

Engaging with Hindu Students

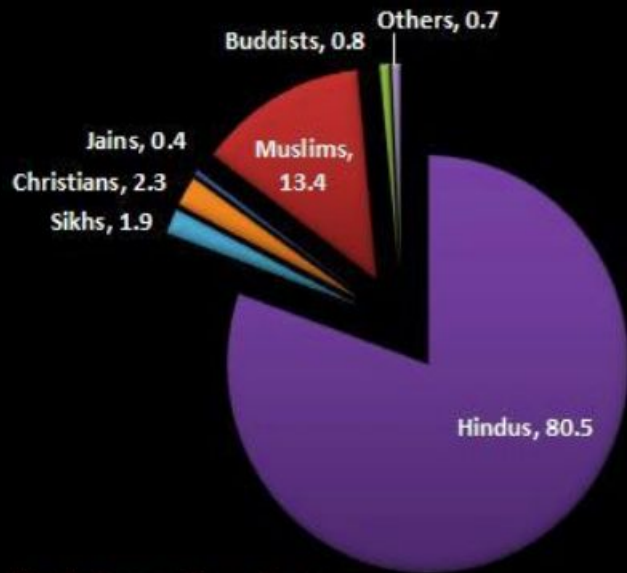


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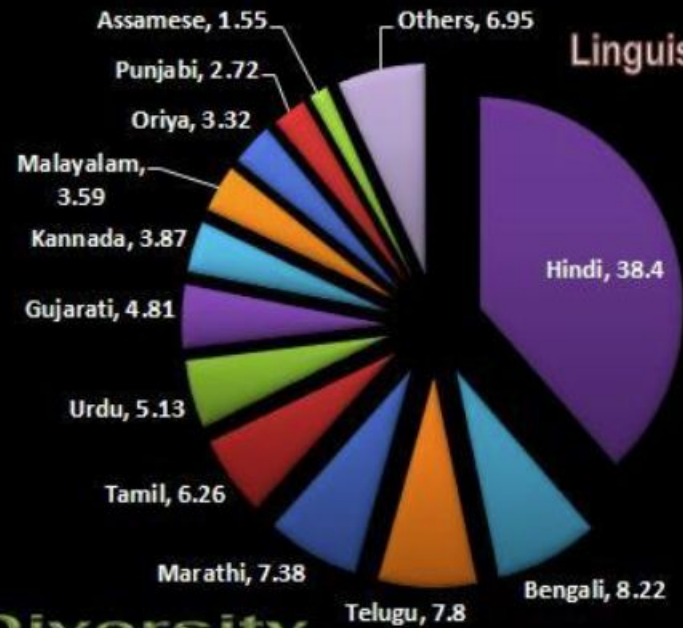
For future contact and questions:

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Religious Breakup



Linguistic Breakup

Unity in Diversity

Overview of workshop:

- **Hinduism not uniform**
- **Tools to deal with common barriers**
- **How to deal with common objections**
- **Resources at our disposal**

Hinduism is not uniform



**The student you are connected to is
your best guide to Hinduism**



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Hinduism is not uniform

- **Various beliefs systems:** atheist, polytheist, monotheist, pantheist
- **Vary on who is Supreme God:** Brahman, Vishnu, Shiva, other?
- **Vary on beliefs of Heaven**
- **How to reach final destination**
- **Variation based on family, region etc**



Ask what your student believes and why.

Also, “How does your family practice Hinduism?”

The student you are connected to is your best guide to Hinduism

Misconceptions about Jesus and Christianity

- Jesus is a western God
- Christianity is a western religion
- We want to impose values, culture onto them
- We want to convert (forcefully push to accept faith in Jesus) them

How can we respond to these points so as to glorify
Jesus?

Misconceptions about Jesus and Christianity

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COLONIZER JESUS vs HISTORICAL JESUS

- WHITE
- CHRISTIAN
- PATRIOTIC
- JUSTICE THROUGH RETRIBUTION
- DIED FOR YOUR SIN
- SENDS SINNERS TO HELL
- SILENT IN THE FACE OF OPPRESSION
- CONDEMNING SINNERS
- ENDORSES CHURCH AND STATE
- A KING
- UPHOLDS TRADITIONAL FAMILY UNIT
- ENDORSES HOLY WAR



- MIDDLE-EASTERN BROWN SKINNED
- JEWISH
- COLONIZED BY ROME
- JUSTICE THROUGH RESTORATION
- KILLED BY CHURCH AND STATE
- FRIEND OF SINNERS & OUTCASTS
- LIBERATES THE OPPRESSED
- CRITIQUES RELIGIOUS PEOPLE
- SUBVERTS EMPIRE
- HOMELESS MAN & CHILD REFUGEE
- HAD HALF-SIBLINGS
- NON-VIOLENT

Unwesternize Jesus and faith:

- **Help them see historical Jesus**
- **Remember ancestral roots:** I've heard a Caucasian staff member sometimes talk about how friends of his from India had ancestors who followed Lord Jesus, while his ancestors were still following Odin and Thor
- **Thomas** follower who came to India before teachings of Lord Jesus spread even to places like England



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Being a Jew to a Jew and Greek to a Greek:

- **Think through what things you do that is due to biblical doctrine and what things are church or American Christianity culture**
- **Jesus never emphasized change of culture but His message was to follow Him as God, Savior and to love**

INVITE TO YESHU SATSANG

Break barriers and be all things to all men in order to win some



INVITING TO CHURCH

- **Do not pressure**
- Explain what will experience
- Explain afterwards that this is what it looks like to follow Jesus here in American culture and that it may look different according to their culture. Invite them to join Yeshe satsang with you to experience that.



Being Jew to a Jew and Greek to Greek:

- **Invite to a Yeshu satsang**
- **Compare and contrast with culture at your church or Bible study**
 - Talk about variations of culture of worshipping Lord Jesus but similarity of doctrine
 - Lord Jesus never emphasized change of culture but to follow Him as God and Savior and to love

Don't throw the baby out with the bath water:

Keep as much of Hinduism as possible without sacrificing the truth of the bible and the uniqueness of the gospel:

- dance
- sanskrit words
- cultural rituals
- holidays
- respect of Indian historical events or people

Jesus never wanted to start a western religion AND helps them long term in reaching their family and community

Being Jew to a Jew and Greek to Greek:

- Give examples of Hindu background believers who maintained culture and follow Lord Jesus
- Encourage students on cultural things that don't go against the Bible.
- Encourage to pray, read Bible, even sing worship in own language



Cultural events as a bridge to the Gospel (ex Acts 17):

- Diwali
- Holi



Misconceptions about Jesus and Christianity

- We want to impose values, culture onto them
- We want to convert (forcefully push to accept faith in Jesus) them

How can we respond to these points so as to glorify Jesus?



Psalm 139- Remember how Jesus sees them

Not as projects



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Sports: Badminton,
Soccer, Basketball,
Table tennis or tennis
Learn cricket or
watch matches

Psalm 139: Interests

Games nights



Henna party



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Psalm 139- STUDENT INTERESTS

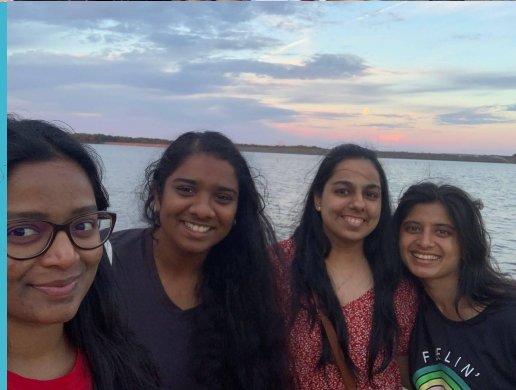
- Artistic?
- Museums?
- History buff?
- Likes dancing?
- Theater?
- Civil rights?
- Athletic?
- Likes music?
- Foodie?
- Likes nature?
- Animals?
- Book lover?

**Find something they like. Something new in that.
Something they can teach you.**



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OHIO or US BUCKET LIST



WINTER BUCKET LIST



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Adorn the Gospel- BIRTHDAYS



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Be in their world but not of their world: Family & Friends



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Adorn the Gospel: LOVE

what is their love language and needs

- airport pick up
- furniture pick up
- ride to Indian grocers
- ride get winter clothing
- driving lessons
- help when sick
- help moving
- emotional support
- time spent having fun
- inspirational messages



MISSION

**To extend life-changing hospitality and
friendship to international students out
of reverence for Jesus**

Asking Questions

- **Family**
- **Favorite activities**
- **Food**
- **Dreams/Aspirations**
- **Culture**
- **What can I pray for you?**
- **Festivals**



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Asking Questions

- **What are your beliefs ... (ask to understand them)**
- **Does your family hold similar beliefs? How does your family practice Hinduism/Sikhism etc? How has that impacted you? Is your family devoted to a particular deity?**
- **What do you celebrate in this festival?**
- **What do you like about this deity?**

Why is listening to them important?



Know what believe and what misunderstand/barriers struggle with

Shows honor and respect

Contradiction to proselytization

Sharing Jesus:

Share the good & the hardship in life but hope thru Jesus



- Relate regular life experiences to Scriptures
- Share how Scripture has helped you in day to day life ex anxiety, marriage, fear, friendships
- Pray before relating to your student what Bible story would benefit them and ask God for an open door to share and follow the leading of the Spirit. (Summarize in 2 min)
- Talk about what you learning through your personal time with Prabhu Yesu (Lord Jesus) about Prabhu Yesu (Lord Jesus).



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Sharing Jesus:

Share your testimony

- Can you summarize it to 1 minute?
- Relate it to the need that student may have? Ex loneliness, anxiety, fear of death, why so loving....

Define yourself when using following words:

- **Resurrection**
- **Sin**- following short or missing the mark of God's perfect moral standard; anything not done in love or faith
- **Awana, Homily, "say grace"**
- **Church / Church "service"**- on Sundays I meet with other followers of Jesus to learn about and worship Him together
- **Christian** use instead, "follower of Prabhu Yeshu or Lord Jesus "
- **Convert & converted**- can trigger thoughts of colonialism and forced conversions; instead say accepted Jesus as God, and His sacrifice to make me righteous and blameless before God. Explain what that means ex. promises for those who have relationship with Jesus
- **Missionary**- can trigger thoughts of colonialism; rather say felt God guided me to country to serve this nation bc He cares for them

Example: Resurrection

If you speak of resurrection add an explanation.

“Prabhu Yesu/Lord Jesus died and came back to life 3 days later **in the same body.**”

Otherwise, they may think you are talking about reincarnation. For example Krishna is believed to have many incarnations (visitations) to the human realm with each incarnation being drastically different than the other incarnations.

Sharing Jesus: Know if receptive

- Door exercise
- Fishing analogy

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brothers *and sisters*, be firm, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not *in vain* in the Lord.

Be in their world but not of their world

Share their life: Join their holidays & festivals



Do not criticize their gods. Rather, tell stories from the bible.

- Do not put down their god or argue with them about flaws you see in their gods; pray for Holy Spirit to open their eyes to these things
- Pray God gives you an open door for sharing of Bible story about Jesus where He does not have this flaw. Focus all on Jesus.
- Typically, I **do not** point out differences. Rather, let Holy Spirit guide them to see differences.
- Ask clarifying questions that get them thinking. Can you explain why he/she did this? Don't argue with your friend's explanation. Just ask questions to get your friend thinking and questioning.

Avoid competition of religion

It's not about going to church or temple or about Christianity vs Hinduism

- triggers fears colonialism
- feels disrespectful and arrogant

Focus on them knowing Jesus

Generally avoid hot topics

- Caste- not created by Hinduism
- Poverty
- Corruption
- Idols- many don't believe actually god but way to center focus
- “millions of Gods”
- Specific character issues like your past addictions or divorce.

Be in their world but not of their world

Holidays celebrated during satsang



Is IFI trying to convert me?

- Do not use the terms convert or conversion in your speech with them
- If ask this to you don't panic this does not mean they will not be interested
- Ask what they think the word convert means?
- What is their fear?

Is IFI trying to convert me?

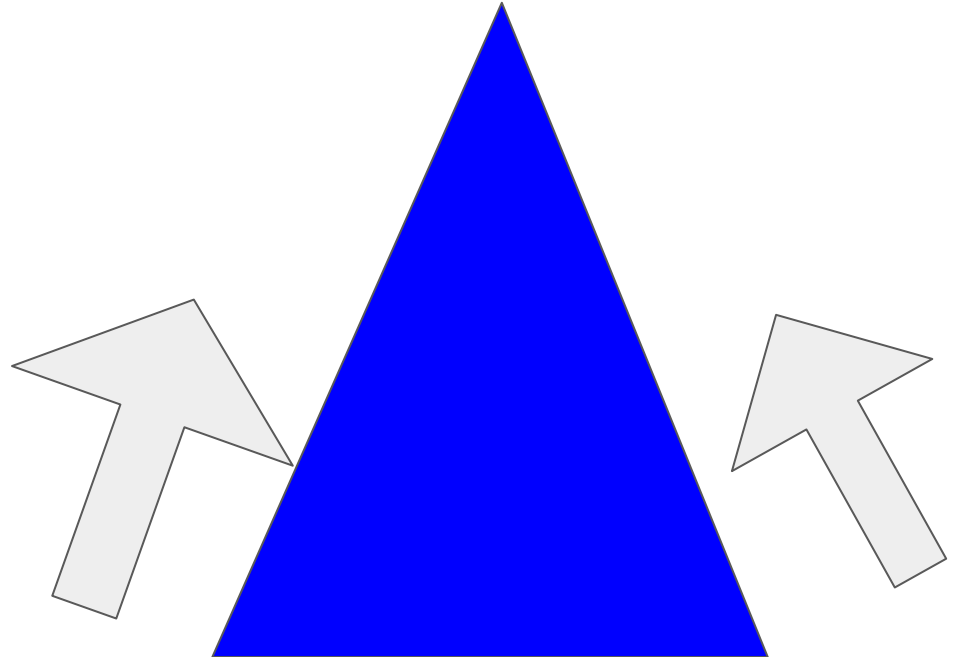
What is their fear?

- Jesus does not tell us to give up our culture, community, and definitely not family. But tells us we should love and honor family and community and our culture can be used to worship Him
- Colonialism and forced conversion goes against the character of God. Focus on Jesus view on free will.
- Explain share bc love them and would share anything good with them. But even something good if forced than not belief.

Other Objections:

Paths to Mukti: no longer reincarnated

- All paths lead to truth and god
- No wrong path unless believe only 1 right path



Other Objections:

- Hinduism is oldest religion
- Hinduism has many scientific and historical aspects to; it is not mythology
- We don't actually worship status there is a deeper meaning not understood.

IF STUDENTS ASK HARD QUESTIONS:

- Focus on Jesus as much as possible at first and then answer questions that are specific barriers.
- Pray - “Is this an actual barrier or rabbit trail?”
- It’s ok to say you don’t know. Can be an opportunity to find out answers with them.



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PLURALISM

- Don't get discouraged if they do not accept Gospel only way or don't immediately accept Jesus as the only god.
- Pray - "Where are they in their relationship with Jesus?"
- Do not shy away from what Bible says but also be discerning on when to be blunt with the truth.
- Pray how God wants you to answer: multiple ways to answer

Have they had a chance to fall in love with Jesus before we ask them to commit to a life long commitment?

PLURALISM

Replies fall upon a continuum.

- Listen to them and not argue with them on the subject....you may win the argument but lose the person
- Sometimes say nothing but continue in relationship and sharing about Jesus when opportunities arise and allow Holy Spirit to convict.
- Don't feel need to disprove everything ex. Religions can be used for good in society, aspects of Hinduism do have historical or scientific authenticity.
- Do you really believe all religions are the same?
- Uniqueness of the Gospel and of Lord Jesus. Keep the focus on Jesus.

Multiple ways to answer



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God's Role

Matthew 28:19-20 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, **I am with you** *always, to the end of the age.*”

John 16:8 And He, when **He** comes, will **convict** the world regarding sin, and righteousness, and judgment

Philippians 2:13 for it is **God** who is at work in you, both to **desire and to work** for *His* good pleasure

1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brothers *and sisters*, be firm, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, knowing that **your labor is not *in vain* in the Lord.**

Hebrews 4:12-13 For the **word of God** is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, even penetrating as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him to whom we must answer.

Isaiah 55:11 So will **My word** be which goes out of *My* mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding *in the purpose* for which I sent it.

Pray, Pray, Pray...

- Before meeting them, pray for guidance and open doors.
- Pray for spiritual protection.
- Ask for God's leading of your witness and words.
- Afterwards, pray for the seeds you planted and for students to have understanding.



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RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS' GROWTH

- Abiding in Christ and power of Holy Spirit
- Your witness and friendship
- 1-1 studies of Bible
- **Yeshu satsang group**
- IFI Bible studies or your church
- Prayer



Let's Pray



**Nahum 1:13 Now I will break their yoke
from your neck and tear your shackles
away.**



Ephesians 6:10-17

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For **our struggle is not against flesh and blood**, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. *Therefore* take up the **full armor of God**, so that when the day of evil comes, you will be able to stand your ground, and having done everything, to stand. **Stand firm then**, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness arrayed, and with your feet fitted with the readiness of the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.



Let's Pray



Ephesians 6:18-20

Pray in the Spirit at all times, with every kind of prayer and petition. To this end, stay alert with all perseverance in your prayers for all the saints.

Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will boldly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it fearlessly, as I should.

Faith DOES NOT
MAKE THINGS EASY
IT MAKES THEM



Possible

LUKE 1:37



Recommended Enrichment

- Engaging with Hindus 2014 by Robin Thomson U.K.
- Christian Barriers to Jesus: Conversations and Questions from the Indian Context J. Paul Pennington
- Living Water and Indian Bowl: An Analysis of Christian Failings in Communicating Christ to Hindus, with Suggestions Toward Improvements; by Dayanand Bharati

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