



The nearby city has more than one million people but less than 30 believers.

# isolated believers

Paul and Meryl, Partners in West Asia, write:

Ahmed lives in a small village in the south of the country. He and his family became believers a few years ago. Since then they have been slowly growing in their faith. Ahmed is an alcoholic. He owns one of two village coffee-houses, but since his conversion his establishment is noticeably less busy.

I visited Ahmed with one of our Partners, 'Liz', who has been friends with them for a long time. We sat outside in a large garden, in the shade of many kinds of fruit tree. Ahmed's wife cooked the chicken Liz had brought over an open fire.

Ahmed smiled but his eyes were sad. His daughter had yet again been thrown out of her house after being beaten by her husband. She was taking refuge with them and was working out in the fields. Her two children were being held by her husband. Both husband and wife have been baptised.

## The needy Church

We talked about life in the village. They are not the most popular family. There is a lot of gossip about them, about the only other believing family

in the village and about Liz. For a while, members from a church in a nearby city were visiting them, but recently the visits have dried up – the church is very small (just over ten people) and visits are difficult to organise.

## How do we make disciples in the face of all these difficulties?

Ahmed and his family could go to a church in another town, but they want to worship in the village where they live. Their whole life revolves around the village – why should they travel elsewhere?

Ahmed reads the Bible regularly and was quoting Scripture a lot during our

conversation. But he was also drinking the local moonshine in the middle of the afternoon.

How do we help him and his family? How do we make disciples in the face of all these difficulties? The questions are no different from the ones people face in the UK or in other Western countries, where people become believers in the midst of broken families and immense social problems. The only difference here is that the Church itself is so tiny and needy (the nearby city has more than one million people, but less than 30 believers). It has neither the people nor the resources to do much to help people like Ahmed.

*We need people who will be committed to working with this village and others like it.*

## Prayer pointer

- ⇒ *Pray* that God would extend his Church to villages like Ahmed's by raising up local Christians and sending committed workers.
- ⇒ *Pray* for Ahmed's family – that the Holy Spirit would effect change in every part of their lives.