

# Visit to Home Churches in India



Vijay

By Dan Beaty  
A Partner in OIKOS in USA

This story begins in 1997, when **Dr. Vijayaravan Karruppia** (known by us as brother Vijay) began seeking the Lord concerning his government's sending him to the U.S. for educational purposes. Out of several possible choices, he chose the Ohio State University in the city of Columbus. Upon arriving in January of 1998 he immediately began inquiring for like-minded believers with whom he could fellowship. The short of it is that we discovered one another by the internet and e-mail, which led to an eventual face-to-face meeting.

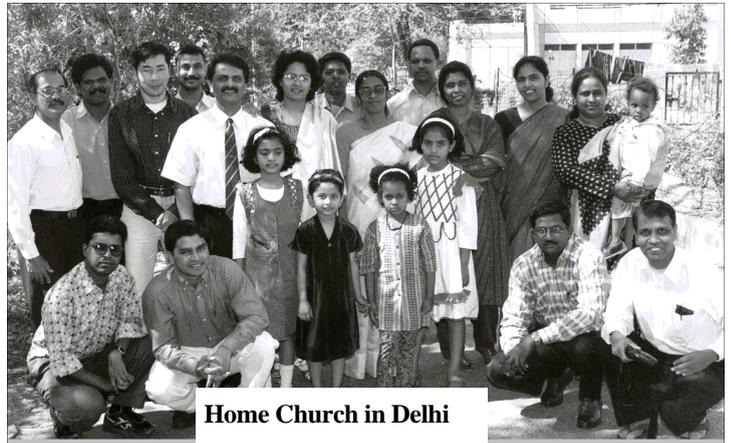
Immediately it became evident that the Lord had drawn us together for His greater purposes. For the remaining months of his stay, Vijay became a part of our home fellowship. It was a very blessed season in the Lord for us all, and many things were confirmed in Vijay's heart.

Soon after his return to India, a new home fellowship was established in New Delhi on the Pusa Campus, where this spring's conference would be held.

A little over a year later, I was challenged by a beautiful Chinese brother, Charlie Chen, to pray about going to India.

From that time on, the desire and belief began to build that God would send some of us to be with Vijay and the saints there. On his end, doors began to open up in one of the Southern states, and The Lord's direction began to unfold.

From Vijay's original invitation, the brothers in Columbus had only a time of fellowship and seeing India in mind. But later we came to understand that this was to be a time for strengthening the believers in the Home Churches, and equipping them for His service. Little did we realise the extent of this work, and very powerful witness of the Life of the Holy Spirit which all would experience!



Home Church in Delhi

I was especially impressed with how the children participate in the meetings, in the singing and being always ready to read out loud the particular passage of Scripture that we were discussing. Later Vijay's wife, Lalitha, shared her original concerns for the children. She was worried that the needs of the chil-

dren would not be met in so small of group. But in time she saw the Lord's provision for them, even beyond her expectations. While they are learning probably more than in the traditional

Sunday School, the blessing of the Lord goes even beyond that.

The Johnson's who have been separated in part from their parents after they left the Roman Catholic Church, found other

grandparents for their two daughters in the Body of Christ. Not only are they receiving love and attention from Vijay and Lalitha, but the Lord has also met part of their needs through Warren and Helen Peterson of the US, who visited them before me. Their thoughtful gifts and prayerful concern have earned them the title of 'grandparents', with these beautiful children! And don't forget "uncle" Dan from Ohio!

This House Church is strategically located on the university campus in Delhi, where Brother Vijay is employed as an



## Studying the Scriptures at the conference



The brothers and sisters that meet regularly with Brother Vijay have become very dear to me. It was such an encouragement to be with them for the four days of the conference.

agricultural scientist. Consequently, many nationalities were represented in this small 4 day conference held in his apartment. People from Ethiopia, Mongolia, Kenya, as well as from distant



**Vijay is seen sharing from Wolfgang Simson's new book, "Houses that Change the World," his thesis on the 3rd reformation through home/small group meetings.**

states in India were in the meetings. All had come with the expectation of receiving something from the Lord to take with them upon returning home.

The young brother from Mongolia was especially touched, as during this time he was delivered from Buddhism, and was later baptised by the church there!

There are some general misconceptions that Westerners have concerning Christianity in India. Christians are in the minority there, but the institutional church, and the institutional mindset continues to thrive.

This makes India very ripe for the recovery of New Testament practices and principles. The old restrictive concepts are now being challenged, so that the people themselves can have greater liberty in their meetings and their witness for Christ.

Everywhere I found a great hunger for the deeper truths of God's Word.

This hunger made our work very easy. Everything we shared was eagerly received, with a readiness to 'search the Scriptures to see whether these

things be so'.

After the first week in New Delhi, Vijay and I boarded a plane to Chennai, in the Southern state of Andhra Pradesh.

There we were greeted by his friend John, one of the sons of a well-known and respected evangelist in India.

He was particularly interested in the concepts of small groups and Home Church. But we were quick to Emphasise the centrality of Christ as revealed in the Scriptures as the only basis for church life.

After spending the evening and the following day with him, we left him some literature and boarded the train for Vijayawada. Upon our arrival at the



**The dedication service for a newly built mud-hut home/church in Andra-Pradesh**

station we were greeted by Brother Israel, an old friend of Vijay's from his youth. It was incredible in the way the Lord brought these two together with me after 20 or so years!

Soon we were riding in his "Gospel Jeep" towards the city of Guntur, visiting a village church on the way. Israel is a true servant of God with a shepherd's heart. Very few men of his calibre would be willing to dedicate

their lives to these materially poor, but spiritually rich children of God.

The impact of the jeep ride through these rural areas on me personally is difficult to describe. As I sit here writing this today, it is like a dream of living in the days of Paul and Peter. If you can imagine the millions of poor, and unenlightened precious souls scattered across this land that have yet to even hear about the love of Jesus!

And then to find these lone workers spending their days and nights caring for those scattered groups of believers, meeting in straw and mud huts, and unknown to the rest of the believing world! All of this adds new depth of meaning to the words of Jesus, "Truly the harvest is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harvest to send forth labourers into the field."

Well, truly that prayer is being prayed, and the Lord is indeed answering. During the four days we were in Guntur, the Lord sent labourers from a radius of many miles to be built up and encouraged and instructed. Vijay and myself, with Israel translating poured just about everything we had into them, considering the time limitations and the fact that we knew very little of what they had been previously taught.

From the looks on their faces and later feedback from Israel, we took it that the ministry was well received and appreciated. I pray that those things which were from Him will abide in their hearts and continue to strengthen them as they are sent with His Good News of the Kingdom of God to these many poor.

Included in that good news is that they are free from religious bondage to worship Him and to live together under His Lordship. May this wonderful news prevail in this great country of India in the days ahead!

**And from Vijay himself.....**

When my wife and I heard the voice of the Lord to leave our traditional church some years ago we felt like Abraham who started his journey by faith.

As we entered the territory which had not been glimpsed by us, we were afraid of unmarked path, and of ridicule and possible failures.

What bothered us was our small size of Home Church and also the loneliness due to our separation from traditional churches. What we did not know was God's wonderful plan of teaching us that church has to become small in order to grow big.

Dan's visit proved to us not only the bigness of heart of house church but also our nearness to millions of saints of Home Churches who are scattered all over the world. Dan had to travel thousands of miles and spend a lot of money just to be with a small group of saints who meet in homes.

The visit of Brother Dan to our Home Church conference, may be the first of its kind in the city of Delhi. It has been like a time of celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles in our midst as we have been experiencing Christ through one another. The new songs taught by Dan brought added joy to all of us. His testimony of his spiritual journey and his experiences with Home Church strengthened all of us.

Finally we bow down and worship the Lord Jesus Christ the builder of the Church, who has come to our city.

**(Vijay receives OIKOS via the Internet)****DID YOU KNOW?**

As well as India OIKOS is sent to -

- ◆ England
- ◆ Wales
- ◆ Scotland
- ◆ Ireland
- ◆ South Africa
- ◆ United States of America
- ◆ Canada

**Appeal from Rowland Croucher.....**

Dear Bessie

I visited a client in Ararat prison the other day, and in the conversation mentioned that our daughter Lindy has visited the Victorian women's prisons (Deer Park and Tarrengower) for 'friendship evangelism' most weeks for the last five years.

My friend's eyes filled with tears as he said: 'She will never know how incredibly important that is.' Later, as we prayed, he asked the Lord to bless the ministry of Lindy and her co-workers each week.

I am writing on my own initiative to ask for your help for this ministry. Two women - Marj Swales and Laurel Gore - are the full-time staffworkers for Prison Network Ministries (PNM).

This little - but very strategic - ministry, which originated with Campaigners for Christ, reaches into the hearts and lives (and families) of women in our goals.

In the Deer Park prison there are weekly 'Christian discussion groups' and craft classes, and monthly evangelistic services (attended by up to sixty women). In addition, these two women are available 24 hours a day to support women in crisis. (Lindy's role is to coordinate volunteers for the regular visits).

PNM has very limited funds, and the cars these women drive are leased. Both cars are on the road most days, visiting courts and prisons, transporting children to visit their mothers, and bringing women 'home' (actually many don't have homes) on their release.

The lease for one of the cars has just expired. A new contract would cost \$629 a month. I believe that's outrageous, and am asking individuals and churches to either write PNM into your missionary budgets, or make a generous one-off donation towards the purchase of a car, and/or ongoing support for PNM. Donations may be sent to -  
PNM, Box 46, Kerrimuir, 3129.

The aim of this letter is simply to personally endorse this wonderful ministry. Further enquiries may be made to Helen Walker, the treasurer (9899 0800).

Thanks, on behalf of those we are called to serve in prisons (see Hebrews 13:3: 'Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them').

Love and peace,  
Rowland (and Jan) Croucher

