

Share in the Joy

BY JARED RATCLIFF



How is it possible to love a sparrow, a hamster, or any other animal?

Discussing this today with a friend, I realized that attachment comes when you invest time and love.

Sreylee was a student in my English class for a year and worked hard — always near the top. She also wanted to learn more about Jesus.

Then her family pulled her out of school.

As I watched her walk away . . . I cried. I put time and love into all my students, and I get attached.

It was not her choice to leave. But in a country where 97.1 percent of the population is Buddhist, following Jesus takes a real commitment. That decision means leaving behind friends, neighbors and sometimes your family. I pray every day for her to be in heaven. How she will get there, I do not know. Nor do I care as long as she is there. And if my giving up something would make that possible, I am more than ready.

You know such tears . . . over a pet that has passed away or a person we may never see again who is looking for God's love.

Jesus has invested infinitely more time and love into us than we can do for another. If we were to give up our life for someone, it would not compare, for we would only be giving up this temporary life. Jesus was willing to give up eternal life. On the cross, when He bore the sin of the world, we are told that the Father, though present, had to turn His back. Jesus could no longer sense His presence. He did not have the assurance of being resurrected. And yet, He stayed on the cross.

Why? For you. For me.

If Jesus loved us this much, imagine His tears when we miss the mark or the joy filling His heart every time we learn something new from the Bible or spend time talking to Him. Imagine His elation over each of His children who give their hearts to Him — and His agonizing heartbreak over each one who walks away.

I want to share in that joy, those tears. Father, may I?

Jared Ratcliff served as a student missionary with Adventist Frontier Missions from 2020-2023. This story is shared with permission of Adventist Frontier Missions.

World Church Prayer Requests

DECEMBER 27, 2024 — JANUARY 2, 2025

- Pray for the 10 Days of Prayer that will be running January 8-18, 2025. Pray that many churches and groups around the world will take part. To find out more information, go to www.tendaysofprayer.org.
- Pray that we would see each hardship as a reason to trust God and praise Him more, just like Paul and Silas praised God even while in chains.
- Pray for Oakview Preparatory School as they prepare for increased enrollment and the success of Pentecost 2025 Week of Prayer. Pray that the hearts of staff and students will be consecrated to God.
- Pray for Kingston, New York, as workers seek to reach their community with the three angels' message. Pray that the Holy Spirit will rain down and that all those involved will be convicted and converted.
- Please pray for the many ministries of the Milagrosa SDA Church in the Philippines. Pray that the Holy Spirit will work on lives so that the people will continue to grow IN and WITH Jesus.
- Pray for refugees in your local towns and cities who may be struggling to survive, stay warm, or are missing loved ones during this time of year. Pray for ways you can reach out and serve them.