



September 2021

Dear AWR Friend,

It was a Sabbath in December 1974, and I was in the youth room at a church in Cleveland, North Dakota, when I was asked to share where my wife Kathy and I were headed to next.

We had accepted a call to be missionaries in the Congo—the very heart of Africa—and my wife's sister had many questions, especially about our sanity. We had two small children—Denae, six months, and Bracken, three years old. Why would we do such a thing? Why would we even consider going to the African jungle with no running water and no electricity? Plus there were many tropical diseases such as blackwater fever, malaria and cerebral malaria, yellow fever, bilharzia, filaria and many others. Malaria alone—even today—kills a child every two minutes.

So why put our little family through this unnecessary danger?

The Sabbath School youth leader put me on the spot when he asked, “Why? Why are you going?”

I could see my sister-in-law nodding her head and expectantly awaiting my reply. I silently sent up a prayer, and almost immediately the answer came back: Isaiah 6:8, 9. God asks the question, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And like Isaiah, I had replied, “Here I am, send me!” Then God's command had followed: “Go, and tell this people. Go and tell the people of Africa.”

Just a few days later, on New Year's Eve, we flew for the first time ever on an airplane across the USA and then on to Geneva, Switzerland, then by land to Collonges-sous-Salève where we would study French. A year later had us flying to Lulengele Mission, located in the Kasai region of the Congo.

It was four hours by plane from Lubumbashi where our union office was located, and where we could get medical care. Did we get malaria? Yes, many times! We saw HIV/AIDS begin there. We were working right where the Ebola virus began. Were we in danger? Yes! We went through two war invasions and saw many people killed—both locals and foreigners. But God had said, “Go!”

In a few short years, we saw the small mission in Lulengele—which in 20 years of work had grown to only 300 members—suddenly explode to more than 100,000. That is why God had said, “Go and tell this people.”

Today, we are seeing something similar at Adventist World Radio, but this time it's not just in one area of a country, but all around the world! Our mission at AWR is to fulfill the gospel commission when Jesus said, “Go into all the world and preach, teach and baptize, and lo, I am with you always!”

AWR
50
YEARS
OF MINISTRY



By God's grace, AWR is using all methods to do this—first and foremost through radio in all its forms, and then over all digital platforms. This is working, because God blesses all efforts made to share His precious message. Almost daily I say to Kathy, “Look at this!” as we receive emails, texts and WhatsApp messages and phone calls with reports from all around the world.

In 1974, God told us “Go!” And today He's still saying “Go!”—not just to Africa, but wherever air goes—to every corner of the planet, making His light shine in the darkness.

Let me share with you some of the latest reports of what God is doing.

THE INCREDIBLE IMPACT OF GODPODS

Most of us are familiar with the AWR Godpods. They're solar-powered audio players that have been loaded with the whole Bible, Bible studies, children's stories and health messages. To those of us living in developed countries, these little devices don't hold great appeal. We have so many resources at our disposal that they may seem to be nothing more than rudimentary audio players.

Not so in other parts of the world where they're highly prized! These Godpods have no need for electricity and can be recharged simply by being placed in sunlight. That's amazing in itself, but for people who can't read or write, they're even more valuable. It allows them to listen for hours to the Bible and other presentations being read in their own language!

Recently we received a letter from one of our AWR representatives in a remote part of the world, somewhere near the country of Tibet that will remain unnamed for security reasons. We will call her Lily, and she recounts her experience during a recent “field trip” to visit several mountain villages where small groups of Adventists are meeting. Let me share part of her message:

We stayed in one village during the Sabbath morning services, and then prepared to walk four hours to reach the next village. We arrived at sundown, and we could hear every house turning on the Godpods and listening to the AWR Revelation of Hope presentations in their dialect. It thrilled my heart!

The next day we walked another four hours to the next village where we held a clinic and tended to people's needs. Among the villagers was a man of 86 and a woman of 82. We were told he practiced witchcraft and she dealt with poisons, but they came and requested we pray for them! The villagers asked us to give them Godpods, which they accepted gladly.

We then went to visit the mother of one of the girls who is studying the Bible with us. She had opposed her daughter's baptism, so we went to see her. We told her how her daughter was interested in the Bible and the things of God. The mother almost ran out of tears she cried so hard. She said, “If she wants to choose Christ, who am I to hold her back?” We were amazed at her change in attitude and shocked to hear her say this. But we know it's because when her daughter visited her earlier this month, she gave her mother a Godpod, and the Word of God has melted her heart. She said, “I was wrong to forbid her to take baptism.”



We prayed with her and then walked to the top of the mountain to meet with a woman who lives alone in a cowshed. It was a difficult walk and we struggled to reach her place, tired and bitten by many insects. We greeted her and she gave us her testimony of how she listened to the Godpod. At first she had gathered the villagers and told them to burn the Godpods, but after listening, she said, “Do not burn them until you have listened to them. Only then decide!”

She also said she used to live in fear of spirits, but she is no longer afraid and doesn’t need anyone to stay in the forest with her because God’s words comfort her. We shared with her some thoughts from God’s Word and prayed with her.

The letter continues sharing other experiences, and at the end she closes with these words:

We returned home tired, bitten and scratched by the rough terrain we traveled. At times we were afraid, but I was more afraid of not being able to go and share God’s Word. We covered 150 households in five days. Whole villages speak only the local dialect and all wanted more Godpods. Every house has eight to 10 children, and there is no electricity, running water, proper drinking water, or toilet system. There are many needs. Please keep them in your prayers.

Lily’s letter doesn’t just show the need, but it also shows how receptive and open the people are to receiving the message. They want to learn more about God! They may not know or understand how chaotic this world has become, or see the signs of Jesus’ soon return, but they sense God’s Spirit calling them.

And this is happening all around the world! Let me share the next story. It’s short but very powerful.

MADAGASCAR – THE GODPOD THAT DIDN’T WORK

Recently we received a visit in our AWR studios in Antananarivo, Madagascar. A man had traveled 100 miles to get there. He explained that first he rode a bicycle as far as possible. Then he went by foot over rough terrain—a walk of more than 30 miles to the bus stop! That took him 15 hours. Finally, he took the bus to the capital city and searched for our studios.

He’d traveled a long way from the outback just to arrive at our studios! Why had he made the long journey? When he was asked, he told Elian, our AWR studio director, that his Godpod had broken and he needed a new one! He had been listening to it every day and didn’t want to be another day without it. That’s the value of the humble Godpod!

AN ONGOING PROJECT

We have many amazing date-driven projects at AWR, but the Godpod projects are always ongoing—because the demand drives them. Right now, we have just shipped 21,000 Godpods to Israel. They will be loaded with the Bible, Bible studies and health messages in Farsi to be distributed throughout Iraq and Iran.

So many people are eagerly waiting for them—and some don’t even know it yet! God is opening doors, helping us find the right people to help us in these adventures of faith!

Yes, we are told that as we near Christ’s return, “There will be strange things happening to the sun, the moon, and the stars. On earth whole countries will be in despair, afraid of the roar of the sea



This man traveled 100 miles by bicycle, foot and bus to replace his damaged Godpod!



Part of the AWR team loading Godpods in an undisclosed location.

and the raging tides. People will faint from fear as they wait for what is coming over the whole earth, for the powers in space will be driven from their courses.” (Luke 21:25-27 GNB)

But amid the roar of impending disaster, we can still hear God calling, asking, “Who shall we send, and who will go for us?” And at AWR we want to say, “Here we are, send us!”

We may regret many things in this life, but we will never regret answering God’s call, because soon, “The Son of Man will appear, coming in a cloud with great power and glory. When these things begin to happen, stand up and raise your heads, because your salvation is near.” (Luke 21:28 GNB)

What a glorious day that will be! Thank you for your support of Adventist World Radio. It is changing lives. You may think the little you can do is not much, but make no mistake, it is hugely valuable to the families living near Tibet, or to the man in Madagascar—and much more valuable to God, because when we help “the least of these” we are making a difference for eternity.

Yours in the Blessed Hope,



Duane McKey
President



P.S. Yes, Jesus is coming soon—and He’s calling you and me to share this wonderful message! Like the woman in the cowshed, millions live in fear as they wait for what is coming on the earth, not knowing that God loves them and has a rescue plan. Thank you for making a difference, and for your giving that allows us to continue sharing the Good News with every nation, kindred, tongue and people!