

Snippets From KeyCom
July 2024
He Works In Ways We Could Not Imagine

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Since we were the first to record and broadcast Gospel programs in the Urdu language from Pakistan, Far East Broadcasting Associates (FEBA) asked me to write an article for their 50th anniversary. The Director liked what I sent him but pointed out that I'd neglected to say anything about our follow-up with those who contact us because of the broadcasts. His comment reminded me of an incident which taught me that it is not us, but God, who changes the hearts of people.

Not long after we began broadcasting in 1971 we started receiving letters from listeners. I have whole file cabinets full of correspondence with the thousands who have contacted us over the years. In the beginning, my father's concept was that we would develop a relationship with each listener. If, after several rounds of correspondence a person showed interest in spiritual things, we would send him a New Testament.

Since at the time my role was in production, not follow-up, I didn't give this policy much thought. However, I couldn't help notice that we weren't sending out many New Testaments. To satisfy my own curiosity about what was going on, I did an analysis of listener response and was shocked to find that most people contacted us only once or twice. We simply didn't have the opportunity to develop the kind of relationship my father envisioned.

Then it dawned on me. The very fact that someone contacted us at all was an indication of their interest in spiritual things – particularly since contacting a Christian organization can be quite risky. Once we realized that, we changed our whole approach. We figured that if we only had one or two opportunities to interact with someone, we ought to send him the most valuable thing we could. We started sending a New Testament to everyone the first time they wrote us.

Well, several years ago a man wrote to us in response to one of our programs. We answered and told him we were sending him a New Testament under separate cover. About a month later we received an extremely hot letter back. In sulfurous language the man accused us of breaking our promise. We'd failed to send him a New Testament.

Now, I have to admit that occasionally something does fall through the cracks. However, in this case, we really had mailed the book as promised. Apparently, the package had gone astray somewhere. We apologized and sent the man another copy. That was the end of that. We never heard back from him and forgot about the incident.

A year later we received a letter out of the blue from someone we'd never heard of before. "Do you remember the New Testament you sent to so-and-so? I hate to confess this, but I'm the mail carrier. When I saw what you sent him, I stole the package. I've been reading the book ever since and God has convicted me that I did wrong. Though I'm embarrassed to do it, I'm going to

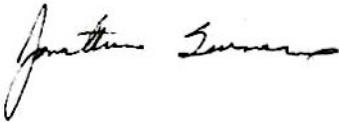
deliver the book to the person you sent it to. Could you send me a copy of the New Testament for myself?"

I used to become upset when the books we send to people go astray. I don't anymore. I figure that God sends them to the people who need them most. It is He who convicts people of their sin and their need of Christ, not me!

There is an important corollary to this: God is working to bring people to Himself even though we can't see what He's doing. It reminds me of the parable Jesus told, "...This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come." (Mark 4:26-29 NIV)

Sometimes it is frustrating when we sow the seed of the Gospel and there doesn't seem to be any visible result. But as long as we fulfill our responsibility to sow the seed, God will ensure that there is a harvest at the appropriate time. Thank you for making it possible for us to sow the seed in the Urdu language!

In the Name of He who changes hearts,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jonathan Turner". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Jonathan Turner