

## Sam's Testimony

My full name is Venkata Narayana Murty Samsany, but friends call me SAM, which are the first 3 letters from my family name. I am 45 years old and have a wife and two children. This is my story.

We were staunch Hindus and we are now faithful Christians. I was born and brought up in a Hindu family and I was extremely zealous in my beliefs. I was very proud of Hinduism and believed I was on the right path, by worshiping lots of gods and idols. I was very anti- Christian. In fact, I truly hated Christians. In 1991, my younger brother left our family's Hindu gods and began to worship Jesus. I was furious! When he expressed his faith in the Lord, I took it upon myself as his older brother to kick him out of our house, with the help of our parents, seeing it as a big insult to our family. In those days, my eyes were blinded and I thought our Lord Jesus Christ was only the white people's God and a foreign God.

Even though I kicked my little brother from our home, he never was angry at me. That puzzled me. In fact, he showed more love and grace than ever before and he started praying for me and our entire family. But I was very angry with him and hurled insults on him and other Christians.

Three years later, in 1994, I got married to Lakshmi who came from a Hindu family. Ours was an arranged marriage. I didn't even call my little brother to come to my wedding. I was very proud and full of false pride in those days. I was working in the hotel industry as a marketing manager and I had a small but growing taxi business on the side. Life was good and I was making a lot of money. No matter how many believers shared the Gospel with me I never listened to any of it. I was happy with my Hindu beliefs and wanted nothing to do with Christianity. I even use to destroy the "Gospel Tracts" that were handed to me from time to time by various people. But then in 1999 everything began to fall apart. I incurred huge losses in my business and at the same time, I lost my job. In a very short time I went from reasonably well off, to penny less. I was desperate and didn't know what to do. I was mad at everyone in the family. I had no peace and no proper sleep for nearly 4 to 5 months. I called and cried to all the gods whom I worshiped but no one answered me or helped me.

All I thought was that death is the only way to get out of this mess and I attempted suicide by pouring gasoline all over my body. I wanted to self-immolate myself. I sat down with the gas all over my body and took out a box of matches. I was afraid and in a terrible state of hopelessness. Nervous and shaking, I tried and tried to light the matches, but to no avail. Praise God, for some reason the matchsticks did not light! As it is said in Jeremiah 29:11, "'For I know the plans I have for you,'" declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'" He has got plans for me and my family and HE saved me. That night I cried and cried! And I called on our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for the first time. Immediately, I experienced peace like never before and I slept like a baby that night. On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2000, I was baptized and my whole family now believes and follows Jesus Christ. Slowly, God began to remake me and build me up as a new creature in Christ.

Evangelism is my passion and my burden is to reach out to the unreached people groups. Steve has been very helpful to me and equips me to fulfil my passion to reach out with the Good News to the unreached people groups in various villages. As our Lord says in Matthew 9:37, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." Still there are lots and lots of villages where the Gospel is not heard in India. And now my little brother and I work together sometimes to share the Good News!

Thanks for reading my testimony. Hope it has encouraged you,

Blessings,

Sam and Family