

My wife, Dimple, was born an Indian Hindu from an Untouchable caste. Her family came to Jesus through a traumatic encounter with an evil spirit that cost Dimple's sister her life. The family came to worship at our church, which is how we met and eventually got married. Dimple and her family focused their ministry efforts on their friends, relatives, and neighbors, and a few hundred people have made decisions for Jesus. Although many fell away over the years, we are still discipling believers in her community. The area she's from is called a "colony," which means there is poverty, alcoholism, lawlessness, and illiteracy. Most families live in one or two room flats and there can be 10 flats in a single building. The buildings are contiguous, and streets are narrow.

The men of Dimple's community make flip flop sandals and earn very little money. During the lockdown their places of employment were shut, and they were left without any income. Their situation was grave, but our disciples were able to get out among the people who they had been sharing the Gospel to in order to give enough money for a month's supply of food. Positive cases of COVID-19 sprang up early in the community, and now it is a containment zone where the police actively prevent all foot traffic in and out and new buildings are being quarantined as new cases arise. As I'm sending this (May 31), one of our disciples and her mother say they have a fever. They haven't been tested for COVID-19 yet. One of our former disciples and her entire family have contracted the coronavirus.



This is a picture of the line of women that formed outside Dimple's family's house when they called them there to receive money. These women live in the colony that's now a containment zone, while Dimple's parents live less than a mile away, outside the containment zone. This picture was taken before the containment zone was established.



This girl is named Dominee. She accepted Jesus years ago but abruptly returned her Bible to us without explanation and didn't want to follow Jesus anymore (we suspect outside threats, which is common). She and her entire family now have COVID-19. Her grandmother has been admitted to the hospital, but the rest of the family must stay home. The doctors say they will admit them later but haven't done so yet. We gave some money for food, but they can't even use it now and depend on the government to deliver essentials. We keep in contact with them over phone.



This woman is a relative of Dimple. She scours rubbish heaps in search of copper, iron, and anything else she can sell as her daily work. When she went out for work on the first day of lockdown the police beat her and sent her back home empty handed. She came from across Delhi to reach Dimple's parent's house to receive money.



The Indian woman smiling in this picture is Sangita. She was an early disciple of Dimple's that became a committed evangelist. The American next to her is a missionary that came to teach house church planting techniques, and the children are Sangita's. Her money was running out during the lockdown and she felt her desperation increasing. We gave her some money and her family praised God.



This picture is of Jyoti, our disciple who currently has a fever but we don't know if it's COVID-19 or not yet. We gave her family money when the lockdown began. We're sharing this to ask you to pray for their safety.

So far, we've helped 43 families in this area. Many families were borrowing money to live. The government occasionally provided a single meal, and except for that meal some families went without anything. They couldn't even make tea, and most Indians would starve before they gave up their tea. We're attaching a few photos of some of the families we helped so you can get an idea of what they look like.

