

# WALDRON NEWSLETTER

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## J. W. SAMSON

While my family and I were living in Australia between 1971 and 1975, I served as an instructor in the MacQuarie School of Preaching. At the time Coy Roper from Oklahoma was serving as the director of the school. One day in a faculty meeting brother Roper said that instead of being called the “director” he thought that “principle” would be more appropriate as it fit in better with British (or Australian) usage. However, he said to use the word principal reminded him of what the high school student had said about his school, “I didn’t mind going to school, it was the principle of the thing I couldn’t stand.” Since India was a British Colony for about 200 years I was reminded of this when we announced last November that J. W. Samson would become the director or principle of the Dindigul Bible Institute (DBI) on January 1, 2001.

J. W. Samson was born in 1958 near Kotagiri, which is a small mountain town located at 6,500 feet above sea level in the mountains of South India. These mountains are called Nilgiri, which literally means, Blue Mountains. Samson’s ethnic background is not the same as that of the majority of India people. His people are a mountain people called Badaga. They are generally taller than most other Indians. Samson is five feet ten inches. His family had been members of the Church of England for five generations when he obeyed the gospel in May 1975. Cecil Bailey, a Canadian and the brother of J. C. Bailey, was the preacher on that occasion.

After receiving his SSLC (Secondary School Leaving Certificate) Samson attended the twelve-month course of the preacher training school conducted by Carl Johnson at Ketti, which is also in the Nilgiri region of south India. Samson and his wife Shermila were married in 1984. Theirs was an arranged marriage and she is also Badaga. They have two children, a son, Santhose (San tos), who is 15, and a daughter, Soniya, who is 13.

I first met Samson in the spring of 1991 when he enrolled in DBI. As I have mentioned before DBI is a

three-year preacher training school, but since Samson had attended twelve months at Ketti he was able to complete his work in 18 months. Immediately after graduation he began to work as a teacher in the school. He proved himself invaluable not only as a teacher but as an electrician and handy man about the property. In January 1997 Samson and his family moved a hundred miles to the northwest of Dindigul in order to work with the two Bible Institutes near Coimbatore. These are the two schools set up for single men and women, which are headed up by C. Aruldass and his wife Lilly.

Coimbatore is a city of over two million people and there are very few New Testament Christians in the area. Besides his teaching, electrical and upkeep work at the two schools Samson also carried on a Bible correspondence program, worked with other teachers and students in doing house to house teaching and in 1999 he began a new congregation in a suburb called, Idyarpalayam.

Actually the Bible Institute at Dindigul had been without a director or principal since the previous man abruptly resigned in April 1999, rather than give an account as to what he had done with a large sum of money put in his hands for construction purposes. Eventually that brother had to be marked as not being worthy of fellowship in Christ. I have served as interim director, but there has been a great need for a native brother to be in this position. J.W. Samson has proven his genuine worth and capabilities over the years. He took up his duties as principal on January 2. Until April he will come by bus from Coimbatore on Mondays and return home on Fridays. When the current school year for his two children finishes in April the family will move to Dindigul. The church at Banner Elk, NC has taken responsibility for Samson’s support.

**DINDIGUL BIBLE INSTITUTE 2001**

Ernest Burnette and I left the States on December 26. On the 31st we preached in New Years Eve services in two separate locations. In both places there were large crowds. On the 2nd of January Ernest began teaching a course at DBI called General Bible Knowledge. I began the work of interviewing and testing the brothers who are just entering the school for the first time. As has been reported before we strive diligently to obey the Holy Spirit's command by Paul that we train faithful men ( 2 Timothy 2:2). Since we are not able to look into the heart of those who apply, we have had to raise our entrance standards over the years. Most of you know we have, since the beginning in 1989, required that all who enroll be Christians for at least two years. But it became apparent that even though they had been Christians that long most were not reading and studying their Bibles. Thus in 1999, we introduced a Bible entrance exam for all incoming students. This has meant that the Bible knowledge of those entering has gone up dramatically and as far as we are able to judge it has also meant that the quality has improved. There are actually four different exams and none of them is easy. One thing which students must be able to do is to write all the books of the Bible in their own language. They also must know such things as what was created on each day of creation, the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, the kings of Judah, the ten plagues, the ten commandments and many things about the life of Abraham and Christ.

As J. W. Samson becomes the new principal we now have our largest enrollment ever. The total enrollment is 197. Of these, 38 will graduate in May 2001. Seventy-two are due to graduate in 2002, 45 in 2003 and new students will be added each January and June. Not only is the present enrollment our largest ever in DBI, but it comes at a time when we have first year students enrolled in seven one-year schools scattered all around the state. For these things we give praise and honor to our heavenly Father. We also give thanks to Him for stirring up your pure minds to take part in this work of faith and labor of love. For without your joint participation we would not be able to carry on this work. Thank you, each and everyone.

On occasion, brothers in the States have asked me when will we be able to give up this work? With 61,000,000 people in Tamil Nadu (not counting the 918,000,000 in the rest of India) I do not see how the work can end until our Lord returns. It grows exponentially, that is, the more we train the more they convert, which means there are more who need training and more congregations who need preachers. Since I had my surgery last June, then turned 65 in November, it has become more and more evident that someone, or two or three are needed who can take up the slack in the coming years. We are aware of this at Dunlap and I talked with our elders on the subject in early December. Please pray for this work and for me.

## **MORE ON JAN-FEB EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN**

Last month I reported that the number of congregations in the State had grown to the point that 15 vans were needed to fulfill all the requests for the eVANGelism program to reach the various locations. Hardly had that newsletter been mailed when we got a call for another van to be used in Tamil Nadu's state capital, Chennai. This request came from James Raj Kumar, a brother and gospel preacher, who has been a long time associate of Bruce Johnson. The latter brother is the youngest son of James Johnson, a Canadian gospel preacher who conducted a school of preaching in Tamil Nadu's capital for many years. Bruce himself served among the Tamil people for 27 years and during that time he learned the local language and adopted Indian citizenship. In 1999 he moved to Texas to work with the church that had sponsored his work in India for many years.

This extra van will mean we will have a total of 192 preachers in 16 units that will be working over the northern and middle portions of the state for two weeks. Another interesting aspect of this up-coming campaign is that the workers last year collected about 10,000 names of prospects who said they would like to be put on our mailing list. Of these 6,000 good and clear addresses have been gleaned, thus we are mailing out about 6,000 printed letters telling these contacts that the vans are coming again. Also, the printing of 160,000 tracts has just been completed so that the brothers will have them to distribute. Of these 120,000 have a place for an individual to write his name and address if he or she wants to get on our mailing list.

In Christian love, Jim E. Waldron

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