

August 2019



Dear _____,

As I write this letter, I'm in Kolkata, India, where last weekend hundreds of people were baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church—an event that was repeated throughout the country!

Thanks to your support, more than 1,000 projectors were distributed to the churches holding the meetings, and volunteers and pastors alike—including our General Conference president—shared the gospel message from multiple locations.

Despite having to keep the event low-key due to religious unrest, we were amazed at how God worked in the hearts of people wherever His truth was presented.

It was wonderful to see Akhil and his group of young people and watch them at work as they continue to courageously share the gospel message in their communities. Their help was vital in this event—and they used the motorcycles you helped to provide to travel to their different meetings! (See our newsletter from January 2019). “Having the motorbikes has been the greatest blessing to us,” said Akhil. “We can easily move from place to place. We are so grateful!”



Akhil has been tirelessly organizing Adventist youth to share end-time messages in India!

We were surprised to learn that more than 100 people traveled to Kolkata from Pakistan, Bangladesh and North India to attend the meetings. They had heard about the event on the radio and decided to attend. A group from Pakistan said, “We listen to AWR, which broadcasts into Pakistan from East India!”

We heard hundreds of testimonies and witnessed the power of God at work. Two stories stand out that I just have to share with you:

THE BISHOP, THE [REDACTED] PASTORS AND THE SUNDAY CHURCH*

Earlier this year, in preparation for the meetings, we held a training and revival seminar in [REDACTED], India. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] attended the meetings. They had both been [REDACTED], but [REDACTED] had been baptized into the Adventist Church, and her husband had accepted the Sabbath but had not yet made a decision for baptism.

After the meeting, they approached us and requested that we hold a digital evangelism training seminar for the [REDACTED] pastors since [REDACTED] had a close connection with the [REDACTED] bishop.

We agreed, and the meetings were scheduled for this past June with more than 200 [REDACTED] pastors invited. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, the person scheduled to do the training couldn't make it, and at the last minute the backup speaker was late. Who would speak at the meetings?

* Note: For security reasons, certain names and locations have been blocked.



AWR staff enjoy a special program for children and the blind.

God already had a plan! One of our AWR evangelists, Murrell Tull, was holding evangelistic meetings nearby and was asked to fill in. At first, the group wasn't too happy with the last-minute change, but when the [REDACTED] bishop heard Murrell speak for the first time, something resonated in his heart and he couldn't get enough of Murrell's speaking!

After the meeting, the bishop invited Murrell to speak at his church on Sunday, both in the morning and evening services—with 10,000 members attending each service! Murrell spoke on the Bible promise of the Second Coming and the signs of Christ's soon return.

The meetings were a hit, and pretty soon many of the members were attending Murrell's evangelistic series—including several of the [REDACTED] pastors! Their numbers grew each night until 108 pastors were attending and learning Bible truth, including the truth about God's Seventh-day Sabbath. At the close of the meetings, when Murrell asked those who were committed to keeping the true Bible Sabbath and the commandments of God to raise their hands, almost every hand went up!

We are told that at the end of earth's history, "Tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God" (*Testimonies for the Church*, 8:41). And we are just starting to glimpse it!

There is one more story that is so special I have to share it with you.

THE UNUSUAL VISITOR

Tim Saxton, our AWR coordinator for India, had just concluded an evangelism training session for the day, when he saw a man approaching. He looked extremely poor, even by Indian standards, and Tim's first impression was that this man was coming to ask for money.

However, the man surprised him by requesting prayer for his eight-year-old daughter. She had a hole in her heart, and the father was taking her to a hospital in the city. The man's wife stood just behind him holding a baby, and what struck Tim was that she didn't wear any jewelry—an adornment common among Indian women.

After prayer, the man seemed to blend into the crowd, so Tim called out to him through his interpreter, asking if there was anything else he needed. The man said no, except to say that if Tim ever came to his village for a seminar—several hundred miles away—he would have 10 pastors come and listen to his presentation.

Believing him to be an Adventist pastor, Tim explained he would need an invitation from the local conference to visit his district. That's when the interpreter said, "I don't think he's Adventist."

Sure enough, Tim learned that the man was a Pentecostal pastor. **But what was a Pentecostal pastor doing in an AWR training session?** Tim's interest was piqued, and he looked more closely at the little family. He noticed their weariness and felt impressed he should invite them to eat.

But when he did, the man declined the invitation, and when Tim insisted, the man declined again, even as he and his wife were retreating.

In that moment, Tim thought of Abraham's invitation to the three angels before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. In the book *Patriarchs and Prophets*, we read that the three angels initially declined Abraham's invitation to stop and eat. The patriarch had to insist before they accepted. Tim later told me, "I cannot describe the surreal sense that came over me as I, too, insisted this man come and eat with me. And he finally agreed, saying 'I will come and eat with you.'"

Let me share in Tim's own words what happened next:

When I had first arrived in India, the conference had lodged me in a beachfront hotel that was absolutely beautiful with landscaped grounds and a white sandy beach. I decided to treat this family at the restaurant of that hotel. We traveled there in the local church vehicle, and when we arrived and went inside, there was no doubt this family looked out of place. In fact, as we later learned, in all their life of poverty, they could never have hoped to even enter such an establishment.

Since it wasn't quite time to eat yet, I led the family to the back and showed them the beauty of the grounds. I will never forget their faces. The look of care and toil seemed to vanish, and the most beautiful joyous smiles appeared as they realized that as our guests, all this was for them to enjoy. Grabbing their children, they rushed off to enjoy the magnificence of the place.

Returning later, [REDACTED] sat down with me and I shared with him (through the pastor interpreter) the Three Angels' Messages and the Sabbath. As I concluded, the man broke down crying saying, "God has led me here."

After a delicious meal, we sent them on to the hospital. When they arrived, the doctors performed tests on the little girl, only to discover that the hole in her heart was gone. She had been healed!

What a wonderful testimony! But the story doesn't end there, because we had Pastor [REDACTED]'s contact information, and soon we invited him to another AWR training event in another state. He came and learned more fully the Bible truths of this time, including the Sabbath truth.

Pastor [REDACTED]'s background was Hindu, and before accepting Christ, he had worshipped other gods in demon-inspired ceremonies. His family had been well-off, but when he accepted Jesus as his Savior to become a Pentecostal minister, he had been shunned by his family and had left his prior life and any wealth that would have come with it, accepting the life of poverty to walk with Jesus.

Now, as the conviction of truth was presented to him, he responded by saying, "I have given up everything for Jesus. How can I not follow Him in this, the Sabbath truth, as well?"



Pastor [REDACTED] (center) taking his baptismal vows.



Pastor [redacted] and his wife (in white to the right of the photo) along with another baptismal candidate.

Pastor [redacted] returned from the AWR meeting equipped with a projector and our *Revelation of Hope* sermons to teach his people the truths he had learned. Arrangements were soon made for an AWR evangelist to visit him and his three congregations and help him teach his people. Then, we received word that Pastor [redacted] and his wife wanted to be baptized as Seventh-day Adventists. We were overjoyed!

I personally invited Pastor [redacted] and his family to come to Chennai when I was there in June, and had the joy of witnessing their baptism. The words of John 10:16 kept resonating in my mind: “*And I have other sheep which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice.*”

Pastor [redacted] lives in a very difficult part of India where there is intense persecution of Christians. **Already, 50 people from his congregation have accepted the Adventist message. But they face some challenges.** His main congregation does not have a church building in which to worship and he faces losing the house he is living in as well. It will be a great blessing to build a church for this area that could be a beacon of light to all. We also plan to build a small pastoral apartment for Pastor [redacted] and his family.

We now leave India with a sense of joy and gratitude. God is doing amazing things, and it's no longer business as usual. God is calling His people—His “sheep from other folds”—to come into the knowledge of His truth.

Thank you for supporting this work. As we rejoice in the triumph of the gospel, I can't help but feel a deep gratitude to you for making these miracles possible. It is through your support that the gospel is being carried forward in India and around the world. It is only as we work together that miracles happen!

Yours in the Blessed Hope,



Duane McKey
President



P.S. We can only stand back and be amazed at what God is doing in India and around the world. The stories of the bishop, the [redacted] pastors and the Pentecostal preacher are almost beyond belief. Yes, there are many signs of Christ's return, but the greatest of all is the sign of God's Spirit working in people's hearts like never before. Thank you for partnering with us in this adventure of faith!