



June, 2019

Dear AWR Friend,

"I'll beat you if I want to!" yelled Maria's husband. She stared at him in fear and disbelief. How could she tell anyone about her husband's abuse? After all, he was the local Adventist pastor!

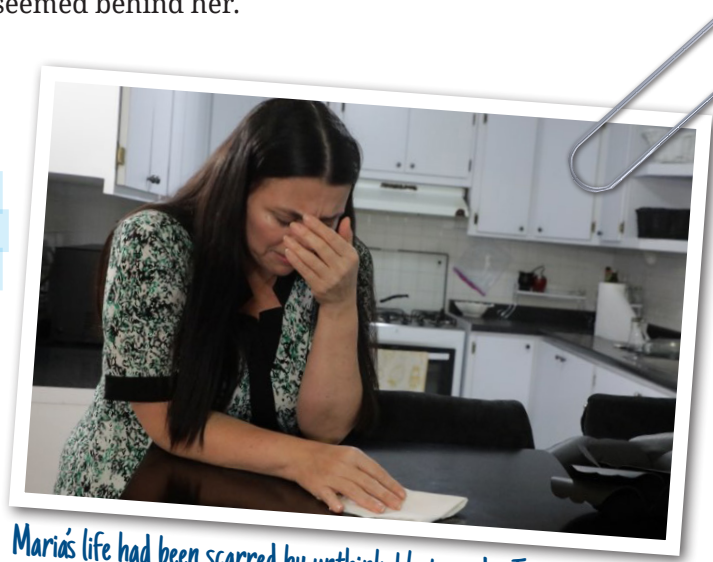
To add insult to injury, Maria discovered that in addition to beating her, he was having an affair. When this became known, he lost his job and abandoned Maria. Her heart became bitter, and once her husband walked out of their home, Maria walked out of the church vowing never to return.

Eventually, she met a wonderful man who truly loved her. Chuck was a well-respected ex-military professional who worked for the local police department in the narcotics division. They married and had two children. Life was good, and her troubles seemed behind her.

Then, the unthinkable happened. Their oldest son had just graduated from first grade, and friends and family were invited to the house after the ceremony to celebrate the happy occasion. As Maria and Chuck returned home, their car was suddenly ambushed. Gunfire erupted, and Chuck threw himself over Maria to protect her. Their car was riddled with more than 40 bullets, and when it was over, Chuck was dead. The attack was in retaliation for a drug bust he had directed.

Maria survived unscathed, and providentially, so did her children who had been riding with relatives in another car. But the loss of her husband left Maria heartbroken and in complete despair. Then her mother died.

This was too much. Her pain was unbearable, and in her anguish, she did the irrational. Out of her mind with grief, and prompted by a friend, she decided to try to contact her dead husband and her mother.



*Maria's life had been scarred by unthinkable tragedy. In utter despair, she chose to do something she would have never imagined.*

In denial of the truths she had once known, Maria lit some candles and tried the incantations she believed would bring back her loved ones. It appeared to her that she had succeeded, but the messages she received through her séances brought little comfort. Soon, depression settled in like a suffocating blanket. Life had little meaning for her other than taking care of her children's basic needs.



*Maria received a cell phone message from her sister, Esther. It contained a link to a message of hope from AWR.*

Months passed, and one day Maria received a cell phone message from her older sister, Esther. It was an AWR360°/TMI sermon, and as Maria listened, she felt strangely comforted. From then on, every week she received a message, and began to look forward to them.

Then, one day Maria received a sermon on the state of the dead. She was away from home running errands, and as she listened to the presentation, a sense of horror overwhelmed her at what she had done. Feeling deeply convicted, she ran home, destroyed her worship candles and fell to her knees, begging God to forgive her for talking to demon spirits. She had once known the truth, but in her grief and bitterness, she hadn't cared. Now she was afraid it might be too late for her.

That Sabbath, Maria gathered up her courage and walked into a Seventh-day Adventist church with her children in tow. After that, they never missed a service and attended faithfully.

Meanwhile, Maria began sending the AWR360° presentations she received to friends and acquaintances. Many of them showed real interest and in turn forwarded the messages to others as well. Her contacts grew and grew as her ministry expanded. She was now an AWR360° ambassador, sharing evangelistic sermons with an ever-growing number of people.

Then one day, Maria had a troubling thought. She tried to brush it off, but it persisted. She felt like God was telling her to forgive the people who had wronged her. There ensued a real struggle in her heart, because there was hatred there for the people who had killed Chuck, and a deep resentment toward her abusive first husband.

Finally, through her tears, she gave her hatred and bitterness to God. Then, she set out to find the people who for so long had consumed so many of her waking hours with thoughts of revenge. She wrote to each one, telling them she forgave them, and asking if they wanted to receive messages of hope. They all agreed—not one of them refused!



*Maria fell to her knees asking God to take away her hatred and bitterness. She asked God forgive those who had wronged her.*



Today, Maria sends AWR's precious truth-filled messages to not only the killers of her second husband, but to her first husband as well. They have all expressed amazement at her forgiving spirit, and are humbled that she is willing to send them these messages of hope.

Recently Maria's ex-husband (the former pastor), called Pastor Samuel—whose voice is on some of AWR's evangelistic sermons—and said, "Pastor, I have no idea what to say about these messages. I just want you to know that my ex-wife's forgiveness and kindness have shocked me. I am now attending church again. Please pray for me."

What a wonderful hope-filled testimony! "The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Maria's story is the "tip of the iceberg," because in just two years, AWR's cell phone evangelism has grown from zero participants to more than 500,000 people! What began in Africa with just one of our lay evangelists reaching out to the Dutch Afrikaans of Namibia (*Transmissions*, Winter 2017), has grown throughout the world with huge ripple effects!

Last year alone, we conducted cell phone evangelism training seminars in Africa, Europe, Latin America and in the USA—and requests keep coming!

The amazing thing is that tens of thousands of people who receive these messages are sending them—with just the click of a button—to their phone contacts, who in turn send them to theirs, so that it has gotten completely out of control—and I mean that in a good way! God's Bible truths are being shared willy-nilly everywhere, unstoppable, and spreading like autumn leaves.

It has gotten so that we receive reports every week of someone walking into an Adventist church and requesting baptism. When asked, "Do you know what it means to be baptized?" They usually respond, "Yes! Someone has been sending me these wonderful messages on my cell phone through WhatsApp."

In Namibia alone, as a result of the ripple effects of just one person—our lone lay evangelist—sharing these messages, more than 3,000 people have requested baptism!

If we have learned anything as we watch this phenomenon mushroom into a gigantic worldwide ongoing evangelistic series, it's that the work is not ours, but God's. He is taking what we do and running with it. We just need to keep doing what we're doing—sharing this wonderful message—and God's Spirit does the rest!



*Around the world, lay members are learning how to use their cell phones as evangelistic tools to reach their friends and neighbors.*



Ellen White wrote many years ago, “In this work all the angels of heaven are ready to cooperate. All the resources of heaven are at the command of those who are seeking to save the lost. Angels will help you to reach the most careless and the most hardened. And when one is brought back to God, all heaven is made glad; seraphs and cherubs touch their golden harps, and sing praises to God and the Lamb for their mercy and loving-kindness to the children of men” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 197).

What a privilege for you and me to work together with the angels in the greatest calling ever—the saving of souls! And we believe this is just the beginning, because one day soon, the earth will be lighted with the knowledge of truth, and every person on the planet will have a chance to make a decision and stand for Jesus.

Thank you for supporting the work of Adventist World Radio. Together we can make a difference in the lives of people like Maria, and even in the most hardened hearts, because nothing is impossible with God.

Yours in the Blessed Hope,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Duane McKey'.

Duane McKey  
President



*P.S. The incredible story of Maria (above) is just a sample of what is happening through AWR’s cell phone evangelism initiative. The audio sermons are being received and forwarded throughout the world to family and friends at lightning speed, so that their reach has become impossible for us to track—but not so for Heaven who keeps record of every sincere heart! Thank you for making such a significant difference in the lives of so many people. Jesus is coming soon, and that’s the best news of all!*