

Revival & REFORMATION

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It was Only Jesus!

By Andrew McChesney

Rap! Rap! Rap!

It was Saturday night, and the sharp rapping of knuckles brought Pastor James to the door of his house in Page, a city located beside the Navajo Reservation in Arizona. A Native American man stood outside. "I need help for my daughter," he said. "Her stomach hurts."

James looked beyond the man and saw the daughter and her mother in the car. "Does she need to go to the hospital?" he asked.

"No, no," the father said. "Just pray."

James invited her into the house, but the father shook his head.

"Would you like to bring her into the church?" James said, motioning to the Seventh-day Adventist church next door. He had moved to Page only two months earlier to serve as the church's pastor.

"Yes, we'll do that," the father said. He drove the car up to the church's back entrance, and the mother got out first.

"Do you have holy water?" she asked. She said the family had just come from another church where they had asked the priest to sprinkle holy water on the daughter. The priest had refused and sent them away.

"We don't use holy water," James said. "We have the Bible."

"She's possessed," the mother said.

Puzzled, James thought, "What's going on? The mother says she's possessed, but the father says she needs prayer for a hurting stomach."

The father opened the car door and helped his daughter out. She was bent over, clutching her stomach. She appeared to be in her late 20s.

James had never dealt with demon possession, and he thought, "If she is possessed, she won't want to go into the church."

He watched as the young woman followed her father into the church. But as she walked through the back door, she started foaming at the mouth. Then she crouched down on the floor and grunted like an animal. Her father, who was considerably larger than her, said, "I'm not scared of you."

Turning to James, he said impatiently, "Just say the prayer and get this over with." The mother, however, was scared, and she backed away from her daughter. With a quavering voice, she said, "In the name of Jesus, in the name of Jesus."

James picked up a Bible, and it fell open to Mark 9. It was the story of Jesus casting a spirit out of a boy. Echoing the question that Jesus asked the boy's father, James asked, "How long has this been happening to her?"

The father was annoyed by the question. He didn't want to admit that his daughter was possessed. He just wanted James to pray. The mother, meanwhile, kept repeating, "In the name of Jesus, in the name of Jesus."

Then the daughter attacked. She caught her father in a stronghold from behind and began strangling him.

The father, who moments before had claimed not to be scared of her, cried out, "Help me! Help me!"

Terrified, the mother ran out of the church. James went up behind the daughter and lightly touched her shoulder. Immediately, she released her father, and he ran out. James wasn't sure what to do, but he wasn't afraid. He had perfect peace that God would take care of him.

Feeling his touch, the daughter turned around slowly and stared at James. Then she raised a hand. James backed away until he hit a wall. She followed until she was standing right in front of him. Her hand remained raised, as if ready to strike. But she didn't touch him. James looked into her eyes. They were empty. It was as if her person was gone. She was not there. James prayed silently for Jesus to deliver her.

A moment later, she collapsed to the floor in a crumpled heap.

Then James prayed for Jesus to restore her. She got up and sat on a chair. She was a completely different person. Speaking in a normal voice, she asked, "Who helped me?"

"It was Jesus," he replied.

Her father came back to the room. He looked relieved and said, "Wow, that's my girl, that's my girl."

Then the mother returned, and James led the family in a prayer of thanksgiving. He spoke to them about the power of Jesus. "It's very important to turn to the Lord in these kinds of situations," he said. As they left, he gave them a copy of Ellen White's *Steps to Christ*.

James has never seen the family again. He doesn't know what happened to them. But from that night he understood that the great controversy between Christ and Satan is very real on the Navajo Reservation.

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

World Church Prayer Requests

January 5 - 11, 2024

- Pray for the Navajo people. Pray for the work of Pastor James Crosby and his family in Page Arizona.
- Pray for church members in the Democratic Republic of Congo and West Congo Mission, as the church is in a condition of unrest due to conflict in the region.
- Pray that God will open ways to share the gospel in the East Central Africa Division and in the 10/40 territories.
- Pray for the "Antioch Initiative" in the North American Division. This initiative is all about taking resources shared collectively and focusing them in one area, in creating centers of influence. Praying to have thousands of centers of influence all around the North American Division.
- Pray that many will be encouraged in the 10 Days of Prayer that will be running January 10-20, 2024, focused on the "Priorities of Faith." It just started. Don't miss out!