

Valaiady is a small village near Nazareth in Tuticorin District. Valaiady village was full of Hindus and Muslims until 1839. This village was against Christianity and the missionaries. Though very near Nazareth, a Christian hub of that time, they were against Christians. Valaiady village today is a full Christian village and the credit goes to the missionary Rev. Augustus Frederick Caemmerer. Let us see how God used him to change this village upside down (or should we say right side up).

Rev. Augustus Frederick Caemmerer was born on 13th April 1804 in Nazareth. His father, Rev. Dr. A. F. Caemmerer was a part of the Lutheran Mission and then a part of the Danish Mission in Tranquebar. In 1803 Rev. C. W. Gericke passed away and Rev. Dr. A. F. Caemmerer took charge in Nazareth and this was the time when Rev. Augustus Frederick Caemmerer was born. Rev. Augustus Frederick Caemmerer studied at Tanjore, Tranquebar and Chennai. He studied Theology in Bishop College, Kolkata from 1826 to 1832. After his theology he was ordained as catechist in Vepery, Chennai. Since he was born and was brought up in Tamil Nadu he was very fluent in Tamil. He was the translator for Bishop Wilson Daniel and toured all over Tamil Nadu in 1834 and 1835. On 11th November 1835 he was ordained as deacon in Kollam. He then became a Reverend in Vepery. During this time there was a clash between the community groups at Vepery and Rev. Augustus Frederick Caemmerer acted wisely and

sorted out the problems and hence gained the respect of many people.

Rev. J. C. Irion who served at Nazareth Church till 1838 returned to his home country as he became very ill. So Rev. Augustus Frederick Caemmerer was transferred to Nazareth. He travelled by a bullock cart to Nazareth. Madakkan, 26 year old man, from Valaiady was going on a pilgrimage to Kasi. Those days the pilgrimage to Kasi was very difficult to embark that almost none of them have returned. On the way he went to Thiruparankundram, near Madurai, a famous religious site for Hindus. He was staying at a temple there and meditating. Caemmerer was on his way to Nazareth, and while crossing Madurai he also decided to rest at the temple in Thiruparankundram. Caemmerer enquired about everyone staying at the temple that night before going to bed and struck up a conversation with Madakkan. He enquired why Madakkan was going to Kasi. The conversation went on for long and they both shared their experiences. The next day morning Rev. Caemmerer asked him if he was going to Kasi or coming back to Valaiady. Madakkan immediately said that he was going back to Valaiady and was going to learn more about Jesus. Rev. Caemmerer was pleased with this answer and was praying for this man. After a few weeks Madakkan returned home and his parents and family welcomed him gladly. He said that he was going to study about Christianity and without any hesitation he

History

-Carolyn Roopsingh

Augustus Frederick Caemmerer



was given permission. God chose the last son of Sudalaimuthu, a staunch Hindu to be the first Christian in Valaiady. Madakkan went to Nazareth everyday and listened to preaching about Christ and he also studied a lot of books and the biography of Jesus and often prayed. He accepted the Lord by accepting that he came down for his sins and he died and now he is alive. He accepted Christ in 1839. Madakkan became Suvisheshamuthu. The seed that was planted by Rev. Augustus Frederick Caemmerer in the heart of a young man and the prayers of many missionaries has helped the whole village to be transformed. After Nazareth, Rev. Augustus Frederick Caemmerer, served at Tanjore and after his retirement stayed at Tranquebar. He contributed a lot to Tamil literature. He wrote many religious books in Tamil. He died at Tranquebar on 2nd September 1891 and was buried at New Jerusalem church Tranquebar.