

# Finding True Happiness

BY ANDREW MCCHESENEY



Denroy was 10 years old when he drank for the first time. He was at home in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. His uncle was celebrating his 35th birthday, and one of his uncle's friends offered Denroy a sip of vodka.

The boy thought, "I've never tried this. There must be a reason why people drink. Why not try?"

He imagined that he felt a bit tipsy afterward, and he wondered what would happen if he drank more. He imagined that people probably became happier when they drank. He wanted to be happy. So, he decided to find out what would happen if he drank more.

A few days later, Denroy asked a 10-year-old friend named Privilege for help.

"Doesn't your dad store beer in your fridge?" he asked Privilege. "Would he notice if you took some?"

Privilege's dad didn't notice, and the two boys began stealing beer and drinking together. Denroy

imagined that he felt happier every time that they drank. That summer, he began to drink heavily. During the school year, he and Privilege drank only once a week, but during summer vacation they drank nearly every day.

Denroy hid his drinking from his parents. When he was drunk, he stayed at Privilege's home and only returned home when he was sober. He spent many nights at Privilege's house. He imagined that he was very happy.

That same summer, Denroy's parents decided to send their son to a Seventh-day Adventist school. One of Denroy's older cousins went to the school, and his parents thought it would be a good place for him to study once the school year started.

Denroy didn't like the school at all. Teachers and children prayed before classes and meals. He had never prayed. Teachers and children prayed at morning worships and Bible class. He couldn't understand why everyone seemed to pray all the time. Even worse, he felt like he had lost his freedom. At public school, he and the other children had been allowed to come and go as they wished. But now the teachers watched all of the students closely to make sure that they were in class. Denroy wasn't happy. He wanted to drink.

Days turned into weeks, and weeks stretched into months, and Denroy kept hearing about Jesus at school. He hadn't known anything about Jesus when he had arrived, and he was amazed that the teachers and other children viewed Jesus as their best friend.

He wondered, “Who is Jesus? How can I go to heaven to live with Him?”

More months passed. At morning worship, Denroy heard teachers and children praising Jesus. He heard them talking about how Jesus filled their lives with joy. In the Bible, he read Jesus’ words, “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. ... I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 10:10; 14:6, NKJV).

Denroy realized that Jesus, not drinking, offered the true way to happiness.

His life changed completely. He quit drinking. He stopped being friends with Privilege. Instead of hanging out with old friends after school, he avoided temptations by going straight home to do his homework and to help around the house.

At school, a love for the teachers grew inside his heart. He saw that the teachers made sure that he and the other children were in class because they loved them and wanted them to learn.

Happiness filled his heart and spilled over into his life. He gave his heart to Jesus and was baptized. Today, Denroy is 16 and enjoying his new life in Jesus.

“I wanted to find happiness through drinking,” he said. “But at the school, I began to think that true happiness might only be through Christ.”

Asked if he was truly happy, he smiled slightly. “I’m getting there,” he said.

*Andrew McChesney is the editor of Adventist Mission. This story has been shared with permission of Adventist Mission.*

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# World Church Prayer Requests

JANUARY 31 — FEBRUARY 6, 2025

- **Ukraine:** Pray for the members of the Dnipro SDA International Church and the other Adventist members within the country. Pray that God will give them strength and peace as the conflict intensifies.
- **United States:** Pray for Cheap Yellowstone Tours, a Creation-based Yellowstone National Park tour company. This ministry is designed to accommodate Creationists and to expose a portion of the 5 million Park visitors to the idea of Intelligent Design and a Creator God.
- **Côte d’Ivoire:** Pray for the WAD Impact 2025 centers across West-Central Africa. WAD Impact 2025 is a divine calling to bring the everlasting Gospel across West-Central Africa through united efforts in evangelism, community service, and total member involvement. Pray that God will provide the needed funds for each center and that the Holy Spirit will be poured out on the hearts of the listeners.
- **Papua New Guinea:** Pray for the Tete SDA Primary School, an evangelistic field for children. Pray for those in leadership positions that they will have wisdom and intelligence as they seek to further God’s work.
- **Middle East:** Pray for God to raise up brave missionaries willing to work among the 746 people groups in the 20 countries of the Middle East Division.
- **Philippines:** Pray for the Support-a-Student Program of the Sushila SDA Church. Pray that as God provides for the students’ physical needs, He will also train them to become disciple-makers. Pray also for the students’ families that they will commit their lives to Jesus.