



In an Indian Red Light District

A mission trip to encourage and support our contact in India is heart rending. She labors in the red light district of one of the largest cities in the country. Her work is hard, with repeated rejections as she makes her rounds in multiple buildings filled with brothels. In spite of frequent spiritual attacks on her and her family, she has made great connections in the area and built much trust.

A typical day with E (name withheld for security purposes) begins around 11 am. India is slow to start her day, but makes up for it in the evening and late hours as the streets bustle with color and activity as people shop, barter, play, and indulge in far less innocent pursuits. We take an “auto” (three wheel, open vehicle, also called a rickshaw, and known as tuk-tuks in other countries) to the red light district where we settle into the salon. This is a safe place for many children of the brothel workers, as well as a meeting place for ladies with HIV who (usually) no longer work. They receive food and the truth in love on a regular basis from E. E trains young girls to work in the salon so they can receive experience and an income. The ladies from the brothels are encouraged to come to the salon for beauty treatments at virtually no cost. Here they receive kindness and the love of Jesus, and they know they are safe.

We then make our way across the road where the pavement is lined with women adorned in cheap make up and colorful textures, standing in doorways of filthy brothels with expressionless faces. The brothels themselves are filthy with dark, stone stairwells littered with trash, walls discolored with red saliva (paan chewed up and spat out by locals). Shrines to various manmade gods are all around. The ladies we meet are scarred physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Society considers these ladies less than animals, yet they hunger for real affection and a sense of worth. They ask us for prayer, knowing deep inside there is more than the life they know, more than this empty world of darkness. It is surreal – I have to keep reminding myself where I am – I hug them and kiss them, tell them they are beautiful, pray over them, give medicine, rub soothing creams on their aching joints or skin diseases, and pose for their “selfies” with me.

I am blinded by compassion for each and every woman, wanting desperately to scoop them up and free them; but this is what they know and how they survive. There is no quick fix, no easy answer. There are so many precious souls here, and in other cities around the world, enslaved like this because of man’s lust and greed, yet each one is born in the image of God, and Jesus died for them all, as well as for the customers and people who profit from them.





Like all of us, their only hope is Jesus. My calling is to introduce as many of them as we can to “Him who died for them and rose again” (2 Corinthians 5: 15, NKJV). How do we do this? By loving each lady, one heart at a time.