The Bold New Move

February 28, 2011

In February 1971, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists made a fateful decision: they would commence “A Bold New Move to Finish the Work,” as the Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald would later call it. By October 1 that year, AWR aired its first “Voice of Hope” broadcast on Trans-Europe Radio.

There was no Internet. There were no cell phones or iPods. Satellite television delivered content between continents and to broadcast networks’ headquarters, not directly into people’s homes. And many parts of the world did not have access to television, or even Christian radio. (In many parts of Europe back then, whatever religious broadcasting that was allowed was usually controlled by the state government, and often was restricted to majority faiths, or even just the state-sanctioned church.)

Yet there was one thing around 40 years ago that remains today: people are hungry for the truth. They wanted – and still want – a better life for themselves, their families, and especially their children. They wanted, and still want, HOPE. And people have always sought answers, real answers, for the ultimate questions of life: Why am I here? Where am I going? What happens after death?

Today, we reach the world in close to 100 languages every day, with an emphasis on the “10/40 Window,” that portion of our world where only 2% of the population are Christians, were missionaries aren’t always able to go, and where it can even be illegal to share the Christian message. We’ve expanded from shortwave to include AM, FM, pre-recorded solar-powered audio devices (MegaVoice Ambassadors), and the web, including podcasts.
Incoming messages tell the story

Just this past November, I was in Nepal, where our Nepali producers held an AWR listener reunion. More than 40 people – mostly Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and other Christians – came to worship together as a result of AWR’s broadcasts. During that retreat, five new believers were baptized. Six young people were also baptized. They also are AWR listeners and even help produce programs for young people. They are orphans in a home run by one of our AWR producers, Rama Basnet. As I reflect on that occasion, I am thrilled and amazed to see how God has led AWR from its early days until now.

Just a few years ago, this meeting would not have been so possible. Our broadcasts went off the air because of political struggles that country had, and our producers went into hiding.

It’s exciting to realize that AWR has been trumpeting the gospel to the uttermost parts of the world for 40 years, but it is also sobering to realize that we are still here and not in heaven! As never before, we must seek the Lord for the outpouring of his Holy Spirit; we must pray for the millions of listeners across the planet to give their hearts to God; and we must sacrifice our time, our energy, and our funds to – as Elder Ted Wilson says – “reach the world with the message of lifting up Christ, His righteousness, and His three angels’ messages.” The many broadcast languages, the studios around the world, the podcasts, and the 24/7 broadcasts have happened because of your prayers and your financial partnership. Thank you so very much!

Yours in Christ’s service,

Dowell Chow
AWR President

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