



## The Great Commission Fund

FRUIT THAT ABOUNDS TO YOUR ACCOUNT—PHILIPPINES 4:17

October 2023

### A GIANT LEAP FORWARD

BECAUSE OF YOUR GIVING,

**WE HAVE DRAMATICALLY INCREASED THE NUMBER OF SUPPORTED NATIONAL MISSIONARIES.**



*By Jon Nelms*

**What would you think if I told you that our Great Commission Fund has grown so much that we can now support all these men you see in the photo above?**

Tremendous, right? Yes, it would be, but that would be grossly misleading - and I don't want to mislead you.

Those men in the photo are not *all* the national church planters your offerings are funding. They are not the sum of all our preachers worldwide, our

preachers on a single continent, our men in one country (in this case, India), or even our preachers in one group (in this case, the State of Tamil Nadu). Incredibly, they are a group of 106 preachers, of whom 92 have just been approved for support—in one day! In fact, the purpose of this gathering, which took place on September 20-21, was to inform them that after years of planting churches with no outside help, they would *all* now receive a monthly stipend.

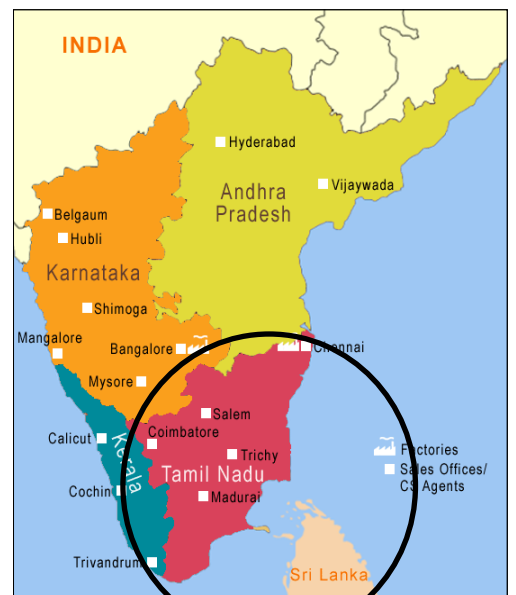
But a pastor's meeting for several days means that while we may have helped with food and transportation, they sleep on the floor.



All these men have been planting churches throughout the State of Tamil Nadu and have a passion for souls, discipleship, and church planting. As a result, their ministries multiply every month as each actively trains their Timothies to follow their example.

Much of this is possible because Pastor Thomas Maher has long operated a Bible College, initially funded by Evangelist David Wood, who is now enjoying the treasures he laid up above. Years ago, the ministry that funded these preachers closed; still, the men continued. Despite their poverty, they continued their evangelism, church planting, and discipleship of new preachers.

Pastor Thomas has asked to join our Final Frontiers team officially. Though we have been supporting him for several years, he is now registering our ministry with the government of Tamil Nadu and officially





becoming our National Director. And though each State of India has its own Director, it is prudent for us to have an official ministry office to deal with the accountability of the preachers and the legal issues of the State and Country.

If you are familiar with India, you know that it is run by a fanatical Hindu party that has curtailed the financial assistance of Indian preachers and churches by outside sources. Many house churches have been confiscated, and most have been officially closed. Those who continue to meet do so illegally. However, an upcoming election gives hope of restoring religious freedom to the citizens. Please pray about that.

Despite the government interference, the State of Tamil Nadu has defied the federal government. It is the wealthiest state in India and gives more revenue to the federal government than it receives. Not a few members of their legislature openly talk of secession and the formation of a new country, to which several other states have expressed an interest to join.

Politics aside, Pastor Thomas has trained students and returned them to their home states and countries. He now has churches in:

- Nepal
- Bhutan

- Bangladesh
- Sri Lanka
- Myanmar
- And almost every State of India

In the photo above, each student proudly holds a Study Bible that Thomas provided.

What you see in this photo is now officially the student body of our first accredited Bible College in India, which can now offer "umbrella" certification to all our Bible institutes in the country.

Why is this important?

Politically, the government has been shutting down churches whose pastors have no degree or no accredited degree. Now, as these institutes join our College, their diploma automatically becomes accredited.

Incidentally, we also have an approved Bible College in Pakistan. I will go there in November to officially dedicate the new campus.

I am not "big" on Bible colleges. In my experience, more gets done with individual pastors mentoring their students like Paul did with Timothy and others. However, a great leader and teacher sometimes rises, and students are drawn to him. After all, when

your pastor is sitting under the tutelage of such a leader, you want to sit beside him and learn with him. For this reason, we have these schools, but our desire is not to become an educational ministry. Our firm and unwavering purpose is to support national church planters and help provide for their needs. Period.

Having such institutions is not without problems. Recently, we received an email from Thomas stating the campus has become infected by snakes, including cobras. The students were nearly bitten while killing three, but four others escaped. The snakes had entered through a gap in the gate, so Thomas now needs to raise \$7,000 to patch the openings and install lights to keep the snakes away. (Can you help?) I would hate to lose one of these future pastors or future teachers due to the bite of a serpent.

In addition to all he does, including publishing a quarterly training and inspirational newspaper for over 19,000 pastors in his state, he also has a weekly television program that airs without conflict from the government. Eddie Wilson, the founder of Christian Media International, partners with us by paying the entire expenses of the broadcasts.

Thomas is an innovator, always looking for ways to expand the gospel's reach. When my wife Nolin and I visited him as COVID-19 entered India, he agreed to open a feeding center in one church where we would finance a meal every Sunday for each child in the village. I didn't realize it, but he decided to feed them every day and has been able to accomplish it somehow. Now, he has taken the feeding program to several other churches and uses it as an outreach when evangelizing unreached villages.

**With men like Thomas, I have learned you don't tell them what to do; you show them what can be done, and they take it from there.**

The photo on the next page reveals that he has outfitted a motorcycle with a kitchen/serving table. When the students invade a village, they offer food to all and then divide the adults from the children and preach Christ to the people in a manner they can understand.

Each team has several students to cook and pass out



the food. Then, an experienced pastor/teacher will provide a sermon for the adults. At the same time, another demonstrates how to reach and teach children effectively.

And so the Great Commission Fund continues to grow, and as it does, we can take on the support of more national church planters.

**India is a "closed" country of more than 1.4 billion souls. That means no American missionaries or British, German, Canadian, or Australian live there. If the land is to be reached, Indian pastors, evangelists, and missionaries must reach it. And if they, despite their poverty, are going to make an impact, they need a small supply from our abundance.**

That is what you provide with your Great Commission Fund partnership. Rather than helping one man in one place, your funds are helping hundreds of



men. They don't know you, and you don't know them. Were it not for the Final Frontiers GCF, you would not even know about them or have the opportunity to "lay up treasures above" by funding their efforts.

Thank you for all your prayers and gifts. Please spread the word to your friends and family and encourage your church to add our Great Commission Fund to its missions program.

If you want to be privy to more encouraging news, register at:

[www.Missions.World](http://www.Missions.World)

This is the Final Frontiers concise news site with reports from all over the world regarding all our ministries, including Touch a Life, Smugglers, etc.

Pray as we attempt to get our app approved.