

Revival & REFORMATION

The Official “United in Prayer” Weekly Blog and Prayer Requests
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No Schooling, but He Could Read Bible

By Andrew McChesney

Joe Konyon Seeyah couldn't read.

There were no schools in his village of Seeyah, in Liberia. As a boy, he worked on the family rice farm. When he grew older, he married and had nine children and still worked on the farm. He had no reason to read.

One day, a Seventh-day Adventist evangelist, Willie Helbig, arrived in the village. Joe was interested to learn from the Bible, and he and other villagers asked the evangelist to study with them. Willie agreed and, a month later, all 50 adults in Seeyah and a neighboring village, Dehyu, were baptized.

Willie, the first ordained Liberian pastor in the Adventist Church, told the new members that it was their turn to spread the gospel message. Joe didn't know what to think. He loved Jesus and wanted to share the gospel but he was 45 years old and couldn't read.

“I can't open the Bible and teach from it,” he said.

Willie wasn't worried. He invited Joe and five other newly baptized church members to attend a Bible training school in Dehyu. On the first day of classes, Joe looked at the other five men in Willie's classroom. None of them had gone to school. None of them could read. He was in good company.

Willie prayed and gave a new Bible to each man. Then he opened his own Bible and showed the men how to find important verses. He read each verse out loud and explained the meaning of every word.

Joe prayed earnestly. He didn't know how he would remember all the verses. He wanted to speak to others about Jesus' soon coming, but he didn't know how he would ever be able to do that. Every day, Joe and the other men met with Willie to learn from the Bible. Every day, Joe prayed for the Holy Spirit to bless their classes.

One day, as Willie guided the men through important verses in the Bible, Joe noticed that he had no trouble finding the verses on his own. As Willie read, he was able to follow along in his own

Bible. He looked over at his classmates. They also were able to find the verses and to follow along. Joe and the other men stood up and began reading the Bible out loud to the astonished evangelist. Back at home, Joe tried to read a book other than the Bible, but he couldn't understand a word. He found another book, but he couldn't read it either. However, he was able to read the Bible easily. Joe went on to become head elder of the first Seventh-day Adventist Church established to serve Seeyah village and several other villages in 1937. Although he never attended school, he energetically taught and preached from the Bible at the new church, located in the village of Newcess. He died in 2003 at the age of 90.

"It was the work of the Holy Spirit," said his son, S.E. Joe Seeyah, 66, who also is a church elder. "It is the Holy Spirit who gives knowledge, and He wanted the Seventh-day Adventist message to come to our region. He allowed my father to read the Bible."

Andrew McChesney is editor of Adventist Mission. This story was reprinted with permission of Adventist Mission.

World Church Prayer Requests

From the Desk of Ted N.C. Wilson

October 13-20, 2019

- **PRAYER REQUEST:** As we conclude Annual Council meetings this week, please pray for an increased sense of urgency and realization by Church leaders and members that we are living at the end of time and that Jesus is coming soon.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray that every member feels a burden for soul winning and realizes that heaven asks everyone to follow in Christ's steps in sharing their personal faith through God's guidance.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray for greater support and interest by all Church members and administrators in maintaining Seventh-day Adventist education as truly Seventh-day Adventist in content and emphasis since it is vital to the church's future work force and mission perspective.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray for increasing emphasis on the wonderful doctrine of Biblical creation with our earth being created in six, literal, consecutive days by the word of the Lord since this is foundational to so many Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and the Sabbath, the memorial of God's creative power and authority that will be the sign/seal of God's people at the end of time.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray for united evangelistic and witnessing activities of every Seventh-day Adventist man, woman, and child around the world, empowered by the Holy Spirit's power as we submit to His leading in our lives. Total engagement and active participation of every church member around the world is a key to the final proclamation of the loud cry. This will keep us active in God's service combating apathy and complacency through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in each life.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray for increased participation and commitment in evangelistic outreach by all Church institutions as they support the ongoing mission of the Church. As we submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit, this will allow Christ to make us one thus fulfilling Christ's prayer of John 17 as we understand our role in this world as a prophetic movement and face the end of the great controversy leading to Christ's soon return.
- **PRAYER REQUEST:** Pray that we can nurture and establish thousands of "centers of influence" especially in large cities around the world, which can make huge differences in people's lives as they are shown God's truth through Christian service.