**Caste and Christianity in India: A Theological, Historical, and Legal Analysis**

**-Sudhakar Mondithoka, Director of and Faculty Member at HITHA**

(A Paper Presented at the RTF Forum on ‘Casteism in India and the Church’ on July 10, 2015 at Shammah Church, Secunderabad)

**Introduction:** People being divided into different groups and certain groups being discriminated against on the basis of different grounds is a universal human problem. The European class system or the racial divisions or the caste system of India are some examples. However, we cannot equate them and say that they are all the same. The grounds for the different ways in which people are differentiated in different cultures, civilizations, and religions, vary greatly. In a sense, this is a manifestation of the human sinfulness, because sin has affected every facet of human life and the essence of sin is self-centeredness rather than God-centeredness.

The Caste System or the problem of caste is a uniquely Indian problem and it is inseparably linked to the Hindu religions (or Hinduisms).[[1]](#footnote-1) Discrimination is not unique to India or Hinduism, but Caste/Varna/Jati-based discrimination is unique to India and Hinduism. Mason Olcott argues that the Caste system is a hierarchy of endogamous groups that individuals enter only by birth, that caste differs from a clan or class, that the Caste system of India is different from the class system of other countries because of the mighty sanctions of the ancient Hindu religion, that the hierarchy is based on birth and reincarnation, and that there are also outcastes (also called depressed classes or untouchables).[[2]](#footnote-2) The outcastes are called ‘Dalits’ and the way they have been treated is horrible and inhuman and there is no parallel to this in any other culture.[[3]](#footnote-3) On the Hindu view, humans are not created equally but created unequally and there is no theological or ideological basis for equality in Hinduism or the Hindu worldview. Even the concept of salvation (Moksha) within the Hindu worldviews is inseparably linked to the concepts of karma-samsara and Varna system.

The Christian or biblical view is very different. It is rather contradictory to the Hindu view. On the biblical view, all humans are created equally by the same Triune God in His image and likeness and in this all humans are equal and have equal dignity and worth. We share the same humanity and bear the same divine image and so we are ontologically equal irrespective of any differences that might exist in other aspects (see Genesis 1: 26-27; 2: 22-24; 9: 6). All humans are equally sinful and lost and are equally saved by grace through faith and there is no basis for any boasting at all (Romans 3: 9-30; 5: 1-2; 6: 23; Ephesians 2: 1-3). All (from whatever background) those who are reconciled to God through faith in Christ are united in the one family/household of God (1 Timothy 3: 15), one spiritual house, one holy priesthood, one holy nation, and a people belonging to God (1 Peter 2: 4-12). All that are in Christ are united in the one body of Christ, the Church (Ephesians 4: 3-6; 1 Corinthians 12: 12-13/31; Romans 12: 1-8) and are one in Christ (Ephesians 2: 11-22). All the barriers that humans have created to separate themselves into different groups and classes or castes are broken down in Christ and hence any discrimination on any basis (ethnicity, social status, economic status, gender, etc.) is not acceptable (1 Cor. 12: 13; Gal. 3: 26-28; James 2: 1-10).[[4]](#footnote-4)

It is against this backdrop that we are going to look at the issue of how Caste and Christianity have been related to each other in India. We will take a brief look at the history of this interaction by considering the response of missionaries to Caste, and then consider the legal (constitutional) issues and conclude with the consideration of some contemporary practical issues.

**Caste and Christianity in India - A Theological and Historical Analysis:** Theologically, it becomes obvious to anyone who takes even a cursory look at the biblical view of human equality and dignity and compares and contrasts it with the Hindu view (the Caste System) that the Christian worldview stands opposed to Caste system. Discrimination on the basis of Caste (or on any other grounds) is against the fundamentals of Christian theology and the teachings of Christ and the Apostles. Christians are exhorted to strive or make every effort to guard or maintain the unity of the Spirit in the body of Christ (Ephesians 4: 1-6) through the bond of peace. Paul offers a profoundly theological foundation for this unity (vv. 4-6) by showing that the Triune God, the Holy Trinity is the foundation for Christian unity. In a sense, the unity in the Triune God we worship is the model for our unity, the unity among all Christians. In true worship, the worshipper becomes transformed more and more into the likeness of the object of his worship. Just as there is unity in diversity in the Holy Trinity, there should be unity within the diversity among Christians (whatever might be the kind of diversity). Jesus Christ prayed in His high priestly prayer for the unity among all his disciples (John 17: 11, 20-23) and that shows how important it was and is for Him. Anything that tries to disturb and mar the Christian unity instead of maintaining it cannot be acceptable from the Christian perspective. Caste disturbs the Christian unity and therefore Christians should not allow it to come in but should rather work against the Caste System and destroy it by the power of the Gospel, the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1: 16).

However, the history of missions in India shows that when the Christian missionaries[[5]](#footnote-5) came to India they responded differently to the reality of the evil of caste in India and it appears that instead of Christianity affecting the Caste System and bringing about social change, caste affected Christianity and invaded it.[[6]](#footnote-6) It is sad that the missionaries did not address the Caste System as they should have from a biblical point of view. Unfortunately, people in the Church are as caste-conscious and caste-driven (rather than being Christ-driven) as the people in the society are and there are denominations that are associated with castes and there are also caste-based churches in the two Telugu States of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

**Francis Xavier**, a Roman Catholic Jesuit was the first Western missionary that came to India (in October 1542). Most of his converts were from the people known as *pariah* (outcastes). **Roberto de Nobili**, another Jesuit missionary came to India in A.D. 1606. He rejected the example of Xavier and sought converts from among the Brahmins, because he found that Christianity was successful only among the lower strata people and that it was because of the Portuguese who were known as *Paranghis* and seen as those that ate beef, drank liquor, lived unclean and had contact with the low-caste people. Roberto de Nobili started following all the Hindu religious customs, accepted Caste, practiced untouchability, and even appointed separate priests for Christians considered as upper and lower caste. Many so called upper caste Hindus became Christians. But his work resulted in a divided Church with Brahmin Christians and Pariah Christians. **Ziegenbalg and Plutschau** were the first Protestant missionaries that came to south India in 1706 from Germany. Most of their converts were from the Dalit and other low and poor castes and they were more biblical in their preaching than the Catholic missionaries. However, they did not see the gospel and Christian faith as having any social and communal significance but saw it as merely a personal faith resulting in personal holiness and some sort of otherworldly spirituality. Their understanding of salvation was that it is private and personal and they did not see salvation as the reversal of all the effects of sin or the fall. This kind of a view ensured that the Gospel they preached did not have social impact that could bring about social change or transformation by addressing social evils. This view was inherited by the native believers and so even a missionary like **Bishop Heber**, the Anglican missionary who reached India in October 1823, who took seriously the question of caste in the Church ended up accepting the views of the native Christians and the early missionaries. He concluded that in some forms distinctions existed even in Europe. The American Presbyterian missionaries in India also toed the same line.[[7]](#footnote-7) The great Baptist Missionary **William Carey** and his team had a different approach to their mission work. But that was not the majority view and although their work impacted the Indian society to some extent, it did not impact the Indian Church significantly. The common missionary response to the caste problem in India was ‘the policy of accommodation’ (rather than the policy of engagement for transformation) and this resulted in a divided Indian Church or Indian Christians on the basis of their caste background although in Christ there is not supposed to be any discrimination but unity. This also resulted in ‘mission compounds’, ‘Christian colonies’, ‘Christian villages’ and so on and thus kept the majority of Christians coming from the Dalit backgrounds separated and isolated from the so called upper caste people. Even within the Church, the caste divisions were maintained and the great unifying sacrament of the Lord’s Table too could not break the barriers as caste people and priests and pastors were not willing to be one with the lower caste or Dalit people and even the different sub-caste groups among Dalits are divided on caste-denominational lines, as already observed. The Church is not free from the caste problem but is rather under the grip of it, very sadly.[[8]](#footnote-8) Even now some of these tragic tendencies prevail in the Church in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and some other states. Inter-caste (or across the caste and background lines) marriages among Christians have been and are happening, but in most cases caste is still taken as a very important factor in choosing marriage partners. It is in view of this history that we will now look at the issue of caste in the Indian Church and the constitutional and legal aspects.

**Caste and Christianity in India - A Constitutional and Legal Analysis:** After India became independent in 1947, all the poor people belonging to lower and under-privileged castes were given certain privileges like free education (or scholarships for education), reservations in jobs, and so on.[[9]](#footnote-9) At the time of writing the constitution for India, when the question of Christians being entitled to those reservation benefits (particularly because majority of Christians were from the Dalit background) including their minority benefits came up, the Christian representatives (all three – H. C. Mookerjee, Amrit Kaur, and Jerome D’ Souza, S. J. were from upper castes) did not want to have the reservations but just the minority rights. Then the 1950 Order of the President of India stated that those who choose to become Christians from the Dalit background will lose their benefits of reservation. This is great injustice to the Dalits who desire to embrace the Christian faith (and even the Islamic faith), because Dalits who choose to become Buddhists and Sikhs would continue to enjoy the reservation benefits even after conversion (extended to Sikh Dalits in 1956, and to Buddhist Dalits in 1990). It is also required by law that those that become Christians from the Dalit background should inform the government of this change. There is a case going on in the Supreme Court and many political parties promised to bring justice but nothing has been done so far and the present government is clear and categorical that they will not be in favor of extending the caste- based benefits to Dalit Christians. There are many good Christians who think that it is not right for us to demand that the Government should take care of our people (Christians) but think that we, the Church should take care of them. There are also some who argue that while fighting constitutionally (because all citizens of India are free to choose any religion they want and it is constitutionally guaranteed) and legally for justice and against injustice, we should take care of our people and encourage them to take a stand for the Christian faith and be willing to pay any price for being the followers of Christ. According to the 1950 Presidential Order, it is the Hindu Dalits that are listed as ”Scheduled Castes” and therefore, the BJP leaders and others argue that as Christianity has no caste system, once someone becomes a Christian he or she ceases to be a Hindu and therefore, they cannot be listed as Schedules Castes and hence they cannot enjoy the reservation (affirmative action) benefits any longer but should rather be willing to forego those benefits. This takes us to the final major point of the contemporary and practical consideration of the subject of Caste and Christianity in India.

**Caste and Christianity in India - A Contemporary and Practical Analysis:** There are people that are holding the view that there is no qualitative distinction between the biblical concepts of tribes, nations or people groups, and other such concepts and the caste categories in India coming from the Hindu religious sources. This is far from the truth and we should study the biblical anthropology properly and grasp the truth that ‘all humans are created in the image and likeness of God’ and therefore we should not look down upon or discriminate any group or individual on any grounds. We have already given enough on this truth. It is a fact that the Church in India is a predominantly Dalit Background Believers’ Church with about 75 percent coming from that background.[[10]](#footnote-10) The Dalits are the ‘trampled upon’ or ‘broken’ people (as the Marathi terms used by Mahatma Jothiba Phule in the late 1880s to talk about the Outcastes and Untouchables indicate) that have been oppressed by the Hindu society) for ages in this country. Therefore, we (the Church) should not continue this in any way. We should avoid (rather rebel against) any teaching or practice that would perpetrate this historical and social evil.[[11]](#footnote-11) Even the DBBs (Dalit Background Believers) should come out of this and not separate themselves into sub-castes but should break the hold of this evil upon them. One way to do this would be to remain open for marriage with people coming from other backgrounds as the Bible only insists that a believer should marry another believer. We should not allow the stigma of Dalitness to haunt people anymore and even if we have to speak of the Dalit background in a historical sense we should ensure that our new identity in Christ[[12]](#footnote-12) and the biblical teaching about humanity would be our primary and dominant perception of ourselves and others. We should not talk about any special ‘convert Christians’ as there can be no Christian who is not a convert (converted by the work of the Holy Spirit who brings about the experience of being ‘born again’ or regenerated) according to the Bible. We might refer to our backgrounds in sharing our testimonies only for the sake of reaching others from such backgrounds but not to paint a picture of superiority about ourselves or to boast in our backgrounds. We should learn to boast only in Christ and what God has done for us in Him.

Let us make needs – financial, economic, educational, etc., the basis of support to fellow believers in the Church and detach all our social and community service from the caste-tag. This way, we can overcome one of the downsides of the Reservation System, which keeps the caste-tag and thus the stigma that goes with it.[[13]](#footnote-13) Let us fight legally against the injustice done to the Dalits that would want to embrace the Christian faith (or the Islamic faith) purely on the basis of the constitution, particularly articles about the freedom of religion. Let us win our right to fight by being truthful and honest. Commenting on Psalm 15: 2, Bob Crow says, “All believers in Christ (not just a few exceptional ones) should be blameless in behavior – 1 Cor 1: 8; Phil 2: 14, 15; 2 Pet 3: 14. All of us should always speak the truth – Eph 4: 15, 25; Col 3: 9, 10. The true God is a God of truth (31: 5), and demands that we love truth and speak the truth. Those who do not are in great danger – Prov. 12: 22; 2 Thessa. 2: 10, 11; Rev 21: 8, 27; 22: 15. Liars are Satan’s children (John8: 44), and will be punished with Satan.”[[14]](#footnote-14) We cannot fight against injustice if we are not following the law of the land and are not morally right in claiming to be Hindus in the official records when we are Christians (believers in Christ and His disciples).[[15]](#footnote-15) We should love Jesus Christ/God more than anyone and anything else and we should be ready to lose even our lives for bearing that holy name and for being His witnesses and so we should not hesitate to lose (or shrink back from losing) some privileges (like scholarships or jobs or promotions in jobs). Of course this applies to every area of our lives and not just this one area. We should be people of integrity and truthful in all other areas also as we worship the God of all truth and Christ who is the truth in person and the gospel we preach or proclaim is truth. When we do this we win our right to fight against what is wrong and unjust and we are true Christians committed to Christ on His terms of discipleship. We, the Church should stand with such people who take their stand for Christ boldly and support them in every way possible.[[16]](#footnote-16)

**Conclusion:** The first step in facing the problem of caste in the Indian Church is the honest admission that it is a reality. The second step would be to say from the heart that we put Christ and His teachings first and caste and social status second or next or whatever. We are supposed to be the light of the world shining into the darkness of the caste-plagued (and even corruption-plagued) Indian society. If we deny the harsh reality of caste in the Indian/predominant Hindu society and in the Church in India, we cannot be the light as God desires and declares. Let us make a prayerful covenant as a community of God’s people in India (the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ) that we will do all that we can in our capacity by the grace of God to shun the evil of caste in all its forms (in all the aspects of our lives) and stand up against it in a spirit of humility and love. Someone said, “The Church in India does not preach caste, but practices.” Although there are some who even preach caste, this is vastly true of the Church in India. So let us commit ourselves to stop practicing caste and start preaching against it so that India might be blessed by the power of the gospel (rather than just by the gradual and slow natural processes of globalization, democratization, secularization, etc.). Let us learn to think and live biblically, allowing the biblical/Christian worldview to transform our way of life for the glory of God and the blessing of India. Let us determine to die to Caste (as those that are dead to sin) and live in and for Christ and thus demonstrate the power of the Gospel to transform individual lives and cultures.

**Questions for discussion/further reflection and study:**

1)Is it morally right for a Christian/follower of Jesus Christ to write with his/her own hand that she/he is a Hindu for the sake of some benefits (or SC status or some other reason)?

2) Is it wrong to teach to Christians in the Churches that they should declare their faith (irrespective of the background they come from and the price they have to pay)?

3) How should Christians from the (so called) lower caste backgrounds, particularly the DBBs see or relate to the Christians from the (so called) upper caste backgrounds (particularly Brahmins)? Is there any room for bitterness or hatred or any spirit of vengeance?

4) Can we come up with any biblical support for Casteism in the Church? Can missiological reasons be considered strong enough to support the continuation of caste in Christianity (or the Church) when it is theologically not acceptable/supportable?

5) Can Christians be cobelligerent with others in fighting against the injustice that is meted out to Dalits who desire to embrace Christianity (the law of the land is such that when they embrace Christianity, they lose the reservation/affirmative action benefits and those who embrace Buddhism and Sikhism from the same background do not lose the benefits)? What rightful means of protest against injustice are available for Christians in their fight against injustice in this regard?

1. The word ‘caste’ has not come from any Indian root word (it came from a Portuguese term) and there can be nuanced differences or distinctions between the *Varnas*, *Jatis* and *Castes*. Even the terms like Hindu, Hinduism, and India are terms that foreigners derived from the existing terms of the land and these terms developed over a period of time and the meanings also evolved into the current forms. As much as ‘Hinduism’ is an evolving set of religions, things like Casteism within it have also been evolving. From the four *Varnas* of the *Chatur Varna* (The Rig-Veda X, 90) system or *varnashrama dharma* we got 2, 378 main castes and tribes (1901 Census of India) and now there are over 4000 castes and sub-castes (*Jatis*) – see Arundhati Roy, *“Democracy hasn’t eradicated the country’s caste system. It has entrenched and modernized it,”* Prospect Magazine (December 2014) – <http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/features/indans-shame>). Manu Smriti, Ramayana and Gita also give Caste System a strong religious sanction and the current social practices in the Indian culture confirm this truth. There is scholarly agreement that there is nothing called ‘Hinduism’ but there are rather Hinduisms like Polytheism (Polytheistic Hinduism), Pantheism or Advita Vedanta (Pantheistic Hinduism), Henotheism (focusing the devotion on one of the many gods), and so on. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Mason Olcott, “The Caste System of India” in [*American Sociological Review*, Vol. 9, No. 6 (Dec., 1944)](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2085128), pp. 648-657. Sai Krishna’s paper *Caste System According to Hindu Scriptures* is all about this subject of Casteism and Hinduism and you can look at it for more on this. He shows from the primary level Hindu sources/Scriptures that Caste System is intrinsic to Hinduism and that it is a very horrible and dehumanizing hierarchical system. There are some who have tried to argue that Casteism is not intrinsic to Hinduism and there have been others who have shown that such a view cannot be maintained (see for example M. V. Nadkarni’s article “Is Caste System Intrinsic to Hinduism? – Demolishing a Myth” in *Economic and Political Weekly*, November, 2003 and a critical evaluation of this article by Gail Omvedt in *Economic and Political Weekly* March 13, 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See the quotations from the Hindu Sacred writings that Sai Krishna has given in his paper to understand how true this is. Read Arundhati Roy’s article (it has some very shocking and shameful instances described vividly). Dr. B. R. Abedkar, a great Indian intellectual, a key contributor to the Indian Constitution and a Dalit experienced the caste-based discrimination to such an extent that he said, “I was born a Hindu, but will not die a Hindu” and embraced Buddhism along with hundreds of thousands of people from the Dalit background. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Douglas Groothuis’ paper *Abolishing Caste among Christians* is all about this issue of Christian/biblical teaching against all kinds of discrimination and shows that the Christian worldview opposes the Hindu view of Casteism. He argues for the abolition of Caste among Christians purely on the basis of the Biblical teaching. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Before the arrival of the modern missionaries, the Syrian Christianity that was present in Kerala was totally absorbed into the Hindu Caste System and those Christians followed this system like the Hindu people. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See James Massey, *Dalits: Issues and Concerns* (Delhi: BR Publishing Corporation, 1998), 69-94. I have drawn much of the historical material from his chapter “Church History: Dalit Perspective,” which is well documented. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid, 72-78. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See some recent articles in the social media and the news media and you will know how true it is: 1) **Not even the Church escapes India's caste system,** Ivan Fernandes, Hyderabad, September 11, 2013 - <http://www.ucanews.com/news/not-even-the-church-escapes-indias-caste-system/69231>, accessed on July 7, 2015, 2) **Caste system a reality in Church?** The Milli Gazette: Published Online: Dec 29, 2012: Print Issue: 16-31December 2009, Fr. Anand Muttungal - <http://www.milligazette.com/news/5380-caste-system-a-reality-in-church>, accessed on July 10, 2015, 3) **India minister says no special caste status for Christians,** Oct. 27, 2014 by Anto Akkara - <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2014/10/article_3443328.html/> accessed on July 10, 2015, 4) **Hindu reconvert gets SC benefits,** February 27, 2015 | Samanwaya Rautray - <http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/keyword/caste-system/featured/2>, accessed on July 10, 2015, 5) [**REFLECTIONS ON CASTE AND CLASS, HIERARCHY AND DOMINANCE**](http://www.india-seminar.com/2012/633/633_john_harriss.htm), **John Harris**,Professor and Director, School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver -

<http://www.india-seminar.com/2012/633/633_john_harriss.htm>, accessed on July 10, 2015, and 6**) Religion Dispatches: Caste First, Christ Second, for Some Indian Christians** by Megan Sweas (July 9, 2012) – <http://religiondispatches.org/caste-first-christ-second-for-some-indian-christians/> accessed on July 7, 2015 (University of Southern California publication). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Even before India became independent of the British rule, the British Government in 1935 specified while notifying the SCs (Scheduled Castes that would get the government reservation benefits) that “no Indian Christian shall be deemed to be a member of a Scheduled Caste.” This is true even now. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Of the 24 million Christians in the country, Dalit Christians are about 16 million. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The popular secular Telugu Television News Channel TV 9 calls Casteism a disease (‘Kula Gajji’ in Telugu, meaning Caste Eczema or Scabies) and has launched a campaign against it. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. We should not confuse this with Paul’s reference to his Jewish identity, because there are fundamental differences (and even total contradictions) between the Christian Worldview and the Hindu Worldview and there are fundamental similarities between Judaism and Christianity and in a sense ours is a Judeo-Christian Worldview (although there are differences between Jews and Christians with regards to the Messianic identity of Jesus Christ). Paul uses his Jewish identity only to preach Christ to the Jews and not at all to compromise on any single truth of the Gospel and the Christian Faith/Worldview. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The Reservation System gives rise to Dalit IAS officers or IPS officers or some other people like that, but does not actually liberate people and cleanse the system of the Caste-based discrimination. It rather keeps the Dalit still Dalit (and for that matter any other category like the Backward Class Officers, Brahmin or Reddy or Kamma or whatever class) and such people are not honored on par with their colleagues. Equal honor and dignity can become a reality only when the society is cleansed of the evil of Caste System. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Bob Crow, Today’s King James Version of STUDY BIBLE (Chennai: India Bible Literature), 665-666. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Vast majority of converts to Christ from Dalit backgrounds are not declaring in their official records that they belong to Christ and hence are Christians but are instead writing with their own hands that their religion is Hinduism and that they are Hindus. Can a true believer in Christ do this and not be troubled in the conscience? Can God be pleased with such unethical telling or writing of a lie/false statement repeatedly and deliberately? Christians believe in the true God (the God truth – Psalm 31: 5), the Bible as the truth from God, the Gospel as truth, and the Bible teaches that we should be holy in all our ways like our God is holy (1 Peter 1: 15-16) and that we should be truthful and honest in every singly area of our lives (Psalm 15: 1, 2; 145: 18; Proverbs 12: 22; Ephesians 6: 14; 1 John 1: 5-2:17 and you can find any number of verses and passages regarding this). We are called to be the light and salt in this dark and corrupt and decaying world and to expose deeds of darkness (Matthew 5: 13-20; Ephesians 4:17-5: 14, especially 4: 25 and 5:8-11). Even those that come to Christ from other backgrounds should write in the official records that they are Christians, because the truth that we have discussed so far applies to all believers and to all areas of life, not just this area. Very sadly and depressingly there are even people among Christians who are arguing that there is nothing wrong in writing falsehood and claiming-enjoying the reservation benefits and they are even saying that people should not be taught to declare their faith (write the truth that they are Christians instead of writing falsehood that they are Hindus). There is a huge national organization which has recently taken a decision to this effect and started encouraging this terribly un-Christian and unethical practice among its members. Can we imagine anything more compromising and contrary to the teachings of Christ? Can people be witnesses for the truth of the Gospel and Christ who is the truth, if they are compromised like this? Can this be true discipleship to Christ? [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Let me humbly share (no reason for boasting) here that I am not writing this paper just theoretically. In my own life these truths have taken effect. Mine was the first inter-caste/across the caste-lines marriage in the entire history of my father’s family and my mother’s family. It was not easy, but the Lord enabled me to take a stand as I was convinced of the biblical truth. My wife and I have supported many people in all possible ways (both students and professionals) who came to know the Lord and got convicted that they should declare their faith (over the past 24 years) and we are still willing to do this as responsible members of the family of God. I did this even before I got married. The bible commands that we should love, care, and support one another and if we say that we love God and do not care for the needy among us, we are liars. I have also been involved in the fight against the injustice of denying SC reservations to those who chose to embrace Christianity. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)