

Hindus

Has God put an unreached people group literally next door?

Barriers between Hindus and the Gospel

The Meaning of Being “Hindu” or “Christian”

In the West, the term “Hindu” and “Christian” are terms that describe someone’s religious beliefs. However, in India and other South Asian countries, these words are usually understood to reflect the community culture into which a person is born. A Hindu is a person born to Hindu parents and who belongs to a Hindu community and Hindu way of life. Those born into a Hindu family in India automatically are identified by the government as Hindu, and “conversion” involves a legal act of changing their registered identity. Therefore, Hindus usually view Christians simply as those born to Christian parents and associated with the West. They assume Jesus is not approachable for them because “He is the Christian god and since I’m not Christian, he’s not relevant for me.”

The Commitment to Community

Their family network, or “jati,” is of greatest importance to a Hindu. Their highest duty and responsibility is to their family, and important decisions are based not on individual preference but on what is best for their family. An Indian’s caste is determined by their family of origin and predetermines both their social status and economic opportunities. While Christianity has made inroads into some of the lowest castes of Indian society, the upper castes—those most likely to immigrate to the West—have been almost untouched by the gospel.

Sadly, the majority of Hindus assume that to follow Jesus means that they must reject their Hindu family and culture and transfer to the Christian community. This assumption that they would have to abandon their family to choose Jesus must be replaced by an understanding that they can follow Jesus in a way that blesses and honors their family and community.

One-Way Giving and Telling

Because Hindus see themselves as equals with, or even superior to Christians, believers who try to share their faith from a position of authority are seldom successful. Instead, faith must be shared with Hindus from the posture of friend and peer. The best approach is to balance sharing about the Lord with asking questions about your Hindu friend’s spiritual beliefs. A relationship built on mutual respect, honesty, and shared interests will open doors. Being perceived as feeling superior or belittling Hindu practices will slam them closed.

Access the full article at:

<https://catalystservices.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Hindus-Postings-November-2019.pdf>