

# Stories

from Places Where  
Missionaries Cannot Go

by Benjamin D. Schoun



**ADVENTIST  
WORLD RADIO**

“Like cold water to a weary soul is good news  
from a distant land.” – *Proverbs 25:25 NIV*



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*These are true stories taken from the files of Adventist World Radio. Names of individuals and places may be changed or left out to protect people in potentially dangerous situations.*

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# Miracle of God's Guidance

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Vietnam is a communist country that limits the freedom of Christian believers. Yet it is one of the places that has the greatest number of responses to AWR's broadcasts. This is one of my favorite stories regarding the early work of broadcasting in Vietnam (mid 1990s).

One day not too long after the broadcasts had begun, a letter came to our studio that was written by a lady who indicated that she and a number of others in her area were faithfully listening to the AWR programs. They wanted to find out more information about the Bible's teachings.

A lay pastor by the name of An was sent to the area to see if he could find this person. He was riding a small moped, as many people do in this country. But it was not easy to find a particular house because, in Vietnam, the small towns and rural areas had no street names or house numbers.

An spent many days looking for the woman who wrote the letter. He had to be very careful to avoid

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being arrested. The longer it took, the more discouraged he became. He prayed to the Lord whether he should quit and return home. He felt he was wasting his time and precious funds.

After his prayer that day, he started out once again on his moped to track down another lead. He searched all day and was traveling down a country road when it began to rain. It would soon be dark. Suddenly, his moped stopped running. He checked it carefully. It had fuel, and all the hoses were connected. It should have been able to run.

An saw a house on a small hill nearby and decided to see if he could leave his moped there until he could get help. When he knocked on the door, a lady met him. She was skeptical about letting him in, not knowing who he was. But he explained his problem and asked if he could stay until the rain stopped. Inside the house were seven men. They invited An to stay for a simple dinner, but no one revealed their plans for the evening.

At precisely the time for the AWR broadcast, these men turned on the radio and listened to the program very intently. They even took notes on the material being presented. An was amazed and so happy. As the broadcast ended, he revealed his connection with the radio program. The others in the house did not believe him, and they became

afraid that he was an undercover policeman.

So An reached into his bag and brought out a small book that was printed by the AWR Vietnamese studio and showed it to them. After looking at it carefully, they all broke into broad smiles and were filled with joy! They explained that they had been fasting and praying for several days that the Lord would lead them to learn more about the teaching they heard on the radio program. In fact, they had already begun to worship on the Sabbath and wanted to learn more.

An and these people had a wonderful meeting together. When it came time for him to leave, An tried his moped one more time. It started right up and ran without a problem for the rest of his trip!

These people could not help but believe that God had miraculously made it possible for them to meet, answering the prayers of both parties. Today, in this one area, there are more than 10,000 members listening faithfully to the radio broadcasts.

# In the Face of Death

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Nadif was a Muslim, as was his entire clan. In fact, his whole country was Muslim, and there was no intention that anyone change. Nadif had been taught that other religions like Christianity had no light or truth. But he did want to better himself, so he would listen to the radio.

One day he happened upon a program that was different from the others. It was called “The Voice of Hope” and was broadcast by Adventist World Radio. It was an interesting program about Jesus Christ. The longer Nadif listened, the more it made sense, even answering a number of questions that he had always wondered about. He felt drawn to learn more and more.

Finally, after many months of listening he decided that he *had* to find out more. Because there was no postal system in his country, he could not write for information. He decided to make a trip, covering more than 1,500 kilometers on dusty roads — sometimes walking, sometimes catching

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a rickety bus. He even had to sneak across an international border. Worst of all, when he got to the city, he didn't know where to find what he was looking for.

When Nadif arrived, not knowing what else to do, he hailed a taxi. "Take me to the church," he said to the taxi driver, thinking that as Muslims have their mosque, Christians have their church. They must all be connected. Without comment or question, the taxi driver took Nadif into the heart of the city and then suddenly stopped. "Here is the church," said the driver, pointing to the building beside the road. Nadif got out and paid the driver, then slowly approached the big building. Would these people treat him well? Would they know about the radio program?

As Nadif introduced himself to some of the people, he discovered that the taxi driver had dropped him off at the Seventh-day Adventist Church headquarters for that country, and that an AWR studio was located right on the premises. It wasn't long before he had obtained a Bible in his own language, and every day he studied with some of the people.

After about six weeks of learning all he could, Nadif decided he needed to return home. Back along the 1,500 km he went, across the border

and down the dusty roads, until he arrived home. Every day he got up early and read his Bible; he had so much to learn. He wasn't attending the mosque as often anymore.

One early morning while reading and praying in his home, Nadif suddenly noticed a tall man with a bright countenance standing in front of him. The man was pleasant-looking and was holding out his hands to Nadif. Frightened at first, Nadif asked, "Who are you?" He had never seen this person before. The man replied, "I am Jesus, and I want you to follow me." Then the man disappeared. What an experience! Did Jesus really appear to him as he had to Saul on the road to Damascus?

Some of the men of his village noticed his absence from the mosque, since everything in that society revolves around that center. They came to Nadif and questioned him, "Why aren't you at the mosque? What is wrong? You need to come!" Nadif told them that he was praying at home, but they would not let it drop. These men continued to press him until Nadif admitted that God seemed to be leading him in another way. "What way is that?" they demanded. "I believe God is leading me to follow the Messiah," Nadif said, hesitantly.

The men left, but three days later they returned to Nadif's house, dragged him outside, and began

to beat him. They hit and kicked and used stout sticks to batter Nadif. After knocking out his front teeth and cracking his skull in two places, they stopped, thinking he was dead.

But Nadif did not die. It took him six months before he could sit up. Slowly he regained his strength. Later, he traveled once again to the city, and after studying further, he was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He believes that Jesus has called him personally to follow Him. He stands as one member in a country where church statistics say there are zero members. It is still dangerous for him, but he says, “My body belongs to Jesus; He will do with it what He wills.” Nadif adds, “As a servant is not above his master, I gladly suffer for Him.”

# Radios Given by ... Angels?

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**A**dventist World Radio broadcasts to a number of countries where people do not have freedom to worship according to their consciences. In fact, many times the people in these places suffer great persecution for following the Christian faith.

In one such place — which will remain nameless for the security of the people involved — Christianity had not penetrated at all, and the government wanted to keep it that way. It is an isolated area made up of tribal people who followed animistic and ancestral religions. The strong determination of the government to keep people out of the area is demonstrated by the reports of people shot dead trying to enter without proper permission.

In spite of the roadblocks and the special permits required for anyone to go into this area, AWR received piecemeal information that a large number of people were listening to the AWR radio

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programs. The radio waves had “jumped” over the soldiers, the police, the roadblocks, and all the efforts to keep these people from being “tainted” by influences from the outside world, including Christianity. That is cause for rejoicing in itself. But there is more to the story.

Later, AWR received a reliable report from a man who had been in this territory. He told how he had visited one of the villages where the chief related the following experience.

One day a stranger appeared in their village. He was a tall, well-built man, and had an aura of bright light about him. The stranger asked for the chief of the village. When the chief came forward, the stranger gave him a radio and showed him how to use it. Then the stranger told the chief that there was a very important radio broadcast that he and his people should listen to. It was the Adventist World Radio broadcast, and the stranger showed the chief how to find the right frequency on the radio.

As the people of the village were crowding around to see the radio, they suddenly realized that the stranger was no longer with them. They looked around quickly, and some ran down the path. But as much as they searched, he was nowhere to be seen.

The man who gave AWR the report said that he went to another village, and to his surprise the chief of that village told him the same story, even though the two villages had no contact. A third village reported that same experience. Altogether, six village chiefs recounted the same story, although they knew nothing about similar happenings in any other village.

The man who made these contacts said that he saw the people in these villages gathered around the radio listening to the broadcast. He testified that these people had become devout Christians and were worshipping on Saturday, the Sabbath day.

Our AWR producer for this area said, “I must believe that it is the angels who care for these people. It is unbelievable, but we must believe. I had goose bumps all over my body when I heard this report.”

# Radio Led Me to My Mother's Faith

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**M**y name is Li, and I live in China. When I was in high school, I took a class to learn English. My English teacher told me to get a shortwave radio so that I could listen to the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) and VOA (Voice of America) to improve my English. But I was poor and couldn't afford a radio. Now I'm in college. After I earned some money by doing a part-time job, I finally bought a shortwave radio. Whenever I have free time, I listen to broadcasts.

One evening I discovered your program, "Voice of Hope." I've been with your station now for a month. Your voice is from heaven. Every night when the light is out, I listen to Voice of Hope in bed. The feeling is heavenly!

As far as God is concerned, I can only say that I encountered Him. I don't know Him well yet.

But as a matter of fact, I knew about God from

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my mother. She is a faithful Christian, one of the only few in our whole village. People looked at her with disgust. Even my father tried to force her to give up her faith, but my mother persevered. For fifteen years she stood with God. Under pressure from within and without, she wept many times on her knees. I didn't understand why she was so serious about God until many years later. Now I know. Jesus Christ has become her true love. Mother has lived a painful life along with all kinds of insults. Only God can understand what she has been through. Now when I think of the way she prayed and wept, I can't help shedding my own tears.

My mother tried to teach me about God, but I was quite stubborn. I thought that only communist beliefs were true, and all others were false. I, too, refused to listen to her. She was all alone as a believer among all of us atheists.

“Voice of Hope” has helped me to understand that Christianity is not so bad. I am beginning to believe that there is a God.

On my last vacation, I went home to see my mother. I brought along my radio, and I turned it on for her. The program was telling the story of the birth of Jesus. My mother enjoyed the program very much. When I had to go back to school, I offered

to leave the radio with her. But she refused to take it. She knew that I had worked so hard to buy it. Mother said, “My eyes are still good. I can read the Bible. You need the radio. Just bring it back with you next time!” I felt a lump in my throat at that moment. I thank God for sustaining my mother through all the sufferings in her life.

I’m writing to you for a program schedule. Also, please send me some devotional material. I’m giving you my mother’s address, too. If you don’t mind, please send some books to her. Thank you very much!

# Coming to Christ in a Muslim Country

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## **First e-mail message:**

Thank you so much. I really love AWR and its programs. To introduce myself, my name is Amin. I am a boy of 19 years old and I am from [a Muslim country]. Please, will you help me to learn more about Christianity and Jesus Christ? I'm eager to know about this religion and this radio.

## **Second e-mail message – one month later:**

How delightful it was to receive your first letter. A great joy filled my heart. But I have some questions.

1. How does Christianity view the other religions?
  2. Can a non-Christian become Christian?
  3. If yes, what conditions fulfill this conversion?
  4. How do I know I am “saved”?
  5. What will happen to me if I don't “receive Christ”?
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6. Is it true that all I have to do is “believe”?
7. How do I pray?
8. Can you explain Matthew 10:34-36 and I Corinthians 6:3?

May I have a Bible (both of them: Old and New Testament)? I do hope I am not putting you to too much trouble. Thank you again for your precious letter and helpful programs. Please, pray for me.

### **Third e-mail message – two months later:**

I'm very happy to say that I have received Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior. My life has just begun.

As a teenager, I wanted to be happy. I wanted meaning in life. I was asking myself, “Who am I? Where am I going?” But when I started to know Jesus Christ, my life has changed.

I know Satan hates me now more than ever, but I also know that Jesus is alive to help me live a new life that is pleasing to God. Now I'm a new Christian. Every day I read the Bible (using the Internet). I read some stories and miracles of the Lord. I'm learning more truths. The word of God makes my heart come alive again, and my prayers bring light to me.

The message of Jesus Christ is my only hope. I have sincerely trusted in His word, and I am following Him. Really, He was right when He said, “I’m the light of the world. I’m the way, the truth, and the life.”

I wish I could find someone to share the word of God with, and Jesus’ salvation and prayers, because I don’t want to be alone with the Satan, especially as I have just begun my new life.

### **Next e-mail message – two months later:**

Every day they abuse me and say, “Let the Christians feed you if they can,” and start laughing. My father tore up my Christian books and said, “If only I see one book like those between your hands, I will bury you alive.”

I know that Jesus Christ said, “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven.”

But what should I do if my family kicks me out? Where to go? What to do? Don’t tell me to pray or to read the Bible. I do that every day. I can’t receive any letters now because my father will get them instead of me and burn them.

God bless you.

## **Last e-mail message – a few days later:**

I don't care what's happening to me. I love Jesus Christ. I'm ready to die for Him. When my father tore up my Christian books, I used to read the Bible on my computer, but now I'm not allowed to use it. I'm obliged to borrow some money from my friends to go to the cyber cafe.

Yesterday, two policemen came to our house and asked to meet me. One of them said, "I think you were playing, right? You'd better stop this Christianity game and be a man. But if you don't stop this game, we'll bury you alive. We'll consider you a terrorist. I think you know the result. In this case prison will welcome you forever."

I'm sure I'll be taken to prison soon. Either this week or the next one. I'm just writing to let you know, *not* to ask for help. I know that no one can help me, even Christians, but only the Lord.

I don't know what will happen to me. Maybe this e-mail will be the last one.

*Note: This was the last message we received from Amin. We pray that he is safe and faithful.*

# Determined to Escape

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Aesun was desperate to gain her freedom and escape from North Korea. After her father and older brother died, she put in long hours working in a coal mine. But during the severe famine at that time, Aesun suffered greatly from lack of food.

After much internal debate and planning, Aesun finally decided to try to escape. She attempted a hazardous journey across the Tumen river that is on the border with China. To her great joy, she successfully eluded the searchlights and patrols and made it into China. She was taken in by a group of Korean people who lived on the Chinese side.

Without any identification documents, Aesun was unable to get a job. If the Chinese authorities discovered her, they would send her back to North Korea, so she had a very limited existence.

Aesun happened to catch an AWR broadcast that came from a shortwave transmission directed to North Korea. The only radios and televisions that

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are produced in North Korea are pre-tuned to official stations, and it is illegal to listen to non-official broadcasts. People who use smuggled shortwave radios run the very real risk of being sent to one of the numerous prison camps. Aesun wrote to the AWR studio in South Korea, using a different name, and the staff mailed literature to her in care of the Protestant “protector couple” she was staying with.

But before long, she was discovered by the Chinese security police. She was sent back to North Korea, where she was promptly put into prison. After a time, she was let out, and she went back to live with her mother and sister. Aesun told them about AWR, but they were all afraid to tune in to the broadcasts.

Aesun was frustrated that she had ended up right back where she started. She longed for freedom — freedom to work and get adequate food, freedom to somehow help her family, but most of all freedom to learn more about Jesus and follow Him. So once again she gathered her courage and made her escape across the same river. She located the family that had previously welcomed her and resumed her life of secrecy. But sadly, after a time, the Chinese authorities discovered her again! Back to North Korea she went, this time spending a much longer period in prison under harsh conditions.

Whether out of determination or desperation, upon her release Aesun trekked back to the river and made a miraculous escape for the third time! After further contact with the AWR staff in South Korea, she received a visit from Pastor Lee, the studio director. To her delight, he brought her a computer, which was filled with Spirit of Prophecy books and Bible studies.

Aesun made contact with an Adventist couple in Mongolia, who offered to help her go to that country where she would be safe. (Mongolia does not repatriate North Koreans.) Just before she left for Mongolia, a special, secret baptism was planned for Aesun. She is now joyful in her newfound faith as a Seventh-day Adventist Christian. Today she continues to live in Mongolia, but is working to move to South Korea. Throughout the tumult of the past few years, however, one thing has remained constant for Aesun: AWR's broadcasts bringing her a voice of hope.

*Note: North Korea is considered by mission organizations as currently the most difficult country in the world to penetrate and has the most systematic and severe persecution of Christians. Yet AWR has evidence that it is worth it to continue faithfully broadcasting there. Pray for a breakthrough that will allow the people of this country in greater numbers to rejoice in the hope of the gospel.*

# I Believe We Are a Church

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*Note: Nyela is a young woman who lives in a country where the Adventist Church has no official work. Official church statistics indicate that there are no members in this country. Being a Christian is dangerous. AWR has a broadcast to this country and receives responses from listeners like Nyela. Without realizing what she is doing, notice how Nyela outlines the natural steps of Christian growth: she felt a need in her life for something better, Jesus attracted her, she began to learn Bible truth, her life changed, she wanted to tell others, she faced obstacles and discouragements, and she desired to fellowship with other believers. Although these people have never been in a church, together they believe that they are a church. Here Nyela's story in her own words:*

**B**efore becoming a Christian, life was meaningless. I was tired of religion and all the holy people. I didn't believe that God cared for me. I desperately needed comfort but never found it in our religion. I came across Adventist World

Radio and heard the living words of Jesus Christ. The more I listened, the more I wanted to learn.

With the help of God, truth was slowly revealed to me through the teachings, and I gave my heart to Him. He changed my life and gave me comfort and hope.

I began to tell my friends and some of my family about Christ and Christianity. They told me I was wrong. They laughed at me and punished me with their words. I was initially able to handle these difficulties, but after a while they bothered me very much. Since I didn't have anybody to support me, I decided to keep my faith a secret. All I had in the world was God and Jesus.

In my first year of high school, I got to know two girls who were in the same situation I had been before I became a Christian. They were confused and worried. After one year, when I realized we were sincere friends and I could trust them, I shared my faith in Christ with them. They opened the door of their hearts and invited Jesus in.

Now I have at least two friends who are Christians. They now have the same purpose in life as I have. Together we listen to Adventist World Radio. We have never been in a church, but with this program I believe we are a church for Christ. He is with us, even in our brutal society. Every day we are growing in our faith.

# If you have been inspired by this booklet,

you will want to know more about AWR.

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*Please contact us for the following items:*

- **Transmissions** – AWR’s quarterly print newsletter
  - **Inspirations** – AWR’s monthly e-mail newsletter
  - **Monthly letter** – with reports about AWR’s needs, projects, and results
  - Information about estate gifts
  - **Video DVD** – can be used for Sabbath mission emphasis or worship services
  - **Audio CD** – short stories about AWR listeners
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**Send a gift now** to help cover the cost of air time.

Tune in to **Making Waves**, AWR’s new television series on Hope Channel, and other outlets.

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**Adventist World Radio** is the international radio ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Its mission is to broadcast the Adventist hope in Christ to the hardest-to-reach people groups of the world in their own languages. Programs can be heard through AM, FM, and shortwave radio, Internet broadcasts and podcasts, as well as other audio devices and satellites. AWR prepares and transmits its programming in more than 75 languages. Tens of thousands of listeners respond to the broadcasts, requesting Bible study materials and other literature. Many of these people are baptized and form new church congregations. For many listeners, this is the only means by which they are able to hear the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. AWR places a priority on reaching the areas where other mission methods cannot be used and where missionaries cannot go. Pray for listeners at any time of day or night (broadcasts are heard around the clock), that their hearts will be drawn to Jesus. You may become a partner in this ministry financially and help to keep the broadcasts on the air.



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