EVANGELISTIC STRATEGY TO COMMUNICATE THE GOSPEL TO HINDU COMMUNITY IN MORRIS COUNTY

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In Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

By
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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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New Testament evangelism is emphasized as an urgent command specially communicated by Christ. Corresponding the gospel with the detached came naturally to the early Disciples of Christ. However, in recent decades, local Bible-believing evangelical churches have taken this command either lightly or have completely drifted away. If the church continues to ignore evangelism, the church loses its purpose for existence and results in a spiritually lost generation. Therefore, if the church of Christ will not prioritize evangelism efforts, it will not happen. The purpose of this qualitative study is to equip, mentor, and develop Christian lay leaders with the tools needed to share their faith with the Hindu population. To also encourage them to join and complete evangelism training workshops so they will be able to witness effectively. Without being intimidated by their Hindu friends. The Methodology of this study included questionnaires and surveys, which were distributed via U.S. mail and e-mail. Twenty participants completed the survey, which incorporated a Bible knowledge questionnaire, letter of the announcement, and schedule for classes being offered. The study showed volunteers lacked a theological understanding of the importance of evangelism as commanded in the Scripture. The training covered multiple topics relating to understanding the Hindu mindset and friendship evangelism. The researcher used data gathered from participants, and the findings showed all participants felt encouraged, equipped, and confident when interacting the gospel with Hindus. A pre and post-test were conducted to measure the attitudinal change in the area of evangelism and to bring awareness.

Abstract length 249

Keyword: Namaste: A respectful greeting in the Hindi language
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ABBREVIATIONS

ESV English Standard Version

KJV King James Version

NIV New International Version
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” 1 Peter 3:15.¹

Sharing the gospel with the unbelievers is the command given by Christ in Matthew 28:28. The Hindu community in New Jersey falls within that command so they can be evangelized by the followers of Christ as they obey the command of the New Testament. For this very reason, this community should not be overlooked. Christ gave his life for all, and salvation is available to Hindus. Therefore, developing an outreach strategy within the church setting will fulfill this command of Christ. Teaching the local believers of the importance of evangelizing will be the first step. Helping them to believe that following the Lord’s Great Commission found in Matthew 28:18-20 is the central mission of the church, and it is the responsibility of every follower of Christ. Henry C. Thiessen, in his inspiring work in Systematic Theology, identifies evangelism as the Lord’s plan and central mission of the church.

The Great Commission directs the church to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19; Luke 24:4648; Acts 1:8). The Scriptures do not direct Christians to convert the world but to evangelize it. That means that the church is a debtor to the whole world; the church is under obligation to allow the whole world to hear the gospel and to accept Christ. Not all the world will respond to the gospel call, but the church is duty-bound to give the whole world an opportunity to know about him and to accept his salvation. God is today calling out from among the Gentiles a people for his name (Acts 15: 14), and he does it through the church and by his Spirit. This is to go on until “the fulness of the Gentiles has come in” (Rom. 11:25). No one knows when that will be, but

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the New International Version Bible (NIV).
that is the definite objective of Christ in which the church is to participate. Evangelization begins in a study of needs (John 4:28-38; cf. Matt. 9:36-162 Matthew 28:19-12, and so every church should study missions. It finds expression in missionary intercession (Matt. 9:38), missionary contributions (Phil. 4:15-18), the sending of missionaries (Acts 13:1-3; 14:26; Rom. 10:15), and in going forth into the mission fields (Rom. 1: 13-15; 15:20).²

In Mathew 28:19, “make disciples.” The Great Commission instructs Christians to make disciples while they are in this world. The instructions to “go,” “baptize,” and “teach” are indirect commands. How are disciples made? By baptizing them and teaching them all that Jesus commanded. “Make disciples” is the primary command of the Great Commission. “Going,” “baptizing,” and “teaching” are the means by which the command to “make disciples” is fulfilled. A disciple is someone who receives instruction from another person; a Christian disciple is a follower of Christ, one who believes and obeys the teaching of Christ. A disciple of Christ emulates Jesus’ example, and believes in His resurrection, possesses the Holy Spirit, and lives to do His work. The command in the Great Commission to “make disciples” means to teach or train people to follow and obey Christ. The Great Commission requires Christians to share the good news until everyone has heard. These words were given to every follower of Jesus. If one is His disciple, he is commanded to go and make disciples of others. MacDonald makes an interesting observation of this passage; the responsibility rests on Christ’s messengers to teach baptism and to press it as a command to be obeyed. The commission goes beyond evangelism; it is not enough to simply make converts and let them fend for themselves. They must be taught to obey the commandments of Christ as found in the New Testament.³ McArthur gives a clear description of the Great Commission; it is a command to bring nonbelievers throughout the

³ William MacDonald, and Arthur L. Farstad. Believer's Bible Commentary (Thomas Nelson, 2016), 129.
world to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and the term the Lord uses in this commissioning is “make disciples.” The true convert is a disciple, a person who has accepted and submitted himself to Jesus Christ, whatever that may mean or demand. The truly converted person is filled with the Holy Spirit and given a new nature that yearns to obey and worship the Lord who has saved him. Jesus’ supreme command, therefore, is for those who are His disciples to become His instruments for making disciples of all nations. Jesus’ earthly ministry was to make disciples for Himself, and that is the ministry of his people.

The mission of the early church was to make disciples (Acts 2:47, 14:21), and that is still Christ’s mission for his church.”⁴ Since Christ is the head of the church, it is His divinely given responsibility to command the church in every aspect of its life and ministry. It is important to understand what God intends to accomplish through the preaching of the gospel to every creature. The gospel is preached so that anyone who believes may be saved. It is also God’s plan to call out “from every tribe and language, and people and nation a select group of people identified as the church (Revelation 5:8, 7:9) these are people who are saved through the preaching of the gospel everywhere in the world also has the responsibility to reach out to the unbelievers which include Hindus. Interestingly, in the Great Commission, Jesus not only commanded his disciples to go preaching and teaching throughout the world, but he also gave them a wonderful promise. The Great Commission became a great appointment to the followers of Christ by promising them, “Surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20)

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The early church missionaries understood the importance of communicating the gospel to people of different cultures. The communicator of the gospel needs to realize the importance of connecting evangelism to the culture. Chan explains the relationship between gospel and culture in two ways,

First, the gospel is transcultural because it is true for all cultures. In the Old Testament, God is the God of both Israel and the nations. In the New Testament, salvation is for both the Jews and the gentiles. The gospel is universal and normative for all peoples at all times and in all places. And yet, secondly, the gospel is not acultural, as if it hovers above culture and is devoid of any culture. Instead, the gospel is deeply enculturated, which is why we have to explain the Bible’s culture whenever we give a story or talk from the Bible. There is another aspect to the gospel-culture relationship. The person we are trying to evangelize is also enculturated. They are not a person who hovers above culture and is devoid of any cultural influences. Instead, this person is deeply enculturated. And this can vary widely, even within the same geographical area…Each would have different cultural concerns, gospel interpretation, cultural communication, and cultural application. Not only are the evangelized enculturated—so are evangelists. We, ourselves, as evangelists... are not free-floating people hovering above the culture, devoid of any culture. We are not acultural. We each have a cultural accent and a cultural flavor. We are deeply enculturated, and this will affect our understanding and application of the gospel.⁵

Like missionaries who evangelize tribes in Papua New Guinea or the streets of Mumbai, when they engage in evangelism, they need to understand that there is no form for presenting the gospel that hovers above a culture, devoid of culture. One particular form that speaks to one culture but may not speak to another culture. This does not mean the gospel itself changes, only the way that it is communicated to different kinds of people. The Scripture uses different methods of evangelism because people are different in their ideas and their thinking patterns. That is not to say the truths of the gospel are compromised, but the methods that are used are many. People come to know Christ in many different ways: it may be a logical understanding of the gospel, emotional circumstances, or experiencing the acceptance and love demonstrated by

⁵ Sam Chan, Evangelism in a Skeptical World: How to make the Unbelievable News about Jesus more Believable (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan (2018), 133-138.
Christians. So, the challenge is to evangelize using different methods, mediums, and entry points. One does not have to evangelize the same way that one was evangelized. The learning styles of the evangelist are not imposed on other people. However, evangelists need to take the calling seriously. “God uses our gospel presentations as natural means for his supernatural regenerating work. This keeps us humble about our abilities. But it also encourages us to keep doing the work of an evangelist, because, if God so wills it, he will use our words to move someone from death to life.”

The emphasis of the Great Commission is to “make disciples,” and this involves far more than simply leading someone to the Savior. Followers of Christ are supposed to make more disciples who live in obedience to Christ. One must spend time teaching and mentoring believers so they will grow and mature in the faith. (Hebrews 5:12-14)

**Ministry Context**

When participating in a mission committee at Grace Church, a question was raised by the researcher concerning what needs to be done to reach Hindu communities that are not too far from Grace Church which is only about seven miles from the Indian community. The answer that came back was resounding, “Yes, we would love to be part of an evangelistic outreach for them, but we just don’t know how to evangelize to them.” After a couple of meetings, it was decided to reach this group, and the ideal way to do that is to train people within a church/ministry setting. It was agreed that the church would make announcements, and people interested in this ministry area to contact the author. The pastor and the board were all on the same page and very supportive of this vision. The program will consist of workshops, home-group settings, holding a musical concert in the Hindi language, role-playing, and street evangelism.

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A handful has shown great interest and a deep desire to reach this group. One of the obstacles that have surfaced among the church group is not knowing how to evangelize to that group. The church has overlooked this great opportunity within its communities, and some are conscious of this great privilege of fulfilling the great commission. Interestingly, the church did not have any outreach or evangelism strategies in place to reach the Hindu community in Morris County. New Jersey has one of the largest Asian Indian populations on the East Coast, and this large population is mostly of a Hindu background. Very few, if any, churches here have an outreach ministry to reach the Hindu population. Grace Ministry, in which the author is a member and a servant leader, has a great burden to reach Hindus with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The strategy to reach Hindus for Christ within their community is to build lasting relationships. Once the church members are well prepared on evangelistic strategies to reach Hindu communities, they will start to feel comfortable reaching out to them. Some areas of preparation are to build a better understanding of the Asian Indian worldview, Hinduism, their culture, and the importance of friendship evangelism. Hospitality will also be significantly emphasized since it is such an important aspect of Asian culture and religion. Since the message of the gospel is universal to all men in every culture and cannot be compromised, effective methods of delivering it will be implemented. In the Language of Evangelism, Handman points out that some methods may not work with different audiences. Consequently, traditional churches may not send individuals to employ traditional evangelism methods such as door-to-
door evangelism or the distribution of flyers, handbills, gospel tracts, and other religious material artifacts.7

Local Hindu Community

Many Hindus in this community own or manage small businesses such as grocery stores, Indian restaurants, motels, and gas station businesses, while some groups are in different professional disciplines such as information technology, medical, and law. Today, Oak Tree Road is known as “Little India,” a booming ethnic business district, which runs about 1½ miles in central New Jersey and attracts South Asian customers from Maine to Maryland.8 They remain highly religious; most have their shrines in their homes of their favorite god or visit their temples locally when possible. Hinduism is growing in many forms; its influences are penetrating throughout society, especially locally in Morris County. Temples are being erected in a number of conspicuous locations, and at present, the researcher noticed two churches are being replaced by Hindu temples. Hinduism is a belief system of many gods with the freedom of worshiping any god. Christian evangelists may have some opportunities to penetrate the gospel in a Hindu person’s heart since Christ is also God, although not the only one God in their Hindu religious viewpoint.

Often Hindus are industrious people who come from India and work hard to accomplish their professional goals here in the United States. They are culturally, and community-driven people, and family is the central part of their lives. They feel comfortable within their


community who speak their language or dialect and understand their culture. Therefore, because a large percentage of Hindus live in this area, they feel they do not need to go outside of their community which is their comfort zone. However, this author has contact with many Indian friends, and it is often heard amongst them that they miss living in their own country and feel alone in the states. Even though some of them are financially secure and have reached their financial goals, the writer sensed that there was an unsettling aspect of peace in their lives while communicating with multiple Hindu friends. The older generation, in particular, seems to feel very disconnected from the younger generation who were born in the US and have acquired a different way of thinking culturally. The sense of isolation and the persistent sense of being in transition provide some opportunities for the gospel into both generations. The young who work with Christian believers in businesses or corporations are exposed to the gospel in the lifestyles of Christians. The older generation who treasures good friendships and a sense of community can lead to friendship evangelization with time. The younger generation, who were either born here or came to the United States when they were young, have adopted the Western culture. Although they are open to the gospel, they are also exposed to the radical individualism and anti-Christian sentiments that permeate the culture here.

Participants of this outreach project will be blessed to be part of this Great Commission opportunity to this unique group of people who are at their doorstep. They will be fulfilling and obeying the command of Christ by taking the step of faith outside of their comfort zones. This will help followers of Christ in the following ways. First, it will help them to grow spiritually by trusting the Lord and, in return, will strengthen their faith and give them confidence by the power of His Spirit when witnessing. It will also help them to build relationships and understand other cultures. They will realize that cultures are only man-made, much like their own, but the power
of the gospel penetrates far beyond any culture men are capable of creating. This project will

guide volunteers in building strong relationships with people of other religions and
understanding why sometimes people misunderstand the Christian faith. This strategy will be to
prepare the volunteers well, and the author himself will take the lead first in evangelizing to the
Hindu community first as others will observe him. The plan is to do this during the Hindu
festival, when the largest population of Hindus is visible.

**Problem Presented**

The problem is that the Hindu community in Morris County is not being reached with the
gospel of Christ. Often local pastors have lamented that there is nothing being done to evangelize
to this group in Morris County, and nothing concrete happens beyond prayers and the earnest call
for workers to harvest the field. The local Hindus have been overlooked from hearing the
message of salvation and the eternal life of Christ. And having lived here for many decades, they
have built businesses and worked locally; most of the first-generation now have children who are
birthed and schooled in the United States. The local church still has not developed a method or
strategy on how to reach Hindus with the gospel. Will McRaney states that “The church in
America is failing to impact the pool of people who do not claim to possess a personal
relationship with Jesus Christ.” Indeed, for several successive generations, the local church has
experienced great difficulty in retaining their youth upon graduation from high school. If the
truth be known, there is difficulty too in retaining adults who are on the church membership
rolls. Somehow the great message and God-given preferred lifestyle are not being communicated
and lived out in a manner that is attractive even to those on church membership rolls, never mind
outside the church. There is a battle being waged, a spiritual war where the eternal destiny of
generations is at stake. The fear is that a false sense of security and complacency has lulled
Christians into thinking that it is a time of peace. On other fronts, Christians are fighting the wrong enemy, namely amongst themselves and their younger generation, amidst the onslaught of liberal agendas set by the post-Christian culture. The challenge is to storm the gates of hell with the only message that can rescue people from the most horrific thought and reality – eternal separation from God.⁹

It is every Christian’s responsibility to share the Good News wherever he or she goes. Jesus said, “If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up the cross and follow me” (Matthew 16:24). William Fay reasons that evangelism is not about bringing people to Jesus or “winning souls,” but it is about obedience, motivated by faithfulness.¹⁰ Fay counters Christians about their “sin of silence” by pointing out that only five to ten percent of Christians shared their faith in the past year.¹¹ He argues that there are two groups of Christians; those who talk to the lost and those who only talk about the lost.¹²

Ministering to the Hindu population will not only fulfill the Great Commission of Christ given to his disciples; but will also help build strong relationships within two different cultures. Having church congregants participate in the teachings on how to minister to Hindus in their community will give them confidence when ministering to them. It will also help them to understand another culture and how to relate to their spiritual needs. A deep desire to minister to the Hindu community by the local church is evident, but evangelism tools are lacking for disciples of Christ. Understanding the mindset, culture, and the religious beliefs of Greeks as

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¹² Ibid, 8.
Paul should be modeled by the Disciples of Christ everywhere, every time they reach out to groups outside their communities. Upon discussion with local Christian leaders, they agreed to fully support this project.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this action research thesis is to train Christian volunteers to evangelize the local Hindu community. This paper will describe the most effective ways to minister to the Hindu population. This will be done by informing how the Hindu population is growing in the United States and the world and the critical time of evangelizing them. The paper will share insights about their culture, religion, and strategies on how to evangelize to this unreached people group in Morris County. Based on the problem discussed and analyzed, one might suggest that to be “a truly missional church involves deep reflection on culture and discovering creative ways of communication and church practice that both adapt to the culture and challenge it”\textsuperscript{13} This project will also examine why the Hindu community has been neglected from hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ. This will be done in the local church by recruiting volunteers who have a burden to evangelize to the Hindu community. The initial class will be held, and volunteers will share why they have been hesitant to minister to Hindus either in their communities or their workplace. Classes on how to reach Hindus within their communities will be held. Such classes will focus on evangelism, Hindu culture, and understanding their theology. After these classes, arrangements will be made to go to a large cluster of Hindu communities and share the gospel within their context.

\textsuperscript{13} Timothy Keller, *serving a Movement: Doing Balanced, Gospel-centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 30.
The researcher of this paper will take with him a couple of volunteers to see how he evangelizes, and volunteers will only observe at this time. Then another trip will be set up with the same people, and they will be allowed to evangelize to some Hindus while the researcher of this paper observes them. The purpose of this training would be to prepare them to witness to the Hindu population and to eliminate the fear of witnessing while building confidence. Prior classroom training earlier also taught them about Hindu theology and culture, which will be a major contribution to the hands-on witnessing they will experience. The purpose of this phase was to give them self-assurance and hands-on training on how to minister to Hindus. Another purpose of this project is after the first group is ready to evangelize and feel comfortable, they can recruit more volunteers and train them to do the same, so the program will continue to run effectively within the church.

**Basic Assumptions**

There are some assumptions made in conducting this thesis project. First, there is a great need to evangelize to the Hindu community in Morris County, and there is very little being done. Furthermore, it assumes equipping Grace Ministry volunteers to evangelize to the Hindu community will create confident, mature, and informed Disciples of Christ. It assumes many people are unaware of the importance and command were given to Christian to reach the detached within their community. It assumes that if people are well aware and provided the tools to reach this people group, the fear of evangelizing will be reduced. The tools are seminar, homegroup training, and shadowing street evangelizing, just to name a few. This project presupposes other churches may also be motivated by fulfilling the great commission by reaching the Asian Indian population for the kingdom. The researcher is aware this project will not reach all people, but the hope is to reach as many as possible and bring positive heart change.
Definitions

1. **Bhagavad Gita**: A section of Mahabharata epic, often printed separately and esteemed as the greatest Hindu Scripture, dated between 200 BC and 200 AD.\(^{14}\)

2. **Bhagavan**: God, the blessed all-glorious one.\(^{15}\)

3. **Bhajan**: A spiritual song.\(^{16}\)

4. **Bhakti**: Devotion. (The most popular of the ways to attain salvation.)\(^{17}\)

5. **Brahma**: The creator, manifestation of universal soul or essence of all things.\(^{18}\)

6. **Caste System**: A social division mentioned in the Vedas that has at later stages developed into a rigid hierarchy based on birth.\(^{19}\)

7. **Dharma**: Duty is the way into should live who wishes to attain Nirvana.\(^{20}\)

8. **Guru**: A spiritual teacher, in the highest sense, and treated as God.\(^{21}\)

9. **Hanuman**: The monkey God, Ram`s loyal devotee.\(^{22}\)

10. **Jnang**: Knowledge gained by meditation and one of the ways to attain salvation.\(^{23}\)


\(^{20}\) Ibid.


\(^{22}\) Ibid. 104.

11. *Karma*. Law of cause and effect, active in the moral realm. The principle that rewards or infallible follow every deed, which determines a person`s caste in his present lifetime. Reincarnation supposedly continues a soul`s process (or regression) through the various castes.\(^{24}\)

12. *Krishna*. An avatar of Vishnu, or the appearance of supreme God on earth; supreme teacher in Bhagavad Gita.\(^{25}\)

13. *Mahabharata*. The great epic home of India and their sacred book.\(^{26}\)

14. *Mandir*. Hindu Temple.\(^{27}\)

15. *Maya*. Illusion, the doctrine that the visual world is an illusion that lines the reality of absolute oneness.\(^{28}\)

16. *Moksha*. Release, salvation.\(^{29}\)

17. *Mukti*. Salvation.\(^{30}\)

18. *Puja*. Worship of the gods.\(^{31}\)

19. *Samsara*. The cycle of reincarnations.\(^{32}\)

20. *Veda*. The most ancient of Hindu Scripture, Vedas are hymns.\(^{33}\)


\(^{26}\) Ibid, 109.

\(^{27}\) Ibid 108.


\(^{30}\) Ibid, 171.


\(^{32}\) Ibid, 74

\(^{33}\) Richard, *Rethinking Hindu Ministry*, 112.
Limitations

This thesis project looks at the need to evangelize to the Hindu population in Morris County. The problem confronting the community is the Hindu population continues to grow without hearing the gospel. The tools on “how” to evangelize to this group are not available to those who have a burden for their Hindu neighbors. The purpose of this thesis is to prepare church volunteers through seminars, literature, and whole groups so they will be equipped to evangelize to their Hindu community in Morris County.

This thesis project is limited in its scope since its primary focus is to train volunteers to reach the Hindu community. Only time will indicate how many volunteers will sign up and stay with the program. Some may have a great desire to evangelize, but the fear of street evangelizing and cultural barriers may discourage them from continuing. Since building relationships with Hindus takes time and patience is very much needed. The author will design a program for laypeople, and each gender will be trained to evangelize to its kind, especially since it is a culturally sensitive situation.

A second limitation will be that the Hindu community is large, and trying to reach everyone is outside of this project scope because of time and geography restraints.

A third limitation the researcher understands, it is impossible to develop a program that will fit every person’s needs and tailored to a specific style of evangelism. While it is limited to such things, the importance of realizing these limitations is central.

The fourth limitation the researcher may have no control over is due to the global pandemic of COVID-19; many churches are closed. Recruitment efforts can be challenging, and some ministers may decline to participate because of distance issues related to COVID-19.
Delimitations

The researcher selected a few people who already had exposure to the Hindu community and spoke the language and understand the culture. This research was limited to adult males and females over the age of 18, who also had a burden for this group and were able to be flexible on weekends, if possible, to evangelize in the Morris County area.

Thesis Statement

If the church volunteers at Grace Ministry learn how to evangelize, then many Hindus may come to know the Lord. Christ`s first instructions to his new followers in the first chapter of Mark were, “Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.”\textsuperscript{34} Volunteers at Grace Ministry will not only obey this command from Christ but also fulfill it by learning how to evangelize to the Hindu population if they continue to be part of this. It will benefit them greatly because the two cultures are from completely different mindsets and belief systems, and to have all cultures united together in Christ will be a great testimony to everyone. The strategies that will be shared with them will not only be in theory but will be very practical. They will have an opportunity to evangelize to Hindus within their community and their workplace since many Hindus live in urban areas where they have their community, stores, and restaurants. It may be helpful to break the ice for some volunteers to just observe and get a feel for culture and people or have lunch before evangelizing in these areas. This program is going to be unique because of its twofold training theory and practical combined as one. If this project is successful, the writer of this paper believes training more local church leaders and congregants for future ministry in reaching Hindus for Christ may be established.

\textsuperscript{34} Mark 1:17, King James Version (KJV).
CHAPTER 2: Conceptual Framework

Literature Review

This chapter presents the Biblical and theological basis for evangelism to Hindus. The Bible makes it clear the urgency and the responsibility of evangelism for a follower of Christ. A Christian who has had personal experience with Christ may understand and often have a deep desire to share the love of Christ and recognize the importance of evangelism. On the other hand, understanding other belief systems at the basic level is crucial if a Christian is to understand sharing the gospel with people of other religions. In his book, Synergistic Evangelism, Robinson critiques various evangelism methods and elements of evangelism to meet the needs of different people in different places as the first missionaries did who heard the message from various backgrounds with their unique needs.\(^{35}\)

This section deals with the accelerated growth of the Hindu population in the United States. The author describes the urgent need to share the love of Christ with them. Since Hinduism has diverse beliefs compared to other belief systems, it is outside of the scope of this paper to encompass all the beliefs of Hinduism. Therefore, this discussion is limited only to the basic and major tenets of Hinduism that are relevant to the topic. The emphasis is also given in the area of understanding Hindu philosophy and its fundamental beliefs, their idea of God, Hindu sacred religious books, and effective ways to witness. The theological Framework builds its case upon the Scripture as its foundation.

\(^{35}\) Darrell W Robinson. Synergistic Evangelism (Bloomington, IN: Crossbooks, 2009), 18.
Migration of Hindu Presence in the United States

Shattuck presents a thought-provoking history of the global migration of Hindus from their homeland, as he points out, in two waves. “There have been two waves of Hindu emigration in the modern period. The first occurred during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the nineteenth century, the quest for work caused Indians to emigrate to Burma (Myanmar), Sri Lanka, Malaysia, South Africa, the Fiji Islands, and the West Indies. By the 1920s, approximately two million Indians were living abroad, mostly in British colonies and dominions. Most of these emigrants were indentured laborers. Despite discrimination, lack of educational facilities, and high mortality rates, they prospered in their new environs. Usually, they lived in ethnic communities where they could follow the traditions of their homeland. Temples were established, and priests (not necessarily Brahmins) were employed to perform traditional rituals.

The second wave, which gained momentum in the 1960s and continues to this day, is made up of middle-class, educated urbanites. These city folks are migrating to the urban centers of the United States, Great Britain, Canada, and the economic centers of Asia like Singapore. They are professionals, doctors, engineers, and computer programmers, seeking economic opportunities because there are not enough jobs in India for all her college graduates. Unlike the refugee immigrants of Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia, these middle-class Hindus do not settle in ethnic ghettos. They move into suburban areas where there are good schools for their children. Most of these immigrants quickly gain middle-class status in their new countries, largely due to their education and the ability to speak English.”

As of 2010, there were about 1 billion Hindus around the world, representing 15% of the global population. The number of Hindus around the world is projected to rise to nearly 1.4 billion in 2050. This increase will roughly keep pace with overall population growth. As a result, Hindus will remain fairly stable as a percentage of the world’s population over the next four decades, at about 15% in both 2010 and 2050.\textsuperscript{37} Since the changes to U.S. immigration laws in 1965, the American ethnic and religious landscape has shifted dramatically. The truism that the U.S. is “a nation of immigrants” is no longer just a cliché and has become a very diverse nation, which created diversity in culture, language, and religious beliefs. Walk down the street of any major city, and one is likely to overhear conversations in any one of several languages.

How did the United States reach its present level of multireligious diversity? The advancement of information technology within a few decades played a big role in bringing qualified professionals and engineers to the United States. Numrich gives a brief insight into this trend,

Two major social trends that either began or intensified in the 1960s have significantly diversified the American religious landscape in the early twenty-first century. Restrictive immigration policies that had been in place since the 1920s were relaxed, and historical preferences for European immigrants were set aside. From the 1950s to the 1990s, European immigration dropped from 53 percent of the total immigrant flow to a mere 15 percent, and Asian immigration increased from 31 percent to a substantial 78 percent of the total. The Asian increase accounted for most of the growth in America’s non-Christian population, particularly in the numbers of the three largest non-Christian groups: Muslims (mostly from the Middle East and South Asia), Buddhists (mostly from East and Southeast Asia), and Hindus (from India and countries with secondary Indian settlement).\textsuperscript{38}


According to the world population review, India, not surprisingly, has the largest Hindu population in the world of 1.053 billion, comprising 79.80% of India’s total population. The United States has the seventh-largest Hindu population in the world of 2.23 million, comprising 0.70% of its total population. There are over 2 million Hindus in the United States, primarily on the East Coast, in such states as New York and New Jersey. Presenting the saving knowledge and love of Christ to them would benefit the kingdom of God and help fulfill the Great Commission of Christ. It is God’s desire for followers of Christ to communicate the grace, love, and forgiveness of sin to the Hindus because He wants them to also experience Christ as 1 Timothy 2:4 declares that God desires all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. This may be a great opportunity for local believers as it seems that the mission field is right here in their backyard waiting to be harvested.

Defining Hinduism

A believer needs to make an effort to be an effective communicator of the gospel if he wants to reach out to the Hindu population for Christ. Having a basic understanding of their religious belief would be beneficial when ministering to a Hindu. Hinduism may be the religion most misunderstood by the Western world. Explaining where Hindus live around the globe and approximately how many live in the United States is a much easier task than defining Hinduism and what they believe. Hinduism is not always easy to define because of its diversity of faith and practices when compared to other belief systems. Even though some fundamentals are universal to all Hindus, such as reincarnation, karma, three major gods, and Hindu scriptures, on the other hand, culture is absolute for Hindu people. Everything, especially spiritual ideas, is evaluated

based on how it will affect their present way of life or culture. In Western culture, ideas are absolute. They stand alone and are evaluated according to their own intrinsic truth. For the gospel bearer, understanding that culture is more powerful than ideas to Hindu people, and it is a significant clue as to why gospel ministry among Hindu people is frequently difficult. Hinduism is so intertwined with the culture that at times it is difficult to separate one from the other, and perhaps that may be the reason tolerance and flexibility exist in Hinduism.

Hinduism is more than a religion in itself, it is a way of life, and the Hindu culture is one that revolves around love and respect for others. Culture, then, is the conceptual design, the definitions by which people ordered their lives, interpret their experiences, and evaluate the behavior of others. Everyone is born into a particular social context and family. A Hindu person is no exception to be born into social context and family. Subsequently, culture is so intertwined with the way Hindu person thinks it affects everything in their life including their worldview and their everyday function of life. For instance, respect for elders is the foundation of Hindu culture, which many Hindus abide by and take it seriously. This is often shown by giving a senior member of the family a seat to sit down and a younger person standing. It is rare in Hindu culture for the younger person to be sitting down while the older standing or younger sitting next to his right. Someone younger never addresses an elder by his or her first given name. Even a younger brother will not address an older brother by name and refer to him as Bhai. (Brother) Indians are a close-knit family and try to live with reverence for each other. This


is evident in Morris County, where a large Indian community lives and still holds on to their traditional culture, which is treasured deeply. An important thing that can make or break a relationship is the trust factor in Hindu culture. In cross-cultural experience, trust is even more important but also more difficult for several reasons.\(^\text{42}\) Trust is built differently in different cultures, but most people build trust somewhat intuitively, without thinking. As indicated earlier, this trust is intertwined with the all-encompassing culture of Hinduism. It is a common practice to live in extended families since the family is an important building block in Hindu culture because relationships are highly treasured. In the Hindu belief system, \textit{dharma} (Duty is the way one should live to attain moksha) is always fulfilled in relationships, so doing one’s duty is fulfilling one’s dharma. Perhaps it is the best way of describing the Hindu way of life.

Hindu Culture

Gender roles are very distinct. Women manage the house, finances, and family, while men are the breadwinners and family heads. As the modern world continues to influence the younger generation, things are slowly changing, but it is still common today when a wife gets married, she lives with her husband’s family. Arranged marriages are common among the Hindu population; often, it is the parents of both sides who decide for their son and their daughters. Since this area is a large population of Indians, it is very common to see them with their own culture and speaking their dialects if one is to visit an Indian community or store. There are many Indian stores and restaurants here owned by Indians, which cater to Indian people and people of different cultures and religious beliefs. Hindu temples are where people can go and worship their gods to have their spiritual needs met.

Hinduism is the third largest religion in the world, and over 80% of its Hindu population lives in India. It claims to have no beginning, no human founder, no decisive creedal statement or dogma, no central authority or organization, and no set pattern of worship. Hinduism has often been described as the most tolerant of all religions. And this is true of the vast majority of Hindus. They believe with all sincerity is always of belief are equally valid. If one visits a Hindu temple or cultural association, one will be warmly welcomed, invited to see what goes on, and invited back. A common saying among Hindus is, all rivers flow into the same ocean, so all thoughts flow into Hinduism. It also welcomes all religions within its hospitable mention and shaping them to fit its own form. For the Westerner, this may be a little confusing, but for the Hindu mindset, it is a very normal and systematic way of thinking. Interestingly, when compared and contrasted with other religions, Hinduism includes a system of traditions and beliefs on spirituality, but unlike other religions, it has no clerical orders or principle religious authorities. Hindus have the freedom to hold any kind of belief pertaining to their gods or deities. Which can include monotheistic to polytheistic, from atheistic to humanistic, and tolerance of any beliefs is what makes Hinduism exclusive in its nature.

The Hindu Concept of God

The word Pantheism comes from the root Greek words, *pan* (everything) and *theos* (God). Pantheism is the belief that the universe and everything in it is identical to divinity, or in other words, God is an impersonal being that exists in everything. Similarly, polytheism comes from roots poly (many) and *theos* (God). Therefore, a person who believes in many gods is a polytheist. Therefore, Hinduism is tolerant or relative, and it embraces both pantheism and

polytheism. Hindus can choose to be monotheists, polytheists, pantheists, atheists, agnostics, dualists, monists, or pluralists. Religious truth, according to Hinduism, is not conceived necessarily in dogmatic terms because truth transcends all verbal definitions. Consequently, Hinduism represents an astonishing complex conglomeration of doctrines, cults, rituals, practices, observations, and institutions.**44**

Since Hinduism in its nature is inclusive, for the Hindus, the possible religious views are virtually infinite.**45** With such an accommodating worldview, Jesus is often blended in with other Hindu deities in the mind of a Hindu. For instance, Indian lawyer and anti-colonial nationalist Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, also known as Mahatma Gandhi, responsible for leading the successful nonviolent campaign for successful for India`s independence from British rule, did not believe Jesus is the only begotten son of God. Gandhi would say, “God cannot be the exclusive Father, and I cannot ascribe exclusive divinity to Jesus. He is as divine as Krishna or Rama or Mohammed or Zoroaster.”**46** Hindu perceptions about God are diverse and capacious, which make up many names and forms. For Hindus generally, the purpose of religious belief and devotion is to cultivate a relationship with the Holy, the source of benevolence and blessing as well as of death and difficulty.**47** In some ways, God is perceived as a mystery that is willing to be unveiled. Hindu philosophers explain God as the Ultimate Reality, whom they called *Brahman* in the Sanskrit language. It is difficult to describe God because he is without qualities.


So, thinking about God can be very abstract and challenging. As indicated, Hinduism is multifaceted in its belief-system and is classified as a pantheistic because it believes in Brahman's impersonal deity. Brahman is impersonal, whereas most monotheistic religions conceive their deities on the model of the human personality.\(^{48}\)

Bickel and Jantz make an important point; as Hinduism developed, most of the early Hindu deities disappeared (no one knows where they went) and were replaced by three primary gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva.\(^{49}\) Hinduism has found room for many deities, and there are an estimated 330 million gods worshiped in India.\(^{50}\) When questioned about worshiping many gods and goddesses, some Hindus have suggested that images or idols are only a visible aid to the one alternate reality meaning, Brahma. Hinduism in the United States teaches that God is an impersonal divine essence they call Brahma. Among the most important Hindu gods are Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the preserver, Shiva, the destroyer.\(^{51}\) Brahma is the chief God who created everything. Hindus see Brahma as the Ultimate Reality as being an impersonal oneness that is beyond all distinctions the impersonal force of existence. Vishnu is kind and compassionate and understanding; he is believed to have come to earth here in various incarnations. Some Hindus believe that Vishnu assumes a human or animal body and visits here on earth as a savior in times of hardship. Some Hindus have even gone as far as incorporating Christianity and making Christ the avatar of Vishnu. Shiva is often portrayed with six arms, three eyes, and a blue throat to

\(^{48}\) Dennis Lardner and John Carmody, *Ways to the Center: An introduction to World Religions* (Belmont CA: Wadsworth Publisher, 1984), 92.


present his role as destroyer, the giver of wisdom and giver of fertility. The third eye signifies higher insight, and the blue throat results from swallowing the full cup of human sins. Most Hindus give primary worship to one or a few gods while they acknowledge the existence of others. Ultimate reality is one, but it manifests itself in countless ways. Each is valid in its own way, for its own situation. One cannot limit God to only one manifestation at any particular time, place, or perspective, says one Hindu. There is much flexibility with Hindu gods, and there is no set creed or format on how to worship the ultimate reality. In the mind of a typical follower of Hinduism, God is a mystery that is to be unveiled and beyond all imagining and impossible to describe in human terms and conception.

Interestingly, some may have spoken and indicated Hindu religion has a Trinity; nevertheless, this cannot be compared to Christianity. While Hindus believe in three central deities (among the 330 million), such as Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the preserver, and Shiva, the destroyer, but they are not worshipped in the same way everywhere in India. Brahma is not worshipped as a major deity, while Vishnu and Shiva have followers and temples dedicated to them. Hopfe expands and clarifies the role of Brahma,

Brahman, who is the ultimate reality, is at the core of Hindu thought. He is one and undivided. Yet postclassical Hinduism sees him in terms of three forms or functions. These three, called the Trimurti, are creation, preservation, and destruction. Each of these three functions of Brahma is expressed by a god from the classical literature: Brahma, the creator; Vishnu, the preserver; and Shiva, the destroyer. Devotees of any of these gods tend to see all of the functions of Brahma in their chosen deity.53

53 Hopfe et al., *Religions of the World*, 104-105.
Hindu Worship (Puja)

Most Hindus worship every day at their home and have a specific place for their shrine altar. A shrine can be anything, a statue or a picture of a deity. At their shrine, Hindus make offering to (*Murti* statue). The primary way of worshiping God or goddesses is through *bhakti*. The purpose of *bhakti* is to establish a close relationship with the deity. This is also done to gain favor or bring good luck from the deity. By doing this devotional worship of these deities, often the goal is also to reverse the karmic cycle of reincarnation. Some of the common ways to strengthen the intimate relationship and bring good fortune with the deities are to sing to them in a genre called *bhajans*. These gods and goddesses are treated with high dignity and respect. It is not surprising to see some worshippers worship the deity through adornments which are also a form of devotion. Some *murti* or shrines may be adorned with a small set of clothing. Some deities may prefer a different kind of ornaments such as precious metals and stones like pearls or diamonds. Most Hindu people are religious and have their favorite deity. Depending on the need of the worshipper and the experience he or she had with the deity. “The more common interpretation of the *murti* is that it is a literal embodiment of the deity. The deity is willing, through his/her grace, to take this manifestation form, a form which is dependent upon the worship of the devotee, in order to make him/her assessable to the devotee.”

Hindu Scriptures

Hinduism has no simple canon of Scripture like the Bible. Most Hindus are acquainted with only a small percentage of voluminous books considered scriptural. The ultimate canonical

authority for all Hindus is the Vedas. The oldest of the four Vedas is the Rig-Veda, which was composed in an ancient form of the Sanskrit language in northwest India. Rig Veda is a collection of over 1000 poems traditionally dated from around 1000 B.C. Aryans migrated to the Indus River Valley (from which India got its name, though the river is now in Pakistan), bringing their faith in the various deities seen in Rig Veda. The roots of what is now called Hinduism are traced to historical interaction between the Aryans and the ancient Indus valley civilization.\textsuperscript{56} Rig Veda is by far the most important of the four Vedas. The Sama and Yajur Vedas draw almost all their material from it. The fourth, the Atharva Veda, is generally accepted to be later in origin.\textsuperscript{57} The Rig Veda is the fountainhead of Hinduism and is appealed to as an authority by almost all Hindus. In practical terms, however, the Rig Veda has a little influence on Hindu life and thought today as the book of Leviticus has on Christians.

The other Hindu Scripture is called Upanishads, and “Vedas” can refer to either the four collections of hymns or to the hymn collections and Upanishad together.\textsuperscript{58} The Upanishads specially set the tone of high spirituality and mysticism that distinguish Hinduism in general. The Upanishads consist of mystical and mysterious texts on the nature of spirituality, consciousness and knowledge, and wise sayings. The two great epics, the \textit{Mahabharata} and the \textit{Ramayana} are the two stories of India. The Mahabharata tells of the war between the Pandava brothers, led by their cousin Krishna, and their cousins, the Kauravas; it is a story of the conflict of good and evil. It also consists of other stories and parables. It is the longest epic poem in the world, with

\textsuperscript{56} Richard, \textit{Hinduism: A Brief Look at the Theology}, 15, 19.
110,000 pairs of successive verses. The Ramayana tells of the journey of Rama to recover his wife Sita after she is stolen by the demon Ravana. Mahabharata is more like an encyclopedia with multiple subjects and different authors. While Ramayana is another long poem, though much shorter than Mahabharata, containing 24,000 verses in seven books. The incident depicted is said to have taken place before those of the Mahabharata though it was written down there. Mahabharata includes the most famous war story of Bhagavad Gita. (The story of Ram as an example of obedience to good moral conduct)

Bhagavad Gita, dated between 200 BC and 200 AD, is a section of the Mahabharata epic, often printed separately and steamed as the greatest Hindu Scripture. The Bhagavad Gita, or the “song of the blessed Lord, “is often printed as a separate book, although it is one section of the great Mahabharata epic. Bhagavad Gita occurs in the sixth book of the Mahabharata and contains 700 verses divided into eighteen chapters. It is a common practice among Hindus to refer to it as Gita, and it is read perhaps more than any other Hindu Scripture. Technically the Gita is not a Vedic Scripture, so it is not of the highest authority. Traditionally, however, it is accepted as a systematic summary of all that is best in the Vedic literature. In practice, it is the central Scripture for understanding the rudiments of Hindu philosophy.

Important Hindu Holy Days and Festivals

Hindu festivals are often spectacular affairs that contain more than ritual performances. They are times of merriment and joy as well as times of solemnity. However, ritual and worship are part of festivals as temples are usually involved in festivals. Many thousands of local

festivals take part in half a million Hindu India villages, but the following examples depict the most widespread portraits of the festivals.

**Diwali**

The Festival of Lights, Diwali, which occurs on the new moon in the month of Kartik (between October 15 and November 14), is nearly a pan-Hindu festival. It is celebrated by decorating houses with lights, wearing new clothes, and setting off firecrackers. In some areas, this is considered a new year’s festival. The lamps and loud noises are ways to drive away misfortune and make room for Lakshmi, the goddess of good fortune, to reside in the home for the coming year. Merchants start new account books on this day and, in agricultural areas, cultivators worship the freshly harvested crops and offer sacrifices of goats and sheep.

**Shivaratri, the night of Shiva**

This festival is celebrated in Marga (November—December) by Shaivas and by those Vaishnavas who consider Shiva to be Vishnu’s first devotee. On this night, the lingam (a symbolic representation of the male organ denoting creative power.) is bathed in honey and milk.

**Holi**

Holi is a boisterous festival held in Phalguna (February—March). In a carnival atmosphere, people splash each other with colored water and powders. According to the legend that explains Holi, there was once a demoness called Holika who ate a child every day. One day a monk suggested that all the people gather together and meet the demoness with a barrage of

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insults and abuse. As a result, Holika died of shame and anger. Traditionally, Holi is a day when social roles are set aside, and people may fling insults at each other with impunity.

**Pankuni Uttiram**

This is a southern festival dedicated to the god Murukan. There is a major celebration for ten days in March—April, during which the deity from the hilltop Palani temple makes a car procession all the way around the bottom of the hill. Devotees who have made vows to the god, especially in relation to petitions for healing, join the procession.

**Krishna Jayanti (Krishna’s Birthday)**

Krishna’s birthday is observed all over India in the month of Shravana (July—August). After a day of fasting, the birth is celebrated at midnight, the hour in which the Lord was born in the prison house at Mathura.

**Rakhi Bandham (Rakhi Day)**

It falls on the full moon in Shravana (July—August). Girls and women tie colored threads to their brothers’ wrists. This ritual is to protect the brothers and to remind the men that they are their sisters’ protectors.

**Naga Panchami (Snake’s Fifth)**

Mostly a south Indian festival held in the month of Savan (July—August), this takes place during the monsoon season when snakes seek refuge on higher ground and the number of snake bites increases. Women draw pictures of snakes on the walls of their homes and offer them milk and flowers. The snakes are asked not to harm the members of the family.

**Ganesha Chaturthi (Ganesh’s Fourth)**

During Bhadrapada (August—September), Ganesha is invoked and worshiped for several days.
Navaratri (Nine Nights)

A harvest festival dedicated to the goddess Durga celebrated for nine nights in Ashvina (September—October).

Dasara (also called Dussehra)

Symbolizing the victory of good over evil, the tenth day of Navaratri is usually celebrated to mark Rama’s triumph over the demon Ravana, as recounted in the Ramayana, the one who abducted Rama’s wife, Sita.

The Hindu Concept of Salvation

Hindus believe in the doctrines of Samsara (the continuous cycle of life, death, and reincarnation) and Karma, the universal law of cause and effect. For instance, whatever a person sows so he shall reap, and person’s past life affects their present life. Salvation for a Hindu is called Moksha. Moksha is when an enlightened person is freed from the cycle of life and death, which is the endless cycle of death and reincarnation, and comes into a state of wholeness or completeness, only then become one with Brahma or God. The word Moksha is mainly used by Hindus, and the word Nirvana is mainly used by Buddhists, but the meaning is the same.

According to Hinduism, the Atma (soul) dwells in every living being. Death is that of the body and not of the soul as the soul is immortal. When a person dies, the soul enters a new body, and depending upon its karma in the past life, it gets a new body and undergoes happiness or suffering again. This cycle continues until the soul attains salvation when one attains freedom from the cycle of birth and rebirth. Attaining salvation is the ultimate goal of a Hindu’s life. In Bhagavad-Gita, Lord Krishna has described many ways to attain salvation. It is important to know that only human beings can get salvation. One gets the human body when the soul has traveled through 8,400,000 species. Hence, one should utilize this birth to attain salvation.
Although there is no need for one to become ascetic to attain salvation, that is a very famous way. In any case, it is not possible for everybody to denounce normal life and become an ascetic.\(^{62}\)

Four Paths to Reach Moksha. (Salvation)

1. The Way of Action: Called *Karma*, requires followers to give up self-centered action and instead focus on helping others. A Hindu following this path makes many personal sacrifices in the course of his life. This can also involve carrying out religious ceremonies, duties, and rites.

2. The Way of Knowledge: Called *Jnana*, is sometimes considered the opposite of the Way of Action since the latter focuses on life in the material world while the former is about life in the spiritual world. This path leads followers to salvation through the study of Hindu teachings. Through this meditation, a follower of the Way of Knowledge realizes their own identity as it relates to Brahman, the principal Hindu god.

3. The Way of Devotion: Called *Bhakti*, entails acts of worship as a sign of devotion to any Hindu gods. Salvation is reached through acts of worship. This path teaches purely selfless devotion without seeking anything in return, and the individual surrenders his will to the god or goddess he worships. This is the path recommended in the Hindu sacred text, the Gita.

4. The Royal Road: The use of meditation and yoga techniques. Hindus do not always include the Royal Way, called *Raja*, as one of the principal paths to salvation, but many Hindus still believe it is valid.

Each of these ways to earn salvation in the Hindu religion requires that each person follow these principles. As most major world religion except Christianity and Hinduism is no exception, it is through human effort that salvation is attained.

Methods of Evangelism to Reach the Unreached

Evangelizing to Hindus goes back to some of the earliest times of the church. According to an ancient tradition, the Apostle Thomas was the first to carry the gospel to Madras, India. There were some sporadic efforts to establish a church in India before the classical missions’ era, which dovetailed to the colonial period.

In the twentieth century, outreach to Hindus has taken on many forms while also responding to the fact that Hindus have migrated to many parts of the world and taken their religion with them. On the whole, Hindu Indians have responded to the gospel more readily than their Muslim counterparts. It is estimated that about 3 percent of the population of India is Christian at present.

The key to a Christian witness to Hindus (as is true in various ways for all groups) is to engage the person, not the person’s religion. Because Hinduism, in general, does not stress humanitarian efforts, outreach projects centered on works of mercy, such as educational facilities, hospitals, or leprosaria, have had great success. In the face of the perplexity engendered by the diversity of Hindu beliefs, the assurance of truth and salvation evidenced by Christians has spoken to many Hindus. Loving relationships that do not recognize the boundaries of caste or social station have led a number of Hindus to find Christ. And finally, sensitive Christian outreach to Hindus has demonstrated that Jesus Christ can free people.

People of other religions are not our enemies, and sometimes believers miss the big picture of sharing Christ with them. They may have completely different doctrines but
remembering greater real cosmic powers are responsible. Knowing this should help us to look at them from Christ’s perspective. Reminding oneself that people of other beliefs are not the real enemies, and the real battle, as Apostle Paul said, is not with human beings, but against “the cosmic powers of this present darkness” (Eph 6:12). McDermott makes an excellent point that believers of other religions are not enemies; that means patient persuasion, not a hostile argument. It means loving witness to others who sincerely believe they have the truth.

We may believe they have been deceived by spiritual forces, but we must first acknowledge that we don’t have complete possession of the full truth either. No doubt we are also deceived to some extent- even though we know that the Christian faith is the final reality to which all other faiths should eventually lead. Having access to the true God through Christ does not mean complete possession of the truth since we are finite and sinners, belonging to a church that is still growing in its understanding of Christ. This likewise means that we need to share the gospel with more respect and sensitivity. 63

For many people, the fear of sharing Christ is very real, they have the burden to tell their friends or loved ones about Christ, but there is also the fear of rejection. A person may say, what if someone asks? How will he or she respond when they ask a difficult question that one cannot answer. This may be true when ministering to people of other religions, especially Hindus, in this context. Understanding people’s culture, mindset, and religious views are crucial in being an effective witness to reach Hindus for Christ. Evangelism is conducted within human cultures and is supported by knowledge and understanding of cultural context. 64 Since Hindu culture and its religious beliefs cannot be separated, the ambassador of Christ needs to make an effort to understand the basics of their cultures before ministering to them. Moreau makes an insightful

63 Gerald R. McDermott, God’s Rivals: Why has God allowed Different Religions (Downers Grove, IL IVP Academic, 2007), 165-166.
suggestion relating to the culture and its importance when ministering to people of a different culture.

Perhaps there are some returns to learning the culture because culture occasionally can bypass their religious philosophies or culture. It is so closely related to Hindu philosophies that one can have twofold benefits by getting familiar with one or the other. The mission is God’s project, and he graciously allows Christians to take part in it. Developing relationships with people of other cultures take a long time.  

Numrich explains in *The Faith Next Door*, “Evangelism is about God’s love and a deep desire to share his relationship with those who are detached from Christ. Friendship is understanding culture, you know when to take off your shoes, all of those things, learning the basics of what [another] culture respects, things that might offend.” The idea is not to build walls between that person and oneself by not understanding anything about them. If there are fewer walls, then they are more willing to listen to what one has to say about one’s faith. As in all evangelistic outreach, relationship plays a critical role when presenting the gospel. Friendship evangelism has been very effective in reaching Hindus for the gospel. However, there are some objections by Hindus that may make them hesitate to embrace the Christian faith. Some suggestions may be helpful when ministering to Hindus in one’s community.

Several cultural factors might prevent Hindus from accepting Christ. For the reason that Hinduism is intertwined with culture, Hindus often feel they will have to reject their culture before accepting the Christian faith. Indian families are very close to families, and when one family member embraces Christianity, it affects the rest of the family. Often there is also spiritual and cultural pride among some Hindus. They justify the longevity of Hinduism and its

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culture, so it prevents them from considering the Christian faith. In their thinking, if their religion is the oldest, it automatically qualifies it to be a true religion. On the other hand, the theology of apologetic can be a great help for a believer when witnessing to a Hindu as Toren indicates, “The fact that apologetic arguments across cross-cultural and worldview boundaries can never be conclusive does, however, not being that it cannot be rational.”67 That is why it is always preferable to persuade when witnessing to Hindu through apologetics than to get into a philosophical debate with them. The genuine and consistent Christ-like life is an important factor in sharing the gospel with Hindus as they may observe from a different perspective. It is also vital that one should know what to say and what not to say. The reason for this is the deep misunderstanding between Christians and Hindus. In their mind, Christianity reminds them of the white man’s religion because of Great Britain ruling India. So, the goal is to break down the walls and build positive witness for Christ by building relationships first is always crucial when possible.

The following are a few suggestions for an effective way to reach Hindus for Christ:

**Please Do Not**

- Criticize or condemn Hinduism. There is much that is good and much that is bad in both Christianity (Such as the infamous Crusades) and Hinduism as a system.
  
  Pointing out the worst aspect of Hinduism is hardly the way to win friends or show love.

- Share Christ, not Christianity; some may have misunderstandings about Christianity. Perhaps, because of British ruled India for many years, in their mind, Christianity is a Western colonial religion.

- Do not get into arguments or debates on points where one must disagree. Try to find some common ground not only theologically but at a personal level.

- Never give the impression that separation from family and cultures is necessary in order to become a follower of Christ. Do not encourage them to leave their religion, at least during the initial stages, but allow God’s Holy Spirit to work in their life.

- Do not speak quickly of hell or that Jesus Christ is the only way for salvation. In the Hindu mindset, it is a very difficult concept to understand that Jesus is the only way to heaven. Since they have many gods, Christ is just one of those numbers. One points to the Lord Jesus so that it is obvious He is the only way, but the Hindu to see and conclude this for himself rather than to be forced upon him.

- Never be in a hurry for a conversion. If done too quickly, it can cause harm but allow the Holy Spirit to work in that person’s heart and in His own way. At times it can be a slow process.

- Never try to bring in Christian theology to force ideas into Hindu scriptures. One must be faithful in interpreting the word of God when compared to scriptures of other religions. It can hurt the credibility of the Christian scriptures; for example, many Hindus may believe Vishnu god is the incarnation of Jesus.

- Avoid all that even hints at any sense of personal triumph and pride. Remember that one does not have all knowledge of all truth. (1 Cor. 13:10) That will come across as arrogance as if one has all the answers neatly tied up. Hindus appreciate it when one
acknowledges there are things that one still does not understand. One is on a spiritual journey and does not have all the answers, but one has found peace and joy in Christ, which is ultimately the goal of any spiritual quest.

Please Kindly Do

- Witness to Hindu people with great sensitivity. The more that one knows about one’s Hindu friend, the more one will help him or her to come to appreciate the significance of following Christ. And because there is so much diversity of belief and practice among Hindus, it is vital that one knows the friend’s particular tradition. Questions need to be sincere and respectful because it is easy to detect impatience and hidden motives that will put the friendship in tension. Questions should be about his or her family and way of life, not just about her beliefs.68

- Share one’s testimony will be very appealing. And feel free to pray with the friend to whom one is ministering; Hindus are comfortable with public acts of devotion. Be careful how the gospel is explained; for example, being born again to a Hindu is the failure to attain salvation as the Hindu friend will be thinking about reincarnation. Some helpful key theological differences are explained in the next section.

- Ask them about their religion so that one is free to share one’s perspective as well. Be wary that there are many diverse ideas that need to be explored and explained. As stories in the Bible are related, particularly stories of the Lord Jesus, their understanding will slowly grow. Most Hindus are spiritual and enjoy talking about spiritual things, especially Hindu stories from their scripture or family.

- Build relationships and spend time with them: If a Hindu friend invites one to their home, one must consider that a great honor. Invite them back, and it is very respectful to ask about their religious or dietary restrictions. It is a great place to find common ground in what is delicious.

- Be there in times of need: This will be concrete evidence to them regarding the friendship that is in place.

- Live out one’s faith in a consistent Christ-like manner; one’s life is one’s witness. If one is not serious about growing as a disciple of Jesus, Christ will not be visible to the Hindu friend. One can pray and look for opportunities to share one’s heart’s desire with the friend. After a good relationship has been established, one can invite them to a non-threatening Christian event, such as a music concert, carnival sponsored by the local church or Christian organization, but be careful and sensitive as these may be foreign to them; expect to accept the friend’s reciprocal invitation to the temple rituals and festivals.

In dealing with seemingly irreligious or misguided religious stances, an inherent strength in postmodern times is the belief that every person’s perception is valid. With this belief comes an openness to explore and investigate the worldview of others. The flexibility of Hinduism should not be a hindrance but an opportunity for a disciple of Christ to obey the Master’s command to love others. Asking about their belief system and talk about common beliefs such topics as love for mankind, helping the needy, and gently introduce subjects where one might differ. Likewise, the relational aspect of preaching will be reflected in deeper sensitivity and

respect to the listeners.\textsuperscript{70} One must always keep in mind to be respectful and to avoid getting into any arguments.

- Being aware of Hindu festivals and holidays can be an effective tool to reach out to a Hindu (as noted above) and sending them festive and healthy greetings further strengthens the involvement in their lives. Hindus treasure the holidays highly and often are in good spirits. It may be a beginning of a new friendship too, since it is common for them to invite their friends for a festive gathering.

Make time to pray for the people being evangelized, and pray with them if possible. It is also beneficial to hear what they have to say about Christianity or criticism they may have about other believers. This can be an opportunity to correct them in a very gentle and respectful way.

Keeping in mind the ultimate goal is to build a friendship and not to win arguments. Hindus are good philosophers too, more so if they are steeply into their religion, reflecting the long traditions and the deep, all-encompassing nature of Hinduism.

**Comparison Tables between Hinduism and Christianity**

The following tables will help the evangelist understand the divergent ideologies and the cross-cultural nature of the two belief systems.

Building bridges is not always an easy task between Christianity and Hinduism, but it is crucial to understanding the basic beliefs of Hinduism if one desires to share the gospel with the Hindu. For instance, both religions believe in one main God; although Hinduism has many gods and goddesses, Brahman is considered the chief god by most Hindus, and this can be the starting point of conversation.

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid., 66.
Table 1. Comparing Hinduism and Christianity\textsuperscript{71}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hindu Teachings</th>
<th>Christian Truths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>God</strong></td>
<td>Hindus believe in one main god, called Brahman. Some Hindus pick one god to be their own special god. But Hindu teachings tell of many gods. Hindus are said to have millions of gods.</td>
<td>There is one God. “The Lord our God, the Lord is one!” (Deuteronomy 6:4).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship</strong></td>
<td>Hindus do not believe that their gods are like fathers to those who worship them.</td>
<td>Our Father, God, loves us as His children. “I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:18).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Holy book</strong></td>
<td>Hindus respect many Hindu writings. The Vedas are a collection of sacred writings. The Bhagavad-Gita is a respected book of stories.</td>
<td>The Bible is the Word of God. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life after death</strong></td>
<td>Hindus believe in <em>reincarnation</em>—the belief that after people die, they can come back to life again as other people or animals. <em>Karma</em> is the belief that the way someone behaved in a former life determines what they will be in the next life.</td>
<td>After a person’s life on earth ends, there is a judgment. “It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). Believers enjoy unbroken fellowship with God for eternity. (See Psalm 16:11.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salvation</strong></td>
<td>Salvation for Hindus means freedom from being reborn again and again. They believe they become part of their main god when their cycle of birth and death ends. Some of the ways Hindus try to get closer to this “salvation” include rituals, good works, meditation, yoga, and the worship of gods.</td>
<td>The only way to eternal life is by God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table below illustrates the differences between Christianity and Hinduism on some major doctrines of each belief system. In some ways, it can be beneficial when ministering; it will keep the evangelist aware and informed by understanding their worldview and their mindset from their point of view. The more informed one is on Hinduism, the more effectively one can tailor their presentation of the gospel when ministering to a Hindu.

Table 2. Differences Between Christianity and Hinduism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Christianity</th>
<th>Hinduism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature of God</td>
<td>Monotheism: Infinite and personal</td>
<td>Pantheism (Belief in many gods) Impersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
<td>Creatio Ex nihilo: Latin for “Creation from nothing,” creation came from a direct act of God</td>
<td>Cyclical creation: Creation occurs and reoccurs forever; creation came from preexisting materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personhood</td>
<td>Our personhood is a first-person experience of reality</td>
<td>Our personhood is an illusion (maya); we are part of the impersonal God; Atman is Brahman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afterlife</td>
<td>Grace and eternal life; we will experience other persons in heaven, including friends, family, and God himself</td>
<td>Karmic law and reincarnation; finally rejoining the impersonal deity, Brahman; this has been compared to a pinch of salt being added to a glass of water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Dignity</td>
<td>All persons have inherent moral worth because Christ died for all people (John 3:16; Galatians 2.20), and all people are image-</td>
<td>All human persons have different value because of previous lives; the caste system states that some deserve human aid, while others do not</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Problem of Evil

The Problem of Evil
Evil is humanity’s problem because all sinned (Romans 3:23)
Evil is God’s problem because creation is inherently askew (or evil)

Some Hindus believe Vishnu is the incarnation of Christ; perhaps, using this as a conversation starter may be considered but cautiously. The ultimate goal would be to build a bridge, not to insert or compromise the deity of Christ, as described in the Holy Bible. One such example of building a bridge would be in Hinduism avatars that point to a way by which the Hindu devotee can attain enlightenment over a period of many lifetimes. In contrast, Christ points to Himself to receive everlasting life. See the differences below to help navigate this useful but somewhat complicated and nuanced conversation with Hindus.

Table 3. Vishnu and Jesus: The Differences Between Their Incarnations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vishnu</th>
<th>Jesus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At least ten incarnations (some claim more) in both animal and the human form</td>
<td>One incarnation in human form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While the stories of the <em>avatara</em>, <em>or</em> incarnations, of Vishnu, might have a core of truth, their historicity is not essential, for they are primarily mythical in nature. If it were shown that there was no historical basis to the stories, it would have no effect on their meaning and influence. One Hindu tradition even asserts that when the <em>avatara</em> walked, they left no footprints</td>
<td>The historicity of Jesus’s life is very important to the veracity of Jesus’s claims and to the salvation that He accomplishes on our behalf (1 Corinthians 15: 17; 1 John 1:1-3). If Christ did not actually live, die, and rise from the dead in history, then Christianity is built on a lie, and the gospel is without foundation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

73 Rochford, “Comparing Hinduism with Christianity.”
The purpose of Vishnu’s incarnation was “for the destruction of evildoers.”

(Bhagavad-Gita 4:8; Edgerton, 23)

The purpose of Jesus’s incarnation was to see and to save what was lost (Luke 19:10) “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him” (John 3:17; see also John 10:10).

The avatars pointed to a way by which we can attain enlightenment over a period of many lifetimes: “but striving zealously, with sins cleansed, the disciplined man, perfected through many rebirths, then (finally) goes to the highest goal” Bhagavad-Gita 6:45; Edgerton 37, emphasis added).

Jesus points to himself as the way by which to receive eternal life immediately (John 6:29,40; 10:9-10.11:25-26;14:6).

Vishnu incarnates periodically as an avatar when the need arises, and then the avatar dies and is reabsorbed back into Brahman. Hinduism makes no claim concerning the bodily resurrection of the avatars.

Jesus’s incarnation was a unique event. His sacrifice was “once for all” (Hebrews 9:26-28); He died and rose from the dead, and His individual identity is maintained before, as well as after, the incarnation.

Since there are more differences in all world religions than similarities, Hinduism is no exception. On the other hand, contrasts can help a person think for themselves when being witnessed to. It may help the person to think logically since true religion also has to make sense logically. For example, Miracles in the scripture do not make sense logically because miracles are outside of logic. On the other hand, the purpose of the sacrificial death of Christ, when taken as a whole within the scriptural context, makes logical sense.

Table 4. Hinduism and Christianity Contrasted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hinduism</th>
<th>Christianity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
<td>Impersonal</td>
<td>Personal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

75 Rochford, “Comparing Hinduism with Christianity.”
Karma is a very important concept to all Hindus since both are moral concerns to a person of both religions. Speaking on Karma is a great starting point when ministering to a Hindu. Forgiveness of sins is close to the heart of every devoted Hindu, since they are working toward reaching Moksha (Salvation).

Table 5. Karma and Sin Compared and Contrasted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Similarities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both involve moral issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Both affirm the existence of a cause-and-effect relationship between our actions and the results they produce in our lives (see Proverbs 11:18, 22:8).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eternal fellowship with God; that person is fulfilled in a loving relationship with God</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

76 Rochford, “Comparing Hinduism with Christianity.”
Karma (Hindu Concept) | Sin (Christian Concept)
---|---
Karma does not affect one’s relationship with *Brahma*, which is the essence of existence within all things. Whether one’s karma is good or bad makes no difference to the fact that we are unconditionally extended from the oneness of Brahma. | Sin does affect our relationship with God in that we become alienated from Him. One of the attributes of God is absolute moral holiness, and our sin reveals an attitude of rebellion against His moral authority.

The law of karma, which makes morality like a law of nature, does not allow for the possibility of forgiveness. Its consequences are inevitable and inescapable. | Because God is personal, and because persons can *forgive*, God can forgive us of our sins. Moreover, he has done so through Jesus Christ.

The following tables will help the evangelist understand the divergent ideologies and the cross-cultural nature of the two belief systems.

Table 6. Theological Bridges for the Gospel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Theological Bridges for Communicating the Gospel</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>i. BRAHMAN:</strong> As we have seen Brahman, the Ultimate Reality is one behind many gods of Hinduism. This supreme Brahman is in the nature of the Spirit. Brahman remains changeless. Likewise, in Christianity, God is one; He is spirit and changeless. <em>Isware</em> (God), the creator, is similar to the Christian concept of God who creates the world. Since a Hindu accepts avatars, he has no problem accepting the fact of God incarnate in Jesus Christ. The triad of Hinduism paves the path to explain the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. History and Hinduism are Cyclic. Everything is repeated age after age. The history in Christianity is linear. The present world order to be destroyed and a new one to be created to continue forever. It is difficult for a Hindu to grasp the Christian affirmation that God is a God of history and a God in history. The centrality of the historical facts of the incarnation, the cross, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ must be emphasized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ii. ATMAN:</strong> The Hindu and Christian believe that the <em>Atma</em> (spirit) is eternal and comes under the bondage of sin. Lord Jesus came to deliver people from the bondage of sin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>iii. KARMA:</strong> This doctrine of “as you sow, so shall you reap” serves as a bridge to point out to the Hindu that God judges for our sins. He must be told how the Lord Jesus has taken upon himself the judgment on the cross of Calvary because the law of karma is the immutable law that a person pays for the evil he has done. There is no question of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
forgiveness of sins for a Hindu. The cross shows that God is not only a God of law (*karma*) but also a God of love (sacrifice). In the cross of the Lord Jesus, justice and love are met and granted forgiveness of sins.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>iv. <strong>SAMSARA</strong>: The Hindu seeks to be free from <em>samsara</em> (the cycle of rebirths). This keeps reoccurring until a person finds liberation from samsara. The grace of Lord Jesus can deliver a person from the clutches that bind him to the wheel of samsara.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>v. <strong>SPIRITUALITY</strong>: Hindus are very religious people and have a desire to be spiritual. They often see external things as a reflection of holiness. Interestingly Christian Scripture reminds the follower of Christ to live a holy life (1 Peter 1:16, Romans 12:1,2) and to keep our behavior excellent among unbelievers so that they may glorify God (1 Peter 212), Matthew 5:16). Living and obedience and holy life can have a powerful influence on the Hindu when sharing Christ.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Key Principles**

One must understand that Hinduism revolves around a different concept of major doctrines than does the Christian faith. The use of any theological bridge, therefore, is fraught with difficulty especially if one uses a specific term or concept to demonstrate that Jesus is the fulfillment of Hinduism. Christians must realize no concept of Hinduism can be accepted into Christianity without change. They must be extremely careful not to insert Hindu doctrines into Christian doctrines or principles for the sake of witnessing.

At the heart of Hindu beliefs is a great longing for God. We must observe how the Hindu person moves from the impersonal God to the personal God, then on to the divine triad and many gods, and finally to images of gods- all in the attempt to make God real and bring him close. So, when ministering to a Hindu, one must meet him at the core of his need and belief. One must begin with the person of Christ. If we begin in God, we begin with only our false idea of God. If we start with men, we start with a problem. So, we begin with the God-man. Christ Jesus is the one true avatar or incarnation of God. He came into this world and is a historical figure. In Christ, not only do we see God, but we see ourselves because Christ is the perfect man, and we are sinful men. This brings the Hindu face to face with his karma. The Bible reminds us “whatever a man sows that he will also reap” (Galatians 6:7)

It also declares that all men have sown bad karma, for “all have sinned” and “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 3:23, 6:23). Since all men stand as sinners, guilty before God. Hindu recognize the sinfulness of man, for they talk about the “six enemies of the soul, lust, anger, avarice, fascination (with the world, pride, and jealousy. At this point, we can move forward in introducing Hindu to Christ by reminding him his own Vedas say that “it is the sacrifice that saved!” And the New Testament reminds us in the book of Hebrews 9:22, “without the shedding of the blood there is no forgiveness of
sins.” Sharing with a Hindu Jesus is “the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29), and Jesus is the final and perfect sacrifice for sin, of which all other sacrifices are mere shadows. Christ took our karma upon himself, and He offers complete pardon forgiveness of our sins, and salvation is possible. We accept God’s free gift and be a good starting point to penetrate the Hindu philosophy of karma.

The last table is an excerpt from a Lausanne Movement’s report (LOP) on witnessing to Hindus in India. However, much of it transfers to this research context since it deals with the theological touchpoints between the two faiths, which the evangelist can use to build bridges, as always, with caution, lest it betrays the gospel and the work of Christ. It covers much of what was discussed in the main text but from a theological standpoint, taking care to point out the disparities and parallels. In the context of the 1st generation Hindu immigrants, these provide great talking points as they work to resolve their own theology from the old and transfer them to the new culture that they have found themselves in.

Table 7. Theological Bridges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theological Bridges</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction:</strong> We must recognize that Hinduism revolves around a different center than does Christianity, asking fundamentally different questions and supplying different answers. The use of any theological bridge, therefore, is fraught with difficulty, particularly if we attempt to use a specific term or concept to demonstrate that Christ is the fulfillment or crown of Hinduism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No concept of Hinduism can be accepted into Christianity without change. By way of illustration, the following bridges can be grouped into two categories:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Points of Contact:</strong> Those concepts that require a radical change of content:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(i) The concept of God: In evangelism among Hindus, we are speaking into a pantheistic world view, and although clarification and re-definition are required, it is not necessary to defend the existence of God.

(ii) Respect for Scripture: The Hindu respect for the sacred writings can be developed in the context of the unique authority of the Bible. Unlike any other religious community, Hindus will listen attentively to an exposition of scripture. The sole authority of the Bible must be stressed without any compromise whatsoever.

(iii) The person of Christ: The quality of Christ’s relationship with people, his teachings (particularly the Sermon on the Mount), and his unique vicarious self-giving and suffering have a strong appeal to the Hindu. As the Christian communicator fills this respect for Christ with an understanding of the unique and absolute claim to be “the Word made flesh,” a significant bridge may be built.

(iv) The doctrine of karma: While this doctrine is a barrier in terms of defining moksha (salvation), it also can serve as a bridge while communicating the gospel to the Hindu. The Hindu seeks to get free from the cycle of rebirth which his sin causes. He must be told of the Savior Jesus Christ, who by his vicarious suffering and death on the cross triumphed over sin and has taken upon himself the penalty of the sins of mankind.

**Points of Caution and Clarification**: Concepts that require a radical conceptual redefinition:

(i) Christianity and Hinduism differ radically in their understanding of history: We should use this dissimilarity as a bridge, stressing the purposes of God in time, creation, the historical resurrection, and the coming judgment.

(ii) Hindu Spirituality: There is a deep desire in the Hindu for spiritual experience (anubhava). This is noticeable, for example, among the Bhakti Margis. The emphasis on meditation, austerity, and the willingness to accept physical suffering are commendable aspects of the Hindu way of life. At the same time, however, the Christian communicator must stress the degree of personal freedom that comes in Christian worship and the Christian understanding that spirituality is not an end in itself, nor is it merely by spiritual exercises that one inherits the Kingdom. Essentially, the value of this bridge lies in the importance of the spiritual qualities of the evangelist or communicator of the gospel in gaining credibility.

(iii) Incarnation: Hindu beliefs in the intervention of God in human history through avatars must be radically redefined in Christian communication. Avatars enter the world to destroy sinners, and this requires repeated avatars. The incarnation of Christ is unique, historical, sufficient for all time, and is rooted in the love of God, saving sinners.
Theological Foundations

Scripture in Genesis 1 and 2 teaches that God created people in His image, and He had a great desire to have intimate fellowship with them. God had given them only one restriction. They could eat from any tree in the garden except the tree in the middle of the garden: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:8-9,15-17 NIV) Adam and Eve disobeyed God and eat the fruit. Eve disobeyed God by being tempted by the Devil and passed on the fruit to her husband, Adam. (Genesis 3:8-13) God had told Adam that if he were to eat from that tree, he would die. The consequences of this disobedience were that their relationship was broken with God spiritually and physically. Separation from God was spiritual death, and physically, Adam and Eve died, which was never God’s intention. As a result of Adam and Eve’s sin, this common theological term is often called the fall of man. Before the fall, Adam had a great relationship with God and desired to know and follow God’s command. After the fall, man’s attitude was hostile toward God (Romans 8:5-8). Their nature completely changed, which led to many sinful behaviors that affected every person then and continue to present. As of this tragedy, every person in the eyes of God became a sinner, and as God sees it, they are lost and cannot save themselves. Except by the saving power and grace of Christ (Romans: 5:12). Christ became a mediator between every person and God. His sacrificial death on the cross reunites that relationship that was broken by the first couple God created.

Since God is love and He deeply cares about people and their spiritual needs, His ultimate desire is to reunite that broken relationship, originally in the garden of Eden between God and the first humans He created. In the Old Testament, a central figure in the Old Testament though mentioned by many names, is Jesus Christ, the Savior. Christ himself explained this to the apostles after he was resurrected. “Beginning with Moses and all the prophets,” Jesus
“interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” (Luke 24:27) For instance, there are many Old Testament messianic prophecies pointing to Christ that he fulfills. As Isaiah 53:5-6, written about 700 years before Jesus was born, foretells, “But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds, we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” There are also many Old Testament themes that foreshadow Jesus and his work. For example, the Passover lamb pictures Jesus, as the Lamb of God takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29) The Old Testament looked forward to his arrival. The New Testament rejoiced in his sacrificial death on the cross and his resurrection.

Evangelism is very close to God’s heart, and his great desire is people will come to know his son Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus commissions His disciples, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations. baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of, the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of age.” Amen!” This command given by Christ himself must be viewed with significance and as a great privilege for a disciple of Christ. Green emphasizes the importance of evangelizing and keeping Christ in the center when an opportunity comes our way. To evangelize is so to present Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through him, to accept him as their Savior, and serve him as it came in the fellowship of his church.  

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The primary purpose of why the church of Christ exists is to evangelize to the detached and bring them to the saving knowledge of Christ. The word evangelism comes from the Greek word ‘euaggelidzo,’ which means” I bring good news.” So, in simple terms, then, to evangelize is to give people the good news of the gospel. (gospel means “good news). One evangelizes when one tells people the good news that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, will save them from their sins and give them eternal life. As followers of Christ, what right do they have to go to people of other belief systems and tell them about the God of the Bible? Do people have the right to worship any god they want? Most of the religions of the world do have some good moral teaching, so if everybody is trying to be good, why try to persuade people to change. Christian is to obey the authority of his savior and creator, which comes from Christ himself as commanded in Matthew 28:18-20. A believer in Christ has his orders and Christ’s authority to evangelize in the word of God. The God of the universe and one true God who made the world and everything in it have ordered every disciple of Christ to reach everyone with the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God as he commanded: “To all people in every nation.”

Sharing the good news and making disciples are the only thing Christ commissioned us to do. The church of Christ is about people, and the body of Christ is the people of God. Christ has given his church the great responsibility to minister to people of other religions, including the Hindu community within the surroundings of Morris County. Christ gave his life for all, and His heart desires that all would come to know him. It starts with the follower of Christ taking the initiative to share God’s ultimate plan with their neighbor.

**Theoretical Foundations**

Evangelism is very close to God; it is his heartbeat for those who are detached from his saving grace. Jesus himself was the great evangelist who went around and shared the good news
within his surroundings. Before he was ascended to heaven, he gave a very important command to his disciples to make disciples of all people. (Mathew 28:19). To make disciples means more than bringing men to a decision for Christ. It means continuing to deal with them, teach them, and inspired them until they become so filled with delight in studying God’s word. Christ died for the church, and the church is the living organism that Jesus said to Apostle Peter, “and on this rock, I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.” (Matt. 16:18, NIV) Christ is the builder of the living church, and the church is the body of Christ. Being the head of the body of Christ, it is His desire that his people evangelize to all, wherever the Holy Spirit leads them, to share his love with the detached. In the New Testament, Apostle Paul in Ephesian 5:23 reminds the Ephesians Christ is the final authority “as Christ is the head of the church, His body, of which He is the Savior.” The church's mission is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those who have never heard of Him.

Interestingly, the Lord has given the local believers a mission field right here in this state within their communities. With global society and the influence of Western culture and Christianity, opportunities lie within the doorsteps. There are people from all different religions and different worldviews with great hope and desire to come to the United States, often to better themselves and their livelihoods. Most believers work with some nonbelievers who need to hear the truth of the gospel. For instance, within this area of Morris County, opportunities and needs are abundant in the Hindu population. This project aims to reach this community by preparing disciples of Christ to reach this detached Hindu population. Even though the research has been very limited in how to reach these specific communities, the local churches do have a great

burden to reach this population. In the past, attempts were made to evangelize Hindus. This was done by leaving pamphlets and gospel tracts at local Indian stores. To the best of this researcher’s knowledge, in the churches he is associated with locally, most did not attempt to build friendship evangelism, nor did anybody receive any calls from the Indian community, or any person interested in Christianity. One of the main reasons was, as indicated before, was the lack of proper tools to evangelize to individuals with a completely different culture and worldview. In hindsight, leaving literature in English at Indian shops or restaurants produced no fruit, and it was understood this was not an effective way to evangelize this population.

The researcher believes there is an effective way to reach this population for Christ. It consists of building the relationship and friendship before sharing Christ. Evangelism will produce much fruit once the time is taken to invest in personal relationships instead of evangelizing prematurely or as a stranger. Hindus come with very different mindsets, and the idea of accepting Christ as the only Savior is very difficult for them to comprehend, let alone accept. This is especially so when they have the freedom to worship many and any god they wish to worship. The Christ is the only way approach is going can create walls and hinder relationships before it begins.

The researcher believes music is a great evangelistic tool to reach this community for Christ. The researcher has participated in these musical concerts and found them to be effective. The weakness of these musical concerts has been the area of discipleship and follow-up. This can be done by giving them a card they can fill with their information so that follow-up and discipleship can be provided. Since music has universal appeal in the world and especially so in the Hindu culture, it is a great common ground to make connections. Similarly, just about every Indian watches and listens to Bollywood movies and songs (Indian Cinema). Having a Hindi
musical evangelistic outreach would be an effective way to gather them in one place. Certainly, this concert would consist of Hindi songs, testimonies, and a brief message. The purpose of this gathering is to get to know people and exchange information to build a network of friendships. One of the goals of this gathering is to invite them to a nonthreatening setting such as a church carnival or home if possible. Inviting them to a home will create an effective personal relationship which is the ultimate goal of this evangelistic outreach. The process of evangelizing to a Hindu requires time and patience, and a believer needs to remind him or herself of the virtue of patience and allow the Holy Spirit to work in their lives by praying for them every day. It is by the power of the Spirit a person comes to know Christ as the Scripture indicates in John 6:44, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day."
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Based on the need and urgency of evangelizing to the local Hindu community, several things were evident. First, Hindus were not being evangelized by the local Christian believers. Second, church members did not take the initiative to share the gospel for the reason they did not feel equipped and necessary to do so. If believers do not take the initiative to minister to their Hindu community, they will rarely hear the Gospel of Christ. As a result, it was necessary to survey to determine why the believers were hesitant to minister to their Hindu community and to understand how we can serve them better.

The methodology presented in Chapter three will address the specific research and address the problem of this case study. This chapter will outline the research questions, participants, data collections, and interviews conducted in this study. This research will bring insights from the questionnaires and interviews that will be conducted.

Intervention Design

A qualitative study was designed for this research to understand why Christians were hesitant to share the gospel with their Hindu neighbors and how they can be encouraged to motivate to do so. This research will bring awareness to many Christians and churches to minister to this forgotten group. The research methodology utilized in this research will be to train Christian men and women to evangelize to the Hindu population in Morris County. Due to the global pandemic of COVID-19, the method by which participants will be chosen will be via
email and phone calls. Participants were via phone and will be sent out a survey. The researcher has asked the pastor and the participants beforehand, and they permitted him.

The research methodology is a specific procedure or technique used to identify, select, and analyze information about a topic. The methodology asks two questions: How was the data collected, and how it was analyzed. Stringer defines research methodology as research as a systematic and rigorous inquiry or investigation that enables people to understand the nature of problematic events or phenomena. It can be characterized by a focus on a problem or issue to be investigated, a systematic process of inquiry, and the development of explanations that lead to increased understanding.80

Participants

The first phase of this study is to recruit people who may have a burden to evangelize to this unique group. This was done by an announcement online on three consecutive Sunday services before the start of the training seminar. (if services resume by then, as of COVID-19 social distancing issues, or in that case technology will be used) Due to the global pandemic of the COVID-19, the method by which participants were chosen had to be via email and phone. The applied research portion of this investigation included anonymous electronic surveys used to assess the knowledge of the volunteers based on the Bible. Before completing the electronic survey, they also completed the consent form. Any participant who was not interested was excluded. There was a total of 20 participants who completed the survey out of 30 surveys that were sent. The average age of the participant was between 28 -70 who lived in Morris County. A sample of the invitation is addressed below in Appendix C.

Implementation of Intervention Design

Instrumentation and Procedures

Surveys and questionnaires are helpful data collection methods in a quantitative study. “Survey research involves acquiring information about one or more groups of people, perhaps about their characteristics, opinions, attitudes, or previous experiences by asking them questions and tabulating their answers.” In addition, due to the ongoing pandemic, churches were not open, and services were not being held to prevent members from exposure to the virus. As a result of this, the only instrumentation used to conduct the study was an online survey. The online evaluation survey consisted of 19 questions which included a mixture of open-ended and closed questions.

The goal of this research was to aim for 20 participants between ages 28-70 to participate in this study, as indicated already. The only requirement was for participants to be Bible-believing Christians. Participants were notified once they completed their survey, then they would be notified to be part of an online class on reaching Hindus for Christ.

Questionnaire/Data Collection

The contents of the survey were designed by the author. A questionnaire was provided to participants who had shown interest in training and evangelizing to Hindu individuals. Questions were directed to understand the participants' views on evangelism, mission, and application of evangelism as it relates to them. The following questions provide insight into the participant's understanding of evangelism and outreach since many questions were relevant to the research. The online questions were divided into different categories of evangelism which highlighted

personal and general understanding of Biblical evangelism. For a complete list of questions, (see Appendix D). On average, the survey took about 20-30 minutes to complete. Participants' information and data results were kept confidential to only the researcher. Data for the research was collected through interviews, questionnaires, and teaching classes, and question and answer sessions afterward.

Summary

This chapter presented the resources produced to conduct the research. The researcher outlined how the data was studied. The chapter explains how participants were selected and recruited to participate in the researcher’s project. Thirty surveys were sent, but twenty responded, and twenty participants were interviewed: They came from varied spiritual maturity and different age group. The participants were easy-going and diligent in helping the researcher conduct the project and had a burden for reaching the detached. Many of them were excited to be part of this study. Results from this research will be discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This chapter should outline the results gleaned from the data. Sensing suggests, the chapter should be creatively written, not presenting mere dry facts and data but compelling the reader to understand the meaning of the study undertaken.

Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to present the findings of why Hindus were not being reached with the gospel of Christ within their community and why many churches had detached themselves from reaching them for Christ. The Hindu community had been here for decades, but little had been done to share Christ with them. Local churches did not have a plan in place or were unprepared to minister to the Hindu population in the Parsippany area, which is part of Morris County. A large population of Asian Indians called this area their home and workplace. The online surveys, interviews, and classes were conducted and revealed helpful data.

Description of Ministry Project

The three components of this finding were an online survey to clarify the call of evangelism and to assess the participant’s understanding of the topic. Each person was given a pre-and post-test (Appendix D) and questionnaire at the end of each session. The rationale of this was to assess their attitude relating to topics covered in the evangelism workshop. The purpose of this pretest questionnaire was to measure their attitude change concerning evangelism. This pre-and post-test was given by the researcher online. Questions on the pre-and post-test were designed to measure each participant’s knowledge from the beginning and after this project. Six
practical classes were taught weekly on “how to evangelize to Hindus” that consisted of the one-hour total. Forty-five minutes of teaching and 15 minutes were given to the question-and-answer session. The evangelism workshop sessions were designed in such a way so people can appreciate the importance of evangelism as described in the Scripture. The following classes covered these topics.

- Understanding Hinduism
- Understanding the culture and their worldview
- The importance of evangelism and mission
- Do’s and Don’ts when evangelizing to Hindus.
- How to build relationships before evangelizing
- Role-playing/Q&A session

Session One- Was an introduction to understanding Hinduism. During the introduction, participants were given the history of Hinduism and how it started. It also focused on its doctrines and what are the most major Hindu beliefs.

Session Two- Began with a review and questions from the previous class. Also, we saw the importance of understanding Hindu culture and its position when evangelizing. We also discussed Hindu culture and how it is so ingrained in Hindu religion or philosophy that it cannot be separated. Often, it is difficult to discern one from the other because of its intertwined relationship.

Session Three- Began with questions concerning certain cultural practices says participants had observed within into communities. Besides, teaching topics included the biblical mandate of evangelism and the biblical definition and meaning of evangelism. Each participant
was reminded of the importance of evangelism and their responsibility and an opportunity and privilege to participate in this sacred work.

Session Four- Began with a review and comments from the participants about session three. This session tied all three sessions together by complementing each. Participants were reminded certain cultural practices might offend some Hindus when evangelizing to them. Such topics as criticizing them for worshiping many gods and Jesus is the only way (this concept is very foreign to the Hindu mind and their religion). Also, the topic of dressing modestly was emphasized, including conversing with a respectful manner to word their belief was suggested.

Session Five, Emphasized the importance of building relationships before evangelizing. Since hospitality is treasured deeply in Hindu culture, the participants were encouraged to build bonds when appropriate or possible within the same gender.

Session Six- This was the final and unique class, and the goal of this class was to role-play so participants can feel comfortable when witnessing and not feel intimidated. This session consisted of multiple questions, and the researcher had an opportunity also to interview and to ask questions of participants concerning evangelizing to Hindus and how they feel now after completing the class. Besides, this session emphasized the importance and responsibilities of individuals and the local church. The local congregation needs to get to know their audiences and the targeted demographic if a productive conversation is to take place. The participants were split into two groups and were invited to take a tour of the community for observation and evangelism purposes. Unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many participants felt it was not the appropriate time, so it was canceled.
Field Experience

This section will discuss what occurred during this research project. As stated elsewhere, the goal of this project was why the local church has failed to provide the tools to reach out to the Hindu community. If so, provide training and test the outcome of the results for this project. The goal of this training was also to motivate the participants to evangelize and to add a change of behavior to word evangelism and the Hindu community.

Six classes were offered online relating to were writing of topics relevant to evangelism during a time frame of six weeks. The pretest was provided to all 20 participants the average age of the participants was approximately 50 years old. Questions on the pretest were designed to collect the participants' understanding before and after the final class. The pre and post-test contained different sections from a personal understanding of biblical knowledge to personal evangelism. Pre-and post-tests were used as measuring tools to gather data, and they were made up of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and yes and no questions. Following is the sample that was used for pre-and post-test.

1. Multiply choice.
2. Fill in the blank
3. Yes and No
4. Highest priority, high priority, moderate priority, low priority, and no priority
5. Daily, weekly, 2-3 times a month, once a month, a few times a year, and never
6. Essential, Important, somewhat important, and not important
7. Very important, important, somewhat important, not important, and not applicable
8. Strongly agree, agree, unsure/neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree.
9. Regularly, frequently, occasionally, seldom, and never
10. Data Scale:
   a. Strongly agree – 1.
   c. Neither agree nor disagree – 3.
   e. Strongly disagree – 5.

The pre and post-test contained the same questions and used the same format.

Survey Results and Data Collection

The content of the survey/questionnaire was designed by the researcher. During the survey, the author held casual conversations with the respondents, and the following are the results. The survey consisted of when they embraced Christ, their understanding of Biblical evangelism, how likely they are to share the gospel with a Hindu, and will being well-equipped motivates them to share the gospel with Hindus. Of the twenty respondents who participated in the survey, 20 confessed to being Christian. Ten participants felt it was not their full responsibility and did not sense convicted to evangelize but, on the other hand, realized evangelism is biblical. Nineteen participants indicated they have never communicated the gospel to a Hindu but acknowledged evangelism is significant. Twenty participants indicated learning to evangelize to Hindu will motivate them to share the gospel with them, as the majority of them had never witnessed a Hindu within their community. The survey was given during the initial stage of class and was also given toward the final class, and the results were completely different. The participants expressed positive views, and all the participants indicated taking this class undeniably helped them understand biblical evangelism. Of the twenty participants, they revealed they were well prepared and motivated to evangelize to Hindus. Surveys also revealed
the lack of personal responsibility when it came to presenting the gospel and the lack of ignorant on their part. Data indicated fear and rejection was a big factor when witnessing. Fifty percent of the participants sensed it was not their responsibility to evangelize when surveyed during the initial stages of the class when a question was asked about personal evangelism. Their mindset changed when that same survey was given to them after the end of the final class. Information also revealed they were never taught about evangelism as clearly. Seven of the members indicated they had a basic understanding of evangelism but not the urgent calling as the Scripture mentions. It was a clear sign; evangelism was not taught previously to this group even though many understood the salvation plan but did not fully comprehend that evangelism and salvation go hand in hand and cannot be separated. Data also showed they had very superficial knowledge about the Scriptures relevant to evangelism when the researcher collected the survey. Half of the participants were not able to connect the right Scripture relating to evangelism. Again, the data changed, and 90% of the participants were able to connect those scriptures after the completion of the class.

The finding revealed to the researcher the participants had a desire to evangelize but not understanding their full responsibility because they were not being exposed in the area of evangelism according to the Scripture was the reason why evangelism was never taken seriously. Their responsibility was not manifested in their lifestyle because of the unknown truth of biblical evangelism.

The results of the analysis of this survey were based on twenty participants. It came from all spiritual backgrounds; one thing in common among all of them was that they had a great desire to reach people for Christ but fully did not understand nor was taught about evangelism.
Table 8. Religious and Evangelism background of the 20 participants (Survey Results)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Number of Positive/Negative Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confessed to being a Christian.</td>
<td>20 (yes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of Biblical Evangelism, not their full responsibility to evangelize.</td>
<td>10 (yes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you share the gospel to a Hindu? (Did not feel equipped)</td>
<td>19 (no)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will learning to evangelize to Hindus motivate you to share Gospel?</td>
<td>20 (yes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Analysis

The data that was collected from this study reflected the personal and general experiences of participants in their evangelism journey. The researcher focused on how well they understood Biblical evangelism, especially about themself and their personal responsibility relating to evangelism. After reviewing the data of participants, it was clear that there was a need to teach and explain biblical evangelism. Classroom face-to-face settings would have been ideal and personal, but because of a global pandemic COVID-19, this setting was not possible. Results from completed surveys resulted in helpful ideas and the need to inform participants to participate in online classes on presenting the gospel.

Statement of Findings

One of the barriers was the teams were not able to go on the streets to minister to the Hindu community because of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. The researcher made every effort to role-play with the participants to work with them as much as possible. The researcher plans to continue this project by taking the participants to the Hindu community so they can get a practical feel for evangelization to the community. The findings from the
conversations, surveys, and interview questions confirmed the need and purpose of the researcher’s focus on preparing a biblical manual and conducting workshops for equipping believers in different churches and para-church organizations who have a burden for reaching the Hindu population. The researcher will also like to equip believers so they can also continue with this mission.

The findings in this study showed many believers had a genuine burden to share the gospel, and when they are taught and equipped, it will be beneficial to themselves and the kingdom of God. The equipping of the body of Christ is not only an option given by Christ.

**Conclusion**

After the final session was completed, the participants were given a post-test and evaluation form (see Appendix E). They were asked what their impression of classes was? They were also encouraged to give their candid feedback. The participants responded positively and strongly indicated classes were very informative and they felt inspired to evangelize to Hindus. Participants also indicated they sensed confidence in communicating the gospel. Each participant has appreciated the class and indicated it should be taught to other churches who may have a burden to evangelize to this group.

The observation of the researcher was that the participants felt confident in their skills when approaching a Hindu for the gospel. Interestingly enough, previously, many participants did not fully understand biblical evangelism and did not feel motivated until toward the end of the last class. The classes had a significant impact on their understanding, and their mindset had changed. The participants had a completely different biblical view when it came to evangelization.
This project's purpose was not only to prepare the Christian community within the local Christian gathering, but also to expand and implement the benefits gained in this project to other church communities. The researcher observed that each participant grew in confidence week by week. The projects’ research and the researcher's observation showed the major reason for not evangelization was not that believers did not want to or had no desire to minister to this group. The primary hindrance was the fear of not being fully equipped to minister to them and the lack of personal responsibility relating to evangelism and Biblical education. The local churches did not have a plan in place, nor were they equipped to minister to the Hindu population in the Parsippany area, which is part of Morris County.

**Qualitative Results Summary**

Interview findings showed that the participants experienced a positive change in their spiritual life. These changes consisted of four areas: personal evangelism, confidence in ministering, knowledge of Hindu culture and their religion, feeling less intimidated when sharing the gospel of Christ. Even though this project was limited to this research specifically, but it can also benefit the surrounding church ministry who desire to implement it.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Introduction

The first goal of this project was to teach and prepare individuals to share the gospel of Christ with their Hindu neighbors. Participants completed their questionnaire before the first session to determine their knowledge about Biblical evangelism. The question was asked by the researcher in the questionnaire to the participants how comfortable they felt sharing their faith with a Hindu. Most of the participants indicated they were not comfortable. The same test was given after the class, and most indicated they feel better prepared now. Two of the tests were not completed, and it was difficult to analyze. The purpose of this pre-test was to gain participants' self-awareness. Twenty participants took the pretest, and data indicated their confidence was not at par. On the other hand, the post-test indicated their confidence increased.

The second question was asked how comfortable they felt sharing their faith with a Hindu. Almost all participants indicated they were not comfortable. The same test was given after the class, and ten indicated they sense much better prepared now. Five of the tests were not completed, and it was difficult to analyze.

The third question was designed to measure how confident the participants were using Scripture to share the gospel. The post-test did indicate ten participants felt comfortable, and the other half needed more time to get familiar with the Scriptures.

Post-test results indicated participants were much better off understanding evangelism and felt at ease sharing the gospel. As the data indicated according to these three questions, then they were in the beginning stages of the class. Overall, the participants reflected a positive
comfort level in the area of understanding biblical evangelism. The researcher also noticed that the group was motivated, educated, and showed enthusiasm. The evangelism training and questionnaire indicated participants understood their responsibility and experienced increased confidence in sharing the gospel of Christ. The research for this project was concluded, and the goal was accomplished.

This final chapter is a summary of the study that was conducted. It included its purpose, procedure, and research findings. Limitations of study will be acknowledged, and few certain research strategies are suggested.

**Summary of Study**

Evangelism is an integral part of being a follower of Christ. Evangelism and Christian faith go hand in hand and cannot be separated. Christ himself commands his living church to his love with our neighbors to fulfill the great commission. (Matt. 28: 18-22). This qualitative study was conducted for this very purpose. To answer the question of why the Hindu community was not being evangelized. The results indicated people did not personally felt convicted to evangelize to the Hindu community. The two main reasons were that they did not fully understand their duty when it came to evangelism. Their concept of evangelism was only a paid professional should be doing it. Having this misunderstanding did not motivate them to move forward or to have anything to do with evangelism. Secondly, they did not understand how to minister to the Hindu community and felt unequipped to do so. Interestingly enough, few participants mentioned there might have been one or two instances at their workplace. However, they felt very unprepared and uncomfortable to do so because they did not understand their culture or religion. This project's goal was to prepare believers to evangelize to their Hindu friends and not feel intimidated. After completing the session. At the end of the final class, a
survey was given, and most of the participants felt comfortable and equipped to continue their journey of evangelism in the future.

One-on-One Evangelism Conversation

Interestingly enough, the Barna Group conducted a very interesting study which revealed that the majority of the people come to know the Lord through one-on-one interaction. Which may consist of sharing personal testimony or just spending quality time with an individual. One of the goals of this project was to equip believers to be effective witnesses for Christ when ministering to an individual at a personal level. (Appendixes H & I) Personal evangelism comes very naturally to many Christians and undeniably has certain advantages over the more impersonal types of evangelism. Nevertheless, the church that depends entirely upon either approach to the omission of the other does not obtain the maximum results. Both types of evangelism are essential to the work of a local church. Therefore, to speak of an "advantage" of one type of evangelism is not to present an argument in favor of dispensing with other types. Unfortunately, some churches give little or no attention to the most advantageous approach. So, what are some of the benefits of the personal type of evangelism?

Personal evangelism is something all can do. This is demonstrated by the example of the Jerusalem church. "They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). In personal evangelism, every member of the church can be teaching privately at the same time, and this is a type of evangelism that does not require the special abilities which public preaching demands. The fact that all Christians can do personal evangelism does not mean that all will be equally skillful or successful. It does mean, however, that this approach provides an opportunity for every member to function according to the various abilities each member has.
Each person can do this work in his or her way, and according to their ability, and accomplish much good for the cause of Christ.

Personal evangelism is something all can do HERE AND NOW. Every church should be deeply concerned about its efforts to reach the lost. However, few in the church are concerned enough about trying to reach the lost TODAY! In personal evangelism, one does not have to wait for the lost to come. Neither does it wait for the pastor or a paid staff. The only guarantee that believers will share the gospel is for them to be taught first and NOW! The leaders of the church have an equipping role and not a surrogate for the duties of a Christian. Personal evangelism alone makes it possible for everyone to be involved in the Great Commission.

There are greater opportunities for personal evangelism. Preachers have few opportunities to teach non-Christians from the pulpit, and still, fewer are converted solely due to pulpit preaching. However, some have been, and this is the reason pulpit preaching is an important part of our evangelistic program.

Only a small number of Christians have opportunities to preach from the pulpit or over the radio. But opportunities to teach individually come frequently, so they need to be recognized and taken advantage of. A very small number of Christians are looking for people to teach, a smaller number recognize an opportunity when they see it, and even fewer than this take advantage of an opportunity when they see it.

Christ said, "The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few" (Matt. 9:37, ASV). If the number of non-Christians who attend churches is any indication, the harvest is indeed plentiful. It is only that there too few laborers to reap the harvest. "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest." (John. 4:35, ASV)
Summary of Purpose

The goal of this survey was to identify the challenges that local Christians faced for not evangelizing to the local Hindu community. Although, many Christians had a genuine burden and a deep desire to minister to their Hindu community. They lacked the personal equipping to overcome the challenges addressed in this study. This project research questions and surveys were designed to investigate why local Christians were hesitant to communicate the gospel of Christ.

Summary of Procedure

The researcher Utilized biblical principles, workshops, surveys, Q and A sessions, and interviews were used to put to practice. Scholarly literature and documents helped in this procedure. This study helped conclude and designed the pattern for evangelizing as relating to the Hindu community. Multiple sources helped conduct this research project, and sources were gathered according to scholarly research standards, and qualitative document analysis was conducted to uncover patterns, processes, context, and underlying meaning.82

Summary of Research Finding

The research findings revealed the challenges to evangelize to Hindus included lack of preparation, fear of not understanding their culture, deficiency in the understanding of Hinduism, lack of personal understanding of biblical evangelism, and strategies for overcoming fear when witnessing. Role-playing and question-and-answer sessions were very helpful to the participants.

The researcher had the participants find a partner one pretended to be a Hindu and the other one tried to witness to them. After the participants had completed, the researcher would critique them on the areas they did well and areas they need to work on. For instance, one of the recommendations when ministering was to build a friendship first and then move on to theology or try to find common ground to build a bridge.

Christians should be trained to evangelize in this global setting to reach people of different religions. This study found the view of evangelism by the participants was not influenced by the biblical view. Secondly, research findings revealed if people are taught the biblical principles of evangelism, they can make a great impact in their communities and the kingdom of God.

**Qualitative Results Summary**

Interview findings showed that the participants experienced a positive life change in their spiritual life. These changes consisted of four areas: personal responsibility of evangelism building confidence, understanding of Hindu culture and their religion, feeling less intimidated when sharing the gospel of Christ. The researcher had reached his objective in this project research by preparing Christian believers to communicate the gospel with respect and with confidence to their Hindu friends. This needed workshop was a beginning where many churches in the future can benefit greatly. It will help create mature and responsible believers for the kingdom of God. There is a needed ministry among the local believers in the town because of the accelerated growth of Asian Indians in the community. This scenario is played out across many townships, not just in Morris County. The goal of this study is to continue to duplicate this process among other churches. The future goal is to gather some ministers and share this vision so that future workshops can be set up in other local churches to train believers for the gospel of Christ.
Statement of limitations

Even though this project was limited to one local context, it certainly can benefit surrounding churches and ministries who desire to implement certain techniques. As with any research study, there may be limitations that are unexpected and unavoidable. In this case, the COVID-19 pandemic limited the research from its complete fulfillment. The plan was to do street evangelism, but under the circumstances and in the agreement of the participants, it was not conducted. Although the study could still be conducted online, ensuring safety, the personal touch with the participants was sacrificed. There were also plans to have a musical concert which would have been a great network tool to reach Hindu audiences in a nonthreatening atmosphere. The plan to bring in some singers who were able to sing in the Hindi language could not be fulfilled as well. However, the goal of this research is to continue that plan once the COVID-19 pandemic situation ends.

Theological Reflection

This thesis research project was evident to the researcher when the living word of God is taught; it becomes a very effective tool in the hands of Christians and has the power to change their heart. God’s Word changes one’s heart, identity and changes our lives. Since the scripture has the power to transform the hearer first, then that individual becomes the tool in the hand of the Holy Spirit and able to pass the urgent message of the gospel. While there are different methods on how to share the gospel with the unbelievers, but one thing is evident that it has the power to change the lives when people hear it. One thing is clear, the gospel of Jesus Christ must be preached to all people. If the church of God is to penetrate in this fallen world, the transforming power of Christ must be reached outside of the church’s comfort zone. The disciple of Christ must not forget that he or she was also discipled by someone who obeyed the call of
God. In alignment with the Scripture duty of a follower of Christ is also to disciple new believers. “Disciple” comes from the Greek word mathétés, which means “a learner, disciple, or pupil.” The original design and historical view of the word recognizes a pupil-teacher relationship. Besides, “the word disciple, or some variation, appears 266 times in the New Testament, with the vast majority of those 59 occurrences recorded in the Gospels. In those contexts, being a disciple generally means abandoning the things of the world and following Jesus. Discipling a new Christian is a slow process as they grow in their relationship with Christ. The mature Christian must be patient with the opportunity the Lord brought into that person’s life. Especially, discipling a Hindu believer can be a very slow process since their mindset is so focused on worshiping many gods. To have them give complete control to Christ only is the work of the Holy Spirit. The mentor must have the gift of being patient, compassionate, and be understanding. This has been the goal of this thesis project to create equipped and motivated mentors who will understand the Hindu mindset and have a desire and responsibility by bringing them into the kingdom of God.

The call to evangelize is universal to all of Christ’s disciples and all churches around the globe. For the local church to be effective, the same message and the methods that were implemented by the early church need to be replicated. The mandate by the savior Himself must be taken seriously, to “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. (Matthew 28:19-20, KJV).” This mandate cannot be taken lightly by a

follower of Christ. Anyone who calls themselves a Christian must obey Christ's orders; it is not an option but a command to a lost and fallen world in need of a savior.

**Conclusion**

The goal of this thesis project was effectively met. The participants responded positively, and that was manifested in their change of attitude and behavior. The questionnaire and classes indicated the success of this project goal by equipping the participants with the tools needed to share their faith with their local Hindu community. The researcher is convinced if proper tools are provided to the body of Christ, they are willing to make a dent in their local communities. St. Paul reminds his reader, we are to train and disciple, to equip the saints for the work of ministry for building up the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:12, ESV)

A curriculum or teaching handbook for evangelism to Hindus in the local context does not exist. The need to teach Christians in the local community to evangelize is a new pressing need for the churches. Passing the torch of Christian principle is urgent in this global era. The opportunities are in the backyard without crossing any ocean. A call to evangelize is not foreign for the church and its members; it was normal behavior in the first-century church. One aspect was clear during this research. The participants took the initiative to be part of this research which indicated to the researcher they had a burden to evangelize. The lack of responsibility to evangelize was not cleared to them until the final research. Some indicated they thought it was the church leader's responsibility and not the congregants. Few have heard messages about evangelism but were not quite sure how to put it to practice. When the Scriptures were shown to them during one of the sessions, it was clear they needed to take personal responsibility. The overall response was numerous positive participants indicated they have had not had sessions quite like this, which not only helps them to understand the Word of God but also to follow the
command of the Scripture to share the gospel of Christ. As indicated elsewhere, role-play was very beneficial to them, and the purpose of this session was to prepare them to communicate the gospel to a Hindu. The plans were to take them to the Indian community and to have them experience it themselves but initially to see the researcher and tried to mimic a style during the initial stages. That plan was unfortunately canceled, which makes sense to everybody because the community is usually very congested, and not maintaining social distancing would be a safety issue.


APPENDIX A

LETTER OF ANNOUNCEMENT 1

Good morning everyone,

- Have you ever wondered how you can share the Gospel with a Hindu neighbor you have known for years? Or a co-worker you work with but not sure how to or you may offend them.

- Over the last decade, the Hindu population has grown right here in our county and the mission field is here. Christ commands us to share the gospel with the detached and as believers, it's our responsibility and a privilege at the same time. The purpose of these classes is to train and equip to evangelize without fear and to build “bridging the gap” and to interact.

Any person interested in how to evangelize to a Hindu can meet with me immediately following the church service. The length of the course will be for six-week and each session will consist of 45-60 minutes and comprise of lecture and discussion. If you are interested in participating, please meet me in the fellowship hall after the service for details. If a person responds he or she will be given a date and be invited to the researcher’s home if possible (depending on corvid-19 Pandemic, this could be done remotely.) for an introductory meeting. The purpose of this meeting will be to get to know the participants and to inform them of their commitment to this research project. During this meeting, each person who will agree to participate will be given a consent form to sign and will allow them to withdraw from the research at any time. As already indicated, if COVID 19 continues and Churches have not met
for months, then at that point survey will be transported by email, mail, and telephone interviews will be conducted and fully utilize online technology for this research when possible.

The following classes will be taught to the participants, and each class will have a goal of 45 minutes, and 15 minutes will be dedicated to question-and-answer sessions.

- Understanding Hinduism
- Understanding the culture and their worldview
- The importance of evangelism and mission
- Do’s and Don’ts when evangelizing to Hindus.
- How to build relationships before evangelizing
- Role-playing/Q&A session

After the completion of this training and role-playing, the researcher will attempt to take the participants to the streets so they can shadow him. During the initial visit, Hindu literature will be distributed and build some kind of relationship with the people of this community. One effective outreach ministry the researcher is familiar with is the musical concert. The purpose of this evangelistic musical concert is to gather Hindu friends and make contact with them. As they make their way in; they will be given a card and will be asked to fill it out with their information and hand it to us toward the end of this concert. This will create a connection and an effective way to keep in constant touch with them. By building friendships and strengthening relationships before the message of Christ can be communicated.
APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM 2

(Informed Consent Form Adapted from Qualitative Research by Tim Sensing)

Introduction: My name is David Armstrong, and I am a doctoral student at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary in Lynchburg, Virginia. I am conducting a study for my Doctor of Ministry Project. You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 18 years or older. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to equip and educate believers to reach the Hindu population for the Gospel of Christ.

Procedure: If you consent, you will be part of this teaching group at My home located at_________________________. (Depending on COVID-19 pandemic) Or online likely. This group will meet for 8 Sessions beginning December 2020 and concluding February 2020. Each session will be approximately one hour and fifteen minutes.

At the first meeting in December, you will be given a 12-question survey. It takes 10-15 minutes to take. After the classes, when the group concludes in February 2020, you will be given a survey that will take 10-15 minutes to take.

If you consent, you will be part of a group interview at My home. The group will be asked several questions in an oral interview.

This group interview will be scheduled and conducted before December 30, 2020.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate; you may still refuse to answer any question that you do not wish to answer. You may refuse to participate in any activity in the evangelism sessions. You may leave any evangelism session or group interview. You may also withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or jeopardy to any entitlements. Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Risks: You may feel overwhelmed with the information, but the research has the same amount as any evangelism class or Bible class.

Process. The research has the same amount of risk people encounter at Bible Study.
Benefits: While there is no guaranteed benefit, you may be well prepared to communicate the Gospel effectively to your Hindu friends and neighbors in discussions, gaining new insights, and growing in the Christian faith. This study is intended to benefit believers and build their confidence when evangelizing to the Hindu population.


INFORMED CONSENT

Confidentiality/Anonymity your name will be kept confidential in all of the reporting, and/or writing related to this study. When I write the Doctor of Ministry Project report, I will use pseudonyms- made-up names for all participants. All surveys, audio recordings will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-looked computer and may be used in future presentations, coding, survey, and audiotapes will be destroyed within three years from the conclusion of the evangelism group study, in December 2022.

Sharing results: I plan to construct a written account of what I learn (the doctor of ministry project). This written account will be based on surveys, group interviews, books, and documents. This Doctor of Ministry Project will be submitted to professors and project reviewers and may be included in library databases. Findings may also be shared with the __________________________ congregation. The results may also be used in educational settings and seminars.

Publication: There is the possibility that I will publish this study or refer to it in published writing in the future. In this event, I will continue to use pseudonyms (as described above), and I may alter some identifying details to further protect your identity.

Contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant other than the researcher: Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu

Anonymity.

Before you sign: By signing below, you agree to 1) attend Evangelism sessions,
2) Take two (2) survey questions.
Please be sure that any questions you may have are answered to your satisfaction. If you agree to participate in this study, a copy of this document will be given to you.

_I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study._

Participant’s signature: _________________________ Date: ______________

Print name: _____________________________________________

Researcher’s signature: ____________________________ Date: ______________

Print name: _____________________________________________
APPENDIX C

INVITATION TO FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Sample Mail/E-Mail Permission Letter

November 2020

Dear Participant:

As a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting project studies as part of the requirements of the Doctor of Ministry program in Theology and Apologetics. The purpose of my research is to train Christians to witness to Hindu population within their communities, as well as build a healthy relationship, and I am writing to invite you to participate in my study.

I am writing to request your permission willing to participate in classes on Evangelism to Hindus. If you are 18 years of age or older, I invite you to participate in my research study.

Participants will be asked to complete an anonymous online survey. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please respond by e-mail __________________ a permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

David Armstrong Primary Researcher
APPENDIX D

EVANGELISTIC AND PERSONAL PROFILE

PRE- AND POST-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE
Equipping Believers for Hindu Evangelism

PRE- AND POST-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE
Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to measure your self-assurance and familiarity level relating to Biblical Evangelism and sharing your faith. This research is being conducted by David Armstrong for purposes of collecting data for a ministry thesis project. In this research, you will answer the following questions before we begin training and you will answer the same questions after we complete the training. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

EVANGELISTIC AND PERSONAL PROFILE

1.. Which of the following texts is the most direct command to share the gospel?

   a. John 3:16
   c. Matthew 28:18-20
   d. Acts 1:4-8
   e. Joel 1:5.

2.. To whom did Jesus give the Great Commission?

   a. Only to the disciples
   b. To the Jews
   c. To Apostle Paul
d. To the church and all believers everywhere at all times?

3. Does the Great Commission apply to all Christians?
   a. Yes
   b. No

4. What might be used interchangeably with Evangelism.
   a. Praying
   b. Counseling
   c. Witnessing
   d. None of the above

5. According to the Bible, what is the common spiritual need of all people?
   a. To make us rich
   b. To make us happy
   c. To rescues and redeem us from sin.
   d. To give tithe

6. Adam`s story closes in disobedience to God and Jesus ends in --------
   a. Disobedience
   b. Failure
   c. Obedience
   d. All of the above

7. Jesus rising from the dead by the power of God was proof of His --------over sin and death.
   a. Weakness
   b. Victory
   c. Promise
8. Which are important steps when witnessing?
   a. Allow the Holy Spirit to work in the person`s heart
   b. Build strong and lasting relationships
   c. Share your testimony
   d. All the above

9. Fill in the blank for 1 Peter 3:15-16, “But do this with ------------------ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.
   a. Gentleness and respect
   b. Peacefulness
   c. Love
   d. Critical thinking
Please answer each question by circling the letter(s) corresponding to your answer(s). When finished, please hand the survey over or email it to the researcher

PERSONAL EVANGELISM PROFILE

1. How were you exposed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
   a. Someone shared it with me.
   b. I was born in a Christian family.
   c. I heard it on the radio.
   d. I watched a television program.
   e. I searched the Internet.
   f. I attended a church service.
   g. I read the Bible and Christ was introduced to me.

2. How familiar are you with the term Great Commission?
   a. Very familiar.
   b. Quite familiar.
   e. Not familiar at all.

3. How likely are you to share Christ with a Hindu?
   a. Extremely likely.
   b. Very likely.
   c. Somewhat likely.
   d. Not at all.

4. How important is evangelism and discipleship to you?
   a. Not at all important.
b. Moderately important.

c. Very important.

d. Extremely important?

5. How often do you pray and fast for a spiritual revival and salvation for those detached from Christ?
   a. Never
   b. Sometimes
   c. Often
   d. Daily

6. Have you shared the Gospel with a Hindu?
   a. Yes
   b. No

7. Do you work with any Hindus?
   a. Yes
   b. No

8. Do you feel comfortable sharing the gospel with a Hindu?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Neutral

1. On a scale of 1 to 10 (“1” being the lowest), how comfortable do you feel sharing your faith with another person? __________.

2. How often do you share your faith with others?
   a. More than once a week

94
b. Once a week

c. At least once a month

d. At least once every six months

e. At least once a year - Rarely

3. To what extent are you involved in evangelism?
   a. To a great extent
   
   b. To a small extent
   
   c. To a moderate extent
   
   d. To no extent

4. Which of the following reasons best describes the reason you do not witness more.
   a. Fear of how the other person will react.
   
   b. Sluggishness on my part
   
   c. I lack the knowledge I need to witness effectively.

5. Would you be willing to get more involved in the evangelistic efforts?
   a. Yes, to a great extent
   
   b. Yes, to a small extent
   
   c. Yes, to a moderate extent
   
   d. No

6. How important is it to you to bring others to faith in Christ.
   Essential
   
   Somewhat important
   
   Important
   
   Not Important
7. How often do you talk about your faith with someone who is not a Christian?
   Regularly
   Seldom
   Frequently
   Never
   Occasionally

8. Using the following scale, rate how closely you agree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neither Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Nor Disagree</td>
<td>Nor Disagree</td>
<td>Nor Disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-------- A. I am afraid to tell others that I am a Christian.

-------- B. I am comfortable sharing the gospel with people I know.

-------- C. I am comfortable sharing the gospel with strangers.

-------- D. I am confident in my ability to share the gospel with another person.

-------- E. I am confident in my ability to use Scripture to share the gospel with another person.

-------- F. I am confident in my ability to share my testimony with another person.

-------- G. I am confident with my ability to tell another person what he or she must do to be saved.

9. How many people have you steered to Christ in the last year? ________ people

10. Do you know how to present the gospel to a friend or relative?
    Yes No

If “No,” would you like to receive training to empower you to present the gospel?
    Yes No

11. What is your expectation from these training sessions?
a. To learn how to evangelize to Hindus without fear.

b. To fulfill the great commission commanded by Christ.

c. I have a burden for Hindus.

d. All the Above
APPENDIX E

EVALUATION FORM

Hindu Evangelism

Your feedback is critical. We appreciate your help in evaluating this course. Please indicate your rating of the presentation in the categories below by circling the appropriate number, using a scale of (1) Strongly Agree (2) Agree (3) Neutral (4) Disagree (5) Strongly Disagree.

What is your gender? Male Female

Please return this form to the instructor at the end of the workshop. Thank you.

Workshop title:
________________________________________________________________________

Instructor: ____________________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The instructor was knowledgeable on the topic.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The content was organized and easy to follow.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I will recommend this workshop to others.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I will be able to apply the knowledge learned.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The instructor met the training objectives.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The material was presented in an organized manner.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Class participation and interaction were encouraged.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Adequate time was provided for questions and discussion.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Given the topic, was this workshop: □ a. Too short □ b. Right length □ c. Too long

10. In your opinion, was this workshop: □ a. Introductory □ b. Intermediate □ c. Advanced
11. Please rate the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Visuals</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Meeting space</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Handouts</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. The program overall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

12. What did you most appreciate/enjoy/think was best about the course? Any suggestions for improvement?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!
Parsippany-Troy Hills has a large Indian American community, with 8.39% of Parsippany-Troy Hills' residents have identified themselves as being of Indian American ancestry in the 2000 Census, which was the eighth-highest of any municipality in New Jersey, for all places with 1,000 or more residents identifying their ancestry.

APPENDIX G

MAP OF PARSIPPANY, NEW JERSEY
APPENDIX H

EVANGELISM APPROACHES

HOW PEOPLE HAVE EXPERIENCED EVANGELISM

% among US non-Christians and lapsed Christians 18 and older

- Casual, one-on-one conversation: 22%
- Casual conversation within a group: 20%
- Person at church: 29%
- Video / movie: 14%
- Concert venue: 15%
- Tract: 30%
- Person on the street: 17%
- None of these: 34%

n=1,001 US adults 18 and older who are not practicing Christians, May 2018

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Barna Group
APPENDIX I

GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES ON FAITH SHARING

Barna Group
APPENDIX J: HINDU THEOLOGY

Since the universal need of people are the same and witnessing to a Hindu is not any different. Such needs as the emptiness of the human soul, the purpose of life, the hunger for union with God, the search for a meaning for existence, and the search for spiritual life are some of the things that occupy the Hindu mind. It will make a effective impression if Christ can be presented with this background, but go slowly, as noted elsewhere, sharing Christ with a Hindu is a long and slow process.

In order to communicate the gospel to a Hindu, it is essential for a Christian to be familiar with the five basic theological concepts of Hinduism. These will help to see dissimilarities and similarities between Hinduism and Christianity and can be used as a bridge for communicating the gospel. These five basic concepts of Hindu religion/philosophy are Brahman, Atman, karma, samsara, moksha.

I. BRAHMAN

The central belief of Hinduism is that there is one Universal Spirit, or eternal Essence, without beginning or end called Brahman, which means the World Soul. The impersonal spirit, the changeless, and the universal force that comprises everything that exists. The Brahman, who is without qualities or distinction (Nirguna) cannot be known by men. The Brahman with qualities (Saguna) such as Truth, Consciousness and Blissfulness (ananda) can be known by men. Brahman, with these attributes, is also known as Isware, who is the creator of the world. In this operative aspect, Hindus believe in a triad made up of Brahma, the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Shiva the destroyer. When Brahman revealed with a mysterious cosmic creative power known as Maya, the creation comes into existence. The whole universe emanates from Brahman as the web that a spider weaves and returns into Brahman. Interestingly, the time in Hinduism is cyclic in this cyclic process of evolution and devolution of creation, Brahman exists in everything, and everything exists in Brahman. (Pantheism) Brahman alone is the ultimate reality, and Maya, with its created world, is an illusion but not eternal. Brahman is the absolute God of Hindus, is very mysterious, and occupies the highest place, as the creator and enjoys of all creation.

II. ATMAN (spirit)

Atman is similar to the Western idea of the soul. But not the same. Hindu thought of schools are divided; some believe individual atmans are Brahman; as a result, all atmans are essentially identical and equal. On the other hand, the Western concept of soul or spirit is linked to an individual human being with all his characteristics and personality. The soul is thought to come into existence when a person is born, and it is not reborn through reincarnation. By contrast, most Hindus believe everything humans or nonhumans does not start with the birth of a person, but with part of or the same as Brahman reincarnated. So, depending on which Hindu you talk with, there are different concepts of Brahman. For some Hindus, Brahman is an abstract force that underlies all things; for others, Brahman is manifested through gods and goddesses as
Vishnu and Shiva (see definitions) The Atman is reincarnated over and over again. The cycle ends only with the realization that the Atman is one with Brahman and is thus one with all creation. In short, man is an emanation or temporarily manifestation of Brahman, and the real "man" is not man's body, but his Atman (spirit)

III. KARMA

Karma literally means "action or doing". In Hinduism, there is a cosmic power of justice, namely karma, which administers do retribution to every person for his or her actions. It is in a principle saying that "as you sow, so shall you reap." The meaning of this law is that what a man now is, the result of what he has done in his past life and what he is doing now determines what he shall be in the future life.

IV. SAMSARA:

The literal translation of samsara would be "a wandering through." This refers to the way in which a Hindu passes through a number of lives and states. The goal is to and its cycle of reincarnation by reaching Nirvana, or moksha. When a Hindu dies, there is only one place he can go to, that is, back to the place where he came from, to be reabsorbed into Brahman. But since man and Brahman are so vastly separated, one must work his way back up to Brahman through an endless samsara (cycle of births and rebirths). It encompasses the concept of reincarnation and the fact that what a person does in their current life will be reflected, through karma, in their future lives.

V. MOKSHA: (Salvation)

Moksha is liberation or release from samsara (cycle of deaths and rebirths) and merging with the Brahma, like a drop of water merging with the ocean and becoming an integral part of Brahman, in a state of everlasting peace. In other words, the Soul passes through a cycle of successive lives (samsara), and its next incarnation is always dependent on how the previous life was lived (karma). Salvation is achieved by one of three routes, the way of good works (karma), the way of devotion (Bhati), and by way of knowledge (Jnana). The path of knowledge leads to the release from the bondage of ignorance and to be united with Brahman forever.

Building theological bridges between Christianity and Hinduism for communication of the gospel is important. When a common ground is built first rather than gospel being presented prematurely, it can be foreign to a Hindu hearer. We need to consider Hindus are coming from different religious worldviews and different cultures, which can play a big role in their acceptance or rejection of the gospel message. If we are not careful building theological bridges first, it may build walls, and communication can be hindered. The approach should always be relational rather than confrontational. The reason is because after one has invested the time to build the relationship, so when discussions about Christ arise, they will listen. There may be times when differences may become apparent, but the relationship should continue. Seeing Hinduism from a Christian perspective will help to remind us that everybody needs forgiveness,
and it will remind us of Christ's humility. Treating Hindus with genuine love and respect will go a long way. Christians often struggle with how to show love to Hindus and may feel they do not need to evangelize to them. But that will not be aligned with the command of the New Testament. One of the ways a Christian can show respect to a Hindu is by listening to them. Although attentive listening can be a challenge for some people, the only way to understand what a person believes is by having them tell you, because understanding a person's worldview can be a key to building communication bridges.
January 11, 2021

David Armstrong  
Dennis McDonald

Re: IRB Application - IRB-FY20-21-352 A Evangelistic Strategy to Communicate the Gospel to Hindu Community in Morris County

Dear David Armstrong and Dennis McDonald,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study does not classify as human subjects research. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your IRB application.

Decision: No Human Subjects Research

Explanation: Your study is not considered human subjects research for the following reason:

Your project will consist of quality improvement activities, which are not "designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge" according to 45 CFR 46. 102(l).

Please note that this decision only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued non-human subjects research status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

Also, although you are welcome to use our recruitment and consent templates, you are not required to do so. If you choose to use our documents, please replace the word research with the word project throughout both documents.

If you have any questions about this determination or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your application's status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.