



Dear Connie,

God is graciously continuing to use Worldlink and our indigenous missionary partners to bring his saving grace to some of the world's least-reached people. Thank you for your part in making that happen.

I want to briefly:

1. **Encourage you** by introducing you to a young Bangladeshi missionary whom I spent time with two weeks ago.
2. **Update you** on where we are now in God's plan for greater impact.
3. **Inspire you** (hopefully) with what we are working toward over the next few years.

ENCOURAGEMENT:

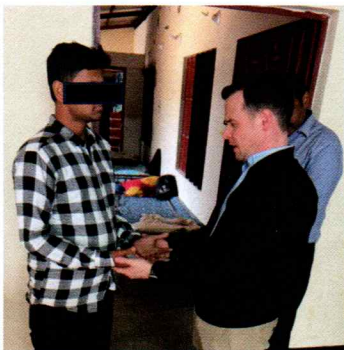
Coca-Cola: Khan's Story

As he shared, it was clear that his hand, though normal-looking, was not normal-functioning. It is part of why he is who he is, and why he does what he does.

We met in a small, walled-in compound in a forest and farm-filled section of southern Bangladesh. We had purchased the property a few years ago to house young men who had left their homes due to persecution, launch a Bible Institute, and ultimately add a Missionary Training Center. Construction continues. Suman, the area leader who oversees this property and regional ministry, had set up a day for Nate, our Director of International Ministries, and me to meet the 37 boys who lived there, along with all Worldlink Bangladeshi indigenous missionaries and some prospective partners.



Nate and Suman overlooking the Missionary Training Center Construction



Nate Prays for Kahn

As Kahn shared his report of his life and ministry, his enthusiasm was more obvious than his hand.

He had been born and raised as a Muslim, as have over 9 out of every 10 people in his country. With his schooling completed, he moved to the industrial area and worked in one of his country's over 5000 garment factories. This is the life of millions of workers as they turn out 85% of Bangladesh's total exports and propel them to rank as the second largest apparel exporter in the world.

This life of always working hard because of quotas and yet always feeling that you are in the same place that you were the day before can be exhausting and discouraging. It led many to behaviors that

displayed a deep-seated ambivalence toward themselves, animosity towards others, and animal-like behavior. Day after long day, Khan toiled, and night after long night, he questioned the purpose of his life and the practices of his friends.

But there was one small group of people who acted like no others. These Christians, he said, were polite even when hated and pure when all around them dirtied themselves. He had not known any Christians before; not many Bangladeshis do, as there are 0.37% "Christian adherents" and far fewer evangelical Christians in the country according to Joshua Project. Seeing these peculiar people was new, interesting, and attractive. He wanted to know more. Being a friendly young man who easily interacts with others, Khan asked the Christians why they acted differently.

It was then that he found that the reason they seemed different was that they *were* different. He heard about Jesus, whose life proved that he was so much more than just a prophet as Khan's upbringing had told him, and his death which meant so much more than Khan could have imagined. He heard of a God who was loving and merciful. He learned that God's grace was shown in Jesus's death, not for his sins, but for Khan's sins and the sins of the world. He heard of an offer that seemed too good to be true.

His whole life, and those all around him, was filled with rules and rituals that grew out of fear and uncertainty. In his upbringing, he was told that you could never know if God would accept you. You had to live up to Allah's standard, but the standard was both unknowable and unattainable.

And then he heard of atoning grace. That Jesus paid the price for his sins. Jesus lived up to the unattainable standards and offered to exchange his righteousness for Khan's sinfulness... because of love.

It was earth-shattering! Overwhelming! He had to know more, and he continued to learn. One day he found himself believing that he was loved by God, and he accepted Jesus's offer of salvation through faith. He was born again, a new young man.

Out of his joy and because of his relationship-based culture, he felt the need to go home and honor his family by telling them he wanted to follow Jesus. He did not say what he expected, but it could not have been what he received.

He was beaten by enraged family men and his fingers were broken. He was thrown from his home with instructions that worse would happen the next time they saw him.

His hand may have been broken, but his spirit was not. The love of God and God's people surrounded him. Over time, he learned enough of Jesus to begin evangelizing children. Then, after discipleship and ministry training, he learned to preach the Good News wisely yet boldly. Khan said to us, "God is spreading the gospel all over the place," and, almost amazed, he added, "With me!"

Khan is a young man with a robust awareness of his country and culture and an even more robust vision of what he is asking God to do.

"Wherever Coca-Cola has reached, I want the gospel to reach," he enthusiastically revealed.

Khan started his ministry recently by targeting 5 villages. So far, he has handed out over 4000 pieces of Christian literature about Jesus, sharing his testimony and Jesus's offer of eternal life with those who will listen. And 30 people have responded. He said he wanted God to use him so that 100,000 of

his unreached countrymen would understand the Good News and come to faith in the One who saved him.

It is our privilege to partner with young men and women like Khan who have equal passions because they know the darkness their neighbors are in through, and they have seen God bring them from that same darkness to light; they want to bring the light into the darkness, so that others may come as well.

As I sat listening and writing Khan's story into the little black book that I carry with me on international trips, God reminded me again of the privilege you and I have to empower missionaries like him who **do what we cannot do in places where we cannot go.**



Worldlink's Bangladeshi Missionaries

Thanks again, for your part in enabling them to reach the unreached!

UPDATE

On 12/31/2023, we completed a multi-year \$5M Growth Step to help us reach more unreached people by bringing our indigenous missionary team to 1500. By the end of May, we will have 1525 missionary partners in 51 countries. Each has been vetted and recommended by our Area and Regional Leaders and Director of International Ministries as having high character, competence, and calling, and each is ready to hit the ground running like Khan to reach their country.

God continues to accelerate our growth and impact. In 2018, we had 402 missionary partners and soon we will have over 1500. That means that God has brought a 284% growth in the last six years.

Praise God! He is reaching more and more people.

In the last 12 months, **1,351,990 people have heard the Good News of Jesus** from our indigenous, missionary partners, many for the first time, and **99,670 responded with saving faith** and began a life of following Jesus.

THE FUTURE

Seeing the way that God is working and seeing the immense need of the world's unreached people, we have set our sights on the next great ministry step for Worldlink. We are working to double our indigenous missionary workforce to 3000 in the next four years.

We believe we have the structures, systems, and growing staff to scale to that level. What we will need is for the Lord to provide the right missionaries and the \$8.4 million needed over that time. Pray with us, for his gracious, growing provision, and that he would find us faithful and make us fruitful.

I just returned from India and Bangladesh. But in the last 30 years, I have never been more excited at what I see God doing on the ground because of what you and other faithful friends have done to partner with indigenous missionaries.

I thank God for you, for our missionary partners, for our team, and most of all for God's using us all together to reach people who desperately need the gospel.

For the Unreached,


Jack Nelson
President

PS: I hope you have had the chance to read the copy of my new book *REASONS: Recapturing the WHY of Reaching the Unreached*. If so, I'd love to hear your thoughts, and I'd love to hear your suggestions on how you might use the book to challenge others to join us and empower indigenous missionaries to reach more people.

PPS: If you do not have a copy of *REASONS*, scan this QR code and download or order a free copy.



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