

The need for a Gospel witness in the villages of southern India

India is the country with the largest population in the world. The current population is 1,415,310,956 as of February 10, 2023 based on Worldometer elaboration of the latest United Nations data. Almost 70 % live in rural areas. Many mission organizations focus on the metropolitan areas of India because of the massive numbers that live there, yet 70 % of the population live in rural areas. Most villages do not have an ongoing witness for Christ. Life in the village is not ease and is very different from life in the city. The villages have great spiritual as well as physical needs that touch all areas of life.

The answer are the promises of God

- John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that ***whoever believes in him*** should not perish but have eternal life."
- Romans 10:9-12, "because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart, one believes and is justified, and with the mouth, one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, '***Everyone who believes in him*** will not be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; ***for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.***
- Romans 10:13, "For '***everyone*** who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"

Therefore VOCM-AMERICA is joining in partnership with VOCM (Valathi Outreach Church Ministries) of India to plant churches in the unreached villages of southern India. VOCM is a registered charity of the government of India. The work of VOCM India includes Religious, Educational, and Social Work.

A guiding principle for choosing a village in which to plant a church is Romans 15:20-21, "and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, but as it is written, 'Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.'"

This fulfills the questions scripture asks in Romans 10:14-15, "How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? ***And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?*** And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!'"

1 John 3:16-18, "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed, and in truth."