

IN TOUCH MISSION

international

Monthly

1 January 2019

"Look at the nations and watch - and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told." Habakkuk 1:5

What We Can't Tell You

India

When ITMI's founder, **Bill Bathman**, visited U.S. churches and groups in between smuggling Bibles to pastors and ministry workers behind the Iron Curtain, he would tell them,

"I can't tell you where I'm going next."

"I can't tell you where I've been."

"I can't tell you his name or where he lives. But there's a pastor who needs... it will cost this much."

"I'll [risk my freedom] delivering it if you'll raise the funds for it."

Unfortunately, we can't tell you what ITMI's Director, **Steve Evers**, saw when he visited the Indian village inhabited by people stripped of all value and called "untouchable" by the rest of their countrymen, because many parts of it are too graphic.

We can't fully describe what happens when a society is isolated from the goodness of Jesus for generations and carries the cumulative devastation of evil and constant barrage of aggressive behavior, because this is a family-friendly publication.

But we can tell you that Steve and ITMI's [Paul \[last name undisclosed for protection\]](#) visited a village in rural India that desperately needs to know that they were created beautifully in His Image.

A group of people that don't understand that they live in a world twisted by sin, both systemic sins of oppression and dehumanization which they have been the victim of, and their own individual rebellion against their Creator.



"Parts of it are too graphic."



That the brokenness and separation from Him they experience isn't how their Creator intended the world to be. That the Almighty God has been working a plan throughout history to save the people He lovingly created.

That the One who has glory beyond measure became like them - a member of one of the lowest possible classes in that society - in pursuit of a loving relationship with each of them. That one day, He will return to gather those who follow Him from every tongue, every tribe and every nation to Himself.

They must know that the exclusion they experience now is nothing compared to what will be felt by those who didn't give their lives to Jesus.

They *need* to hear that they can be part of God's royal family, this cosmic celebratory feast. They must hear that He came to reverse earthly exclusion and that there is a place at His table for anyone who follows, no matter what

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caste, country or culture they hailed from on earth.

There's little to start with in this remote village of "untouchables."

Paul and his team will be starting their Spirit-led engagement by teaching and demonstrating the most basic but completely foreign truths. It will be a staggeringly huge task that will only find eternal results with God's necessary touch.

This daunting mission is not unlike what was faced by ITMI's **Sonja and Charl van Wyk**, ITMI's **Mark and Cindy Parris** and Dr. **Bradley Kuhn** when they began ministering in the marginalized settlement of **Stone Hill** in the early 2000s.

Stone Hill's culture and people were mired in dysfunction and demonstrated at every turn that they were highly averse to the messages of the Gospel. The basic Biblical concepts seemed beyond foreign. The youth appeared unresponsive to the outreaches. They stole from those who were ministering to them. Their mindsets didn't change after months of strategic and intentional investment. The needs, both spiritual and physical, were overwhelming.

But Charl, Sonja, Mark, Cindy, Bradley and their team started with small but regular demonstrations of the goodness of God. They met one need, then another in Jesus' name. They started with one weekly event.

Years later, Stone Hill has been referred to by someone from another township as a "Christian settlement." Once angry, bitter and sin-driven thugs are now becoming the local Christian leaders. New believers are thriving in discipleship - individually and communally. There are multiple outreaches each week, a Community Center, a Medical Clinic and an Early Childhood Development Center, all making resounding declarations: God is good. He loves you. Give your life to Him!

There are still many in Stone Hill who don't know Jesus, and much work remains to be done, but the township is a significantly different place than it was before the Lord led our partners to get involved by meeting one small need, then another, then another.



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From the Director



Dear Team: What Surprised Adi and Ema Last Month

A Happy New Year to you and your family!

New Year's Eve was always an exciting time in the Evers house when we were young. This New Year's quip pretty much sums it up: *"Youth is when you are allowed to stay up late on New Year's eve. Middle age is when you are...forced to."*

If one does a bit of investigation you can find many New Year's resolutions and quips that portray many views of this thing called New Year. One such defeatist quote goes like this: "Resolution for 2019 - No expectation...No disappointment!"

Peter Marshall once said, *"Small deeds done...are better than great deeds planned."* This is a reminder that our growth in the Lord and in His truth is much better actually "done" than just planned or talked about.

"Wherever you are, be all there. Live to the hilt every situation you believe to be the will of God." – Jim Elliott.

Jim did just this. As a young man he was martyred on a river beach landing strip in the remotest part of Peru, seeking to bring Jesus to a tribe that had never heard of God's love and our hope of redemption.

The great preacher, Charles Finney, once said, "A revival is nothing else than a new beginning of obedience to God." My desire is that I experience a revival in my own Christian growth this year, and may all who read this, far and near also ask and seek this revival in their lives.

This revival is something that our dear partners so want to bring, with God's help and merciful grace, to the many tribes and peoples that God has put before them. ITMI's [Adi and Ema Ban](#) just completed a long weekend marriage and family conference, not in their home country of Romania, but in a Romanian community in Spain.

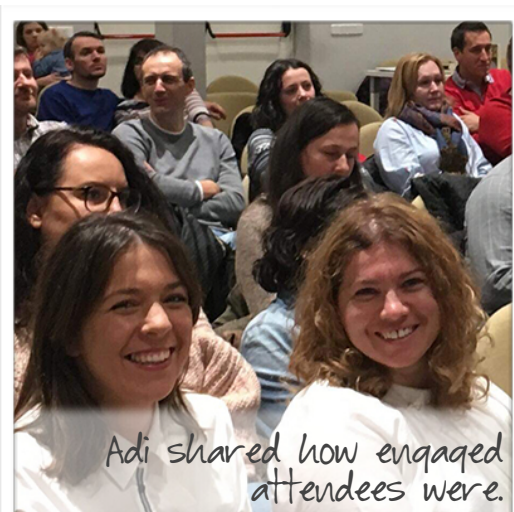
Adi tells me that there are many thousands of Romanians in Spain. He chuckled as he told me that the neighborhood that he and Ema ministered in felt like a part of Romania as everyone, even those casual bystanders walking down the street, conversed in his mother tongue.

What surprised Adi and Ema during this conference was the deep hunger to know how to be a more godly husband, wife and family. Adi shared how engaged the conference attendees were, and how personal and serious the "what-if" questions for Adi and Ema were. Many of the couples asked Adi, "...now there is time, are you going to come again before Christmas (that is Christmas 2018)?"

Adi wisely told them that they would need to implement and practice some of the lessons learned and then communicate the results before another level of growth was to be undertaken. Adi and Ema, ITMI's other partners in India, Africa, and Eastern Europe, are committed to carefully and faithfully putting the truths of God's Word out for those that are hungry and ready for revival.

Allow me to encourage you for all your "deeds done" in helping us reach the world with the saving gospel of Jesus. May this 2019 be a time that we recommit our efforts and recommit our obedience to God's leading and His Great Commission.

In His Service,



Adi shared how engaged attendees were.

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ITMI's Paul and Molly are inviting us to join them, to get in on the ground floor of this initiative to reach a group of people who have been excluded from knowledge of Him for generations. To be part of rebuilding shattered trust, opening the door, paving the way for the Gospel.

Paul and his team have identified the first need. This forgotten village needs some outhouses. This would give people living here privacy and dignity that they have never experienced and pave the way for ministry workers to begin working here.

So, dear believers and friends, we echo Bill's words.

If you'll help with funds, Paul and Molly will lead their team of Indian believers in the socially and politically risky, emotionally painful, physically uncomfortable and overall daunting-but-hands-down-worthwhile task of bringing Jesus to people who have languished for generations without Him.



Pssst! Want to know what we couldn't publish? Steve would love to share with you in person. Give our office a call.

For Praise

1. Poland - Bread of Life - Jesus glorified and needy families of sick children helped with two Christmas events last month.
2. Romania - Bans - Many opportunities to invest in Biblical marriages and families in Eastern Europe during December.
3. South Africa - Smiths - Project Christmas Blessing events at two schools yield opportunities to share Jesus with children.
4. Poland - Jim La Rose - New opportunity opening to minister to at-risk, impoverished children from tough family situations.

For Prayer

1. Poland - Gospel Joy/Gorskis - Opportunities for Andrew Gorski to bless many while visiting supporters in the U.S. this month.
2. Poland - BoL/Tomek Jezyk - Opportunities for Tomek Jezyk to bless many while visiting the U.S. this month.
3. India - Paul and Molly - The Lord's protection and will be done as Molly's visa continues to be under investigation.
4. Zambia - Tim Keller - Continued healing after major dental surgery, complicated by previous infections due to living in Africa.
5. Romania - Casa Dorca - The children's continuing education and motivation through emotional and developmental challenges.

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