

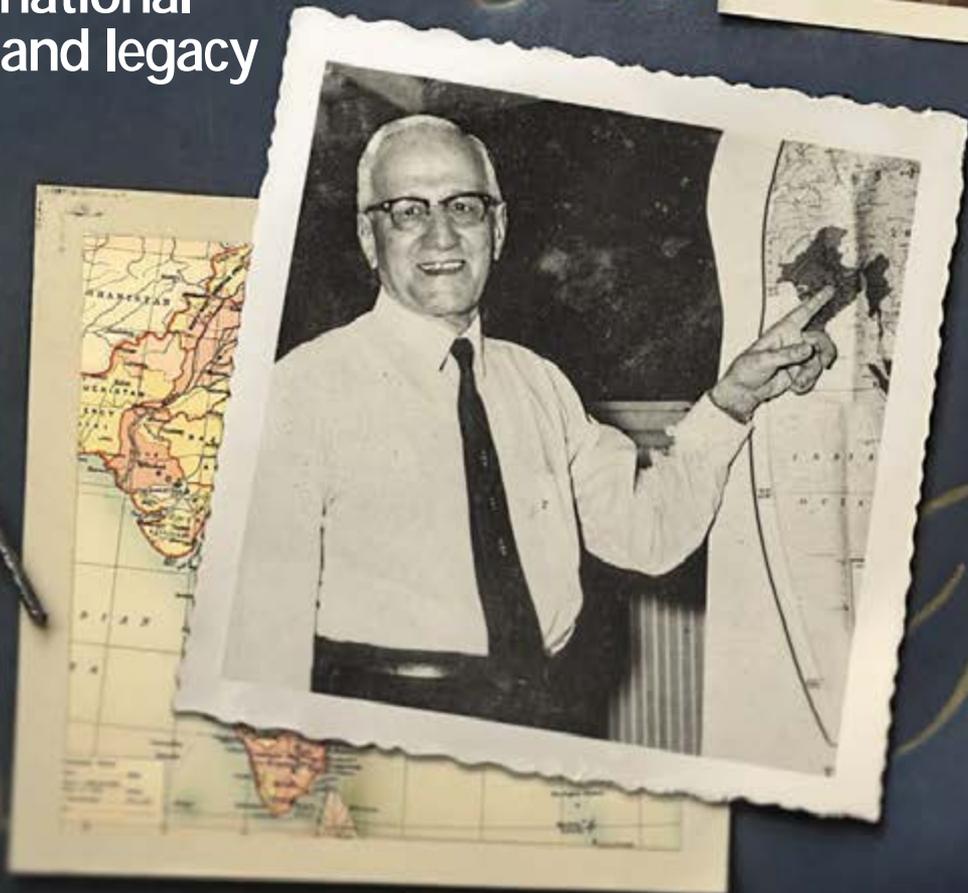
# CHRISTIAN HISTORY

Issue 136



## E. Stanley Jones

An international  
influence and legacy



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**ALL THE WORLD** This 16th-c. Indian painting is called *Christ as Savior of the World*. Jones wanted to spread the gospel in India without equating it with Western culture.

### THE PIERCED HAND

After his conversion Jones tried to convert his friends by reading the New Testament at the barbershop where they had once played cards. After he led one to Jesus, he said that instead of a hand of poker, he had played “the pierced hand of Christ” to win his friend.

### FLAG DAY

Ralph Diffendorfer (see pp. 34–37), head of the Methodist Board of Missions from 1924 to 1949, supervised Stanley and Mabel Jones. He is chiefly remembered today for another of his endeavors; in 1907, while leading the Methodist Young People’s Missionary Movement, he helped Sunday school teacher Charles Overton design the Christian flag.

### LAMENT FOR A MARTYR OF PEACE

The Joneses became good friends with Gandhi and hoped that through their witness the Indian leader might become a Christian. Stanley Jones had intended to attend Hindu prayers with Gandhi on the day of his assassination, but his train from Agra was late and there was not time before Jones’s own evening meeting. Jones wrote to his son-in-law about what followed: “I was walking up and down in meditation when the play stopped on the field. One of the players came over to me and told me that Mahatma Gandhi had been shot and had died. . . . I think that the motive was resentment that Gandhi was making peace with the Muslims. . . . I think that Gandhi will be greater in death for now he is a martyr for the cause of peace.”

### FINALLY, A BISHOP IN THE FAMILY

In 1928 the Methodist Church elected Jones to the episcopacy, but he refused the honor. Then, in 1956, his son-

# Did you know?

FROM A POOR BALTIMORE CHILDHOOD TO FRIENDSHIP WITH GANDHI, E. STANLEY JONES HAD A REMARKABLE LIFE

### A POOR METHODIST PREACHER

E. Stanley Jones’s autobiography tells us very little about his parents or his life before his 1901 conversion. His father, Albin Davis Jones, a toll collector, was reportedly an alcoholic. Stanley was close to his mother, Sarah; one story claims she lost one of her eyes through her refusal to cry. Jones originally set out to become a lawyer and sold insurance to support his parents after his father lost his job; when he told his mother that he had been called into the ministry, her response was, “What—a poor Methodist preacher?”

**LOVE AND MISSION** Stanley Jones and Mabel Lossing first met at the Lal Bagh Methodist Church in Lucknow, India.



MR. & MRS. E. STANLEY JONES, SITAPUR, C. 1914.—IMAGE COURTESY OF ANNE MATHIEWS-YOUNES  
"REST AWHILE, APART" AND "TEACHERS IN THE BOYS' SCHOOL"; WOMAN'S MISSIONARY FRIEND, VOL. 39-40, P. 279 AND VOL. 47-48, P. 231. WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY, METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH [PUBLIC DOMAIN] / BUSWELL LIBRARY, WHEATON COLLEGE



**TWO FOR JESUS** When Stanley married Mabel, she was already a Methodist missionary. They agreed before marrying to continue pursuing their own callings.

in-law, James Mathews, was elected a bishop for Indian Methodists, but refused, saying they should elect indigenous bishops. Four years later Mathews attended a conference and delivered a short but passionate speech, then left for the airport. After he left he was elected a bishop again (for the United States). This time he accepted.

**THE FREEDOM OF CHRIST**

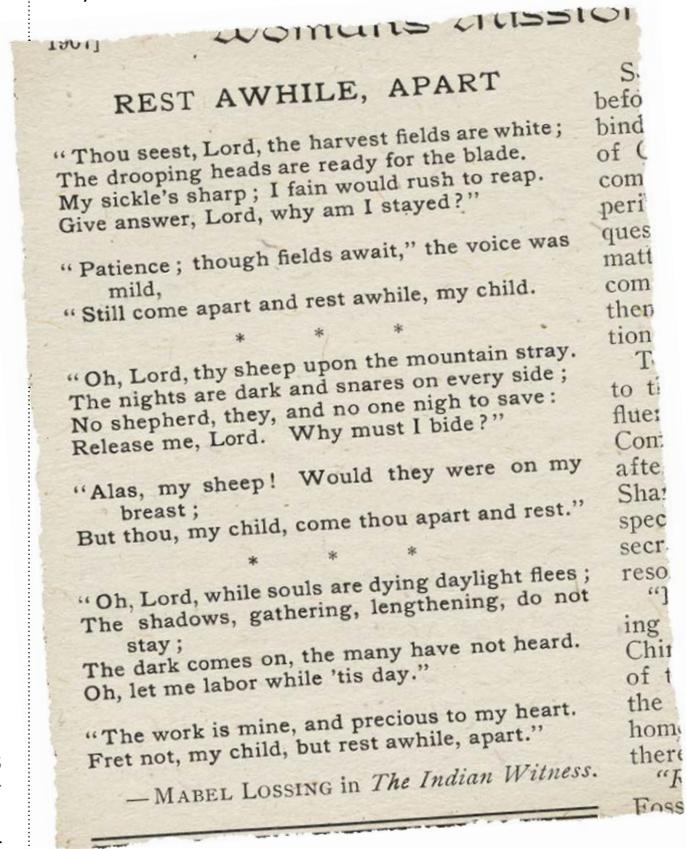
Eunice Jones Mathews traveled with her father as his secretary and helped him with his final book, *The Divine Yes* (1975). She also had a long career as a humanitarian. When Methodists honored her in 2004, she accepted with these words: "I do not have to be identified as the daughter of E. Stanley Jones, nor . . . as the wife of my husband, a bishop . . . but I do have permission to be myself, and this is in the freedom of Jesus Christ."

**"BECAUSE THE DAWN HAS COME"**

In Jones's last days, he traveled on evangelistic journeys with Mary Webster, an Illinois farmer's wife and dynamic speaker, among others. After he died in 1973, Mabel wrote to Mary: "Last week I was 95. Can hardly believe it. But one's body does wear out. . . . I read a little

**WOMEN'S WORK** These teachers at Mabel Jones's school in Sitapur were among the first Indian women to be allowed to teach male students.

**REST AWHILE** Mabel wrote this poem (below) early in her days on the mission field.



poem recently by [Tagore]—a Hindu poet. Stanley once tried to convert him to Christianity but he claimed he found all he needed in Hinduism. The poem sounds very Christian: 'Death is not extinguishing the Light. / It is putting out the Lamp / Because the Dawn has come.'"

Thanks to Robert G. Tuttle Jr. for items from his biography of E. Stanley Jones, *In Our Time*.





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**An individual gospel without a social gospel is a soul without a body, and a social gospel without an individual gospel is a body without a soul . . . I want both.**

*E. Stanley Jones*

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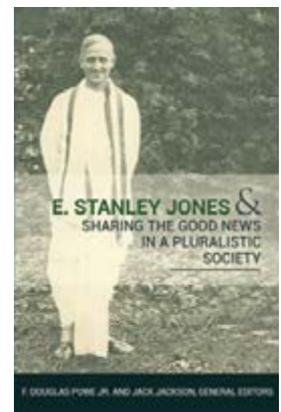


## **The E. Stanley Jones Professors of Evangelism** **A Legacy of Connecting Mind and Body in Service to God**

Since 1984, the E. Stanley Jones Professors of Evangelism have molded hearts and minds in Wesleyan-tradition seminaries and schools of theology around the world. Today, these professorships have been established on three continents – in western Russia, Germany, Zimbabwe, and the United States.

Following the legacy of E. Stanley Jones, these gifted, practical theologians bridge the academic and ecclesial worlds through their teaching and training in classrooms and online, as well as at local, regional, and global conferences. Many occupy positions as deans and associate deans of faculty at their respective institutions but also have an impact beyond the academy.

As a tribute to the late missionary-evangelist, *E. Stanley Jones & Sharing the Good News in Pluralistic Society* brings together the writings of these professors and other scholars, to celebrate Jones's unique way of sharing the gospel.



Available at [Cokesbury.com](http://Cokesbury.com)



[FoundationForEvangelism.org/ESJProfessors](http://FoundationForEvangelism.org/ESJProfessors)

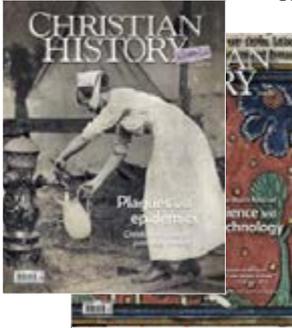
# Letters to the editor

Readers respond to *Christian History*

## PRAISE FOR RECENT ISSUES

Thanks so much for your excellent work on the magazine—a delight to read and share with friends. . . . I look forward to the next two issues this summer.

—Royce Short, Layton, UT



I have been reading *Christian History* for about 15 years, I think, and I've always enjoyed the balance and broader perspective from many other publications. I am a pastor at a Catholic parish [and] earned my Doctorate of Ministry from Louisville Presbyterian Seminary. . . . I find *Christian History* so well balanced, and it really takes an honest look at all sides of issues. I especially appreciate reading the history of various Protestant churches. I find that inspiring.—Fr. Christian T. Moore, Order of Friars Minor Conventual, Louisville, KY

## SPECIAL INTEREST AND MORE QUESTIONS

It has been our privilege and pleasure to subscribe to *Christian History* for many years. The recent issue on Christianity and Judaism was of special interest and, while we have only made modest use of *Redeem TV*, we have found it to be a welcomed option for entertainment and education. Thank you for all the fine work you do. May God bless you abundantly.—Bob and Kathy Knoll, San Leandro, CA

*Redeem TV* is available online at <https://redeemtv.com/>, where anyone can set up a free account.

It was a mistake to place an article in *Christian History* magazine by Miri Rubin. . . . I realize that she is a famous professor but I would think that would be all the more reason to be suspect of her theological work. . . . I realize that people of European descent are trying hard to understand what wrongs they have committed over the centuries right now, but clearly biased articles like this need to be weeded out.—Michael Von Burg, Idaho Falls, ID

For #133, we deliberately sought out Jewish perspectives and those of Christians particularly concerned with Christian-Jewish relations. This inevitably created an issue more challenging to Christian readers than most of our issues. While the vast majority of CH authors have been Christians, we have never asked authors to abide by a theological test as long as they are aware of our mission, our audience, and our belief

statement: “*Christian History Institute* is not aligned with any particular denomination but adheres to the Apostles’ Creed. We seek to present the history of the global church and to see the best in each Christian tradition. Please note that the views, opinions, and organizational affiliations of our writers are their own and do not reflect those of CHI.”

In issue 134, we mistakenly listed the birth date of Jean Jalabert as 1739 rather than 1712. He was not born 15 years after his father died and he was not five when he became a pastor! Thanks to our eagle-eyed reader David O’Brien of Livermore, CA.

## MEET THE STAFF: DAWN MOORE

*How long have you been at CHI and what is your role?*

When my youngest daughter started first grade in 2003, I looked for a fulfilling part-time job. Ken Curtis invited me to review a film he was working on; before long, I was hired to help with CHI’s film and print projects. Originally my focus was on projects geared toward children, such as *Torchlighters*, but I was soon working on films and study guides for adults. Then in 2010, just as printed magazines were declining, Ken had the opportunity to relaunch *Christian History*. I had no experience in magazine publishing, but agreed to help. With the aid of a phenomenal team, we printed issue #100 in March of 2011 on the King James Bible and have been going strong ever since! My current role as director of editorial staff involves overseeing the project as a whole.



*What is your favorite part of the job?*

After 36 issues, I still get a thrill holding the finished print magazine in my hands! Each one is a beautiful work of art. I also find inspiration from the stories we share and the scholars we meet as we plan future issues.

*What do you most wish readers knew?*

Many of our team members are not trained historians and are learning the material as we encounter it. Our goal as “lay editors” is to help make sure the end result is accessible by “average folks” like us.

*What do you do in your spare time?*

I love gardening, cooking, reading, and walking with friends, but mostly spending time with my grandchildren! I also serve my community by volunteering with various nonprofits. ☑

# Editor's note



WHEN I WAS ABOUT 13 YEARS OLD and looking for a daily devotional, one of my family members handed me a small book. We didn't have smartphones then, but it was about the size of two hefty smartphones put together: you could have put it in the pocket of a man's blazer. The cover was orange. My grandfather had used it before me, and his underlinings and scrawled marginal notes appeared frequently. It was called *The Way*, and it was by Methodist missionary and evangelist E. Stanley Jones (see p. 40 for a picture of the book). Thus I first met, in a literary fashion, a man whose witness had profoundly shaped my family's own.

I've commented before that my grandfather was a Methodist seminary president. Generally it's not been relevant for me to be more specific than that, but in this case it is. The seminary was called Asbury Theological Seminary; my grandfather's name was Frank Bateman Stanger. He is pictured above with Jones (*left*) and with Jones's daughter and son-in-law, Eunice and James Mathews (*right*). Stanley (as he was called) is holding up the three-finger salute he used to represent the message "Jesus is Lord!" Eunice and James are presenting my grandpa the original manuscript of a little orange book called *The Way*.

## SEEKING DEEPER HOLINESS

Asbury Seminary is in Wilmore, Kentucky, and is a sister institution to Asbury College (now University),

Find *Christian History* on Facebook as ChristianHistoryMagazine, or visit [www.christianhistorymagazine.org](http://www.christianhistorymagazine.org). Find our daily stories at [www.christianhistoryinstitute.org/today](http://www.christianhistoryinstitute.org/today). For Twitter, use @ChristiaHistory, and for Instagram, @christianhistorymagazine.

Don't miss our next issue, which will discuss the interaction between church and marketplace throughout Christian history.

the institution that originally formed Jones and sent him out on mission. Jones spoke at both on his frequent evangelistic trips back to the United States. Today Asbury Seminary has a school of missions and evangelism named for Jones, the beginnings of which were established by my grandfather. The words, the mission, the ministry, the books, and the overall influence of Jones suffused the very air my family breathed, the way we experienced Methodism, the way we came to seek and know and love Jesus, and the way we sought deeper holiness.

Stanley and Mabel Jones—like many other people in the early twentieth century—set out to be missionaries on behalf of American Methodism. When they came to India, they grew to understand that being missionaries on behalf of Jesus Christ did not automatically mean being missionaries on behalf of Western culture.

From that insight grew all the organizations and movements Stanley Jones founded and the friendships he maintained—organizations, movements, and friendships that for many years made him, quite simply, the most famous missionary in the world. From that insight as well grew Mabel's quieter but no less revolutionary activities as an educator—activities now finally getting the attention they deserve.

Through multiple moves over the past 35 years, I have lost my copy of *The Way*. (I looked in vain for it before I wrote this letter.) But in that book, I was introduced by Jones to the Way, the Truth, and the Life. And I have not lost that, from that day to this. ☑



Jennifer Woodruff Tait  
Managing editor

*CHI acknowledges the gracious support of the E. Stanley Jones Foundation, led by Jones's granddaughter Anne Mathews-Younes; the United Christian Ashrams; and the Foundation for Evangelism in the preparation of this issue.*

We thank the many readers who support this ministry, making it possible for us to provide *Christian History* in print. Please visit [www.ChristianHistoryMagazine.org](http://www.ChristianHistoryMagazine.org) to renew or begin a subscription to *Christian History*.

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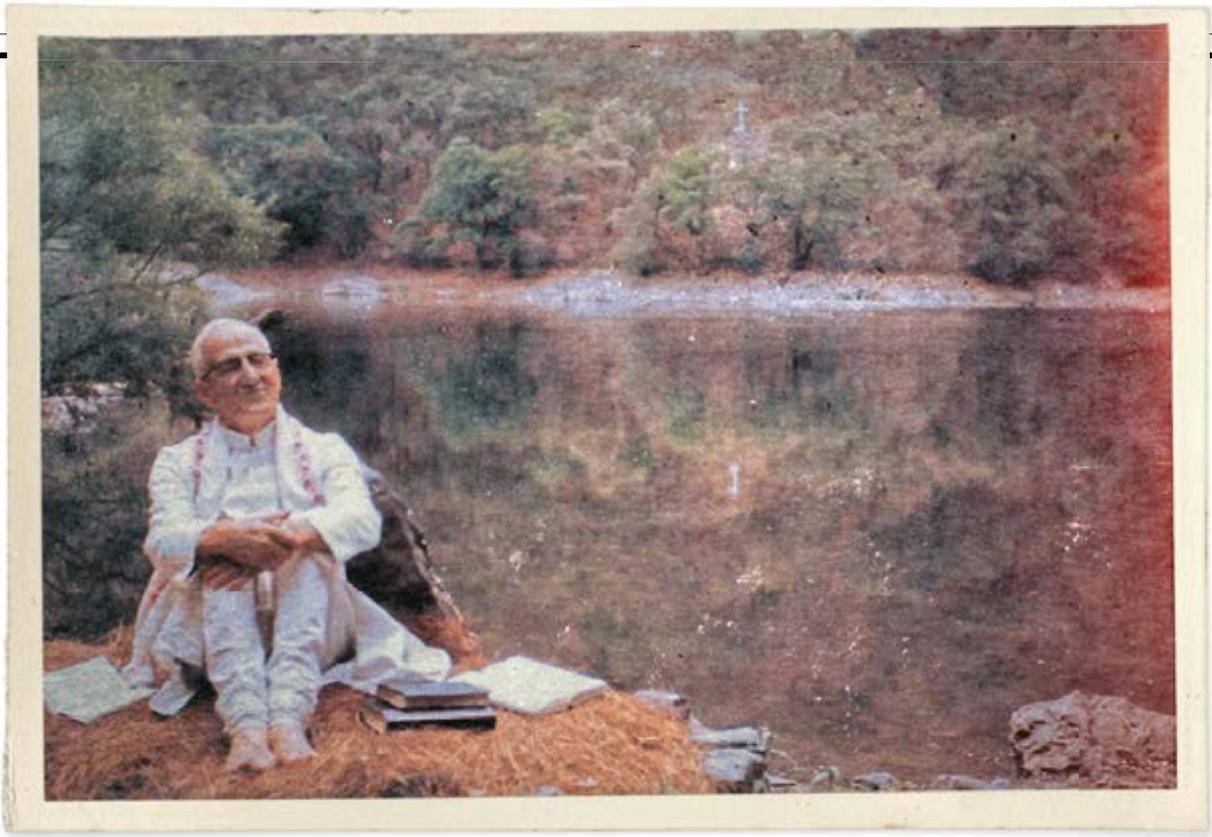
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*Christian History* is published by Christian History Institute, P.O. Box 540, Worcester, PA, 19490 and is indexed in *Christian Periodical Index*, ISSN 0891-9666. **Subscriptions** are available on a donation basis. **Letters to the editor** may be sent to Jennifer Woodruff Tait (editor@christianhistoryinstitute.org) and **permissions requests** to Kaylena Radcliff. **Credits:** We make every effort to obtain proper permission to reproduce images. If you have information about an image source that is not credited, please let us know.

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# The greatest missionary you've never heard of?

THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF E. STANLEY JONES

*Robert G. Tuttle Jr.*

IN 1938 *TIME MAGAZINE* named him “the world’s greatest missionary evangelist.” Today when we hear these words we might think of Billy Graham or recent famous TV preachers, or evangelists of past centuries such as George Whitefield, Billy Sunday, and Dwight Moody. But after Sunday, and before Graham, E. Stanley Jones (1884–1973) dominated the scene.

## **SWEPT OFF HIS FEET**

Born outside Baltimore in 1884, Jones felt his childhood was not particularly notable, and he hesitated to talk about it. Nonetheless Jones’s mother and grandfather influenced his early religious experiences. At 15 years old, he first encountered God, but it did not sustain him. Two years later, in 1901, he responded to an evangelistic invitation in his local church. He rejoiced, “I’ve got Him,” meaning that now he did not have an “it” but a Him. He had Jesus and Jesus had him.

Soon after, Jones met Henry Clay Morrison (1857–1942)—soon to be president of Asbury College in

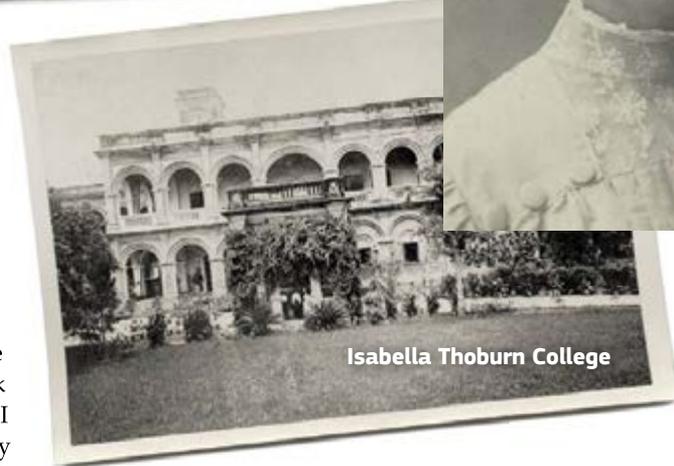
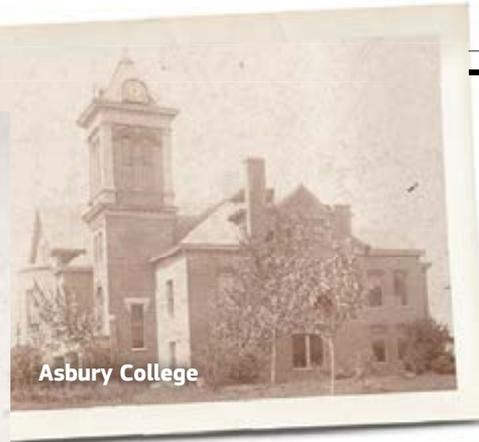
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**WATER OF LIFE** Stanley Jones studies by Panna Lake at his ashram in Sat Tal in the late 1960s.

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Wilmore, Kentucky—while Morrison was holding meetings in a Methodist church in Baltimore. Jones was impressed. If he could learn to preach like that at Asbury, then to Asbury he would go. Probably in 1903, but perhaps as late as 1905, the first Asbury Revival struck the campus and then the entire town of Wilmore.

There Jones recorded that he experienced the filling of the Holy Spirit and became a self-proclaimed “holiness preacher.” He and four or five of his classmates were praying in one of their rooms when something happened, without provocation, that would change his life. As they prayed he felt the Holy Spirit sweep them off their feet and fill them all. It seemed to him a new Pentecost and would become one of the most sacred and formative moments in his life.



**POWER COUPLE** Stanley (*above*) and Mabel (*far right*) were formed by Asbury and Isabella Thoburn colleges before embarking on life together at Sitapur.

Equally significant was his call to missions. The Student Volunteer Movement invited him to speak on missions in Africa; he prayed, "Now, Lord, I don't want to go into that room to give a missionary address. I want you to give me a missionary." He began by saying someone would go to the mission field from that place. Little did he know he would be the one.

Early on Jones felt called to Africa. An excellent student, he had several options and opportunities upon graduation. He received an invitation to teach at Asbury (which he did, briefly); he also received a letter from a trusted friend to consider being an evangelist in America. Then he received a letter from the Methodist Mission Board offering to send him to India. Jones prayed and heard an unmistakable voice saying: "It's India." From that moment it was settled. He would rely on hearing God through this inner voice for guidance and direction for the rest of his life.

On November 3, 1907, Jones left on the S.S. *Victoria* bound for England, with no seminary training and little money. From England he sailed on to India, arriving in Bombay (Mumbai) and then by rail north to Lucknow. He was 23. Jones was ordained and then appointed to the English-speaking Lal Bagh Methodist Church. For the next eight years (1907–1915), he would be consumed by what he later described as "self-striving, self-effort, and eventual collapse from wearing too many hats."

Meanwhile Mabel Lossing (1878–1978) had sailed out of New York in 1904 with 400 pounds of books. She took little else with her except for a reputation as a serious-minded Christian, a successful teacher, and a linguist. She arrived in Bombay at age 26. At the end of 1908, she was sent to the Isabella Thoburn College in Lucknow to fill in for a missionary teacher who had suffered a nervous breakdown. Lossing began attending

the Lal Bagh Church and soon met Jones. She became the organist; Jones thought that she was the "sweetest girl in the world."

#### **DETERMINED DUO**

Jones and Lossing were married in Bombay in February 1911 and moved to Sitapur where there was no electricity and no running water. For the next 62 years, they labored in and out of India—Mabel with her schools and Stanley with his work as a missionary/evangelist. Mabel Lossing Jones became a driving force behind her husband as he embraced a global preaching and teaching schedule. They were a remarkable couple, both called by God and each determined to follow him.

Even as she supported Stanley, Mabel had her own vision: a primary school for boys run completely by women. It was unheard of for women to teach boys in that society, but she did not think that men took the task seriously enough. The school far exceeded expectations. Stanley boasted it was exemplary (see pp. 17–20). Even Mahatma Gandhi, who corresponded with Stanley and Mabel, commended its success.

By the end of 1911, Jones was preaching more regularly and beginning to see significant results. His Indian friends said that of the 330 million Hindu gods, not one is called loving. Jones shared the message of his God of love. Eventually, however, his responsibilities began to take their toll. He was preaching throughout India and neighboring countries, often warding off diseases, snakes, scorpions, and the summer heat. Despite



**ONE IN CHRIST** Jones poses later in life with Indian converts to Christianity (*left*).



running ragged, he believed that he could do it all out of his own strength.

Mabel also weathered his long absences, and Stanley spoke of her inner strength fondly: “Few women would have been equipped for such an adjustment and sacrifice.” Eunice, their only child, was born on April 29, 1914. Her father missed her birth but arrived soon after. When Mabel was 100, she was asked about her happiest memory. She murmured, “The day Stanley came home after Eunice’s birth and held me in his arms.”

However, Stanley increasingly spent more time apart from Mabel and Eunice. World War I broke out in June 1914, and soon Great Britain declared war on Germany, bringing food shortages and soaring prices. Then in October 1914, Jones was taken to Lucknow Hospital with a ruptured appendix. He was weary.

#### “WHY DON’T YOU COME TO US?”

Jones’s early ministry among the outcastes had been nearly all consuming. But he also went in the evenings to a tennis club of Indian officials and lawyers. Early on a Hindu judge asked, “Why do you go to the outcastes? Why don’t you come to us?” Jones had assumed that the upper castes did not want him as a missionary, but the judge informed Jones that they did indeed want him, provided he came “the right way.” That phrase remained in his mind and heart.

The call to the upper castes seemed right, but how could he manage with all of his other responsibilities? He faced a spiritual crisis. “Physical sag brought spiritual sag,” he later wrote. His body was no longer resisting disease, and his nervous collapses continued.

**GO YE INTO THE WORLD** Throughout his life Jones preached at open-air meetings like this one in Singapore (*above*); in 1938 (when the *far left* picture was taken), *TIME* crowned him the world’s greatest missionary.

Sometimes while preaching his mind would go blank, and he would have to sit down, embarrassed and perplexed. Eventually he and Mabel were ordered to go to America on an early furlough.

Jones spent the furlough year (1916–1917) studying and making missionary addresses. Forever feeling as if he lacked the necessary educational training to fulfill his calling, he studied at Princeton Seminary where he met Toyohiko Kagawa, a fellow student who would become a leader in Japanese Christianity. Twenty-five years later their deep and lasting friendship would nearly avert war with Japan.

The Joneses arrived back in India in April 1917. Jones was still not well and went to the mountains to recuperate. He needed healing—in body, mind, and spirit. In this dark hour, he felt led by the Holy Spirit to the Central Methodist Church in Lucknow.

In the back of the church, he knelt in prayer, not for himself, but for others, and felt that God said to him: “Are you yourself ready for the work to which I have called you?” He replied, “No, Lord, I’m done for. I’ve reached the end of my resources and I can’t go on. The Lord replied, “If you’ll turn that problem over to me and not worry about it, I’ll take care of it.” Jones eagerly said, “Lord, I close the bargain right here!” He arose knowing he was well. Years later a marble tablet was put up on the church wall: “Near this spot Stanley

ESJ, 1998—COURTESY OF ANNE MATHEWS YOUNES  
ESJ WITH A NEW GROUP OF CONVERTS IN INDIA, B. L. FISHER LIBRARY ARCHIVES, ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
ESJ PREACHING, B. L. FISHER LIBRARY ARCHIVES, ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

**A LONG WALK** Jones's friendship with Gandhi (*below*) lasted from 1919 until the Indian leader's death.



Jones knelt a physically broken man and arose a physically well man."

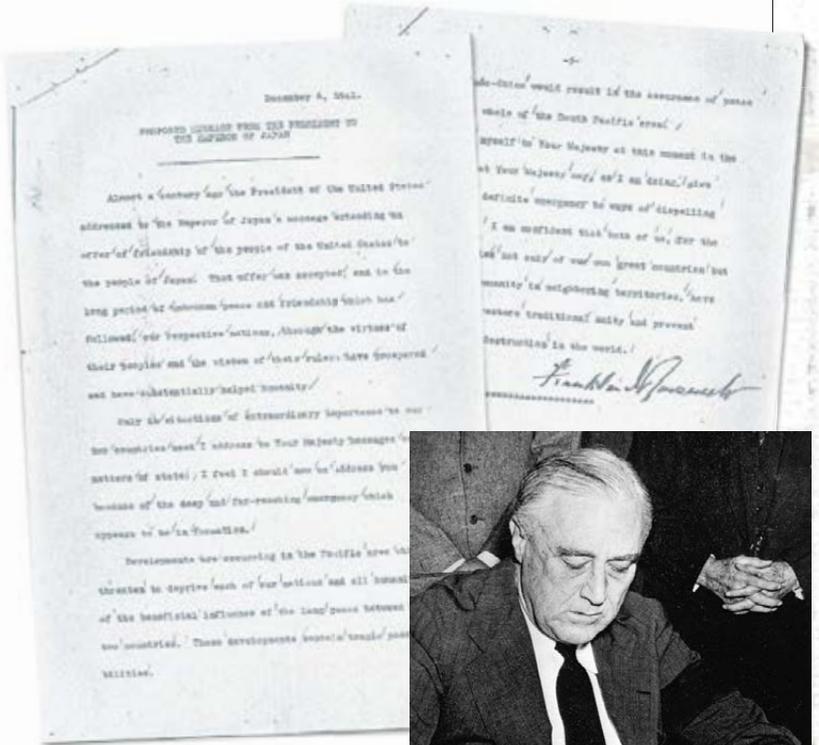
**"DADDY WON'T BE HAPPY"**

Jones could no longer accept old approaches to evangelism that attacked non-Christian faiths. This in part resulted from meeting Gandhi in 1919, beginning a friendship that lasted until Gandhi's assassination 30 years later (see pp. 24–28). Jones's ministry took on new meaning as seen in his first book, *The Christ of the Indian Road* (1925). It sold over a million copies worldwide.

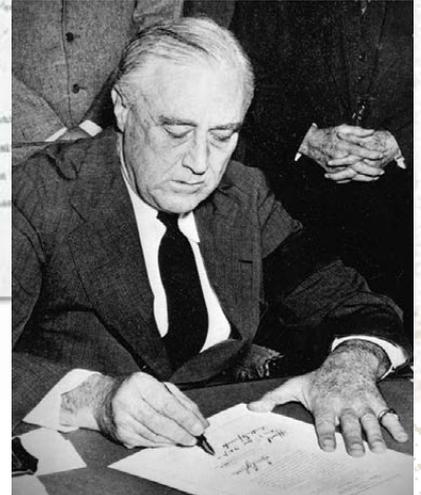
Jones embraced a routine he kept for decades: traveling, preaching to thousands, and organizing Round Table Conferences (see p. 16) where Indian intellectuals sat with him and shared what their religion meant to them. More than half were non-Christians. No one could interrupt or challenge another; Jones would share last. Frequently, at evangelistic meetings in the evenings, many participants became Christians.

Jones also began his ashram movement (see pp. 12–15) at Sat Tal in the Himalayan foothills, leading an experience he had learned from Gandhi and Indian poet Tagore. The difference was that Jesus, not a guru, was the teacher directing the ashram.

In 1928 Jones went to Kansas City as a delegate to the Methodist General Conference. The conference reached an impasse on electing a bishop; much to Jones's chagrin, they broke it by electing *him*. When Mabel found



**WORKING FOR PEACE** Jones's influence lay behind President Roosevelt's telegram (above) attempting to avert war with Japan; at right Roosevelt signs the war declaration.



out, she put a sheet over her head. Fourteen-year-old Eunice wrote 14 reasons she did not want her father to be a bishop; the first was that she "loved their home in Sitapur" and the last was "Daddy won't be happy."

Unbeknownst to them Jones could not sleep that night. The next evening when he took his seat among the bishops his inner voice said, "Now is the time to resign." He thanked the conference for the honor, told them that he was called to be a missionary evangelist and—much to the discomfort and even animosity of some—resigned. Eunice and Mabel were relieved.

Yet, even in India, Mabel continued to experience loneliness as Stanley was gone much of the time. Her realization that her own calling to "her boys" was just as strong as his to preach the Word sustained her. In 1930 the two spent only 10 days together. (She once said she would rather spend two weeks with Stanley Jones than an entire year with any other man.)

In March of 1930, Gandhi began his famous Salt March (pictured above) protesting the British monopoly on salt. He vowed not to return to his ashram until India was free and independent. Jones visited the Indian National Congress at Allahabad and met Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, calling him "a man of deep sincerity but of very radical views." Jones was skeptical. He vowed, "I have to speak to India, and I must

GANDHI AND MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU, PICTURE TAKEN DURING THE SALT MARCH—AGENCE DE PRESSE MEURISE / (PUBLIC DOMAIN) WIKIMEDIA  
"PROPOSED MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT TO THE EMPEROR OF JAPAN," DEC. 8, 1941, FDR PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY / (PUBLIC DOMAIN) NATIONAL ARCHIVES  
UNITED STATES PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, SIGNING THE DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST JAPAN, IN THE WAKE OF THE ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR—ABBIE ROWE / (PUBLIC DOMAIN) WIKIMEDIA



know what India is thinking." At this point he was also traveling extensively in the Far East; he spent time with leaders of China, including Chiang Kai-Shek, who reportedly read from Jones's devotional books daily. One sojourn through Russia led Jones to investigate communism.

He was increasingly identifying the central message of the Gospels as the Kingdom of God; he wondered if this had anything in common with Marxism. This question consumed him for decades, eventually leading him to write a "Nazareth Manifesto," in which Jesus, not Karl Marx, is the protagonist. The Kingdom of God for Jones was never just generic world brotherhood; it remained firmly Christ-centered.

Meanwhile Eunice had married missionary Jim Mathews. During World War II, Mabel remained in India with Eunice and Jim while Stanley preached across the United States; Great Britain denied him visas to return to India until after the war, believing that he was too pro-India to be objective regarding British rule.

In 1941 Jones and his friends at the Japanese Embassy, prompted by Kagawa, asked President Roosevelt to write Emperor Hirohito asking for greater understanding. Roosevelt sent a telegram on December 5, but tragically the emperor did not receive it until after the Pearl Harbor attack. A counsel to the emperor later said that if the emperor had received the telegram a day sooner, he would have stopped the attack.

#### TEN-YEAR PLAN

When Jones's visa was finally renewed in 1944 and he could travel home, he decided that for six months of each year he would stay in India. January to April, he would hold evangelistic meetings, and May and June he would be at Sat Tal. Then he would go to the United States, leading evangelistic campaigns in July and August and then conducting evangelistic campaigns.



**REST AND SERVICE** Even in old age, Jones remained active (*above*) and continued to write (*above left*).

In 1946 Mabel left India never to return. Stanley continued his travels, spending his allotted six months in India and six months in the United States and abroad. He also continued to write. In 1954, when Stanley turned 70 and Mabel turned 76, they both officially "retired" from the Methodist Board of Missions. But Stanley made it clear that his "ten-year plan" would be extended for the rest of his life, commenting, "You may retire me as an active missionary of the Board of Missions, but you cannot retire me as a missionary." Mabel concurred.

Jones expanded his reach after retirement, traveling in Africa as it grew increasingly independent of European colonialism and speaking out against racism. Throughout the 1960s he was fond of saying that his most recent evangelistic events were "the best ever." He continued to schedule almost nonstop public meetings and ashrams, sometimes speaking four and five times a day. As he aged, he relied on friends like Mary Webster (see pp. 34–37); yet he remained active almost to the time of his death in India at 89.

Jones often reminded the ashrams that the church's first creed was the simple statement "Jesus is Lord!" Amid debates and discouragement, it remains a powerful reminder not only for his times, but for our own. 

*Robert G. Tuttle Jr. is emeritus professor of world Christianity at Asbury Theological Seminary and the author of In Our Time: The Life and Ministry of E. Stanley Jones.*

# “Christ to me had become Life”

## Jones’s breakdown and the recovery he found in Christ

**A**fter over eight years continuously in India in various types of missionary work, ranging from pastor of an English church, head of a publishing house, missionary to the villages, district superintendent of large areas, I felt strangely drawn to work among the educated high castes, the intelligentsia. As a mission we were doing very little indeed among them. We had taken the line of least resistance and nearly all our work was among the low castes. Along with my regular work I had started a Bible class and study group at an Indian club house where leading Hindus and Mohammedans gathered. After tennis in the evenings we would sit together until darkness fell and study the New Testament and discuss spiritual matters.

One day one of the leading government officials, a Hindu, remarked, “How long has this mission been in this city?” I told him about fifty years. He asked very pointedly: “Then why have you gone only to the low castes? Why haven’t you come to us?” I replied that I supposed it was because we thought they did not want us. He replied: “It is a mistake. We want you if you will come in the right way.” ...

But who was sufficient for these things? For it meant standing down amid the currents of thought and national movements sweeping over India and interpreting Christ to the situation. I was painfully conscious that I was not intellectually prepared for it. I was the more painfully conscious that I was not Christian enough to do what the situation demanded. And most depressing of all, I was physically broken.

### LIFE AND PEACE AND REST

*[Jones took a year’s furlough, but on his return to India he found it did not help.]* Unless I got help from somewhere I would have to give up my missionary career, go back to America, and go to work on a farm to try to regain my health. It was one of my darkest hours.

At that time I was in a meeting at Lucknow. While in prayer, not particularly thinking about myself, a Voice seemed to say, “Are you yourself ready for this work to which I have called you?” I replied: “No, Lord, I am done for. I have reached the end of my rope.” The Voice replied, “If you will turn that over to me and not worry about it, I will take care of it.” I quickly answered, “Lord, I close the bargain right here.”

A great peace settled into my heart and pervaded me. I knew it was done! Life—abundant Life—had



**GURU AND DISCIPLE** Jones wrestled with how best to present Christ in the Indian context robustly, but without Western cultural baggage.

taken possession of me. I was so lifted up that I scarcely touched the road as I quietly walked home that night. Every inch was holy ground. For days after that I hardly knew I had a body. I went through the days, working all day and far into the night, and came down to bedtime wondering why in the world I should ever go to bed at all, for there was not the slightest trace of tiredness of any kind. I seemed possessed by Life and Peace and Rest—by Christ himself. ...

Nine of the most strenuous years of my life have gone by since then, and the old trouble has never returned, and I have never had such health. But it was more than a physical Touch. I seemed to have tapped new Life for body, mind, and spirit. Life was on a permanently higher level. And I had done nothing but take it! I suppose that this experience can be picked to pieces psychologically and explained. It does not matter. Life is bigger than processes and overflows them. Christ to me had become Life. Apart from this Touch, I question if I would have had the courage to answer the call to work among these leaders of India’s thought and life. It was too big and too exacting. But here I saw my Resources. And they have not failed. — *From The Christ of the Indian Road* ©1925 Abingdon Press, used by permission. All rights reserved.



# The divine yes to every human need

JONES USED ASHRAMS TO BRING CHRIST TO THE INDIAN CONTEXT

*Tom Albin and Matt Henson*

**DEEP IN THE BEAUTIFUL** countryside, spending a tranquil time apart in a place for meditation, prayer, and learning from a guru through teaching and conversation: the ashram experience is common for many Hindu believers, in Jones's day and in ours. E. Stanley Jones, following several previous missionaries, transformed this indigenous structure with Christian encounter. Rather than placing an earthly guru at the center, his Christian ashram focused on Jesus Christ; because the guru is a "dispeller of darkness," Jones focused on Jesus, the Light of the World and the living Word of God.

## A TIME AWAY

Long before Jones arrived in India, the practice of leaving normal life routines to gain knowledge on intellectual and spiritual matters existed. In Sanskrit the word *ashram* is understood to mean "a" (away from) "shram" (hard work).

Indian religious practices adapted to communicate the Christian gospel probably began with Italian Jesuit Roberto de Nobili (1577–1656), who dressed as a *sannyāsi*

**SPEAKING THE WORD** Jones speaks at one of his Christian ashrams (*above left*) and poses with participants at an early ashram (*above right*).

(religious beggar) in southern India and engaged Hindus in apologetic dialogue. Brahmabandhab Upadhyay (1861–1907), an Indian Brahmin who converted to Catholicism, is the first-known native Indian to organize a Christian ashram; Christian adaptations exploded in the twentieth century. Poet and convert from Hinduism Narayan Vaman Tilak at Satra founded the first Protestant Christian ashram in 1917. Others emerged in the 1920s, such as the Christukula Ashram in Tirupattur, founded by Ernest Forrester Paton and S. Jesudasan, and the Christa Prema Seva Ashram in Shivajinagar, founded in 1927 by Anglican missionary priest John "Jack" Winslow.

These and other influences helped shape Jones's ministry. In 1911–1912 he read Indian missionary theologians H. A. Popley and G. E. Phillips. Later

ESU SPEAKING WITH ATTENDEES OF AN ASHRAM DISCUSSION—COURTESY OF ANNE MATHEWS-YOUNES  
ESU WITH ASHRAM GROUP—COURTESY OF ANNE MATHEWS-YOUNES

he encountered D. M. Devasahayam's 1922 essay "Indian Characteristics that Should Be Preserved in the Indian Church." He was soon quoting it in his address to the North India Methodist Annual Conference. And then came Gandhi (see pp. 24–28), who "taught me more of the spirit of Christ than perhaps any man in East or West," as Jones later wrote. Jones asked him how to "make Christianity naturalized in India, not a foreign thing, identified with a foreign government and a foreign people."

Beginning in 1923 Jones visited a number of ashrams. At Sabarmati, one of Gandhi's ashrams, Jones would get up early in the morning to sit and talk with Gandhi, enjoying the person-to-person community granted by the ashram. He also visited the Shantinetan Ashram established by Hindu poet and artist Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) and Anglican priest C. E. Andrews (1871–1940).

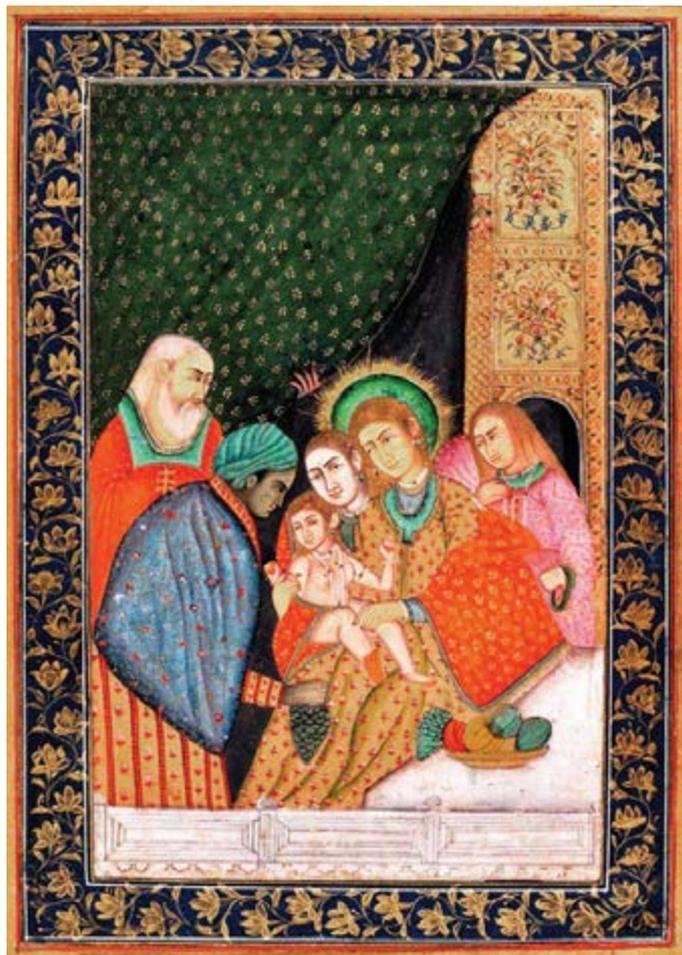
The ashram concept reminded Jones of Holiness camp meetings in the United States, with time apart in nature for contemplation and religious teaching; but it was a purely indigenous Indian form for gathering people. Like William Taylor before him, Jones was willing, even eager, to adapt the ideas and structures found in his experience of India to shape his own theory and practice of mission.

The task of the missionary, he thought, is to introduce people to the Jesus of the Scriptures and then trust the Holy Spirit to lead them into the establishment of a Christianity that remained truly Indian and was expressed in Indian cultural categories with a unique and universal power. In his book *Along the Indian Road*, Jones wrote, "It is the national soul of India expressing itself in religion, the central characteristic of which would be simplicity of life and an intense spiritual quest."

### GROUP DISCIPLINE

In 1930 Jones, with the assistance of Indian Christian minister Rev. Yunas Sinha and Ethel Turner (recently retired from the London Missionary Society) established the Sat Tal Christian Ashram. He wrote: "Three nationalities came together in that humble beginning—American, Indian, and English." Jones was seeking an intentional Christian community with a "group discipline":

I knew that I was to be a missionary and an evangelist, but saw that many evangelists after a few years of fruitfulness end up quoting themselves and using phrases of sermons that may have once been effective, but now are merely slick, like a coin from constant usage. The danger is that lacking a close-knit fellowship to discipline them, they (the evangelists) become dogmatic, cocksure, and wordy. They are telling others what to do but no one tells them what to do.



**SAVIOR OF THE WORLD** Just as this c. 1800 anonymous Indian artist did in representing the Nativity, Jones hoped to present a fully Indian Christ for Indians.

The famous gurus of Hinduism each had dedicated ashram locations. Jones bought the Sat Tal Estate near Nainital in 1930 from a Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Evans; Mr. Evans was a retired British engineer, and Jones and his family had previously stayed at Sat Tal in cottages the Evanses made available to missionaries. These 350 acres located in the foothills of the Himalayas provided a place to retreat from the rigors of daily life and a space to experience nature and beauty, as well as a place for prayer, meditation, and renewal.

After several summers of two-month ashrams in Sat Tal, Jones's desire for a year-round Christian ashram in India was realized at Lucknow. This full-time ashram lasted several years. However, it experienced multiple setbacks and challenges, ending in failure after Jay Holmes Smith, whom Jones had entrusted with leadership, shifted the focus to the political cause of Indian independence from Britain (see pp. 34–37). Jones felt "the disbanding . . . was a calamity at the time." However, he came to terms with the fact that God could use short-term ashram experiences to help people from



all faiths and no faith. What initially seemed a failure became the foundation for the global spread of part-time Christian ashrams around the world.

In 1940 Jones returned to North America to lead the first Christian ashram in Saugatuck, Michigan. The war in Europe forced cancellation of Jones's travel arrangements from India and required him to sail around South Africa. As the ship made a stop in Trinidad, Jones later said, he felt a prompting of the Holy Spirit to fly to Miami. From Miami he took a train to Chicago where a pastor picked him up and drove to Michigan. As they entered the camp, the bell was ringing to announce the opening service of the first North American Christian ashram. It was God's ashram and God's time, he believed.

Initially the Department of Evangelism of the Federal Council of Churches guided the growing North American movement. In 1957 Jones realized that this structure was inhibiting the mission; he decided greater independence and greater local responsibility was needed among the ashrams for the Holy Spirit to guide expansion. With the help of Melvin J. Evans, Thomas Carruth, Joseph Connolly, and Malcolm Gregory, the

**PRAYER AND PREACHING** Jones gathers with ashram attendees at the Sat Tal chapel (*above left*) and speaks to a large group on the shores of Panna Lake (*above right*).

**HONORING CHRIST** Hand gestures have long been part of Indian religious practice (*below*); Jones used this idea to inspire his "Jesus is Lord" gesture.

American (now United) Christian Ashrams was incorporated in the state of Texas. From 1957 to 1967 the movement saw unprecedented growth. When Jones wrote *Song of Ascents*, in 1968, at the age of 84, Christian ashrams numbered more than 100 across six continents.

### CORE PRINCIPLES

Jones and his colleagues emphasized two things in gathering attendees. The first was the importance of equality. The Christian ashram was not only a place to get away from hard work; it was intended to help attendees experience the Kingdom of God in miniature "on earth as it is in heaven." During the hours or days the community was gathered, they pursued an intentional process to "take down the barriers that separate people from one another," barriers such as title, race,



ESJ WITH GROUP AT SAT TAL ASHRAM CHAPEL, INDIA, 1960. B. L. FISHER LIBRARY ARCHIVES, ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
ESJ EVANGELIZING OUTDOORS—COURTESY OF ANNE MATHEWS-YOUNES  
FOUR FOLIOS FROM A MANUSCRIPT OF GESTURES, NEPAL, 14TH CENTURY MANUSCRIPTS—LACMA / [PUBLIC DOMAIN] WWW.LACMA.ORG



**WORLDWIDE TEACHING** Jones poses with attendees at an ashram in Japan (*above*) and walks in nature at an ashram in Green Lake, Wisconsin (*above right*).

class, job, and age, and to “take down the barriers that separate people from God”—their ideas of religion, doctrine, theological distinctives, and criticism.

Second, Jones’s ashrams focused on transparency and openness. He welcomed Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Jains, agnostics, and atheists, requiring only that everyone come ready to acknowledge his or her need. Jones said repeatedly, “If you have no needs, do not come to the Christian ashram. If you have a need, a question, a hurt or a desire—come.”

From that day to this day, every Christian ashram gathering begins with a session called “The Open Heart,” an invitation to each person to be transparent and open with one another. Each participant is invited to answer three questions: “Why have I come? What do I want? What do I need from God before this Ashram comes to an end?”

The ashram experience affords ample time to be together for Bible study, meditation, personal prayer,

small-group sharing, enjoyment of nature, recreation, shared meals, evangelistic preaching, and a healing service. In the final session, “The Overflowing Heart,” participants share thanks to God for the healing of hurts (body, mind, or spirit) and meeting of needs (emotional, relational, and spiritual). An ashram meeting may be as brief as six hours in a single day or as expansive as the current 14 days of the Sat Tal Summer Ashram sessions.

**WORD MADE FLESH**

Christian movements often rise and fall with the leaders who found them, but the ashram movement has survived Jones by nearly 50 years. It reached its high-water mark in the late 1960s and began to decline during Jones’s later years. However, he was clear that it would never be a large movement. The important thing was that it be a *faithful* movement: faithful to the person and work of Jesus Christ.

In 2019 more than 2,000 people experienced a Christian ashram in North America and around the world. In addition to traditional ashram events, international leaders are creating new experiences for college students, clusters of local churches, resort settings, and retirement facilities; during the COVID-19 pandemic, some ashrams even went online to offer Christ to all who attended. The movement still desires to be a faithful incarnation of the expansive, generous love of God for all people, men and women from all races and tribes and kindreds and nations—God’s “Divine Yes,” in Jones’s words, to every human need. ☐

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## Finding Christ at the Round Table

In *Christ at the Round Table*, E. Stanley Jones described how, early in his ministry, an evangelistic meeting attendee said to him, “I hear you speak about finding Christ. What do you mean by it?” Jones recognized this as a sincere question demanding something other than an academic answer. His questioner “wanted to know about this Christ of experience.” So Jones shared his personal story of how he had come to place his faith in Jesus Christ. He soon found that having a small group of people share about their personal faith is a powerful tool for evangelism because it allows for dialogue on a deeper level than larger, traditional meetings do.

Fresh off this discovery, Jones held a series of meetings in another town. A local church official recommended that they try such dialogues with a selected group of men. When the group gathered, Jones invited each attendee to share “what religion was meaning to them *in experience*.”

Jones chose to focus on the participants’ religious experiences to bypass the intellectual arguments that often arise when discussing religious concepts. He had no interest in hammering out clarity around doctrine

**WHAT HAS RELIGION BROUGHT?** Jones asked Round Table attendees to share their own personal experiences of faith.

or proving the historical accuracy of specific events. Instead he wanted people to talk about the effect their religion had in their lives.

He opened the meetings not only to Hindus and Muslims, but to agnostics and atheists as well. He asked all of them, “As we face the problems of life . . . what has religion brought to us . . . of light, of moral dynamic for personal and social life, of inward peace and harmony, of redemption from sin and from the power of this world, of God?”

### EXPERIMENTING RELIGION

Jones explained this approach in terms of the scientific method: experimenting, verifying, and sharing results (see p. 21). In this way he disarmed people who entered ready to battle for the supremacy of their specific beliefs.

Instead, he created an atmosphere in which all voices could speak equally, and the outcome of the sharing was left to the Holy Spirit. He noted that the conferences seemed indeed to reveal the Spirit at work:

We have anxiously listened for this note of finding on the part of non-Christians, for would we not be happy if men were finding God? But while there was sensitivity to the spiritual and a wistfulness of search, yet the note of finding [in other religions] seemed to be absent.

Round Table Conferences became one of the hallmark methods of Jones’s ministry in India, often organized alongside more traditional evangelistic meetings. Twenty years into his missionary work, he stated that he had participated in “scores” of them. His bold work in this area stood against both the emergent Protestant liberalism beginning to overtake the International Missionary Council and more conventional missionary approaches.

Jones believed God had granted him the innovative Round Tables, but other Christians were skeptical. Some worried his openness to other religions would undercut his commitment to Christian faith. Yet they found that Jones’s insistence on pursuing the truth of a meaningful experience of life actually drew him closer to the gospel. One friend wrote to him, “I was afraid you would not come out a *missionary*. But you *have*.”

For Jones this was one of the most powerful signs of the Round Tables’ effectiveness: they not only opened non-Christians to the person of Jesus Christ in a new way, they deepened the faith of the Christians who participated in them.—Mark R. Teasdale, *E. Stanley Jones Professor of Evangelism and Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary and author of Methodist Evangelism, American Salvation*



# “My splendid boys”

THE MINISTRY OF MABEL LOSSING JONES CHANGED INDIAN EDUCATION

*Martha Gunsalus Chamberlain*

**SOON AFTER** the turn of the twentieth century, Mabel Lossing sailed to a life-changing destination: India. She is one of the most accomplished—yet little known—Methodist missionaries, having served 42 years in India, accomplishing miraculous feats through prayer and ingenuity.

## LET THE WOMEN LEAD

That Lossing arrived in India at all was a direct result of resolute women at the Tremont Street Methodist Episcopal Church in Boston, who had challenged male-dominated control of Methodist funds and formed the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS) in March 1869. They commissioned Lossing as an education missionary in 1904.

Lossing first served in Khandwa in central India, where she became the sole administrator of the orphanage and was also one of only two teachers. Among her tasks was to search the streets for abandoned children. At the same time, she honed her skills as fund-raiser and innovator, and also completed her master's degree from Upper Iowa University in 1906,

**ANCHORS AWEIGH** Eunice, Stanley, and Mabel journey by boat to India in 1938.

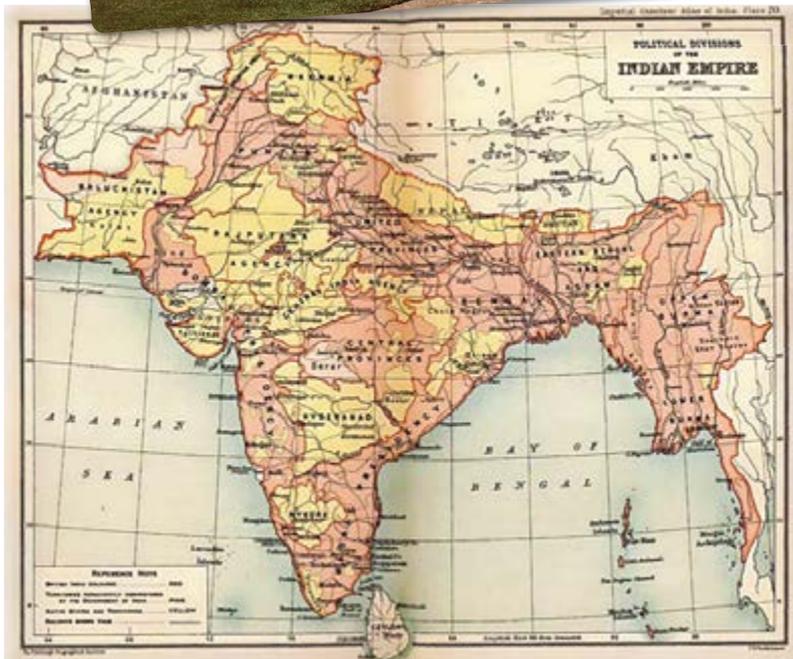
while studying and practicing Hindi four hours a day. She eventually learned Urdu, Sanskrit, and German, and studied classical languages including Greek and Latin, bemoaning the insufficient number of hours in the day.

As news of Lossing's extraordinary administrative ability and gifted teaching continued to spread, she was sent to Jabalpur to start a teacher training school, now called Havabagh, meaning “fresh air,” and then to Lucknow to the Lal Bagh Teacher Training School.

Meanwhile E. Stanley Jones arrived in India in 1907, appointed by the Methodist General Board of Missions to serve the English-speaking Lal Bagh Methodist Church in Lucknow. Lossing played the organ at the church for about a year without ever meeting the young preacher, until one day he approached her in the aisle. One biographer wrote that Stanley Jones “wasn't quite sure how to proceed with romance.”



**HALF A WORLD AWAY** The ruins of the Lucknow Residency (left) and a map of India in 1909 (below) show the world into which Mabel Lossing journeyed.



After marriage, Mabel and Stanley at first worked together in Sitapur with three schools in physical and academic disrepair. But Stanley was no educator. As he moved fully into his call to evangelism, Mabel Jones strode confidently into her own call. The schools served 200 boys, many of them orphans in a boarding school.

No one in India had heard of a female “headmaster” for a boys’ boarding school, or of women teaching boys, or of a Caucasian serving on the municipal council of a city. But to raving accolades, Jones served 20 years on the Sitapur Municipal Council—the only female, the only non-Indian, the only American, and certainly the only Christian to have served the evenly divided Muslim/Hindu council.

**“I’LL TAKE IT TO MY GRAVE”**

While Jones knew she could not change centuries-old protocol quickly, she determined to find ways. When the male teacher of the kindergarten boys became ill, she told him to have his wife teach the class. Year after year

she gradually brought in more women teachers until only women taught the children. After an initial uproar, all saw that the boys had learned more than those in any other school, and Jones had instilled respect for women in male students.

In 1914 Jones gave birth to Eunice, separated by oceans from family and even from her husband engaged in God’s “other” work. Eunice’s primary spoken languages were Hindustani and English. Bhlanu the Muslim cook took seriously his role to teach Eunice to talk. Carrying her about the house, he pointed to various objects, stating their names in Urdu or Hindustani, enjoying her quick childish response and ready wit.

In addition to teaching, Jones had dreamed of becoming a journalist. Already published in *Harpers* and *The Atlantic Monthly*, she continued to write, but under a pen name so that she would not compete with her husband’s writing. Years later when Eunice saw a check arrive from a major American magazine, she begged her mother to reveal her pen name, but her mother replied, “I’ll take that secret to my grave.” So she did. Jones also wrote under her own name for the *Woman’s Missionary Friend* and the *Junior Missionary Friend* to connect young Methodists in the States with missionary life on foreign soil.

Mabel Jones wrote each donor who sponsored a child at her school, no matter how small the gift. She solicited funds with stories rather than asking outright and habitually hand-wrote more than 20 letters a day, raising enough to keep 1,000 boys in school per year. She also sent regular updates to the director of missionary outreach at home, Ralph Diffendorfer, and carried on a lively correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi on education and disciplinary matters.

Jones’s dream of a library for her schoolboys led her to request book donations from US Sunday school children. When the boys’ clothes became torn or tattered, Jones added daily “patching bees” to the schedule and taught the boys to make and mend their clothing. And when Eunice had one too many close calls with snakes at their home, Jones tapped into her Canadian grandfather’s practical ability as a builder and upgraded the property by building a long-needed septic system and a Persian water wheel. Next she built another mission house, nearer the school. But, even in the new house, snakes occasionally found them.

PHOTOGLOB CO. PUBLISHER, LUCKNOW, RESIDENCY EASTERN SIDE, INDIA, LUCKNOW, LUCKNOW, C. 1890. (ZÜRICH); PHOTOGRAPHER, PHOTOLOB COMPANY, TO 1910] PHOTOGRAPH. HTTPS://WWW.LOC.GOVITEM/2017657622/ INDIA, 1908. CARTOGRAPHERS (HEINRICH) WAGNER & M.P. (ERNEST) DEBES, LEIPZIG / PUBLIC DOMAIN



**GREAT WORK** In 1915 the *Woman's Missionary Friend* reported glowingly on the progress Mabel Jones had made at her school (*below*) and with her students (*left*).

**LONG SERVICE** Jones poses (*right*) for an official photo for the Methodist Church in the 1940s.



Like her husband, Jones knew she must connect with the community in meaningful and respectful ways if she was to reach them with the gospel. She joined the Red Cross Society, the Public Health Committee, and the Baby Week Committee; visited women in the jail; and was appointed to the District Board, which oversaw roads, schools, hospitals, dispensaries, and other public facilities that served more than a million people.

One day as Jones lunched at the district magistrate's home, a Muslim official thanked her for a book she had given him about the life of Christ. He said, "I have almost finished the book, and I must say that I am sorry and disappointed that I can find nothing in it of which I disapprove."

Jones learned that literature and music opened the door to conversation about Christ. Well-versed in Urdu and Hindi, she read the Bhagavad-Gita and knew the Qur'an quite well. "She knew full well," wrote her son-in-law, "that one could not hope to witness effectively to what she knew was sacred for Christians without a deep comprehension of what Hindus regard as sacred. Too often this has escaped the missionary."

### THE FLOODS CAME UP

Just after World War I ended, a cataclysmic event hit their world. Mabel Jones had become the on-call "doctor" for an extended community. One day she was called to a schoolboy writhing in abdominal pain and vomiting. Within hours he was dead from cholera. Within six weeks the district lost 10,000. In desperation

Jones began sending telegrams to parents of well children. But one child after another died upon reaching home, already exposed. She wrote:

Each day brought . . . more deaths until I felt I could bear no more. My splendid boys, bright, clean, healthy, happy, promising little lads who had been with me until they seemed like my own sons, [were] snatched away while we stood helpless.

They lost more than 40 children. Then the great 1918–1919 influenza epidemic ravaged the globe. Of 22 million deaths worldwide, more than half were in India.

In 1923 Bishop Jaswant Chitambar, Stanley Jones, and Bishop Waskom Pickett met in Arrah for a meeting and prayed with concerned people for much needed rain. About 4:30 the next morning as they slept on the mission house roof, Pickett awoke to the sound of water. It had not rained, but a mystery river not 40 feet from the mission house was rising seven inches per hour.

At home Mabel Jones was experiencing her own trouble; a little creek a quarter of a mile from the bungalow filled the schoolhouse. Spared any loss of life or serious damage, the children and adults worked together to clean up. Before long, however, the waters again overflowed. Miraculously no lives were lost. But Jones's new mission house had doorsills several inches high to help block the entrance of small animals, which provided a lovely pool for fish. Unadulterated delight filled eight-year-old Eunice.



**THIRD GENERATION** Stanley Jones with (left to right) Anne, Eunice, Jim, and Jan Mathews.

The year's supply of rice was totally submerged for days in the brick storeroom. As the grain swelled in the steamy moist quarters, it also cooked, pushing the walls outward—undoubtedly the world's largest rice cooker. "Oh God, what shall I do?" Jones prayed earnestly. As survivors crawled back to their villages, the news spread. "Tell the people I have food for them!" she announced. Long lines quickly formed.

Even merchants respected Jones in her endeavors, though they tried tempting her. More than once she discovered a 100 rupee note in the bottom of the basket with fruit she had ordered. She returned the basket with a note and the money that had been "mistakenly" placed in her basket, thanking them for the good fruit her boys enjoyed. She divided chores among boarding school students who weekly rotated jobs such as gardening and gathering food for the cook; the students ate stewed lentils with oatmeal in the morning and curried rice with onions for dinner.

#### "DEAR MISS JONES"

In the 1920s donations for missions dwindled, and then the 1929 stock market crash and the Great Depression hit like a tsunami, wiping out even the meager donations that had kept the mission school afloat. Jones had no choice but to continue translating the boys' simple thank-you letters from Hindustani into English and to answer hundreds of others herself.

Stanley's Christian ashram (see pp. 12–15) was located about 12 miles from his family when Mabel and Eunice lived in Nainital in the mountains during the two summer months, allowing them to spend treasured time together. Stanley taught Eunice to play tennis and badminton—not considered women's games in that era. The pair also took long hikes together into the fields and villages adjacent to the compound. "We often walked five miles, passing through villages where the people always welcomed us. Indians are very hospitable," Eunice reminisced.

Eunice attended college in the United States and then rejoined her parents, helping her mother at the mission and her father as secretary on his evangelistic tours and typist of his books. In 1939 Stanley was scheduled to preach and teach for a week in Poona; he and Eunice stayed with a missionary couple. The wife gushed that a young man who was coming was the one for Eunice. Eunice refused to entertain any interest, but young missionary Jim Mathews said he was "smitten when Eunice walked into the room and into my life."

Mathews attended Jones's lectures, but he and Eunice carved out time to bicycle and even to tour the countryside in a car. Back in Bombay, he began a letter: "Dear Miss Jones." He later learned that her father had to assist in deciphering his scrawl. The two were married on June 1, 1940, in the teak-paneled chapel of Wellesley School in the Himalayas.

Mabel Jones returned to the United States to stay in 1946, but continued to work even after 42 years in India. She waited for her husband in their supposed retirement home in Orlando, Florida, but he continued his ministry and could not bring himself to retire. So skillful was she at writing letters that at age 90 she was still raising money to support her boys in India. In fact her letters generated such phenomenal revenue that Diffendorfer asked her to prepare a model for other missionaries.

On learning that her eyesight was failing, Jones hurriedly read all of Shakespeare's plays within a two-week period so that she could reflect on them when it failed completely. Upper Iowa University, her alma mater, honored her with a Doctor of Humanities degree.

Stanley died in 1973, and that year 95-year-old Mabel fell and broke a hip. She would live her remaining days near Eunice and Jim. Mabel Lossing Jones died peacefully on Friday, June 23, 1978, at the age of 100 years, after a century of God-anointed global ministry.

The Mabel Jones Boys School continues to educate and shape young lives to this day. When Mabel Lossing was sent to "rescue" the school, little did anyone expect that by her sheer work, will, and faith she would change elementary education for boys throughout north India. Through her courageous innovations, not only are women teachers acceptable for boys, but a new respect for women pervades the system and the lives of now-grown men who benefited from her tutelage. Even today about a thousand boys continue to be educated each year through Mabel Jones's scholarships. ☐

*Martha Gunsalus Chamberlain is the author of A Love Affair with India: The Story of the Wife and Daughter of E. Stanley Jones, from which this article is adapted with permission.*

# God's adequate answer

*Jones describes his hopes and fears about the Round Tables as a method of witnessing.*

**A**s we sit around in a circle we suggest to them that we take a new approach to religion—new when we think of the ordinary approaches in common use. We suggest that we have had the controversial, the comparative, and the dogmatic approaches to religion. There is another approach possible. Let us come at it by the method more closely akin to the scientific method. . . . Experimentation. Verification and Sharing of Results.

I suggest to them that we try this method. We are all religious men, some more and some less, and we have all been experimenting with this matter of religion over a number of years. We have tried it as a working hypothesis of life. As we face the problems of life—its joys and its sorrows, its perplexities and its pains, the demands of duty, the moral struggle with sin and evil, the upward call to higher life, the desire to help our fellow men and to be of use, the craving for God and for redemption—what has religion brought to us? . . . What have we and what are we verifying as true in experience? Will you share with us the results of your verification?

## DEEP SPEAKING TO DEEP

We suggest, therefore, that no one argue, no one try to make a case, no one talk abstractly, and no one merely discuss religion, but that we simply share what religion is meaning to us as experience. We can almost hear the inward gasp that goes on in the souls of the group when we suggest this. We assure them that we recognize that this is not easy to do, that it is not easy to put into words what one realizes in these deepest moments of life, so that we do not want anyone to feel that he has to speak, that if he so desires he may simply ask to be excused when his turn comes.

We also suggest that we do not want them to feel that the friendliness of this atmosphere must cause them to iron out differences, or to put it in other words, to reduce everything to a least common denominator. . . .

I have noted the change that comes over the group in the first ten minutes. Many have come fortified and ready to enter a battle of wits and to uphold their religious system against all comers. But immediately the atmosphere changes, a deep seriousness comes over them, for here the battle drops to levels deeper than a mere battle of words or of ideas—drops down to where we meet life—we are at grips with life.

Others who have come languid at the thought of further verbal controversy or long lectures are



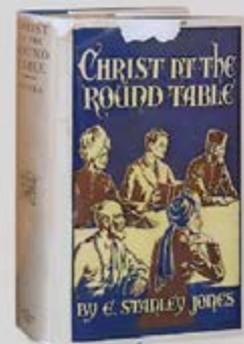
**BETTER THAN A BATTLE** Gandhi participates in one of the Round Table Conferences on Indian independence that helped inspire Jones (*above*).

immediately galvanized into attention and interest, for here is something different—religion is to speak out of life. Has it any adequate answer to give to life?

Or is it a series of mental and social left-overs, out of touch with life and its meaning, and contributing little to its solution? We were to report results of the Great Experiment, we were to tell of verification, if any: deep was to speak to deep.

I must confess that I never approach these Round Tables without feeling my heart beat a little faster, for here before us sit members of the most religiously inclined race of the world, men who belong to a people who have persistently searched for God and reality, as no other people on earth have searched; sons of a philosophical and cultural past that stretched back millenniums before Europe awoke from barbarity. What answer would they bring from that hoary past and this heaving present? Would it be an adequate one?

And we Christians who came with what we call a gospel—would it sound like a gospel here? When we had stripped our religious life of overgrown verbiage, how much fact would we have left? Would our gospel ring true to reality? Would it move amid these problems of life with assured poise and conscious power? Would it face life and answer it? Was our gospel a broken light from God, illuminating patches and portions of life but leaving life as a whole unilluminated? Or was it God's adequate answer to man's need—intellectual, moral, spiritual, social?—from Christ at the Round Table (1928). *Reprinted with the kind permission of the E. Stanley Jones Foundation.*



# Jesus is Lord



## Bombay

- 1869 The Women's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS) of the Methodist Episcopal Church forms and sends Isabella Thoburn to India as its first missionary.
- 1878 Mabel Lossing is born in Clayton, Iowa.
- 1884 Eli Stanley Jones is born in Clarksville, Maryland.

- 1896 Sherwood Eddy begins working as a missionary in India; he will eventually befriend and mentor Stanley Jones.
- 1901 Stanley Jones is converted in his local church.
- 1904 Mabel Lossing is commissioned and sails to India as a missionary with the WFMS.
- 1905 While a college student, Jones is involved in a powerful revival in Wilmore, Kentucky.
- 1907 Jones graduates from Asbury College and goes to India under the auspices of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church.
- 1911 Jones marries Lossing.
- 1912 Stanley and Mabel Jones are assigned to Sitapur; Mabel founds a boys' school and introduces female teachers for the first time in India.
- 1914 Eunice Jones, Stanley and Mabel's only child, is born in Sitapur.
- 1916 Stanley Jones, exhausted, goes to the United States on furlough. While there he becomes friends with



## Ashram in Finland

- Toyohiko Kagawa, who is attending Princeton Theological Seminary.
- 1917 The Joneses return to India, and Stanley has a profound spiritual experience that will shape the rest of his life. The first Protestant Christian ashram is held in India.
- 1919 Stanley Jones meets Gandhi for the first time; a cholera epidemic strikes India, killing 40 boys in Mabel Jones's school.
- 1923 Stanley Jones begins attending a variety of ashrams, including Gandhi's; a flood causes damage to the Sitapur mission compound.
- 1924 Ralph Diffendorfer, who will supervise the Joneses' work for many years, begins working for the Methodist Board of Missions.
- 1925 Stanley Jones publishes *The Christ of the Indian Road*.
- 1928 Stanley Jones is elected a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church but declines the election after a night of prayer.
- 1930 Along with Western missionary Ethel Turner and Indian preacher Yunas Sinha, Stanley Jones founds a Christian ashram at



## Indian Fakirs, Bombay

KARL BAEDEKER, BOMBAY, 1914—CARTOGRAPHERS WAGNER & DEBES, LEIPZIG / (PUBLIC DOMAIN) WIKIMEDIA  
 ESU IN GROUP PHOTO WITH THE FINNISH ASHRAM AL HOLDING UP SIGN "JESUS IS LORD", 1963—B.L. FISHER LIBRARY ARCHIVES, ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
 UNDERWOOD & UNDERWOOD, "INDIAN FAKIRS-BOMBAY", STEREOGRAPH, 1904—LOC PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION / (PUBLIC DOMAIN) LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

# The witness of Stanley, Mabel, and Eunice Jones and their colleagues and friends

Sat Tal. Gandhi leads the Salt March as an act of civil disobedience against the British government.

1935 Stanley Jones founds a year-round ashram at Lucknow.

1937 Eunice Jones graduates from Washington University and prepares to travel with her father as his secretary. She will eventually serve as an editor for 25 of his books.

1939 World War II begins in Europe. Eunice Jones meets Methodist missionary James (Jim) Mathews.

1940 Eunice Jones marries Jim Mathews. Stanley Jones launches the ashram movement in the United States; Britain denies him a visa to return to India because of his

1946 Stanley is allowed to return to India; Mabel Jones comes home from India permanently, settling in Orlando, Florida, where she continues to raise funds for the Sitapur school; Stanley continues to travel and attempts to broker a settlement between the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress.

1947 British India achieves independence and is partitioned into India (Hindu) and Pakistan (Muslim).

1948 A Hindu nationalist assassinates Gandhi. Stanley Jones publishes a tribute to his friend; it will later inspire Martin Luther King Jr.



*Jones in Lucknow*

1949 Friends and colleagues of the Joneses begin the Foundation for Evangelism to promote the cause of Christ within Methodism.

1950 Stanley Jones provides funds for India's first Christian psychiatric center and clinic, Nur Manzil; Mary Webster is converted under Jones's preaching and will later become an active evangelist.

1954 Stanley and Mabel Jones retire from active missionary service, but Stanley continues to travel.

1956 Stanley Jones's long-time friend Bhimrao Ambedkar, whom Jones had hoped to convert to Christianity, becomes a Buddhist.

1957 Stanley Jones and colleagues incorporate the American Christian Ashrams, now the United Christian Ashrams, in the United States.

1960 Jim Mathews is elected a bishop in the Methodist Church.

1962 Stanley Jones is nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

1963 Jim Mathews participates in Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington; Stanley Jones is nominated again for the Nobel Peace Prize and is given the Gandhi Peace Award.

1968 Stanley Jones publishes a spiritual memoir, *Song of Ascents*.

1971 Stanley Jones suffers a stroke, but begins *The Divine Yes*; it will be published after his death.

1973 Stanley Jones dies in Bareilly, India.

1978 Mabel Jones dies in Gaithersburg, Maryland.



*Methodist Church, Lucknow*

support for Indian independence. Jay Holmes Smith, Jones's successor at the Lucknow Ashram, is expelled from India for agitating for independence.

1941 Stanley Jones, encouraged by Kagawa, serves as an unofficial envoy between Roosevelt and Japanese officials in Washington in an attempt to prevent war; the United States enters World War II.



# Building emerging India

THE FRIENDSHIP OF JONES AND MAHATMA GANDHI

*Naveen Rao*

**E. STANLEY JONES MET MAHATMA GANDHI** for the first time in 1919 at St. Stephen's College, Delhi. They did not meet again until 1924 in Poona when Gandhi was temporarily released from jail to attend to a medical need. But they remained in touch with each other continually; helping, inspiring, and prodding one another on in their mutual quest. On one of Jones's visits just before he returned to the United States, he asked Gandhi for a message to take back with him to the West as to how we should live this Christian life. Gandhi replied: "Such a message cannot be given by word of mouth; it can only be lived."

Jones often visited Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram and stayed with him, sometimes for several days, to continue his unlearning and new learning about Indians' pain, struggles, and challenges before presenting Christ to them. Gandhi sent 13 known letters to Stanley Jones, signing five; Mabel Lossing Jones also corresponded with Gandhi for over 25 years on educational subjects for underprivileged communities, particularly the education of girls. Eunice and

**PLACE OF PEACE** Sabarmati, Gandhi's ashram, continues in operation today.

James Mathews later remained friends with Gandhi's family for over 50 years.

## **A CALL AND A COLLAPSE**

Friendship with Gandhi helped Jones answer many of his questions about presenting the gospel in India. Despite the lack of a ceremonial farewell by the Methodist mission board, Jones had been joyful and eager as he began his missionary journey on October 13, 1907. After landing on November 13 at Bombay (now Mumbai), he boarded a train to reach his first posting at Lucknow. During the train ride, an educated and intellectual Muslim family traveled in his compartment.

Jones began sharing about Christ, hoping the Muslim family would be seeking baptism by the end of the journey; instead they shared about Islam and the goodness of their religion. After they had traveled together

for several hours, Jones secured no result, no baptism. This event left him perplexed.

This trend continued even after he became pastor at Lal Bagh Methodist Church, Lucknow. Jones found that many perceived Christianity as yet another addition to India's multireligious, multicultural, and multilingual faiths. The educated intellectuals and the leaders of India did not find Christianity, a religion of the British Empire, to be in any way inspiring, challenging, or life-changing. Everything Jones knew about how to be a missionary in a foreign land failed in the Indian context.

Self-doubt began to creep in. He wondered: what is wrong—method, message, messenger, or place? He wrote, "So at the end of my first term as missionary I ended up with a Call and a Collapse." Mentally, spiritually, and physically exhausted, he left on furlough in 1916. Still believing that he was done for, he returned the next year.

In this context the first meeting between Jones and Gandhi took place in 1919. Sushil Rudra, the principal of St. Stephen's College, Delhi, introduced Jones to Gandhi. During the conversation Jones asked, "What must Christians do to make Christianity naturalized in India?" Gandhi replied,

All Christians must live more like Jesus Christ. You should practice your religion without adulterating it or toning it down. You should emphasize the love side of Christianity more, for love is central to Christianity, and you must study more sympathetically the non-Christian religions to find the good in them and to have a more sympathetic approach.

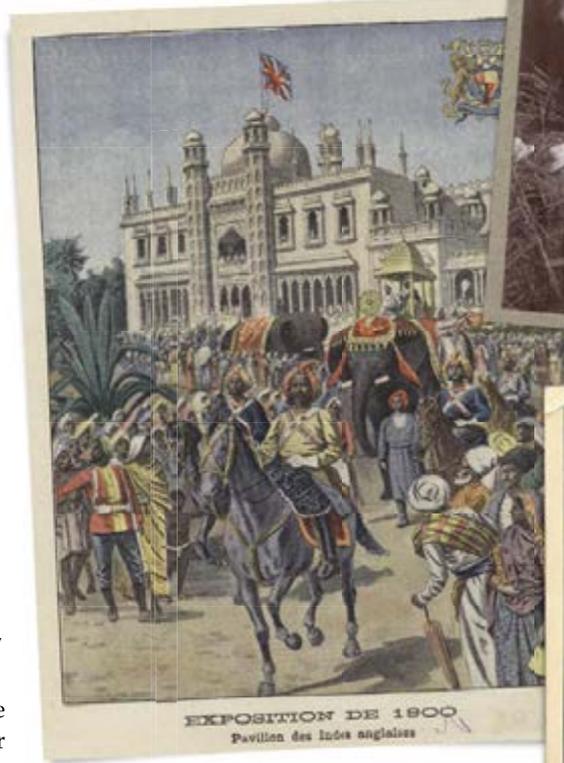
That meeting soon put Jones on a path beyond mission compounds and church boundaries into the struggle of the people of India to become an independent nation. He wrote, "I found myself very early taking sides with [Gandhi] in the political struggle." Jones joined in the rising Indian nationalism of the 1920s, which led directly to *The Christ of the Indian Road*.

### A MISSIONARY STATESMAN FOR INDIA

Jones began seriously to work on learning his context, reading the religious literature of Hinduism and Islam as well as current psychological, religious, and philosophical literature relevant to his ministry. As he did so, he kept an eye on news and events.

On one side was the so-called Christian British Empire ruling India, and on the other side, non-Christian India striving to be free from the British Empire. Which side would Jones and the Christ that he was

**A REVOLUTION** Gandhi (*below right*) wanted to peacefully protest British rule, shown here through an exhibit of Indian life in Paris in 1900 (*below*) and an image of King George V hunting elephants in 1911 (*right*).



preaching take? The people of India were asking, "Would your Christ support enslavement of the people even if it is done by a Christian group?"

Jones knew the obvious answer is "no."

But Jones also knew that, on the other side, Indian groups seeking independence were ruthlessly and violently divided on religious lines. Sporadic eruptions of riots between Hindus and Muslims occurred. If the British left India, what kind of India would emerge? Would it be an oppressive Hindu India or would Muslims find security in their new independence? Jones believed that his missionary task demanded that as a statesman he bring the two warring sides, Hindus and Muslims, together into harmony and unity; into a common struggle against a common power to achieve a common goal of a new, independent nation.

At the same time, something called the "Mass Movement" was taking place under the leadership of another Methodist missionary, J. Waskom Pickett, also an Asbury University alumnus. This movement formed among the depressed classes of India who were seeking



**TWO STATES OR ONE?** The Muslim League (*above*) sought a separate nation for Indian Muslims; Jones attempted dialogue between the league and Gandhi.

**TRAVELING EVANGELIST** Fellow missionary J. Waskom Pickett (*top left*) ministered to the lower classes of India, but Jones felt himself called to the intelligentsia from his very first meeting with a Muslim family on a train like the one at left.

social transformation from the curse of untouchability laid on them by the upper castes, while longing for upward mobility in terms of education. It was proving to be a success; huge numbers of people were being baptized and coming into the Christian fold.

Jones worked diligently to prepare himself for his new task of presenting Christ to the educated people of India who were divided on religious lines and fighting against the “Christian” British Empire. He was surprised to find that, among the educated classes, many already practiced Christian principles in their lives and work, but they did not seek baptism or join a church. Jones recognized that the Holy Spirit was at work far beyond the borders of the Christian church; Christ was coming to meet people in India through other means.

He began to think that Gandhi would be a representative of this irregular channel of Christianity. At one point in 1926, he wrote to his friend and put the cause of Christ before him, saying: “I think the ideas that underlie the sermon on the mount have gripped you and have, in a great measure, moulded you, but to me the centre of Christianity is this radiant Person of Christ. He himself is the Good News.”

His friend responded: “I appreciate the love underlying the letter and kind thought for my welfare. But my difficulty is of long standing. The matter has been presented to me before now by other friends. I cannot

grasp the position through the intellect. It is purely a matter of the heart.” As a result Jones wrote his supervisor, Ralph Diffendorfer, and asked him to have the staff of the missions board “covenant in prayer for the revelation of Jesus Christ to come to the Mahatma.”

Meanwhile Jones began to openly and repeatedly favor Indian self-rule (*Swaraj*) as a birthright of all Indians. As a result of this open and outspoken stand, British authorities regarded Jones with increasing unfriendliness. This antipathy by the British imperial powers grew to such a level that it resulted in his being denied a visa to return to India during World War II.

### BUILDING A NEW INDIA

Of Jones’s three well-known initiatives that made significant contributions to the building of a new India, Gandhi’s influence can be seen in two. First, of course, were the Round Tables. The name came originally from a series of meetings and negotiations between Indian groups led by Gandhi and the British government. Jones applied this metaphor from the political arena to bring the different religious groups together to meet and to share with each other (see p. 16).

It would be naïve to reduce the Round Table Conferences to religious “feel-good” gatherings to score a point here and a point there, or even to convert others, although this certainly happened. Jones was working on a bigger picture: bringing all the religiously diverse

REV. J. W. PICKETT, NORTH INDIA. COURTESY OF GOAH OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, MADISON, NEW JERSEY. MUSLIM LEAGUE LEADERS IN THE CORRIDOR OF THE CENTRAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IN NEW DELHI, 1946. THE ASSEMBLY NOW HOUSES THE INDIAN PARLIAMENT. UNKNOWN AUTHOR [PUBLIC DOMAIN]—WIKIMEDIA THE LOOP, AGONY POINT, DARJEELING [HILL RAILWAY], BOURNE AND SHEPHERD, 1880. COPYRIGHT © THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD / OLD INDIAN PHOTOS

**CROSSING BORDERS** Gandhi and Jones corresponded frequently and with mutual respect (*right*).

groups together in the common struggle to build a new nation.

Meanwhile this ongoing freedom struggle was being nurtured, discussed, and envisioned in secluded places like ashrams, away from the prying eyes of the British Empire. Several ashrams emerged during that time, founded by various Indian leaders involved in the freedom struggle. The ashram became a place of living out the ideals and the vision of a new India in miniature.

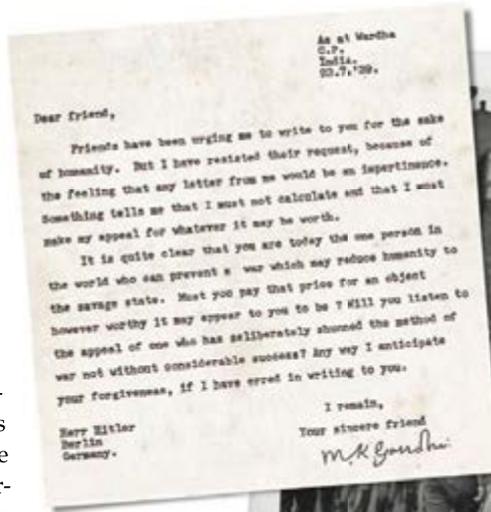
Gandhi, who had experienced the Tolstoy and Phoenix Ashrams in South Africa, started the Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat in 1917 and, much later, the Sevagram Ashram in Maharashtra in 1936. Famous poet Ravindranath Tagore started the Shanti Niketan Ashram in Bengal in 1901.

Jones too started an ashram that supported, helped, and propagated the making of a new India at Sat Tal, Nainital, in 1930 (see pp. 12–15). Jones described it as a forest school for meditation and prayer where non-Christians would be invited to participate. Here all lived in modest Indian style, wearing Indian clothes, eating simple Indian food, and doing menial and manual work with few or no servants.

The purpose was to build a community of the Kingdom of God more in touch with the soul of India. A stone tablet there declares even today, “All are welcome, the people of all faith and of no faith, to have a live-in experience of the Kingdom of God in a miniature.” The lifestyle of Sat Tal Ashram provided a model for the emerging nation: an equality rising above the differences of religion, caste, class, regional, ethnic, and linguistic lines to form a loving, sharing, and caring community as exhibited by the early Christians in the book of Acts.

### DO YOU MEAN IT?

Jones’s third contribution to an independent India—the division of India and Pakistan—brought him into conflict with his old friend. Jones saw his participation in these negotiations as a way to use his neutrality as an American citizen, and the neutrality of the Christian religion, to provide a common and fair meeting ground for the proponents of different religious and political groups. Gandhi took a different view.



**MAN OF PEACE** Gandhi’s correspondence was not limited to fellow peacemakers like Jones; in 1939 he wrote to Hitler in an attempt to prevent World War II.

In the early 1940s, Jones heard for the first time of “Pakistan” (meaning “a holy place”), a Muslim nation that would be carved out of India by the Muslim League after gaining independence. The league was an exclusive Muslim political party also involved in the freedom struggle. Jones asked the leader of the Muslim League, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, “But you do not mean it, do you?” Jinnah replied, “Yes, we do.”

Jones initiated negotiations to resolve the deadlock between the two sides. On one side was the Indian National Congress—a political front of both Hindus and Muslims combined to fight for freedom; on the other side was the Muslim League. He attempted to reconcile the Hindu and Muslim leaders—including Jawaharlal Nehru, the proponent of one combined secular India, and Jinnah, the main proponent of Pakistan.

ESU IN INDIAN DRESS, 1930S. BL. FISHER LIBRARY ARCHIVES. ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY. LETTER FROM GANDHI TO JONES, COURTESY OF MATTHEW YOUNG. TYPESET AND DESIGNED LETTER FROM MAHATMA GANDHI TO ADOLF HITLER, JULY 23, 1939. DIONIDIA PHOTOS / ALAMY. STOCK PHOTO WEIMAR, NAZI PARADE, ADOLF HITLER, OCTOBER 1930. GEORGE PAHL, GERMAN FEDERAL ARCHIVE



**CROWNING A LIFE** Gandhi lies in state after his assassination.

Gandhi earnestly tried to hold India undivided, strongly believing it a sin to separate one body into two nations. But he also believed the solution lay in not denying the division, which was becoming clearer day by day as riots between Hindus and Muslims erupted amid the freedom struggle.

In 1946 Jones wrote a letter to Jinnah suggesting that the Indian National Congress should concede Pakistan and make an India Constituent Assembly and Pakistan Constituent Assembly. Both could work out their respective constitutions and then come together to make a federal union, one united nation of India. Jinnah agreed to this idea during his talk with Jones, but then formally rejected the proposal in writing. When Jones brought it to Gandhi, Gandhi responded: "Even the very idea of such a conception of a Pakistan is a sin, and you a man of God, I am

Gandhi's assassination on January 30, 1948, by a Hindu nationalist and raged on for years.

Jones's biography of Gandhi, written soon after his friend's death, showed his extraordinary admiration as he wrote: "[Gandhi] marched into the soul of humanity in the most triumphal march that any man ever made since the death and resurrection of the Son of God." Jones admitted that Gandhi had taught him more about the spirit of Christ than perhaps any other man in East or West. On the martyrdom of Gandhi, he commented, "Never did a death more fittingly crown a life, save only one—that of the Son of God." 

*Naveen Rao is principal of Leonard Theological College in Jabalpur, India, and author of several books. He is ordained in the Methodist Church in India and has ministered with the Sat Tal Ashram for a number of years.*

## Salt and a narrow escape

In 1930 during Gandhi's campaign of peaceful nonviolence, 79 people began a march to the sea to "make salt," the manufacture of which was forbidden by British law. Within three weeks of the end of the march, in spite of the ridicule of the British, tens of thousands of protesters convened at the seaside—and the whole world knew it. Violence of astounding proportions ensued—never intended by Gandhi.

The years of civil unrest unnerved all who fought and waited. To some it

appeared that Gandhi's methods had been forgotten. Even Mabel Jones, a respected friend of the merchants and officials in Sitapur, experienced a terrifying confrontation.

One day as Jones drove to the bazaar for supplies, the unruly crowd, supposing the white woman to be British, surrounded the car, rocking it and shouting, "*Mahatma Gandhi ki jai*," which translates, "victory to Mahatma Gandhi." She frantically searched for a familiar face, but the crowd had

gathered from out of town. Jones began beeping the claxon horn, keeping time to the rhythm of the chant. Its loud hoarse noise amused the crowd. Someone shouted, "Even a foreign car is for independence—but it has a cold!" Finally and fortuitously one of the merchants recognized Jones and jumped onto the hood, shouting that she was an American missionary from the mission station, and not English.—*Martha Gunsalus Chamberlain, excerpted from A Love Affair with India*

# A simple method

*Use the right means and the right results will follow*

*In Mahatma Gandhi: An Interpretation (1948), known today as Gandhi: Portrait of a Friend, Jones describes his friendship with the Indian leader. The passage below is known to have influenced Martin Luther King Jr. as he developed and applied the idea of non-violent resistance.*

**T**he greatness of Gandhi consisted in the fact that he would not look at the end results; he would use the right means, and the right result would follow. The universe guaranteed it. He could subscribe wholeheartedly to these familiar lines [from “The Present Crisis” by James Russell Lowell]:

Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever  
on the throne,  
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind  
the dim unknown,  
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping  
watch above his own.

Fully arrayed with these convictions, Gandhi steps into the arena of India to apply his principles on the widest scale, for the biggest stakes ever attempted by any man. He would win freedom for India by truth and nonviolence.

It is true that the historic situation helped in the adoption of nonviolence, for India was a disarmed nation. Arms were licensed only to those who were known supporters of the government. So nonviolence was accepted out of necessity, and yet out of choice. And further: undoubtedly an overruling Providence was using India as a proving ground for a new type of power, the power of soul.

## **WE WILL NOT OBEY YOU**

But the Mahatma repudiated with all his might the idea that the method of truth and nonviolence was used because he was weak and cowardly. He insisted that it was the method of the strong, and only the method of the strong. He further insisted that it was better to fight than to take up nonviolence through fear or cowardice.

The weapons Gandhi chose were simple: We will match our capacity to suffer against your capacity to inflict the suffering, our soul force against your physical force. We will not hate you, but we will not obey you. Do what you like, and we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer. And in the winning

**UNFORGETTABLE** Gandhi’s memory is carried into the 21st c. in many ways, including by Jones’s book (*right*) and this statue at the Indian leader’s ashram (*below*).

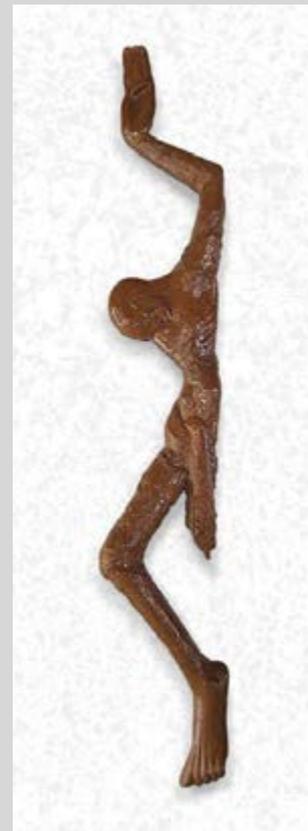
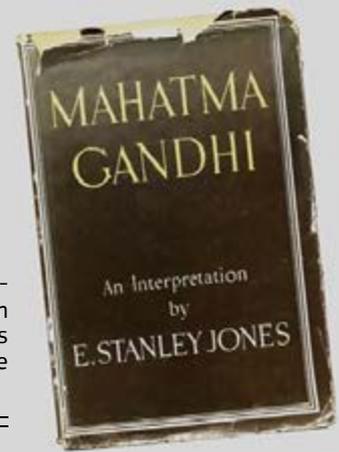
of freedom, we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you. So ours will be a double victory; we will win our freedom and our captors in the process.

I said the method of the Mahatma was simple, and more, it must be kept simple. You cannot complicate it by mixing in other methods to help it out. For instance, a leading communist of Ceylon said to me: “We communists are prepared to use any method that gets us to our goal—the ballot, passive resistance, or force.” Here he revealed a muddled moral mentality. If you submit the issues to the ballot box, you have to abide by the decision of that ballot box. You cannot abandon it if it goes against you and appeal to force. That is not democracy.

Nor can you begin using non-violent passive resistance and, if you find it isn’t working, then appeal to force. These methods cancel out each other.

You cannot alternately use the moral appeal and, if it doesn’t work, then use force; for the one against whom you appeal must know that you are depending on the moral alone and will not abandon it halfway. It must be kept pure. And the Mahatma wisely kept it pure. South Africa taught him to keep his eye single; then his whole body would be full of light. But if his eye became evil (complicated), then the whole body would be full of darkness.

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# Following Christ on the international road

JONES TRAVELED CONSTANTLY AS A PREACHER AND SPIRITUAL LEADER

*Douglas W. Ruffle*

ONE METHODIST BISHOP, referring to E. Stanley Jones's tireless pace, called him "the greatest Christian missionary since Saint Paul." Translations of Jones's books fueled his recognition around the globe, and he eventually spoke on all six inhabited continents. The fame of his books often preceded him—they were, as his official biography at the United Christian Ashrams notes, "read around jungle fires, studied by armies and governments, quoted in parliaments, and banned and burned by Communists."

## PREACHING TWO A DAY

Jones evangelized frequently in China, Japan, and Scandinavia; he also traveled throughout the United States, especially as he guided the US ashram movement into being (see pp. 12–15), and is known to have spoken in almost 500 different churches. Even after his official retirement as a missionary in 1954, he continued to speak worldwide, especially in Asia and Latin America, traveling overseas six months out of every year. His obituary in the *New York Times* claimed

**HOME SWEET HOME** In this 1957 photo for the Methodist Church, Jones points out India on a map.

that in 1963, Jones had 736 preaching engagements—approximately two per day!

In his earlier years, until the growing popularity of air travel in the late 1940s, Jones traveled by ship or train. Getting from one place to another took months. This helped produce *Christ's Alternative to Communism*, written in 1935 after he returned to India by ship and by train from the United States. His circuitous route took him to Europe, then Russia, and then on to India.

Russia intrigued him. At the time, during the Great Depression, the Soviet Union seemed to be working well, with its factories humming and workers paid. He was impressed by its functional system, but alarmed that all this was being done in the context of an atheistic doctrine. Jones objected to communism because of its lack of liberty and its materialistic atheism. But he also respected its attempt to found a society on cooperation. He was

**SPIRIT LED** Carlos Gattinoni (*near right*) hosted a memorable visit with Jones in Argentina when plans failed in Uruguay.

**AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS** Jones globetrotted from Japan (*far right*) to China (*middle*) to Congo (*middle right*) to Finland (*bottom*), explaining the Word become flesh.



harshly criticized because he took communism seriously and described it in objective terms.

**FROM ARGENTINA WITH LOVE**

A Latin American pastor, Carlos Gattinoni, who would become the first bishop (1969–1977) of the Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina, translated *Christ's Alternative to Communism* into Spanish. The translation led to invitations for Jones to visit Latin America. Gattinoni shared the story of one visit in the late 1950s or early 1960s with an interviewer—a story no doubt repeated, though differing in details, in the many places Jones preached:

[Jones] had been scheduled to lead a weeklong Ashram in Uruguay. When his plane arrived in Montevideo, he found out that there had been a miscommunication along the way and the Uruguayans were not prepared for him. He had come a long way and, of course, back then, it took months to exchange letters.

It was a Saturday in January, and he called me from Uruguay to see if we might be able to arrange something in Buenos Aires on the spur of the moment. I told him we would do what we could, and yes, we could arrange for him to preach in the evening at First Church in the city center. I said that many people were on vacation and that it was hot and we would not have time to advertise, but we would try.

Jones boarded a ferry to cross the 70-mile-wide Rio de la Plata, separating Uruguay from Argentina. He arrived on Sunday morning. Gattinoni continued:

I called several of our pastors and friends from other denominations. We announced in church on Sunday morning that E. Stanley Jones would be preaching at First Church beginning that evening. I urged them to spread the news and to pray for the event and to invite friends and to come.

Quite frankly, I was worried that we would get a very poor turnout. It must have been the prayers. The church was packed that night—standing room only. . . . It remained packed every night for a week. There was something about his preaching style—even with my translation—that had people coming forward to enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ.



Other Argentinian Christians echoed Gattinoni's testimony. Pastor Hugo Urcola of the Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina recounted a visit by Jones to Buenos Aires where he led an ashram. "I found myself getting on my knees to receive prayer and anointing from Jones during the Ashram," recalled Urcola. "To my left, kneeling with me, was Emilio Castro, who one day would become General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. To my right knelt José Miguez Bonino, who would become one of the most influential Christian authors from Latin America."

CARLOS GATTINONI IN PULPIT, 1950s. COURTESY OF GCAH OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, MADISON, NEW JERSEY  
 DR. E. STANLEY JONES & DR. SUZUKI (D.D.S.), COURTESY OF GCAH OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, MADISON, NEW JERSEY  
 DR. E. STANLEY JONES (WITH BISHOP C. T. SUNZ), 1900 TO 1930. IMAGE COURTESY OF GCAH OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, MADISON, NEW JERSEY  
 ESU WITH MISSION TRUCK IN CONGO, 1965. B.L. FISHER LIBRARY ARCHIVES. ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
 ESU VISITS NYKAPLEBY AT FINLAND ASHRAM, 1963. SHOWING POSTER OF JESUS AS THE WORD BECAME FLESH. B.L. FISHER LIBRARY ARCHIVES. ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



**CHRIST OF ALL ROADS** Jones speaks and poses with Christian leaders in Finland (*left*), the Philippines (*bottom left*), and Mexico (*below*). He once wrote, “The Son of man is too great to be expressed by any one portion of humanity. Those that differ from us most will probably contribute most to our expression of Christianity.”

**GOD’S KINGDOM** Jones thought seriously about Marxist questions, but rejected the Marxist answers (*bottom*).

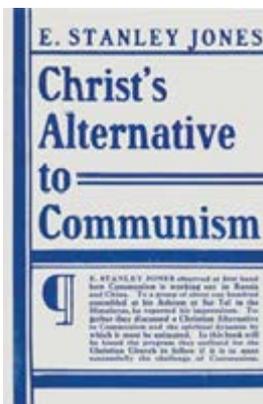
Jones’s aims in his travels were sometimes political as well as spiritual; he negotiated out of his conviction that “the only kind of world worth having is a world patterned after the mind and spirit of Jesus.” Some in Africa called him “the Reconciler,” as he famously attempted to negotiate peace between warring groups in India, Burma, Korea, and the Belgian Congo.

Though he ultimately failed to avert war between the United States and Japan, his efforts were remembered; the first time he arrived in Japan after World War II, banners greeted him reading “Welcome to the Apostle of Peace.” In 1962 he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for his reconciliation work.

### TRUSTING CHANGE TO JESUS

Jones rooted his openness in “an untrammelled Christ.” At home in India and on his travels, he put himself in the challenging position of speaking to the truth he knew in Christ in dialogue with learned Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and skeptics, who in turn spoke to the truth they knew in their religions and their experiences in an atmosphere of civility, mutual respect, and humility.

Jones believed this approach was grounded in Scripture, quoting Paul: “We refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God’s word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of



everyone in the sight of God” (2 Cor. 4:2). He wrote in *The Christ of the Indian Road*, “Jesus appeals to the soul as light appeals to the eye, as truth fits the conscience, as beauty speaks to the aesthetic nature.”

Jones carried this mindset with him as he spoke around the world, desiring the people of each city or town to discover the Christ who walked with them, was recognizable among them, and fully understood their context.

He trusted the power and truth of the gospel of Christ and became vulnerable to others.

The questions he asked still echo today: Do we have answers to life’s questions? Or are we merely living out traditions of our belief systems that now are out of sync with reality? Can we go deeper with one another to unveil the meaning of life? Can we let, as Jones so eloquently stated, “deep . . . speak to deep”? ☐

*Douglas W. Ruffle is director of community engagement and church planting resources at Discipleship Ministries. He is the author of A Missionary Mindset: What Church Leaders Need to Know to Reach Their Community—Lessons from E. Stanley Jones, from which this article is adapted.*

ESJ PREACHING AT FINNISH ASHRAM, B.L. FISHER LIBRARY ARCHIVES, ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
 ESJ AND M. H. DAVID IN LOILO CITY, PHILIPPINES, SEPT. 17, 1937, B. L. FISHER LIBRARY ARCHIVES, ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
 ESJ IN MEXICO, B.L. FISHER LIBRARY ARCHIVES, ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
 E. STANLEY JONES, CHRIST'S ALTERNATIVE TO COMMUNISM, ABINGDON PRESS, 1935

# Disciplined to the Kingdom

## Seeking holiness in community

*In Is the Kingdom of God Realism? (1940), Jones discussed the importance of small groups in discipleship for both individual and social holiness.*

Christianity began as a group movement. Jesus called twelve men around Him. If He taught individuals, He did not teach them an individualistic religion. "There is no such thing as solitary religion in the New Testament," says [James] Moffatt, and he is right. "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The Kingdom was to be given to a little flock and not merely to individuals. The Kingdom would come through group action.

If these Kingdom-of-God groups are to be effective, they must be unreservedly committed to Christ and unbreakably committed to each other. They must enter a conspiracy of love to keep each other up to the highest standard of living. Moreover, these groups must discipline themselves away from the trivial and marginal to the central and fundamental. They must deal with diseases and not with symptoms. They must demand that the church and society deal with the underprivileged, not on the basis of charity, but justice.

We are willing to be charitable, but we are not willing to be just....

A disciplined group would not despise charity, nor would they be blind to the fact that charity may be eyewash and a substitute for justice. A small disciplined group would penetrate through the veneer of things and show how utterly incompatible with the Kingdom of God this present order is; for it is based on selfish competition where the weakest go to the wall, whereas the Kingdom of God is based on mutual aid: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

### FLOCK OF ARCHANGELS

Nor would the remedy be to change a few men within the order and hope that they will make the order other than what it basically is. As someone has said, "A flock of archangels administering this order could not make it other than it is." The order has to be changed from a competitive one to a cooperative one, for the future of the world is in the hands of those who cooperate on the widest scale for the highest ends. It has been said, "The men of science have



**WISE WORDS** "Charity leaves the fundamental relationship unchanged between the giver and the recipient, but justice fundamentally changes this basis," Jones wrote.

been saying all along that the secret of survival is mutual aid and the chief cause of extinction is failure to cooperate."

But in this cooperation, this disciplined group would show a new motive: "Be subject one to another out of reverence for Christ." "Be subject to one another"—that is pure Democracy. "Out of reverence to Christ"—that is pure Autocracy. The two principles of Democracy and Autocracy are put together in a living blend and both are fulfilled.

Moreover, a lasting foundation for cooperation is laid if you are subject to one another out of reverence for Christ, and not merely out of reverence for personality, as many humanists advocate; you will not get tired and lose your faith in man as those humanists often do. You have to believe in, and love something higher than man in order to believe in, and to keep on loving man. A disciplined group would show this and illustrate it in their corporate lives.

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# Working from the victory

COLLEAGUES, FRIENDS, AND INFLUENCES ON THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF JONES

*Jennifer Boardman*

## **NELLIE LOGAN (1870–1950)**

Nellie Logan was a schoolteacher who only traveled outside of her home city of Baltimore, Maryland, on a few short trips. Though she did not travel far, her influence was far-reaching through her spiritual impact on the life and ministry of E. Stanley Jones.

Miss Nellie, as Jones called her, was one of Jones's first teachers, and they shared their lives through letters during her lifetime. When Jones's mother passed away, Logan even became his stand-in mother:

When my mother was dying she called Miss Nellie and said to her: "These years I have prayed for Stanley. Now I am going. I'm turning him over to you, for you will take up my vigil of prayer for him." Miss Nellie said to me years later: "I've been true to the entrustment." . . . She was "true" as a friend, a counselor, a Christian—everything that a noble woman could be.

Though Jones gave much credit to Logan for his faith and ministry, she, too, was grateful for Jones. She wrote,

**SPREADING THE GOSPEL** Sherwood Eddy and Chinese professor Chen Wei Ping look at a YMCA campaign poster (above left); Ralph Diffendorfer (above) dedicated himself to supporting world missions.

The one desire of my life has always been to travel and see the world. . . I have no regrets for I have tried to keep solemn promises made with the full consent of my will. However I have traveled thro' books, lectures, and letters from my friends who were more fortunate than I. . . I am grateful to my Heavenly Father for giving me imagination!

A woman and a man, a teacher and a pupil, a homebody and a famous world influencer, Logan and Jones's spiritual friendship bridged gender, age, vocation, and culture.

## **SHERWOOD EDDY (1871–1963)**

Sherwood Eddy was born in Kansas to a prosperous family, becoming a Christian in 1889. He worked in

**PEACE ON EARTH?** Toyohiko Kagawa (*right and far right*), longtime friend of Jones, was a theologian and peace activist. At this YMCA camp in Wisconsin (*below*) in 1941, the two tried to avert Chinese-Japanese tensions.

both the Student Volunteer Movement and the YMCA to “evangelize the world in this generation.” When his father passed away in 1894, Eddy’s inheritance made him financially independent and allowed him to concern himself only with sharing the gospel throughout the world.

Beginning in 1896 Eddy spent 15 years in India working among the poor and serving as a traveling evangelist. Then he dedicated 15 more years to doing evangelistic work across Asia. Early in his 35 years of volunteering with the YMCA, Eddy realized that his argumentative approach to evangelism failed to win hearts. Understanding that “we were not sent to win debates but to win people,” Eddy took two years to become fluent in Tamil and came to believe that missionaries had to see locals as equals. He also was an early proponent of the idea that locals, and not foreign missionaries, should be leaders in the church.

Eddy and E. Stanley Jones worked closely together in India, and they also traveled and worked together in China in the 1920s. Both believed that divisiveness within the church hurt evangelistic efforts. Eddy wrote, “I can find no difference between liberals and conservatives in the consecration or in the spiritual results of their work.” Both saw agreement in doctrine as important but not essential; for Eddy and Jones, the most critical aspect of their ministry was to live a life connected to Christ and guided by love and Christian ethics.

### **RALPH DIFFENDORFER (1879–1951)**

Ralph Diffendorfer was an Ohio-born executive of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church. As a child he was mesmerized by the life of British missionary David Livingstone, and Livingstone’s story prompted Diffendorfer to dedicate his life’s work to promote worldwide missions.

A bishop in the church said of Diffendorfer, “He’s got more ideas than any other fellow I ever knew, and most of them aren’t of any account. But once in a while he gets a hold of one of them that we accept, and it is worth more than any of the others.”

E. Stanley Jones recalled in his 1961 devotional, *In Christ*, that when he prayed about where he should be a missionary, “The Inner Voice replied, ‘It’s India.’ I arose from my knees and repeated those words to myself, ‘It’s India.’ It was settled.” Then Jones wrote, “If I was called to be a missionary, I was pushed



into being an author—it was a very gentle push, but a push nevertheless. Dr. Diffendorfer, secretary of the mission board, said to me, ‘Why don’t you write down what you have been saying to the American people?’” Jones heeded Diffendorfer’s advice and wrote his first of 30 books, *The Christ of the Indian Road*.

Diffendorfer encouraged Jones to write his seminal book to share his learnings with missionaries and mission organizations: that missionaries must respect local cultures and contextualize Christianity within them instead of mindlessly imposing their own culture upon people groups. Jones believed from that starting point that the Holy Spirit and the gospel of Christ are powerful enough to do the rest.

### **TOYOHICO KAGAWA (1888–1960)**

Born in Kobe, Japan, Toyohiko Kagawa was orphaned as a young boy and sent away to a school run by missionaries. He converted to Christianity and studied at Kobe Theological Seminary and later at Princeton Theological Seminary, where he became friends with E. Stanley Jones.

Less interested in doctrine alone than in how Christianity in action affects doctrine, Kagawa was active in helping the poor, promoting women’s suffrage, and advancing peaceful foreign policy.



#### WHERE HE COULD NOT FOLLOW

Jones worked with Bhimrao Ambedkar (*below*) and Gandhi to fight for Indian independence. Jones hoped to convert Ambedkar to Christianity, but he ended up becoming a Buddhist (*left*); Ambedkar is standing at the microphone.



A well-known theologian and peace advocate, Kagawa traveled around the United States in 1941 speaking and meeting with foreign dignitaries concerning Japan's relationship with China. From July 1 to 5, Kagawa and Jones met at a YMCA camp in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Jones recalled one morning when they "went to the lakeside to wait on God, to see if we could see any light on the tremendous question as to whether China and Japan could be reconciled." Kagawa suggested to Jones that if Japan were granted New Guinea, perhaps Japan would withdraw troops from China.

On September 17, 1941, Jones met with officials in Washington, DC, to propose Kagawa's suggestion of offering New Guinea to Japan. Although the plan was officially proposed to Secretary of State Cordell Hull in November, it went no further. Jones continued to urge peace, but Japanese air strikes reached Hawaii on December 7 (see p. 10).

Following the end of World War II and Japan's surrender, Kagawa helped advise the transitional Japanese government and worked to create democracy in Japan. He wrote more than 150 books and was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1947 and 1948 and for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1954 and 1955.

#### BHIMRAO AMBEDKAR (1891–1956)

Born the fourteenth child of a Dalit (untouchable) family, Bhimrao Ambedkar was the only one of his siblings to pass his examinations to go to high school. After graduating from Bombay University with a degree in economics and political science, Ambedkar received his PhD from Columbia University and further postgraduate degrees from the London School of Economics.

After practicing law in India, Ambedkar created the Independent Labour Party and published

the book *Annihilation of Caste* in 1936. He criticized Hindu orthodox leaders, including Gandhi, for promoting the caste system in India. After India's independence in 1947, Ambedkar wrote India's new constitution and helped reform India's economic system by advocating for industrialization and agricultural growth.

Together Ambedkar and E. Stanley Jones met with Gandhi during his imprisonment in Yerewada Jail during the fight for Indian independence. Ambedkar advocated for the eradication of the caste system, but Gandhi refused to support his position, asserting that caste was only a social distinction (rather than a deeply embedded hierarchical way of life). Knowing that moral, social, and educational equality were necessary for Dalit freedom, Ambedkar wrote, "There can be no uplift of the untouchables without annihilation of caste."

Recognizing how Hinduism's caste system had disillusioned Ambedkar, Jones attempted to convert Ambedkar to Christianity. However, Ambedkar was disappointed by the caste system he saw within the Indian church and the fact that Christianity had failed to help wipe it out.

Ambedkar converted to Buddhism in 1956 after years of study and a lifetime of frustration. Five hundred thousand of his followers also converted to Buddhism in a mass ceremony immediately after Ambedkar's conversion.

#### JAY HOLMES SMITH (DATES UNKNOWN)

E. Stanley Jones believed that one way to advance the gospel in India was to create ashrams that were both

**THE DIVINE YES** Mary Webster (*below*) became one of the United Christian Ashrams' most prominent evangelists: at *right* she arrives in Japan on an evangelistic trip with Jones and Asbury professor Thomas Carruth.

wholly Indian and wholly Christian. There Indian Christians and missionaries could study the gospel, discuss India's national issues, and apply Christ's teachings to life. Jones founded the Lucknow Ashram and appointed J. Holmes Smith to the helm.

While Jones traveled widely throughout India—using the ashram only as a home base—Smith led the ashram down a more political path in support of the Kristagraha movement, the Christian Gandhian nationalist freedom effort. Due to Smith's active support of Indian independence from Britain, the British government expelled Smith from India in 1940.

Once repatriated to the United States, Smith cofounded New York City's Harlem Ashram, which promoted Gandhian nonviolent protests and welcomed visits by pre-civil-rights leaders. The ashram was located in an African American and Puerto Rican neighborhood and became a center of Christian peace activities. Smith and other ashram leaders attempted to confront racism through Gandhi's practice of *ahimsa*, or action without violence.

Although the ashram shuttered its doors in 1948, it helped model nonviolent sit-ins and marches that would become trademarks of the American civil rights era. Smith wrote at least one known hymn, "Come forth, ye men of every race and nation," which urges listeners to join in fighting for the dispossessed and concludes:

Though ruthless power may wield its  
weapons gory  
We hold ourselves for Thee all loyalties above.  
Though storms of hate may rage in empty glory  
In the splendour of the Dawn we see Thy  
cross of love.

Though Jones concentrated less on politics and more on evangelizing in his Indian ministry, he continued to support and advise Smith's efforts at the Harlem Ashram. Both men desired to bring the Kingdom of God to earth as they worked for racial reconciliation, justice, and peace.

**MARY (MACPHERSON) WEBSTER (1917–2004)**

Mary MacPherson was born in Peoria, Illinois. Less than a year after her birth, her mother died in the sinking of an excursion steamboat on the Illinois River; her father worked frequently on the railroad, so she grew up in the home of relatives.

In 1950 she converted under the preaching of Jones, who was evangelizing in the United States and came to speak at her Peoria church; two weeks later her husband, Roy Webster, whom she had married in



1945, also converted. A few months later, she began attending Jones's ashrams.

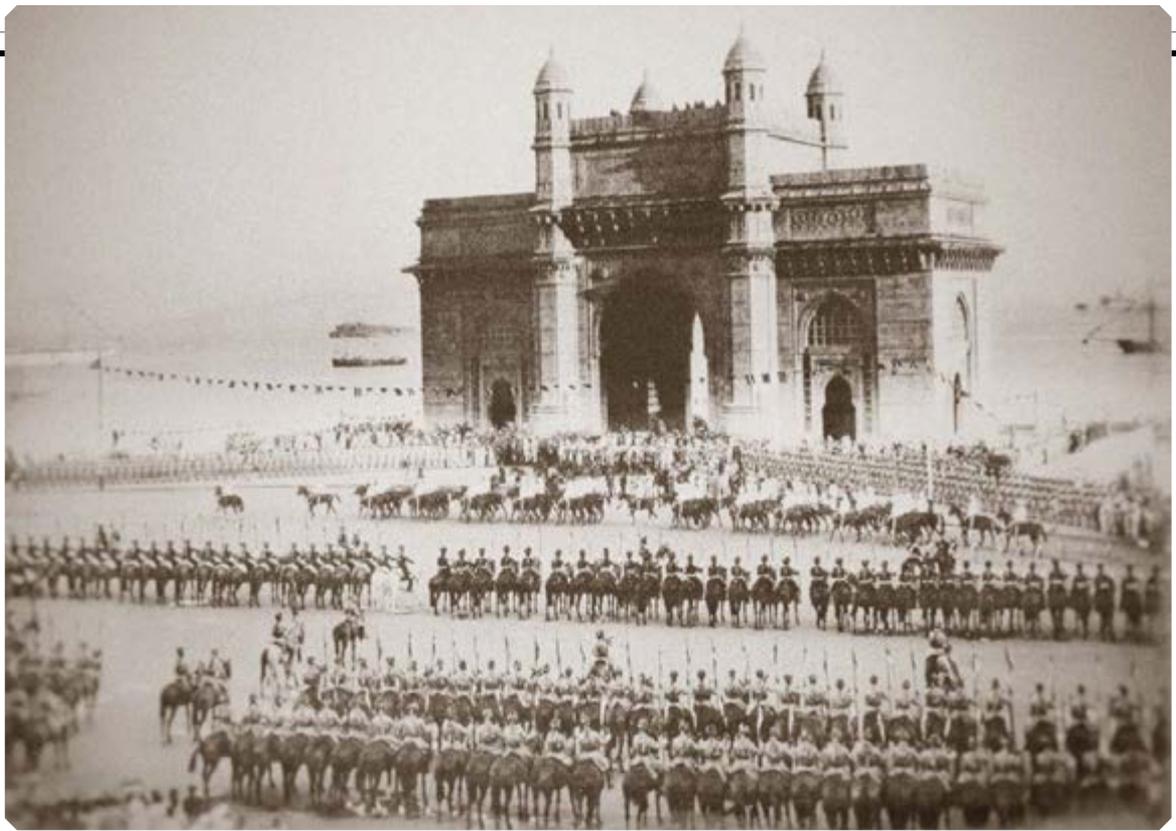
The next year Roy was killed in a car accident, in which Mary, their two sons, and Roy's sister May were badly injured. May continued to live with Mary who cared for her despite May's severe injuries.

Webster began to work with Jones in the ashrams in North America in the 1950s. She traveled as a lay evangelist on her own and with Jones and others; he felt that the future of the church would be powerful in the laity's hands. She also helped transcribe *The Divine Yes*, which was published after his death.

"We do not work to the victory, but from the Victory," Webster once said. In her life she tried to live out that message. ☒

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ESJ, MARY WEBSTER AND TOM CARRUTH—B.L. FISHER LIBRARY ARCHIVES, ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
MARY WEBSTER PORTRAIT—B.L. FISHER LIBRARY ARCHIVES, ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



# My grandfather, evangelist and prophet

E. STANLEY JONES'S GRANDDAUGHTER SHARES HER REFLECTIONS ON HIS LIFE AND LEGACY

*Anne Mathews-Younes*

IT IS EASY TO TAKE THINGS for granted in one's own family. So it was with me and my grandfather, E. Stanley Jones. To me he was just my grandfather who traveled a lot! But now it is fascinating and rewarding to see and understand him as a real person and realize what an exceptional human being he was. Though in his day he was known all over the world, it was India that gave him the ultimate challenge; and India was the anvil on which he tempered and solidified his faith.

As a teenager he ran with a gang. Despite this he was receptive when a visiting evangelist spoke on what Christ meant to him. My grandfather and his friends had planned to disrupt the service, but that disruption did not happen. To the astonishment and annoyance of his friends, he responded to the evangelist's call with a dramatic conversion that changed his life. He had planned to be a lawyer, and, considering his persuasiveness for the cause of Christ, he would have been an

**WESTERN POWER, WESTERN CULTURE** Jones arrived in Bombay (now Mumbai) in British India in 1907, just a few years before this picture was taken.

exceptional one. But once he assumed the responsibilities of faithful discipleship, he never turned back.

## **ONE-WAY PASSAGE**

He went to India in 1907 as a missionary when he was just 23 years old. Mission boards treated new missionaries with astonishing casualness in those days. They gave no orientation—to country, customs, or climate, or even how to get around.

He received a one-way ship passage from New York City to Bombay which took six weeks. He had received the name of his ultimate destination, but getting there was up to him. My grandfather told the story of the 20-hour train ride to his final destination—Lucknow—

**WORKING FOR JUSTICE** Eunice and James Mathews, the author's parents, meet with Martin Luther King Jr. (*right*).

**WALKING IN PRAYER** Jones (with papers) leads ashram participants at Sat Tal (*below*).

in the northern part of the country. He found himself in a compartment with a well-educated, English-speaking Muslim gentleman. Full of enthusiasm he read the Sermon on the Mount, expecting the man to be overwhelmed and immediately converted. Instead the man said, "We have the same thing in our Sacred Book."

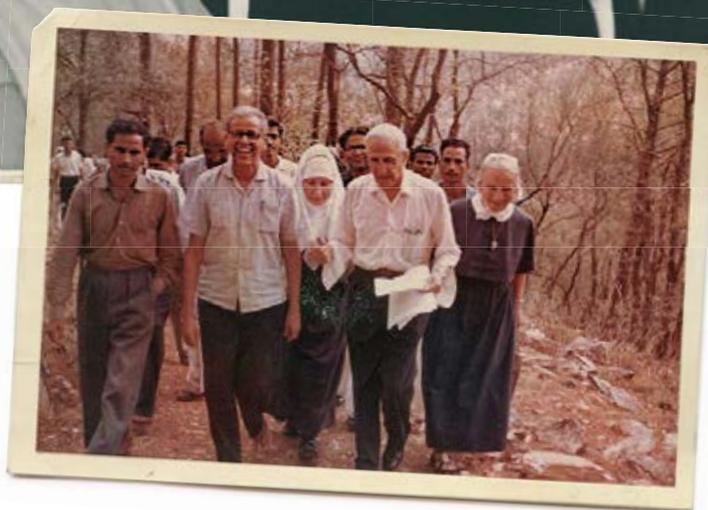
This was the first time my grandfather had come up against the "all religions are the same—only the paths are different" attitude so widely held in the non-Christian world. It shook him. But it also made him face squarely, at a very early point, the question of whether he was going to argue or debate with non-Christians to prove Christianity right, or use some other way. He followed another way. I think that this was a crucial decision that contributed to his great effectiveness.

My grandfather's first church was a British, American, and Anglo-Indian church in Lucknow. He successfully added members to the church, but felt that the great masses of India were beyond his reach. He also felt uneasiness and alarm that new converts were encouraged to reject their identification with Indian culture when accepting their new faith, becoming aliens in their own country. That did not seem right. He became convinced that Christianity could be truly indigenous in India, as well as anywhere else in the world. This conviction was an important contribution to both mission work and evangelism.

After he married my grandmother, they went to Sitapur, a city of about 40,000. There he first came in real contact with educated non-Christians. A casual remark by a Hindu judge made him ponder his whole approach to the non-Christian world (see p. 16). This dramatically changed my grandfather's focus; he had to decide what was really essential and what was nonessential in the system that had been built up around Jesus.

He spoke constantly to ever-growing audiences of educated non-Christians and presented Christ untangled from the trappings of Western civilization: a universal Christ, belonging to all cultures and races and the answer to ALL human need. His audience grew interested in this Christ. For Jones it was not the superiority of Christianity, but the all-sufficiency of Christ that is the foundation of Christian mission.

My grandfather held his lectures (not sermons) in public halls, a neutral ground for non-Christians.

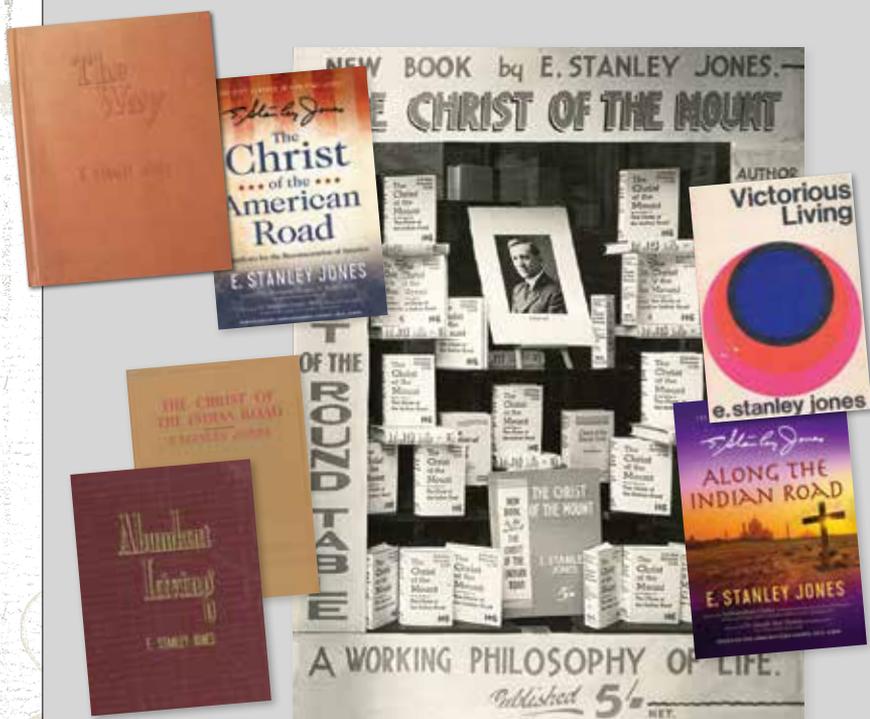


After the lecture the next two hours were reserved for questions from the audience. When I traveled with him and listened to him speak, people were hanging at the windows to hear him. And when he finished speaking, the questions abounded. I was shocked and certain he could not answer these hard questions. I remember slipping lower and lower in my seat, waiting for the humiliation. But to my real surprise (and relief), not only did he answer them, he did so well and never in a provocative, testy, or argumentative manner.

#### **ALWAYS AN EVANGELIST**

My father often said my grandfather was the ablest interpreter of the gospel for the present day of anyone he had ever heard. Perhaps in the early years, Jones would have identified himself as a "soul winner," but over time he broadened his perspective. He became interested in body, mind, and spirit—the whole person. He saw the gospel of Jesus Christ enabling fractured and partial persons to become whole.

# Brother Stanley's legacy: A reflection



**R**einhold Niebuhr, one of the mid-twentieth century's foremost theologians, called Jones "one of the great Christian saints of our time." This high praise speaks to the long shadow cast by "Brother Stanley's" legacy.

Ahead of his time, Jones recognized the need for Christian missionaries to have a teachable sensitivity toward a host country's spirit and cultural identity. While he concentrated on India, a land he loved deeply, he also preached extensively in virtually every country, which gave him a firsthand view of the world that few people on the planet had. At his Round Table Conferences, Jones realized one need not criticize another's faith in speaking on behalf of one's own. Even without relying on slick evangelistic techniques, he brought about significant numbers of conversions to the Christian faith.

Next came the Christian ashram movement, a communal learning experience Jones borrowed from his Indian hosts. At its apex 100 ashrams in over 30 countries existed. Though the movement waned for a time, its current iteration is growing, with renewed ties to the Sat Tal Ashram in India and new efforts in countries like Argentina and elsewhere. These are places of transformative, intergenerational evangelism and discipleship.

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**INSIGHTS ON THE GOSPEL** Many of Jones's books (above) continue to be bestsellers.

The new growth has happened through fresh, energetic leadership and the reintroduction of Jones's books to a new generation. Through the E. Stanley Jones Foundation, Jones's out-of-print books are edifying new audiences. Book sales alone do not measure impact, but the fact that his books keep selling indicates the very hunger Jones sought to satisfy. He had an aphoristic gift, putting insight into condensed statements that endure.

## BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL

The Foundation for Evangelism started in 1949 under the leadership of people with whom Jones had strong influence. It desired to "diffuse the blessing of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ throughout the Methodist Church, the nations, and the world" and has funded E. Stanley Jones professorial chairs in evangelism at 13 different seminaries, three outside the United States. This effort has been going since the 1980s, with two full generations of students now included in Jones's long shadow.

But the reach of Brother Stanley's impact requires going beyond these tangible artifacts. Stephen Graham, one of Jones's biographers, noted that in addition to Jones being ahead of his time in missionary methodology, he also saw the urgent need for racial justice and long advocated for it. A Christian pacifist, in the tense time before the United States entered World War II, he engaged in diplomacy between Japanese and American leaders to try to prevent war. All the while he maintained a preternaturally heavy preaching schedule.

Finally it would be impossible to grasp Brother Stanley's lasting impact without referencing the multiplied thousands of pastoral interactions he had with people across the decades. He engaged constantly in conversation and was known to be a good listener, maintaining a steady flow of correspondence through letters when he could not be present.

No quantitative instrument can measure the impact of these touches, but many know how transformational it is to observe the long life of a faithful, fruitful Christian witness. While we admire Jones's fame, his prodigious publishing record, and the ongoing ministry institutions that carry his fingerprints, we dare not forget his personal, lived-out, close-to-the-ground investment of time, heart, and love—where perhaps his true legacy lies.—*Stephen Rankin is the former chaplain at Southern Methodist University and Director of the Spiritual Maturity Project*

I think his most original book was *The Way*, in which he elaborated on the idea that the Christian Way is written into the texture of life. It is life. He points out the striking words in John 1:3: “And without him was not anything made that was made.” The stamp of Christ exists on everything, and life is made to work through Christ. And in following Jesus Christ, we set ourselves upon that “WAY.”

My mother tells me of when Boston University honored Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. prior to his leaving for Sweden to receive the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize. At the reception my mother was introduced to Dr. King as the daughter of Jones. He immediately became very serious and said to my mother, “Your father was a very important person to me, for it was his book on Mahatma Gandhi that triggered my use of Gandhi’s method of nonviolence as a weapon for our own people’s freedom in the United States.” King continued that though he had been very familiar with the writings on Gandhi and interested in his method of nonviolence for years, it had not “clicked” with him until he read my grandfather’s book that it could be useful in the United States.

### INVESTING IN OTHERS

He was a wonderful grandfather and lots of fun. As I was growing up, he spent every Christmas with us, and his arrival was a time of great anticipation because he played with us. He particularly loved to swim and watch baseball. He was an excellent athlete. I traveled with him as a young adult to Africa and India. Up until the age of 87, he kept up a rigorous and active life. It’s estimated that he preached more than 60,000 sermons—sometimes five to seven per day. I heard him preach that many times in a day. I was tired. He was not.

He always did his daily exercises (even 30 push-ups). But in 1971, after a strenuous two months of speaking 154 times in Japan, he suffered a brain stem stroke. After some months in rehabilitation hospitals, he asked to return to India. The doctors concurred, and we took him back to India to live. By faith and determination, he managed to regain mobility and the ability to preach publicly—some 50 times—despite major speech difficulties.

He wrote to us in 1972 that he felt that the year for him had required the practical application of all they had been preaching—the year of using his infirmities. When life says, “No,” God still says, “Yes,” and such was the affirmation he made in his last book, *The Divine Yes*. He died in India in January 1973. Nearly 50 years after



“LOTS OF FUN” Jones was at ease in settings ranging from worldwide TV interviews (top) to traveling with the author (right).

**PREACH IT** Professors of evangelism at United Methodist seminaries meet to carry on Jones’s legacy (left).

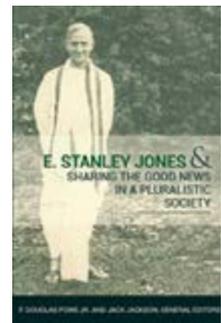
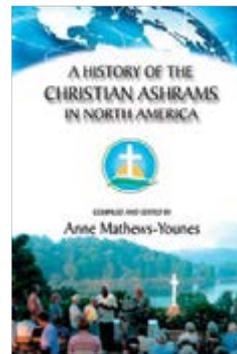
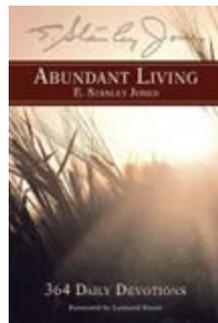
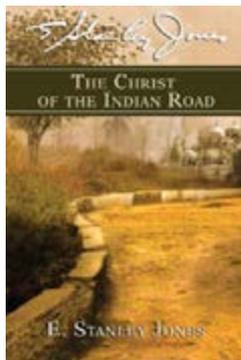
his death, I find that his books and sermons (many written in the 1930s and 1940s) are not out of date and with few exceptions are entirely relevant to today’s world. Just think what he could have done with the Internet!

He foresaw where the great issues would be and spoke to them long before they were recognized—often in the face of great unpopularity and even antagonism and derision. I think that he was something of a prophet, and he laid his honors—and he did receive them—at the feet of Jesus Christ. ☑

*Anne Mathews-Younes is board president of the E. Stanley Jones Foundation, from whose website this is adapted. She is a practicing psychologist, the author of The Life and Ministry of Mary Webster and A History of the Christian Ashrams in North America, and the series editor of 16 reprints of her grandfather’s works.*

# Recommended resources

LEARN MORE ABOUT E. STANLEY JONES AND HIS CONTEXT WITH THESE RESOURCES SELECTED BY THIS ISSUE'S AUTHORS AND OUR EDITORIAL STAFF



## BOOKS

Many of **E. Stanley Jones's own books** are still in print. Among his more famous, most are excerpted in this issue (all dates of original publication): *The Christ of the Indian Road* (1925); *Christ at the Round Table* (1928); *Christ's Alternative to Communism* (1935); *Is the Kingdom of God Realism?* (1940); *Abundant Living* (1942); *Gandhi* (1948); *Song of Ascents* (1968); and *The Divine Yes* (1975).

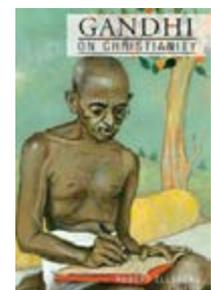
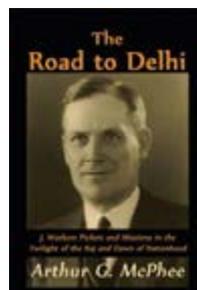
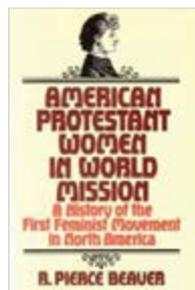
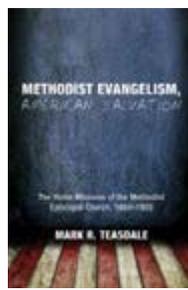
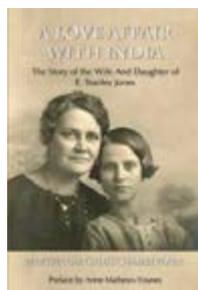
Although many books tell the story of **Methodist missions**, the most relevant here include James Mathews, *Focus on Methodism in Southern Asia* (1950); R. Pierce Beaver, *American Protestant Women in World Mission* (1980); Patricia Hill, *The World Their Household* (1984); Maina Chawla Singh, *Gender, Religion, and the "Heathen Lands"* (2000); Linda Gesling, *Mirror and Beacon* (2005); Ian Tyrrell, *Reforming the World* (2013); Mark Teasdale, *Methodist Evangelism, American Salvation* (2014); and David Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad* (2017).

Autobiographies and biographies of **the Jones family** include Paul Martin, *The Missionary of the Indian*

*Road* (1996); James Mathews, *A Global Odyssey* (2001); Stephen Graham, *Ordinary Man, Extraordinary Mission* (2005); Kathryn Reese Hendershot, *E. Stanley Jones Had a Wife* (2007); Martha Gunsalus Chamberlain, *A Love Affair with India* (2009); and Robert Tuttle, *In Our Time* (2019).

To read more about **Jones's colleagues**, consult Harold Rogers, *Harry Denman* (1977); Earl Hunt and Ezra Jones, eds., *Prophetic Evangelist: The Living Legacy of Harry Denman* (1993); Arthur McPhee, *The Road to Delhi: J. Waskom Pickett and Missions in the Twilight of the Raj and Dawn of Nationhood* (2012); and Anne Mathews-Younes, *The Life and Ministry of Mary Webster* (2017).

Hundreds of books address **Gandhi and Indian independence**, but a particularly relevant one—with a chapter by Jones—is S. Radhakrishnan, ed., *Mahatma Gandhi: 100 Years* (1968); you may also want to look at Robert Ellsberg, ed., *Gandhi on Christianity*



(1991); and James Mathews, *The Matchless Weapon: Satyagraha* (1989).

For the history of the **ashrams**, consult Anne Mathews-Younes, ed., *A History of the Christian Ashrams in North America* (2017) and *A History of the Sat Tal Christian Ashram* (2018); for more on the **Round Tables**, look at Mathew Philip, *The Unique Christ: Dialogue in Missions* (2006).

A number of books on **Jones's theology** exist. Some to begin with include Stephen Graham, *The Totalitarian Kingdom of God: The Political Philosophy of E. Stanley Jones* (1998); Donald Demaray and Reginald Johnson, *Spiritual Formation for Christian Leaders* (2007); Albert Jansen, *Unchanging and Unshakable* (2013); Douglas Ruffle, *A Missionary Mindset* (2016); and F. Douglas Powe Jr. and Jack Jackson, eds., *E. Stanley Jones: Sharing the Good News in a Pluralistic Society* (2018).

### CHRISTIAN HISTORY ISSUES



Read these related issues of *Christian History* on our website. Some are still available for purchase.

- 36: *William Carey and the Great Missions Century*
- 87: *Christianity in India*
- 114: *Francis Asbury and American Methodism*

### VIDEOS FROM VISION VIDEO



Videos on the theme of this issue include: *Amy Carmichael*; *India's Forgotten Children*; *India's Untouchables*; *Saving the World*; *Selected Messages from E. Stanley Jones*; and *Wisdom from India*.

### WEBSITES

Many organizations connected to Jones have presences online, including the United Christian Ashrams, the Sat Tal Ashram in India, the E. Stanley Jones Foundation, the Foundation for Evangelism, and the Nur Manzil hospital.



Boston University's missiology collection has short biographies of Stanley, Mabel, and many of their colleagues, with suggestions for further research. You can watch interviews with Anne Mathews-Younes by Abingdon Press at *Ministry Matters* and the *100Huntley Show* on YouTube.

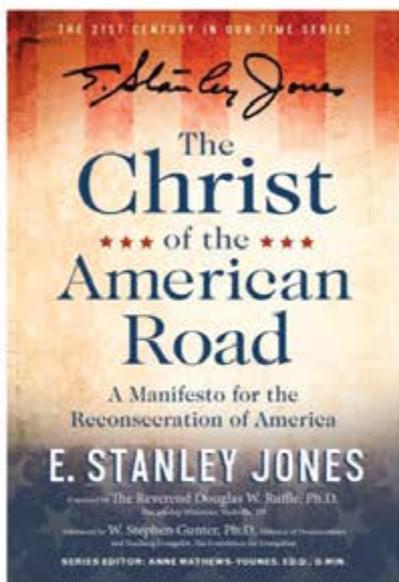


There are many pictures of Jones, his family, and his colleagues (some of which you have already seen in this issue!) at the E. Stanley Jones Foundation website and at the archives of Asbury Theological Seminary. [MKGandhi.org](http://MKGandhi.org), a site on Gandhi, has some resources relating to Jones, including Gandhi's letters to Jones. ☑

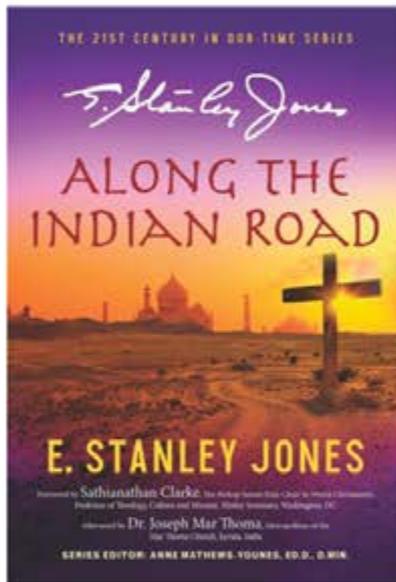




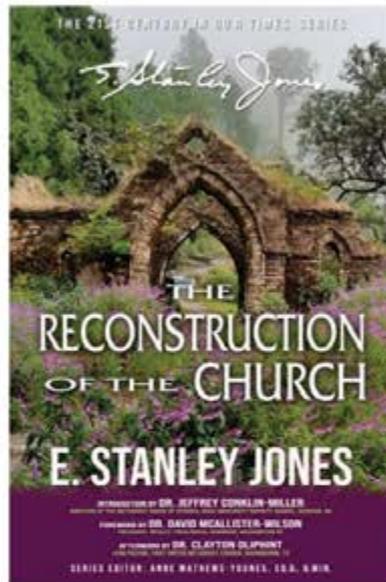
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