

# Revival & REFORMATION

The Official *United in Prayer* Weekly Blog and World Church Prayer Requests

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## Choices of Destiny

By Andrew McChesney

When Artyom was small, about 5 years old, he went to the Seventh-day Adventist church with Father and Grandmother a few times in Uzbekistan.

But then Father and Mother divorced. Artyom lived with Mother, and she forbade him from going to church. Like many people in Uzbekistan and other countries of the former Soviet Union, she viewed Adventists as members of a sect that had broken away from the Christian church. Artyom never set foot inside an Adventist church again until he was 17. Then he went because Father told him that he was grown up and needed to get baptized. Artyom took Bible studies and, two years later, gave his heart to Jesus in baptism. He loved God with all his heart, and he helped the local church by manning its sound equipment.

Mother, meanwhile, had remarried, and Artyom lived with her and his stepfather. One Thursday, his stepfather forbade him from going to church to help with the sound equipment for a music rehearsal. Mother was away from the house at the time.

“You can’t go today,” his stepfather said. But Artyom wanted to go. He wanted to help with the sound equipment.

“I am going,” he replied.

“No, you aren’t going,” his stepfather said.

“I am going,” Artyom said.

“You have a choice,” his stepfather said. “Everything will be fine if you stop going to church. Or you can go to church — and take your belongings with you and leave this house forever.”

Artyom took his belongings and left. He wept as he went to the home of his father and grandmother. They welcomed him in.

Living with Father and Grandmother, Artyom grew closer to God as he prayed and read the Bible for hours at a time. He was especially moved as he read the promise that Jesus gave in Mark 10:29–30. The passage reads, “So Jesus answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time — houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions — and in the age to come, eternal life’” (NKJV).

Artyom had left everything, and it seemed like Jesus was saying to him, “Take courage! You will have a house and eternal life.”

The peace that Artyom was enjoying in his new home shattered when Father stopped going to church and began drinking. One Sabbath, Father told Artyom that he needed help at work. Father made furniture at home.

Artyom refused. “Let’s do it on another day,” he said.

Father angrily ordered the teen out of the house. “Get out of here!” he said. Artyom had nowhere to go. He received permission to live at the Adventist church.

Months passed, and his mother and stepfather invited him to return home. They said he could go to church whenever he wanted. Artyom returned home, but tensions lingered. Father died a few months later, and he moved back to live with Grandmother. All this time, he kept on praying and reading the Bible. Then an Adventist friend had an idea. “Let’s pray that God gives you someone to give Bible studies to,” he said.

The two started praying. One month passed. Two months and three months passed. Artyom noticed a steady trickle of visitors at church, and he invited several to study the Bible with him. Soon he had formed a small group that met regularly.

As they studied, a desire grew in Artyom’s heart to become a missionary. He heard about Global Mission pioneers, people who share the gospel within their own culture. He prayed to become a Global Mission pioneer.

Then he went to the church pastor to ask how to become a Global Mission pioneer. But before he could open his mouth, the pastor spoke. “I have good news for you,” the pastor said. “We would like to invite you to become a Global Mission pioneer.”

Artyom was surprised! The pastor had answered his question before he even asked it. Today, Artyom is 22 years old, and his biggest desire is to help many people prepare for Jesus’ soon coming.

“I’m seeing the first fruits of my labors,” he said. “I have consecrated my life to God, and my goal in life is to bring people to Christ.”

*Andrew McChesney is editor for Adventist Mission. These testimonies are shared with permission.*

## **World Church Prayer Requests**

November 3 - 9, 2023

- Pray for the decisions that were made during the “Almost Home” evangelistic outreach in West Central Africa. Pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to lead many more to the fold as a result of this beautiful endeavor.
- Continued prayers for Israel, for Palestine, and the Middle East. Pray for those caught in the crossfires of conflict, that God will bring healing and hope in the midst of the storm.
- Pray for all our Adventist World Radio (AWR) stations around the world, that they will continue to share the truths of God’s Word with our dying world.
- Pray for your local church and any media ministries that are in operation. Pray that these ministries will grow and reach those who are too fearful to ask for Bible studies.
- Pray for “Zivot Plus,” an initiative of the Mostar Adventist Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to reach nearby cities. It’s a weekend of lifestyle medicine lectures and a health fair. Ask God to continue to expand this ministry and others like it.