

living letters

stories from the Great Commission



second chance

On the day she almost died, Betty* began to live.

The young Indonesian Muslim woman was swimming in the river when three friends on shore fell in. They couldn't swim. Betty lunged toward them, but they dragged her under.

As her lungs began to fill with water, Betty remembered everything she had learned from Christian friends about Jesus Christ.

"At that moment I trusted Christ with my heart," she recalls. "I said, 'Lord, if I die, I will be with You in heaven. But if You want me to live, I will serve You for the rest of my life.'"

Somehow she fought her way to the surface. The others drowned. Betty was later baptized. She also realized her spiritual calling: evangelist.

"I thought about my two friends who drowned," she says. "I got a real burden for people who don't know Christ. I began to reach out" — primarily to Muslims and ethnic Chinese.

She's not timid, either. Her evangelistic travels around Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, with her cell group call for courage.

"They're not afraid to go anywhere," says Rick Arroyo,* a Southern Baptist missionary.

For a young Muslim woman who found life on the verge of death, the Gospel is worth any risk.

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** Names changed*

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win Jakarta, one neighborhood at a time

That's the dream of missionaries working in Indonesia's urban giant.



Venture into Jakarta's Grapes* neighborhood after dark and you might not live to see daylight. Prostitutes perch on barstools. Liquor flows and drugs change hands. Sometimes, knives flash.

But in the mornings, 30 or so children laugh, sing with their volunteer teachers and work on learning activities in a formerly abandoned building. Then they give thanks to God and dig into their plates of fruit.

All the children are Muslim. Most are poor. Odds are none of them would attend school if this one didn't exist. Their parents are excited about it.

"We started the school," says Lucinda Arroyo,* a Southern Baptist worker in Indonesia's capital. "But they're the ones who fixed up the building, plugged the leaks and built the tables."

Grapes has become a laboratory for community ministry in Jakarta.

"Community centers get us into neighborhoods," explains Rick,* Lucinda's husband. "They are bridges. People ask, 'Who are you? Why are you here?' This gives you the right to share the Gospel."

They dream of starting up to 24,000 cell churches in neighborhoods like Grapes. If hope can bloom amid the hopelessness of Grapes, the Arroyos think it can bloom anywhere — and everywhere — in Jakarta.

* Names changed

Muslims finding freedom in Canada

Nadeem Qazi's conversion to Christianity set his life on a path of sharing his faith no matter the cost. A former Muslim, Nadeem and his wife, Jamila, escaped Pakistan and religious persecution. They came to Toronto, Canada, as refugees, but God had a plan for them. Surprised by so many others in Toronto from Pakistan and Southeast Asia, they began traveling the city by bus looking for people who spoke one of the nine languages they speak. Free from persecution, the Qazis are telling Muslims about real freedom in Christ. Watch a video about their ministry at onmission.com/qazi.

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