

# Unreached Peoples: The Maratha People of India

by Paul Hattaway

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*The sermon highlights the spiritual plight of the Maratha people in India and the urgent need for evangelistic outreach among them.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 52:7, Matthew 28:19-20, John 14:6, Acts 4:12, Romans 10:14

**Topics:** "Missions Outreach", "Spiritual Bondage"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the spiritual landscape of the Maratha people in India, exploring their deep-rooted connection to Hinduism, the cyclical nature of life tied to karma, and the longing for salvation from the repetitive cycle of birth and rebirth. It highlights the daily religious practices, social structures, and the lack of exposure to the message of salvation in Jesus Christ among millions of Maratha individuals trapped in spiritual bondage.

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## Transcript

One of the world's greatest cultural treasures, yet hidden beneath this colorful human tapestry, there is an empty longing of the soul. The echoing of silent screams, hungering for spiritual reality. The Indian subcontinent has been a fertile birthing ground for religious expression.

Hinduism is the religion of choice for 80% of Indians. Among them, there are nearly 40 million Maratha people. From a Western vantage point, Hinduism is more of a complex interweaving of traditions and myths than a formal religious system.

Yet daily life in India is charged with religious meaning, saturating individual, family, social and political life with spiritual overtones. The Maratha people view the life of souls to be cyclical, tied to a large degree to karma, which regulates the functioning of the chain of life. In the most general sense, karma is the balance of the total goodness or badness of the actions of a human soul.

Salvation is perceived to be the escape from the dreary and futile round of birth and rebirth that results from the accumulation of good karma over numerous life cycles. Most Maratha people live in rural villages, but the fast pace of city life is home to over 20 million people in major urban centers like Mumbai, Pune and Nagpur. Most Marathi speakers are Hindu and therefore identified with the social strata of the caste system.

The Maratha have an intense love for the land. Many in the villages are cultivators, tilling the soil and producing crops. In a typical family, women cook over an open fire and wash clothes by hand.

The men help care for livestock in addition to working outside the home. For many Maratha families, these daily activities revolve around the worship of idols in the home. There are millions of Maratha people trapped in a cycle of bondage with no genuine hope of escape.

Village after village is filled with people who have never once heard the life-changing message of salvation in Jesus Christ. In spite of the fact that beachheads for the gospel among the Maratha were planted all the way back to William Carey, there has never been a concerted effort to reach them in all the years of missions.

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