

# Capstone Ministries

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After the devastating fire that engulfed thousands of acres of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park two years ago, one now sees a beautiful sea of dense, deep green shoots of the Table Mountain Pine tree rising one to two feet from the charred ground stretching toward the sun. This tree holds its cone of seeds for decades until intense heat from a fire allows the seeds to be released and germinate.

So it is with the Christians of Sri Lanka. They were the minority religion in the minority Hindu Tamil population. The Tamils became increasingly persecuted by the ruling Buddhist Sinhalese majority following independence in 1948. The smoldering tensions erupted in a civil war in 1983 which lasted 26 years. Over 90,000 Tamils were killed and 400,000 were displaced back to India after living in Sri Lanka for centuries. The suffering was intense. The Sinhalese were victors but, at war's end, were declared guilty of war crimes against the Tamil .

Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) is the size of Ireland and the Tamil people are still living in the north and east of the country. Although their hard fought battle ended in defeat, they have been afforded more rights and benefits.

Out of the charred battlefields are springing up a new generation of young Christian pastors and evangelists that are eager to share the gospel with their Hindu Tamil neighbors. One of those pastors, N. Jayaraj, found the Capstone Bible Institute (CBI) website on the internet and contacted our Capstone Indian director-Santhosh (last name kept private due to Indian government surveillance).

A visit was arranged which took Santhosh over 300 miles of Tamil speaking land visiting pastors. This is one of the languages that CBI has translated for use in southern India. Very limited Biblical education is available in Sri Lanka. N. Jayaraj has found 100 pastors who are eager to start CBI training which he will oversee. The pastor's report that they "have not seen any ministry helping them to be trained like CBI." We pray that God will raise up new shoots of believers that will seed the gospel throughout this beautiful country.

**Urgent needs:** 1. Funds of \$750 to support N. Jayaraj for travel expenses for a year. 2. Prayers for the Corona epidemic soon to impact India. 3. Seeking \$3000 for supplies for 40 mentors and 980 pastors/evangelists now training in CBI in India.