

From Drug Dealer to Church Planter

Dear xxxxx,

Iran Alive is not a Television ministry; it is a Church planting ministry. We use media such as satellite TV and the Internet not just for evangelism but also to start and grow underground churches. Our desire and passion is not to transform lives only, but also to see every transformed person become an agent of transformation for his/her friends and family members. The following story is just a snapshot of what is happening through Iran Alive daily. Here is Jamal's story:



"You're under arrest!" I heard the cop behind me say while putting my hands in cuffs. I smirked. I was like, "so what?" It was the fourth time I had been arrested for selling drugs. I had endured jail sentences and even several rounds of lashes. But none of that had the power to change me. This time was no different. I was prepared to endure lashes and several months of jail. But then I'd just keep on doing what I did before.

Six months later, I was released—unchanged. On my way home, I was thinking about how I could start up my drug selling business again. I would need some seed money to buy the first batch of drugs. But how? That's when I remembered that one of my customers had never paid me back and still owed me money. So I went straight to his home.

"Where's my money?" I yelled as I forced my way into his apartment.

The thin frail guy was terrified, "I d-d-don't have it," he stuttered.

I grabbed him by the shirt and slammed him into the wall. "What do you mean you don't have it?" I said as I slapped him hard across the face.

"Please, don't hurt me; just take whatever you like in my house!" He was begging me with tears streaming down his face. I looked around and found nothing of value. That is until my eyes landed on a satellite dish and a receiver. "I'll take those." I said, cursing him under my breath. Oddly, he looked relieved.

Once I arrived home, I installed the satellite dish, and started flipping channels. When I reached Network 7 (Iran Alive's Satellite Channel), I doubled over in laughter seeing two guys in suits talking about God. "How ridiculous", I cried out loud.

At first I thought, "What do they know about God? What do they know about real life?" Yet something strong was pulling me in. Day after day I would sit there and listen to what you had to say, and each time I found it less funny. It seemed like you were talking directly to me about everything in my life.

Soon I found myself believing in the message that I used to make fun of. I fell in love with Jesus. Over time, I saw my life transform supernaturally before my own eyes.

Mysteriously, I had no desire for drugs anymore and was freed from my addiction. I also stopped dealing drugs. What jail sentences and lashes could not do to change me, Jesus did with His gentleness and unconditional love.

Right away, I started sharing the Gospel with other drug addicts—mostly my friends and ex-costumers. I shared how Jesus had changed my life and urged them watch your channel too. Eventually, some of them came to know Jesus, and they also experienced freedom from drugs like I had.

That was seven months ago. Today, with your help, I am leading three underground house church groups—all for recovering drug addicts.

My dear friend, Jamal is not alone. Over the last 13 years, we have seen tens of thousands of lives transformed by Jesus. Today, **we have over 400 underground house churches in over 90 cities inside the “closed” country of Iran.** Transforming Iran into a Christian Nation is not just an empty motto for us. We have a God-given strategy, and it is working. By His Grace, we have a proven track record to show that we can use media (TV, Mobile Technology, and the Internet) not just for evangelism, but for planting healthy, growing, and multiplying underground house churches.

Having 400 underground house churches in 90 cities, for us, is just a beginning—a practice, a proof of concept. With your help, we are now ready to do this on a large scale. In the next 5 years, our goal is to grow the number of our underground churches to over 10,000. We want our church planting effort to go viral, even out of control!

Matching Gift Challenge:

Some good friends of our ministry have challenged the rest of us with an \$80,000 matching gift. Will you prayerfully consider a special generous gift this month? What you give will have a double impact. We are praying for you as you make this important decision.

Please help us implement this proven strategy to transform Iran. It is already working—but we want to do it on a large scale. The Lord has promised to transform Iran in Jeremiah 49:38—and therefore, it will happen. Let’s work together to see that happen in our lifetime.



Your Partner In Making History in Iran,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hormoz Shariat".

Hormoz Shariat, Ph.D.
President & Founder, Iran Alive

P.S. Did you know that you can set up electronic monthly giving by clicking “Donate” on our website – www.IranAliveMinistries.org? You can also give through our free “Iran Alive” app, which you can download from any mobile store.