

**December 14,
2010**

Inside this issue:

India: Wild Weather and Committed Christians	1
A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words!	1
Faithful Believers Behind Enemy Lines	3
It's Christmas. Let's Celebrate!	3
Year End Giving	4
Prayer Requests	4
The Edmondson's Itinerary	4



India: Wild Weather and Committed Christians

It had rained for six days and six nights as we drove up into the hills of Orissa, India. There were five of us in the four-wheel-drive Bolero along with our luggage, some of which

rain and enable pastors to gather for the training event. After many hours bouncing around on those "roads" we noted that the skies had begun to clear. God was answering our prayer. The Similiguda conference began the next day with a full complement of pastors and church planters as well as about 150 children in the evening services. We offered the leaders training and they told us their stories. Many of them bear the scars of beatings they have received for Christ. One brother was recently attacked and given a choice by his tormentors: renounce Christ or be beaten to death. He asked God to receive his soul. At that moment the police ar-



**A Picture Is Worth A
Thousand Words!**

Would you like to see more pictures of our ministry and hear about it from the lips of the pastors we serve?

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Global Training Network

had to ride on the roof in spite of the rain. Joel Madson, Ed Pamer, and I (three full-sized Americans) sat in back. In front were Sindhu Pani, GTN's India coordinator along with our driver, Joseph. We had flown down from Kolkata to Vizag and were now bound for the village of Similiguda where we were scheduled to present a training conference for 160 pastors and Christian leaders. The rains had caused wide-spread flooding and had strewn the roads with fallen dirt, trees, and boulders. In some places, the road seemed to disappear entirely. We prayed that God would stop the



rived and he was rescued. Many such things have occurred in the lives of believers here who face persecution from radical Hindus as well as Maoist terrorists. Most Orriyan Christians have

fresh memories of the outbreak of persecution in 2008 in which 18,000 Christians were beaten or raped, 4658 Christian homes were burned along with an estimated 300 church buildings. Over 50 Christians were found dead or missing including some who were burned alive in their home or church. However, the attacks of the persecutors have only served to strengthen the resolve of Orriya Christians. These were the people who came to our training. They came by plane, train, car, bicycle, and on foot. Some traveled as many as 20 hours. They came in spite of some of the wild-



India: Wild Weather and Committed Christians (cont'd)



est weather in recent memory. A little thing like a flood couldn't slow them down. As we met together, heaven filled our souls with glory. The Holy Spirit worked powerfully during the training sessions and the prayers and worship of these believers can never be forgotten. Global Training Network has an ongoing commitment to training pastors in Orisa and is building a training center here. I look forward to ministering here regularly.

After the close of our Similiguda conference we folded ourselves back into the Bolero for the long drive to Serango, the site of our next training conference. Serango is the home town of Sindhu Pani. About



115 pastors gathered for training here. These men are members of the Soura tribe who first heard the gospel from Canadian Baptists in 1902. From humble beginnings, they have grown to a movement of over 800 churches in three Indian states. However, most of their pastors lack training and were eager to receive the materials and training we brought to them. They too are veterans of the persecution in Orrisa. They too remain undaunted. Once again, our fellowship was sweet and the Holy Spirit evident as these men of God prayed for their communities and for the millions around them who are lost.



My time in India began with heavy rains and floods. It ended with the threat of a cyclone. After saying goodbye to the rest of the GTN Team, I traveled to Vijayawada to



meet with the leader of a large Christian ministry there before leaving India. People in Vijayawada were making preparations for a storm which

they assumed would destroy many of their homes. As it

turned out, the cyclone barely affected our area although it did great damage along the coast. As I departed from India, bound for another country and another training conference, my heart was full. God is building his church around the world and the gates of hell can never prevail against it. We feel greatly privileged and humbled to have a tiny role to play on the construction crew.



Faithful Believers Behind Enemy Lines



1996. I found believers willing to host evangelistic meetings attended by *thousands* in cities infamous for Muslim extremism. I found followers of Christ offering humanitarian aid to victims of natural disasters and sharing the good news of eternal life in Christ even though doing so could easily mean physical death. I was privileged to offer training to 120 Christian leaders here (twice the invited number). As it happened, the training took place

less than two blocks from the site of a recent anti-Christian riot which began with the shooting of two believers in broad daylight, and culminated in the destruction of Christian homes and businesses in the area. When I arrived at the training site the believers were already gathered and singing at the top of their lungs. They refused to hide their worship or to be cowed in any way. Their enthusiasm for their Savior is undiminished by the hatred they endure on a daily basis. Our time together was precious. The world is unworthy of saints such as these. They imparted far more to me than I to them. Yet they have a great need for a partnership with a ministry like ours. My host, the leader of the movement I have described above said to me candidly, "We know how to plant churches here, but it is time for us to switch our emphasis to the training of our pastors. If we don't, this whole movement will die out." It's a big challenge. Few training materials exist in the language spoken here. Further, ministry for an American

in this place presents many obstacles. Yet there is a great need and opportunity here. I am burdened for the people I've met. Please pray that God will make a way for GTN to bless these faithful soldiers of Christ serving behind enemy lines.



As many of you know, after ministering in India, I said goodbye to the GTN team and traveled on alone to a Muslim country which will remain unnamed here. One would hardly expect to find a thriving Christian movement in a place repeatedly and rightly described as a "hotbed of Islamic terrorism," yet God isn't limited by our expectations. In a place of *EXTREME* intolerance for Christianity, I found Christians who are part of a church planting movement which has successfully launched 327 churches since it began in



It's Christmas. Let's Celebrate!



I love Christmas. I can't deny it. I have about 150 Christmas songs on my iPod. I own thousands of Christmas lights. I love the tree, the stockings, the food, the Christmas cards, the food, the gatherings, the white elephant gifts, and the food. I actually like the crowds at the shopping malls. Now, I know what you're thinking: "sick!" Right? Nobody in their right mind likes the shopping mall crowds at Christmastime do they? Well, yes. I do.

You know, it's funny. I sort of expected to have some difficulty getting into the "Holiday Spirit" this year. The economy is still down. Our personal support is only coming along

slowly, and I've found myself in some pretty intense ministry situations among persecuted believers in more than one country.

But I have to tell you, I feel more like celebrating this year than ever before. When Jesus came into the world, his birth represented far more than the pleasant and pacific nativity scene with which most of us grew up. In truth, on that first Christmas, God invaded a world long dominated by the "prince of the power of the air." Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came to build His church, a spiritual

It's Christmas. Let's Celebrate! (cont'd)

edifice composed of the re-deemed souls of hundreds of millions previously lost and alienated from God. On that



day, a titanic battle was joined. Satan would not take Jesus' incarnation lying down. He would do all that he could to thwart God's purposes, but his efforts would only play into God's plan. Just as Jesus promised the disciples, the gates of hell will never overcome the church the He is building.

This year, I have been privileged to see the front lines of the battle first hand. In many Asian countries, I have been blessed to see Jesus' words being fulfilled before my eyes. Satan is throwing everything he has

against the church, but he cannot overcome the message of salvation in Jesus Christ which is winning tens of millions of hearts around the world each year. I've even been privileged to have a small part in this harvest by training over 600 pastors this year. Wherever I go, the story is the same. Where



persecution abounds, the strength of God's people abounds more. Where they try to stamp out the gospel, the gospel spreads. Where sin abounds, grace super-abounds.

This is worth celebrating! Sure,

the economy is hurting. Sure, many of us have difficult personal circumstances. But our God IS God! He has never yet failed. The promise inherent in Christmas is being carried out around the globe today. Jesus is building His church and we get to see it and even take part in it. It puts things into a different perspective. The evil so prevalent in the world WILL one day be a distant memory because Jesus came. The painful circumstances of life whether mere annoyances or serious hardships WILL one day come to an end because Jesus came. There IS hope in the gospel for every man, woman and child on earth because Jesus came. Why, it's enough to make you look at a crowd of people at a shopping mall...and celebrate.



Prayer Requests and Praises

Praise God for

- Strong results in India and elsewhere
- Ministry presented in 5 U.S. churches this month.
- 871 prayer supporters!
- 42% committed financial support.
- Opportunity to minister in Iowa.

Pray for

- Perseverance for pastors in persecuted countries.
- Growth in monthly committed support.
- Developing plans for 2011 ministries.
- Further open doors to present GTN in U.S. churches.

Year End Giving

Many of you have partnered with us this year by praying and giving.

Thank you for your generosity and love.

We hope that you will consider our ministry worthy of support as you do your year end giving.

"Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account... And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:17, 19)

Support accepted at:

Global Training Network
7558 W. Thunderbird Rd. Ste. 1
P.M.B. 449
Peoria, AZ 85381

(Please include a note indicating that your gift is preferred for the ministry of the Edmondsons.)

You may give online at:

www.inhisgriponline.org

Go to the "Support" page and follow the instructions for gifts preferred for the Edmondsons. You can also download an auto withdrawal form if desired.

We would love to hear from you!

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Please Visit our Website

www.inhisgriponline.org



The Edmondson's Itinerary

- Jan 10-14 TLTI Training, Miami, FL
- Jan 16 Yuma, AZ
- Jan 29 SWCBA Annual Mtg, Phoenix
- Jan 30 Kingman, AZ
- Feb 6 Palm Springs, CA
- Feb 13-28 Philippines