



PASTOR TRAINING INTERNATIONAL

Teach to Preach

The PTI trainers met up in Mumbai after travelling. They sent a very encouraging report on the three conferences in Mumbai, Manipur and Mirzapur.

We preached in different slum churches on the Sunday. We were being hosted by the Maharashtra Baptist Society and these churches were affiliated to them. On the Monday we shifted to the Vinalaya Jesuit centre, for our conference. This was a fourth-year conference and was well attended by over 43 pastors, church planters and ladies' evangelists. Some work in the city in established churches, some in slum churches and some are church planters in the interior of this vast state of Maharashtra. One man travelled 700km by bus to get to us. There was a very good appetite to study God's Word and the preaching workshops on the Old Testament were especially very well received.



We then travelled to Imphal in Manipur for a first-year conference. We were met by a pastor who first came to our PTI conference in Mumbai in 2017. He had been sent as a missionary from the Manipur: Naga Baptist convention to work in Mumbai amongst tribal workers. From the moment we met him, we were impressed by his godliness and vision to see his own people taught deep in the Word of God and preaching. He was so excited by the PTI teaching that he has been asking us to come to Manipur ever since 2017. So, it was with great excitement and anticipation that he met us at Imphal. He then drove us 2 hours into his tribal area, called Chandel. The tribal people in this area accepted Christ exactly 100 years ago and the Gospel transformed their animistic, warring culture. However, the churches have grown cold and nominal. Having said that, to see thousands of people walking to church on a Sunday with bibles under their arms was very encouraging!

We both preached in different churches on the Sunday and were hosted by a local pastor for lunch. As we talked with the men they told us how they had been travelling around the district for the past several months advertising PTI and encouraging the pastors to attend. They said that they were saddened by the cold, nominal, legalistic Christianity and the shallowness of the pastors teaching and preaching. Thus they had been praying much for the PTI program to start and were hoping that it would make a great spiritual impact on all the churches.

It was with a mixture of expectancy and trepidation that we started the program on the Monday. We were hosted by a local church. Many of the pastors who travelled in were hosted by church members, as were we. A team of members did all the catering as well. Cooking three meals a day, for over 100 people on open wood fires! The food was great, as was the fellowship.

Right from the onset there was an eagerness to learn from God's Word and we had very good conversations with different folks during the breaks. The preaching workshops were very new to them. Breaking up into small groups to study a passage in depth is alien in the Asian culture. However, they stuck to the task well and we had some great discussion times at the end of each workshop. People seemed amazed that they could dig deep into God's Word and actually find out what the Word of God was saying! Reading through the feedback forms at the end of the conference has been very encouraging. Repeatedly men have told us that this was such a useful learning experience for them and that they were going back to their churches determined to carry on studying the Word of God in a more systematic and deeper way.



On the last day each different tribe wore their distinctive tribal clothes and sang some tribal Christian songs. In all we had pastors from 9 different tribes and a group of Ghorka Nepali pastors. From the testimonies and feedback forms we heard the same things:

"Such deep teaching, so blessed, it has transformed my life and will transform my ministry. My church will be transformed if I preach and teach the Bible like this."

During the testimony time, one of the lady evangelists, KI Rahena, said the following: "I have had so many problems in my Christian life. My husband died young, leaving me with four small children. I have had a difficult life, with not much money, but I have served the LORD with the Gospel faithfully. I have struggled with so many questions in my spiritual life: Am I really saved? Am I worthy enough to go to heaven? Will I really see Jesus? Why has my hard been so painful? I stand here today telling you that in this PTI conference, all my questions have been answered by our wonderful teachers from his Word. I am going back to my village to testify of the Gospel of our blessed Lord Jesus with so much joy in my heart."

That was on the Thursday. On the Friday she spoke at her ladies' group and shared the gospel powerfully. That evening she had a massive heart attack and died. At her funeral, many testified of how she came back from the PTI conference with much assurance of salvation and joy in her heart. PTL! Steve and I did not realize that we were preparing a dear sister to enter into Glory so soon.



We wholeheartedly recommend that further training conferences in Manipur go ahead. Because of the need, the response and the partnership with the local Baptist churches.

On the Friday we drove to Imphal and flew to Kolkata (Calcutta) and then to Varanasi, in Uttar Pradesh. We had a weekend recharging our batteries in Varanasi and then drove to Mirzapur for our 4th year conference. Over 90 attended from the villages and towns of Uttar Pradesh. The education level is much lower in this area and so we had to target the teaching in a much simpler way. But again, the workshops were a great blessing. It was a joy to see people wrestling with the Scriptures and then discussing them. The testimony time was very encouraging. Some men testified to how they have started to systematically preach through a book of the Bible in their churches, since they started coming to PTI training. Each was given a Hindi translation of the David Jackman book; 'Teaching Matthew's Gospel.' These were very gratefully received by everyone.

We would like to thank everyone so much for their prayers and support.

