

EVANGELIZATION OF HINDUS REPORT

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While not containing a sequential strategy, this report deals with seven strategic areas of outreach to Hindus. The report begins by enumerating these seven areas, hence a further summary is not needed here. The following main points were discussed:

1. Caste system among the converts and churches;
2. Indigenization in the Indian church;
3. Evangelization of Hindus with love, prayer and use of Hindu thought-forms;
4. Evangelization with minimum social dislocation;
5. Special and careful awareness of our common enemy — Satan;
6. Overcoming denominational barriers towards their ultimate elimination;
7. Specialized para-church institutions for evangelization; e.g., Ashrams, literature, and hospitals, supported by churches.

The group had enthusiastic discussions and participation. All recognized the vicious and wicked presence of caste among the Christians, mainly in South India. All agreed that every caste element should be discouraged and should not be compromised in any way.

All felt that as soon as possible the Indian church should be indigenized. The Western influence and foreignness should be removed from our churches without compromising with Hinduistic (religious) ways. We would welcome missionaries but only as colleagues and workers, not as leaders or controllers.

It was emphasized that while evangelizing among Hindus we should use Hindu thought-forms and words to communicate effectively. Western methods, phrases, and ways should be avoided. Hindus are disillusioned and are searching. They should be approached with love, compassion and prayer. Care should be taken that there is a minimum of dislocation from their social ties. This does not mean compromising with Hindu religious doctrines, e.g., caste, etc. We must be relevant to Hindus and meet them where they are spiritually, economically and socially. No material helps or promises should be given where evangelization is concerned; such helps can be given after, if necessary, and at the discretion of the church or according to the merit of the case.

We must be aware of Satanic deceptive activities and therefore use Power-encountering ministries according to the gifts of the Spirit. The Word of God should be used carefully and prayerfully.

While we should be aware of Hindu social systems and culture, it should not be over-emphasized, realizing that all are one in Christ and in Christ we are new creatures. There is no fear in love and there is freedom and liberty in Christ.

Historically, it was pointed out that various evangelistic methods have been used but gradually the form, traditions and rituals took over

and thus God used other means. Now under the Protestant era, institutional evangelism is carried on. Care should be taken that again traditions may not overtake the real spiritual fervor.

We ought to encourage establishment of small local churches and house churches with a minimum of formalities and outward form. Indian Christian theology should be avoided when it contradicts the Word of God.