

## Episode 33

### Faith in Action

#### JIM AND KAREN DOSDALL – INDIA

[BEGIN MUSIC]

PRESIDENT MONSON (QUOTE): I extol those who with loving care and compassionate concern feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and house the homeless. He who notes the sparrow's fall will not be unmindful of such service.

NARRATOR: The Mormon Channel now presents "Faith in Action."

HOST: Welcome to "Faith in Action" on the Mormon Channel, a show about welfare, humanitarian aid, and service around the world. Today we welcome Jim and Karen Doslall, who served in Chennai, India. Welcome, nice to have you here.

JIM DOSDALL: It's great to be here.

KAREN DOSDALL: Thank you.

HOST: We talked just a minute before we started this program about, a little bit about your background and I'm fascinated. First thing that just jumped out to me, Brother Doslall, is you're a convert to the Church. Tell me a little bit about that.

JIM DOSDALL: Well, I joined the Church while I was in college, actually. I'm not used to doing things in a conventional way, so I went off to Godless Harvard and became a Mormon there.

HOST: Ah.

JIM DOSDALL: But—

KAREN DOSDALL: Under the tutelage of, of Truman Madson.

JIM DOSDALL: Yes, who was the mission president at the time, and I loved to argue religion, and, yes, he could spade me under. But, so, and we were already married by the time I joined the Church, so we had not had an opportunity, I had not had an opportunity to serve a mission. So, we had planned all our adult lives after I retired, that's something we'd like to do.

HOST: What did you do for a living, Brother Dosedall?

JIM DOSDALL: I was an engineer in, at Ford Motor Company in their research department, kind of a fun job, but you didn't need to have a hobby with a job like that.

HOST: No, you wouldn't. And in the Detroit area.

JIM DOSDALL: Yes.

HOST: And that's where you met and were married, or—

JIM DOSDALL: Oh, no, no. We met in Oregon in high school, and then lived in Boston for a while, and then came to Salt Lake and tried to do the entrepreneurial thing right after college, but it didn't work nearly as well as it did for Bill Gates.

HOST: Mhmm.

JIM DOSDALL: And after 10 years this entrepreneur went to work for the big boys.

HOST: And up in Detroit. Interesting. Sister Dosedall, then, are you a Utah native or Oregon native?

KAREN DOSDALL: Oregon native.

HOST: Okay.

KAREN DOSDALL: Yes.

HOST: So, quite a history there, a lot of travel.

KAREN DOSDALL: A little bit.

HOST: So, were you then ready to open up the mission papers and see India?

JIM DOSDALL: Well, yes. When we planned on going on a mission, I retired a little early because the auto industry was on its way down, and I got out while the getting was good. And thought, "Okay, we can go on a mission soon." But as we prayed about it I kept feeling that it's not quite ready yet, not quite time. So after a couple of years, we got the feeling: yes, now it's time. Now it's time to put in the papers. I wanted to do something a little bit exciting.

KAREN DOSDALL: And I was so afraid of, of foreign language, but I thought exciting would be good. Not, not a conventional location. But we left it in the Lord's hands, and He called us where we should go, and we were so grateful for that.

HOST: And did you have a big family gathering when you opened the envelopes? How did that play out?

JIM DOSDALL: Oh, yes. Yes, all of the, the local people were in the room, and those away were on the telephones, and so we had a—

KAREN DOSDALL: Or right on Skype, and so it was great.

JIM DOSDALL: We had a whole family occasion of it.

HOST: So—

KAREN DOSDALL: Yes, they could hardly hear us through my squeals when we received our call to Bangalore, India.

HOST: When you read Bangalore, India, what's the first thing that goes through your mind? Do you recall that moment, like, where, or why, or are there missionaries? What are we going to do?

JIM DOSDALL: We really didn't have any idea of the Church's presence in India at all, and, in fact, it, Bangalore I knew. You know, I knew that much geography, but when we read on the next sentence there saying that we'd be humanitarian missionaries assigned to the LDS Charities Office in Chennai, India, I thought, "Chennai, I've never heard of that." It wasn't 'til after, after everybody went away and I could get back on the web and find out, you know, where is Chennai? That I found it was the former Madras. Which is—

KAREN DOSDALL: A city of 10 million people in, in India, so.

JIM DOSDALL: Which, about eight years ago, in a fit of nationalism they changed the name back to something a little more historic rather than British.

HOST: Interesting. When, how much time did you have to prepare from the time the letter came to the time you departed? Do you recall?

JIM DOSDALL: Pretty typical, about three months.

HOST: About three months. So it was a little bit of time to put your time in order.

KAREN DOSDALL: Right.

HOST: Now, you mentioned 12 children? Is that correct?

KAREN DOSDALL: We had 13. We, we lost a son while we were on a mission.

HOST: That must have been heartbreaking.

KAREN DOSDALL: That was hard.

HOST: Very difficult. Do you have an option to come home during that time, or do you, just make the decision that you're going to stay, and, how does that work?

JIM DOSDALL: You do have an option. Senior couples have a lot more flexibility than the, than the younger Elders. And, with the travel time, and expense and all, and with Skype, now, and we were in regular contact with their family, I felt like we could be in, in better touch with them during the critical hours than if we were up in an airplane somewhere. And, so, we elected to, to stay there, sit by our Skype. We, we didn't do much missionary work for a few days, but we kept in touch with the family that way. It's a wonderful age we live in, where you can transport yourself electronically, if not physically.

KAREN DOSDALL: And that was difficult, and, and it had some kind of mixed emotions about that. But we were able to be in touch with everyone that way.

HOST: So, you get a correspondence from the Church telling you basically, probably, what to pack, what to expect, is there kind of a background? So, you're, all your luggage is packed, you get on the airplane. Where did you fly first? What's your first stop out of the country? Do you go right into India, or do you go someplace else first?

JIM DOSDALL: Well, our trip, both coming and going, we stopped in Frankfurt, Germany. And the route is a polar route. In fact, in our return trip we missed the Icelandic volcano by about two weeks. We came right over that area coming back. So, yeah. It's, it's a polar route you take to get from here to India.

KAREN DOSDALL: And it's halfway around the world. We were eleven and a half hours ahead in India, as far as time. So we had to watch that on our Skyping.

HOST: That would make, get somebody out of bed in a hurry, wouldn't it?

KAREN DOSDALL: I know, you're right.

HOST: Sure. Today we're welcoming Jim and Karen Dosedall, who served in Chennai, India. Okay, we go to Frankfurt, then we end up in, was it Bombay? What's your first city in India that you land in, did you recall? Is it Chennai?

JIM DOSDALL: We went right in to Bangalore.

HOST: Bangalore, okay.

JIM DOSDALL: The mission headquarters is in Bangalore and we had a few hours briefing there before we were sent off to, to our assignment in Chennai.

KAREN DOSDALL: We stayed overnight.

JIM DOSDALL: Yeah. The, the letter of call said we'd be working in the Chennai Office of LDS Charities. We soon discovered that this was the, the extra bedroom in our apartment. The nearest other married couple was 200 miles away. We were the office.

HOST: That's very interesting (laughing).

KAREN DOSDALL: We worried about how far it would be to the office, and it was—

HOST: That was it.

KAREN DOSDALL: Down the hall.

HOST: It was right there.

KAREN DOSDALL: Yeah.

HOST: Okay. What was your first impression as you get off the airplane? I imagine there's a couple that meets you there, you get in the car for the first time. What are you thinking when you're driving down the road that first day?

KAREN DOSDALL: Oh my goodness (laughing). Everything was so different. The first impression, of course, was that it was hot and humid—and this was wintertime (laughing), we later found out. So it was incredibly hot and humid, and then the, the streets were so crowded with everything, and, and it was, it was not the U.S. That was our first impression: this is not the U.S.

JIM DOSDALL: Yeah. Everything is different, even in areas where it wouldn't have to be. I mean, the light switches flip the other direction, the toilets are different. Probably shouldn't go into that. But—

KAREN DOSDALL: The clothing, the food...

JIM DOSDALL: Yes. Everything is different.

KAREN DOSDALL: Appearance.

JIM DOSDALL: Even down to the way they write numbers. In, well, in, we're used to writing numbers in thousands, and a thousand thousand is a million, and thousand million is a billion. In India, they go to thousands, and then a hundred thousand is a lakh, and a hundred lakhs is a crore. And you set off your commas every two places instead of every three. Things like this, that you wouldn't even think of, that are different that you have to get used to.

KAREN DOSDALL: The paper size is different, the pencils are different. Everything seemed to be.

HOST: So there's not a standard printer that you could take a U.S. printer and—

JIM DOSDALL: Well, most of the, most of the things you buy will accommodate a wide variety of paper sizes, so we had to deal with the European Standard, A4 sheets instead of letter size. But, you know, every little thing like this is somewhat different, and it takes some getting used to.

HOST: Now, are you there replacing someone that's going home, or are you just really kind of restarting from scratch on these projects?

JIM DOSDALL: Well, the, we probably should talk about the projects we actually did. We were preceded by missionary couples who had left a few months before. India seems to have perpetual problems with visas, and so continuity is always an issue. There had been a couple of months hiatus between the previous couple and us, and we did get the chance to meet them before we left the U.S. though. They were from Utah.

KAREN DOSDALL: Which was very helpful, yes.

JIM DOSDALL: And, so, we got briefed by them. When we left India, there were visa problems again and there's not a couple there replacing us yet. We hope to meet them when this finally gets resolved, and they get someone in there to pick up where we left off. But there's again a break in the continuity.

KAREN DOSDALL: A gap.

HOST: Is it a political problem, or just a logistical problem getting the paperwork?

JIM DOSDALL: Well, it's—



HOST: Without getting into anything, you know—

JIM DOSDALL: It's political. And there's a lot of things in the world that are contributing to it right now. India is very nationalistic, very proud. They, even getting a work visa to go into India, they're being flooded from the East, from China, and Southeast Asian countries, and so, they're very protective about Indian jobs. Missionaries, well, yeah, missionaries come and do good and the Congress party will let them in, but the BJP doesn't want them. And, so, it all depends on local politics. And right now, in the depressed worldwide economy, the U.S. is not renewing green cards for some Indian engineers that are here, so their retaliation on that. So it's all very complicated.

HOST: So, as I understand, you worked in, with orphanages—in orphanages. Were there someone there to kind of show you the ropes, or did you just kind of come into town and somebody said, “Over there's an orphanage, go to work?” Or how does that work?

JIM DOSDALL: Well, the particular orphanage that we worked at had had missionary couples there: two missionary couples before us. And the story of how they became associated with the LDS Church is, is a miracle in itself, and we won't have time to tell that whole story. But as we arrived, there had been previous missionary couples. They had, and this orphanage is 60 miles outside of Chennai, it was a two hour drive.

HOST: Let's stop here. How do you get there? Do you drive, do you take, is their rickshaws? I've heard stories about rickshaws that are frightening (laughter). How do you get there?

JIM DOSDALL: Yes, well, in India they have a well-developed public transportation system. A lot of people ride buses. Most people travel on two wheels, motorcycles.

HOST: K.

JIM DOSDALL: Entire families—

KAREN DOSDALL: Or bicycles.

JIM DOSDALL: Entire families travel on motorcycles. You get four, maybe five people on a little 100 cc motorcycle traveling all over the place. Out into the countryside, everywhere.

HOST: So you're taking then, a bus to the orphanage.

JIM DOSDALL: Well, we actually hired a driver.

HOST: Oh, ok.

JIM DOSDALL: I could probably learn to drive on the wrong side of the road and dodge the buses, and the oxcarts, and the pedestrians, and all of those things, but finding anything, finding where I was going was completely out of the question. We had to have a native for that.

HOST: Interesting.

JIM DOSDALL: So, yeah. We hired a driver, and he would take us out to this—well, the previous couple had, had involvement with the branches in Chennai. There were two branches in the city of 10 million people. And then, also an assignment out at this orphanage, two hours out into the countryside. When we arrived, there was another missionary couple, came, they kind of took over the in-town stuff and we spent all of our attention at the, at the Pathway Orphanage, which is a residency school, which provided education Kindergarten through 10<sup>th</sup> grade. And their big watershed exams at the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade that determines whether you're college prep, or whether you're vocational, or whether you go get a job right now. So, they had about 200 kids at this orphanage. The director is a member of the Church. But he was the only one. The rest of the staff were all, were all Indian, mostly Hindu, a few Christian. And—

KAREN DOSDALL: And he is an Indian doctor, but a convert to the Church.

JIM DOSDALL: He joined the Church 18 years ago. And so, he invites the missionaries to come there. We—

KAREN DOSDALL: Provides a place for them, and—

JIM DOSDALL: We had a little cottage there to live in, which was very comfortable but very Indian. We taught in their school curriculum English and Values. There the syllabus is written by the state, and the state of Tamil Nadu includes one hour per week of values/life education. And, so, we had an opportunity to teach ethics, morals, gospel principles...

KAREN DOSDALL: Family Home Evening, a second time. So we, we worked primarily with the kids grades 5-10. Because the younger ones are, their primary language is Tamil, and that's not ours. We, (laughing), it's totally different than English. So, by the time they got to fifth grade, we could communicate quite well.

JIM DOSDALL: Though, it, and this was an English medium, a matriculation school. That is to say all the classes were supposed to be taught in English, except their one Tamil course. Most of the public schools were Tamil medium. They had a required English course. A matriculation school it was, it was college prep. That's where these kids were supposed to be aiming for. Tamil—I thought, okay, even though we are supposed to operating in English, it would be fun to know a little of the local language. So I got a Tamil-in-30-Days book and looked at it, got as far as the first page, discovered there are 247 characters in the alphabet, and I got stuck right there. (laughing)

HOST: 247! (laughing) All right. How, then, you mentioned by the time they got out of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade they were speaking some English. What happens to one through five?

JIM DOSDALL: Well, there's an interesting story into that, and let's go to that. They, most of the kids there come equipped with Tamil as their, their native language.

KAREN DOSDALL: Native language.

JIM DOSDALL: And this school just starts them at Kindergarten, or lower kindergarten—they'll take in four-year-olds. So orphans have been in some other orphanage for their first three or four years. And, so, they, they come in with the rudiments of Tamil, except for a few kids that came from other states. And every state line you cross is a different language. Not only a different language, it's written in a different script!

KAREN DOSDALL: Different characters...

JIM DOSDALL: Language is an intractable problem in India. English is the common denominator, but it's, English is spoken sort of everywhere, sort of (laughing). But as far as the program there and what we did, we were largely involved with running the Church programs. We taught Seminary, Mutual, Family Home Evening. Just a few months before we arrived they had arranged for a home group to meet at the orphanage. They didn't have to bus in to the city, this two-hour trip each way every Sunday, so they had their Sunday meetings there, as well. And the orphanage director was a member of the Church, held the priesthood. And a fellow who was a long-term member of the Church who also ran a little orphanage a few miles away was included in this home group. And so, we had the three of us as priesthood holders, three adults, four, four adults, basically, to run the whole show. And there were 26 baptized members out of these 200 kids. Of those 26 members, 32 had attended Seminary regularly.

KAREN DOSDALL: 40.

JIM DOSDALL: And then, well, and then the next year 49 of our 26 members were attending Seminary regularly.

KAREN DOSDALL: This year it should be 60-some.

HOST: And these are young people.

JIM DOSDALL: Yes.

HOST: In families, or converts kind of just single, young people, or how does it, how did that work?

JIM DOSDALL: Well, this school was basically an orphanage school. It gave priority to orphans, children without parents, no one to take care of them.

KAREN DOSDALL: To total orphans...

JIM DOSDALL: Second priority was to semi-orphans. Family is very strong in India. You live in extended families, multi-generational families. And the patriarch takes care of you all of your life until he dies, makes all of your financial decisions for you, sees who, decides who you will marry. Family is very tight and very strong. So, if you, in the U.S., if you lose one parent, you have a single-parent family. In India, if you lose one parent, you are a semi-orphan. It's a different way of looking at it.

HOST: Is there a difference if you lose your mother or your father, or is it the same?

JIM DOSDALL: They're still both called semi-orphans. More frequently it's the father who is gone, from abandonment or something of that sort.

KAREN DOSDALL: Because the women are not able to provide a living as well, usually.

JIM DOSDALL: So, there are, this school had some orphans, some semi-orphans, and some destitute children: children from families who maybe have two parents, but they can't afford to feed them.

HOST: Okay.

JIM DOSDALL: And so, this is the, the admission to this school. We soon also found out that there must be some other sorting process going on somewhere, because these were not your average kids, not a random cross-section. These kids were spiritually sensitive; the Lord had brought them there for a purpose.

HOST: Interesting.

JIM DOSDALL: I don't know how the Lord decides who He's going to send to India to be an orphan, but He definitely had His way of pulling strings as to who he sent to the Pathway Orphanage, where they could receive the gospel and be taught the principles of the, of the gospel.

KAREN DOSDALL: And these kids had a level of spirituality that you just don't often see among a group of young people.

HOST: Sister Dosedall, you're talking about maybe 60 attending Seminary. Equal number of young men and young women? Predominantly young men? What is that?

KAREN DOSDALL: Because girls cost more for Indian families to raise, they are more often put in the orphanage, or find their way into the orphanage. So, there were more girls than boys, and, and, in fact, it's illegal in India to find the sex of a baby before it's birth, because there was enough female infanticide that this has become against the law.

HOST: That's very interesting. So, we have a big Seminary class, and you're in charge of that. Lessons each week? Just from the Church material, or is there anything different or unusual about this?

JIM DOSDALL: No. No, we were teaching from the Church materials, the standard materials, three mornings a week. It was not a home-study program at the Pathway Orphanage. Now, the kids in the branches in town that had more trouble getting together got together on Saturday afternoon for a, a home-study type program. But we had, we had an early-morning Seminary. And from the standard materials. The Things that were different—we got permission from the CES directors to make it a 7<sup>th</sup> grade through 10<sup>th</sup> grade program instead of 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>. That meant that by the time they finished at Pathway, they had had four years of Seminary. And, well, other than that, that's about the only difference, I think.

KAREN DOSDALL: We had a lot of preparation to, to cover the classes that we had. I figured that on many weeks I would have 17 separate preparations for school classes, and the classes that we taught. And Jim had additional ones because he was the one that ended up with teaching Seminary. And, of course, we had, we were totally involved in the home branch there, which met every week except one in the month when they were, when the older children were bused to Chennai to keep up some acquaintance with the, with the branch there.

HOST: What is a branch like in Chennai, is it...

KAREN DOSDALL: Large.

HOST: ...just like we would walk in to any other branch in the world?

JIM DOSDALL: Pretty much, yes. There were two branches, and, in fact, there was a third organized within the last month. They're building a new building there: the Church's first building in Chennai. It's in a very busy intersection, it will be a landmark, it will attract a lot of attention once that's completed early next year. The Church is growing, but maybe just a word about the, the Mormon population density in India: India is about a third the geographical area of the U.S., but four times the population—about 1.1 billion people. There are about 7,000 Latter-day Saints there. The first were baptized in about 1965. The Church has been growing steadily, and we see a real blossoming, a real pent up demand. Oh, I could tell you a favorite story about that, too. Though we were humanitarian missionaries and did most of our work with the children at the orphanage school, we did occasionally have a little proselyting work to do. We were set a part for that as well, we were given to name badges: one that had our first name on it and said LDS Charities, and one that said Elder and Sister on it, and just like the proselyting missionaries would have.

KAREN DOSDALL: And, and another note here: I might just say that after the first month we were not Elder and Sister Dosedall, we were Grandpa and Grandma to all the kids who, of course, did not have their families. They saw their families two to three weeks out of the year.

HOST: So, you inherited another big family.

KAREN DOSDALL: Oh, we did! And they were our kids! And even the staff at Pathway called us Grandpa and Grandma. So, that's, that's who we felt like we were during our mission.

JIM DOSDALL: Yes, an extension of our family responsibilities at home, basically. These kids didn't have anybody for the, the touch, the hugs, the...

KAREN DOSDALL: Support...

JIM DOSDALL: The talks, the...

KAREN DOSDALL: Yeah.

JIM DOSDALL: Yeah.

HOST: What was Relief Society like in the little branch that you attended?

KAREN DOSDALL: Well, I usually went, when we went to the once-a-month to Chennai, I usually went to Young Women's or to Primary, because no one could play the piano, and I was so—this was another responsibility that we had an opportunity to help the kids learn the, the fundamentals of music. And we had 30 eager piano students that would wait their turn, as well as some keyboards, so both of us were involved in this. So, I didn't get to Relief Society, I went (laughing)...

HOST: So, you're teaching English, you're teaching Seminary, you're teaching piano lessons...

KAREN DOSDALL: And the Church programs.

HOST: And the Church program.

KAREN DOSDALL: And...

HOST: You're very busy.

KAREN DOSDALL: Yes.

JIM DOSDALL: Oh, yes, indeed.

KAREN DOSDALL: English, and values, and choir, and all kind of things.

JIM DOSDALL: And the children loved music. Choir practice was one of their favorite things.



KAREN DOSDALL: And, of course, their music was the hymns of the Church and the Primary songs, and they sang with great gusto. One of the choice experience that we would have and I'd play the piano and, and cry as we'd hear them sing with, with great sincerity, "Because I Have Been Given Much." Realizing that they weren't out on the streets and that they did have the gospel in their lives, and this was of great meaning to them, and it certainly spilled over to us.

HOST: What is their future, those in the orphanage?

JIM DOSDALL: Because they are there, they have a future. Otherwise, they'd be street beggars or following the cow around somewhere. But because they're receiving an education, because they are learning English, they will be able to move into the modern India. Which exists in the cities. There is a strong IT industry there, there's a lot of international commerce and connections, a lot of international business. So knowledge of English is a very important thing for these kids to have. These kids in particular will be the leaders of the Church in India in the future.

KAREN DOSDALL: It's amazing to see the great desire on their part to be faithful members of the Church, and how important that is, how competent they are at conducting meetings, at giving prayers, at teaching. We, while we were there, Jim felt it was so important to reach the younger kids, whom we couldn't communicate with because they were largely Tamil speakers. And so, in a, in a two-phase move we organized a Primary for the hundred kids that were pre-Seminary age. And, of course, we didn't have teachers who could teach in Spanish—in Spanish? (laughing)...in Tamil except for our students. So we had kids that were 13, 14, 15, 16.

HOST: You had kids teaching kids.

JIM DOSDALL: Yes.

KAREN DOSDALL: As the teachers.

HOST: Wow.

KAREN DOSDALL: And we would have, we ended up having 12...

JIM DOSDALL: Well, I'll tell you this story. We decided that the, the missing link, we were not serving the younger kids. We had pretty good programs going for 12 and up, but the younger kids were not getting anything. They weren't getting bussed into Chennai before because the two-hour bus ride wore them out. They weren't good for anything by the time they got there.

KAREN DOSDALL: And they didn't have the method of transportation, not a big enough bus.

JIM DOSDALL: And so we felt prompted that we needed to organize Primary. And so we laid it out very carefully. We were going to do a teacher development course for a couple of months, for some of our Seminary students. We decided we'd phase in the senior half of Primary, age 8 and up, first. We had about six, we'd need about six classes, so we thought we'd train 12 teachers so they could team teach. We invited about 15 of our best Seminary students to teacher development on a Sunday morning before meetings, and 28 showed up.

KAREN DOSDALL: Consistently.

JIM DOSDALL: Yeah. The first day that we were going to have teacher development—we'd planned to start Primary a couple months later after we'd had them trained—the rumor got around that we were going to start Primary and 60 kids showed up ready for Primary.

HOST: Oh, dear.

JIM DOSDALL: And, of course, we were a little, a little panicked, but one of our 13-year-old students said, "Don't worry, Grandpa. We've got it taken care of." And she took us into a room where she had had the blackboard all prepared, she had lesson materials prepared. I kind of suspect that Monisha had spread the rumor herself, she was so eager to get Primary going. But from that day forward we had Primary. After we got these classes all going, we trained some more teachers and phased in the junior half of the Primary. And when we found that after we were going to leave, there would not be a couple to replace us immediately because of the visa issues. Now 14-year-old Monisha is our functioning Primary President. 16-year-old Minakshi, who was one of the piano students...

KAREN DOSDALL: Piano students.

JIM DOSDALL: ...plays the music for singing time.

KAREN DOSDALL: And helps with conducting.

JIM DOSDALL: And the two of them run the program.

KAREN DOSDALL: And we have 20 other students as teachers. And so they are doing a Primary with 100 children, with 22 kids...

JIM DOSDALL: Duly set apart.

KAREN DOSDALL: ... between the ages of 13 through 16.

JIM DOSDALL: Duly set apart under the authority of the Branch President. But, yes, probably the largest Primary in India is being run by 14 and 16-year-olds.

HOST: Is that an amazing story. Wow. As you look back, we always like to ask, something that really touched you, something that stands out. As, and everybody says, "Well, there can't be a highlight. There was just too many things." But one of the highlights of your mission.

JIM DOSDALL: There was another orphanage about 20 miles away: Rising Star Outreach, which is another story in itself. You can go to their website and see that. Run by LDS people. And one of their security guards, one of the LDS folks got talking to him, found out that he was Christian and was interested in religion. And he told an interesting story. He had grown up in a nearby village, village entirely Hindu. In fact, he had been a Hindu Priest in his young years. But he was a bright fellow. He learned English, he went to the city. He got a job in a bank. He was going very well. But he had a health problem. There was something that was bothering him for a couple of years, and he couldn't seem to do anything with it. He'd go to a doctor, and they'd check him all over and say, "Well, it's not my specialty; I don't know what it is." And he couldn't find any help. Till one day he found a magazine that talked about faith healing. Said if you have faith in Jesus Christ, you can be healed. So he wrote a letter to the editor and described his situation. They

wrote back and said, “Yes, if you have faith in Jesus Christ you can be healed!” And about three days later, his symptoms disappeared and did not return, and he decided, “Oh, I should find out something about this Jesus Christ!” So he went to various churches here and there, and everybody had a different story and taught different principles. And to make a long story short, he ended up enrolling in a theological seminary and studied for two years to become a minister, figuring that that was the way to find out what’s the real story. Meanwhile he got a picture of Jesus and put it up in his little shrine in his house and started praying to it. But he studied for the ministry and felt called to go back to his native village and bring Christianity to his village. And about a fourth of the village joined his church. And then the folks in the next village said, “Come preach to us!” So he started a church there. He had three congregations going. These were all poor village people, though, and they couldn’t offer any support, so he was working as a security guard to feed his family at this other orphanage. But he was a Christian minister. And so these folks showed him the Book of Mormon and he was very interested in it. They gave him a copy of Gospel Principles and he could read English, so he could handle all of this. And he started reading the Book of Mormon. You know, as a security guard you’ve got a lot of time to read. But he set it down after a few days and woke up in the middle of the night with a voice telling him, “Read the book of Alma.” Well, he hadn’t got to Alma yet. So he read the book of Alma and found that it answered questions that had bothered him all of his life. And he was reading in Gospel Principles and came to the story from Elder Packer about the unwise debtor, explaining how the Atonement works. And he was just astonished. “Now I understand it,” and “Now I can teach my people.” He began teaching his congregations out of the Book of Mormon and using Gospel Principles as his, as his teaching text. One day when we came to teach, oh, the Elders in town said, “Hey, this guy way out in the countryside that wants to hear about the Church, “We can’t get out there. Can you go teach him?” So we went and met with him a number of times. One time when we came to teach him, there was another minister sitting there. And most missionaries know this is bad news. Well, this minister explained that he was the leader of a ministerial association in the nearby town of Kanchipuram, and he wanted to invite us to come speak to his group. So we came, spoke for about an hour and a half about how the Lord has always dealt with his people through prophets, how people have not listened, and He said, “Restore dispensations,” how in modern history the gospel has been restored again, along with some other ancient scriptures called the Book of Mormon. We explained what that was, gave them copies of the Book of Mormon in Tamil, a few for those that could read English we gave them in English. And after the meeting, many people came up and...

**KAREN DOSDALL:** Explained to them that they could not have the gospel at this point.

**JIM DOSDALL:** Explained that the Book of Mormon was here, the gospel has been restored to the earth, the Church is coming, but it is not here yet. Because the present policy in India is that you only teach English-speakers who can receive their instructions, get a solid foundation of the gospel in English...

KAREN DOSDALL: Who are within reach of the Church.

JIM DOSDALL: Who are close enough to a center of strength that they can attend their meetings.

HOST: Okay.

JIM DOSDALL: The Church does not want to baptize people and then abandon them. So we had to explain them, explain to them: prepare the way; the Church is coming; it is not here yet.

KAREN DOSDALL: For it be ready when it comes.

JIM DOSDALL: Well, so Pastor John was sharing this with all of his friends. Before we left we had to leave him a couple more cases of the Book of Mormon in Tamil, because he had more friends to distribute them to. At last count there were eight congregations in Kanchipuram, Assembly of God congregations who were being taught out of the Book of Mormon. There is this, this waiting demand for enough of us to be able to go over there and carry it to them.

HOST: That is a fascinating story, there. Just waiting for the gospel. Here we take it for granted every day and that's all they're thinking about is "Get it to us, get it to us."

JIM DOSDALL: And they may have to wait for years for baptism. The mission president, President Nichols, said, "Your story is not unique; I run into this all over the place. It's frustrating. We just don't have the strength to baptize these people because we don't have the strength to serve them once they are baptized."

HOST: Interesting.

KAREN DOSDALL: This is the case with our children at Pathway, as well. There's such caution about baptizing them because of the Church's position, because of some of their families' situation that many of them would like to be baptized and have not been able to. And so, some of them may have to wait five to ten years for baptism. And yet they may be

teaching Primary, getting 100% attendance at Seminary, reading their scriptures and praying every day.

JIM DOSDALL: They're still waiting for baptism.

HOST: See, that is startling to me.

KAREN DOSDALL: Faithful, faithful members without being baptized.

HOST: That is absolutely amazing. We have to hurry!

KAREN DOSDALL: We do, we have to send people!

HOST: We have to send more people over there, we have to get this done!

JIM DOSDALL: There is urgency.

KAREN DOSDALL: Yes. We have to send people.

HOST: Anything that we have missed that you would like to talk about?

JIM DOSDALL: Well, I guess I'd say just a few more word about the, the kids there. Before we left we wanted to make sure that those that were, that wanted to be baptized would have the opportunity. And so we invited about 15 of our Seminary students who were regular attenders at Seminary who had not been baptized to have the missionary discussions. And again, about 30 showed up (laughter). We taught them the entire missionary discussion series. And then, noting that a couple of them had missed a couple of lessons along the way, things like this happen, we said, "Okay, we'll offer the series again for review, so that those of you that missed one or two can come back." And the second time through, just to make sure that we hadn't been talking over their heads, we had a couple of our students, well, Monisha, and Valu...

KAREN DOSDALL: Our only priest—

JIM DOSDALL: —16-year-old priest, the only priest we had in the group, to act as translators so that we would teach a principle in English, they would translate it into Tamil just to make sure that the kids were understanding everything that we were saying. On the review time around with the missionary discussions, 30 of them showed up again.

KAREN DOSDALL: Every kid came back for the second round.

JIM DOSDALL: And we used Monisha and Valu as translators. I would teach, we would teach...

KAREN DOSDALL: We co-taught.

JIM DOSDALL: ...a principle out of Preach My Gospel, and we had given them copies of Preach My Gospel too, so they knew what they were talking about. And then they would teach it in Tamil. And occasionally I would find myself picking up on key words, names of prophets or something, and thinking, “Oh. I should’ve, I should’ve taught that, I forgot to.” These kids were teaching the Gospel with such authority, with such conviction, with such fluency and power, that (pausing), well, it brings tears to my eyes. These kids are well prepared to be leaders of the Church, as the time approaches.

HOST: And even if they end up in the big city where there are branches, can they then be baptized where there’s a branch, or is there still going to be a waiting period for them?

JIM DOSDALL: If they’re near enough to the branch, and if they’re, whatever family they have—and many these kids have aunts, uncles, cousins that have some interest in them—have no objection, then they will be baptized. Otherwise they may have to wait until they are 19, which is their legal age of maturity, to make the decision themselves.

KAREN DOSDALL: And some of them know that. Some of our key children could not be baptized, because they had not received permission or the blessings of their family.

HOST: Sister Dosedall, would you, could we close by bearing your testimony of this work? How you felt about this wonderful opportunity you had of serving in India.

KAREN DOSDALL: There were sacrifices that we made to go on a mission. We lost a son while we were there. We had four grandchildren born, our first great-grandchild, and a marriage in the family. And yet, none of these sacrifices compared with the blessings that we received. We feel like we have been bound forever with some of these choice young people, and that we were a blessing to their life, as they were to ours. And in no way does our sacrifice even compare with the blessings that we received while we were serving these wonderful—family, this wonderful family that we obtained while we were in India. And I think we will have a link with these children forever. And so, I am so grateful for this opportunity of going on a mission and for this wonderful call that we had [START MUSIC] to go India, which, little unbeknownst to us was the perfect calling for us.

HOST: Thank you. We've been listening to Faith in Action on the Mormon Channel. Today we've been visiting with Brother and Sister Dosedall, who served in India. Thanks for coming by, we appreciate it.

[END MUSIC]