement. Yet the expressions of thankfulness and joy from the men (approx. 100 to 150 total at Kukatpally, Eluru, Hyderabad) who came for the training, was more a blessing and encouragement to us.

We were so excited to take the message of encouragement to the churches where many of these men serve. How exciting for them to bring their teachers to their homes and churches. Even more, how wonderful for us to meet the people that these men serve. Not that I consider any of us like Paul, but I wonder if our experiences were