

The need in a labourers

[Religion](#), [Christianity](#)



Introduction

By 2035 India is projected to overtake China as the most populous nation on earth. With over 4000 people groups and 1652 language groups, there is a tremendous need for us to pray that the Lord will send labourers for the harvest.

As one who grew up in North India and a labourer for the Kingdom of God since 1990, there is no doubt that the Kingdom is advancing. The persecution of God's people has increased but never before has India seen such a move of God. The Lord is building his Church in India and the need of the hour is dedicated labourers for the Kingdom.

The purpose of this paper is to see how best we can see our training efforts raising a harvest force that will be committed to see God's work growing.

I intend highlighting the need for labourers in the light of the tremendous openness to the Gospel. The present scenario of theological training will be dealt with and will be followed by some recommendations of how best we can see our training envisioning young men and women of India to the task of fulfilling the Great Commission

The Need for Labourers

Jason Mandryk in his book 'Operation World' states about India that, " the Hindi speaking heartland, the States through which the Ganges flows (Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal) combine to account for 382 million people. Most of the northern states recorded less than 1% Christians, and some less than 0. 1%. There is

however more Church growth than ever in the North from mega churches of 7000 to networks of tens of thousands of house churches.” Sociological phenomenon like globalization, urbanization and resultant migration is changing the traditional paradigms of ministry and drawing unreached and unengaged people groups into the redemptive plan of God.

Dr. Manokaran in his book *Christ & Cities: Transformation of Urban Centers*, has explained about the Mega Elite, middle class, migrants and the marginalized that are found in our cities.

This brings to our mind the promise of God to Abraham in Genesis 12: 1-3, that through you I will bless the nations. The fulfillment of which we see in Revelation chapter 7 where a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people and language worshipping the Lamb.

The need of the hour is labourers. There is a tremendous need of pioneers and evangelists who can promote indigenous missions. Pastor’s to establish and equip the emerging congregations. Servant leaders who are willing to pursue integrity and excellence.

I am not sure whether there has been a study of the actual number of seminaries, Bible colleges and Training Centres in India and how many of its graduates are having a hands on involvement in the ministry. But such a study will be helpful in rethinking several of our training and equipping strategies

While impartation of knowledge is important in theological education I think the challenge is to cultivate holistic spirituality which is crucial to their effectiveness for the ministry.

I have had the opportunity to see several potential young leaders who held much promise for God's Kingdom. What I found is that instead of taking up the cross and treading the path of self denial, they were pursuing the path of visibility and fame. Very soon they made a ship wreck of their life and aborted God's plan to make them a blessing for the nations.

India needs labourers who have the firm conviction that

- Worship will come to the Lamb from every nation.
- God will redeem people from every People Language, Urban and Geographical groups
- God will overcome evil powers in order to bring things under His governance

While charisma has its place what we need is character. A willingness to embrace the Incarnational model, reflected in service, humility and simple life style is a must if we need to see the Kingdom impacting India.

The present scenario

Praise God for the spurt in Bible colleges, Seminaries and Training Initiatives.

I am not sure whether there has been a study of the actual number of seminaries, Bible colleges and Training Centers in India and how many of its graduates are having a hands on involvement in the ministry. But such a study will be helpful in rethinking several of our training and equipping strategies

While impartation of knowledge is important in theological education I think the challenge is to cultivate holistic spirituality which is crucial to their effectiveness for the ministry.

Forgive me if I sound harsh but seminaries tend to have a feeling that they are the sole reason for the Church to exist. In my opinion Seminaries and Bible colleges should be the servants of the Church. However mutual responsibility and respect between the two is a must.

In Seminaries we often see the top-down model of education, and the rigours of academics and deadlines makes us forget that theological education is an ongoing and interactive process in which students and teachers are participants who share and reflect upon each other's faith and socio-cultural experiences.

It is often seen that inspite of theological training the security and significance of the worker is not derived from God. Instead its source is the posts positions and influence. This erodes the basis for selfless service which is a non-negotiable for effective ministry.

According to Warfield, ministry is a “ learned profession “ and so good learning is essential, but before and above being learned, minister must be godly”. These two requirements are not antagonistic to each other.

If church is missional, theological education should be missional. Dr. William Cahoy, dean of Saint John's School of Theology and Seminary in Collegeville, Minnesota, has put it aptly, “ The most important feature of theological education is knowing God, not knowing about God.”

Seminaries need to pursue higher intellectual level, but often it is taught as a set of philosophical constructs and the active role of the Holy Spirit is not given importance then it will be difficult to see laboureres for the Kingdom.