

They Find the Church and the Sabbath

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Being members of a non-SDA community in Sri Lanka, Niroshan and wife Piumi, and three children, were not Saturday Sabbath keepers. The idea of worshipping God on Saturday used to sound very strange to them until they have come to learn the truth themselves!

In year 2011, Piumi had a plan to further her education in United Kingdom. The whole family decided to move there altogether to support her along her educational journey. Life in United Kingdom, however, was not easy to them to adjust. The family were facing varying challenges and difficulties continually. They longed for spiritual guidance and fellowship, so they sought help from a Sunday church. Despite having received help and guidance, they felt incomplete and unfulfilled, so they visited more churches. Finally, they found a Protestant Church, and they somewhat felt fitted in so they kept going there to attend church services on Sundays.

A tragedy, however, struck the family and shook their faith. Piumi came down with cancer in 2013, and this had left the family feeling devastated. The family decided to prioritize healing and well-being, so she had to put her education into a halt and sought treatment. Fortunately, Piumi quickly recovered, regained her health, and went back to normal life. Upon her healing, the family was flooded with joy. Piumi went back to school and finished her studies in no time. In 2015, the family made another transition by moving back to Sri Lanka for good.

To the family and growing children, coming back to Sri Lanka meant another big adjustment. This time, nonetheless, children's education was their top priority. Niroshan and Piumi shared a strong belief that Christian education was a necessity as it would impact positively the Christian journey and spiritual growth among growing children in the future. Thus, Niroshan and Piumi were determined to send their children to a school offering a faith-based curriculum. They searched and found the Seventh-day Adventist international school in Negombo very fitting place for their children to learn.

Another need soon realized. They wanted to attend church services to continue their fellowship, enhancing spiritual experience and fortifying their Christian faith. Initially, they were undecided of the church they would attend. A final decision, nevertheless, came when their daughter, Sherika, mentioned about a Seventh-day Adventist Church in Negombo where one of her friends regularly had been attending. This brought the said church to their notice.

The following Saturday morning, Niroshan and family headed there. Even though they did not feel comfortable with the idea of worshipping on Saturday, they were compelled stronger to attend spiritual meetings that they had been longing for. The first fellowship at Seventh-day Adventist Church was not very impressive as they felt the alienation from some church members. Even under the atmosphere of inconducive worship, they continued to attend church services for the following weeks while they were still praying for the right church. They were continually asking God for the Holy Spirit and God's guidance over them.

Niroshan and family were invited to Bible study sessions with the church pastor during Sabbaths, and they promptly accepted. The sessions devoted to intensive study of the Scriptures, and it lasted for an entire year. Niroshan and family soon realized that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the church that follows all the Biblical teachings. They discovered in God's own word in the Bible that the Saturday Sabbath is Day of worship, and it is God's mandate to His people. At the end, the whole family decided to get baptized at the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Negombo in 2016.

Currently, Niroshan and Piumi happily serve as Adventist missionaries of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. They are working for a pilot project CEAR (Center of East-Asia Religion). Their mission is to plant a church in Katana area where the majority of population are Buddhists. By employing Jesus' method – mingling with people, winning their trust, and ministering to their needs – they are confident that soon a church will exist and witness for God in that area.

As missionaries, Niroshan and Piumi also put their focus on children being the generation that develops genuine faith and trust in Christianity. Children come to attend English classes they conduct daily for low-income families at the village temple. The English classes is paving the way for a bigger community outreach that, in turn, will eventually lead to more complex community projects.

As an impact, Piumi has been chosen as Village Economy Development Officer. She has been tasked to monitor and even, audit, government programs. The community supports Niroshan and Piumi's ministry there and they are well-received. Let us continue to earnestly pray for their ambitions in favor of God's mission field in Sri Lanka!