

Week of Prayer

— DAY 3 —



Katee Sheppard

The story is still unfolding, and there's work to do.

Christians in West Africa learned about their role in God's story through rocks. Now, if you're wondering what rocks have to do with anything, keep reading.

Church members watched the line of rocks grow. One by one, more rocks were added, until there were 22 in formation. For each rock, a believer told a Bible story.

International Mission Board missionary Katee Sheppard trains West African believers to use rocks to share 22 stories from creation to Revelation.

Teaching believers how to share the gospel using stories is life-changing, the missionary said, because it leads and equips them to recognize the intentionality of turning a regular conversation into a spiritual conversation. For people in the world who prefer to learn orally or for those without a Bible in their language, Bible storying methods present the gospel in a fashion that is easy to retain and is reproducible for the listener.

Pray these Bible storying methods will continue to change lives as people grasp the gospel for the first time.

During a training time using the rocks and stories, Katee directed participants to leave a large space in between the story of Paul and Silas and the stone representing the second coming. Katee asked the congregation, "Why do you think there is such a big space in between the last two stones?"

Someone piped up, "Because that's us. Those are our stories."

The church recognizes that this is their time, their task, and their responsibility. Now they feel better equipped to spread the gospel.

Mariam, one of the believers on the storying team, stood before the congregation and seamlessly wove the stories that the 22 stones represented into a narrative.

Pray for Mariam and other members of the evangelism team as they continue to train more people in this storying method.

The following Sunday, church members went into the community with their stories. Katee wasn't sure how many would come. She wondered if they'd feel nervous, but the congregation came excited.

Five people made professions of faith. One of the believers was shocked to find someone she shared the gospel with had never heard the creation story. Katee said it was like a light went on in her mind.

"There's work to do here," the believer reported back to the church.

Everything clicked with the congregation. With five members fully trained, Katee passed the ministry baton on to the church members.

Katee said this is her goal in ministry — local leadership championing the work — so that she's worked herself out of a job. The Lord will have more work for her to do with others.

Ask God to bring more missionaries and West African ministry partners to this region so more lives will be transformed.

*Some names changed for security reasons