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Mixed Religious Households

By Gia Arroyo

Growing up in a household that is split religiously is never an easy thing. My mother went through a situation like this at home. Although her parents were both Christian, it was still difficult living with a Seventh-day Adventist mom and Pentecostal dad.

Wanting to see how common this is, I decided to research it online. According to a Pew Research Center study done in 2016, “roughly one-in-five U.S. adults were raised with a mixed religious background.”
The research center also discovered that 48 percent of children who grew up in a two-religion household are more likely to follow their mother’s faith.

While researching this information, I remembered that my roommate, Shirali Pathak and her older sister, Prianca, grew up in a mixed religious household. They were raised by a Seventh-day Adventist mother and Hindu father.

“My dad not only wanted us to keep his values, as well as my mom’s,” said Shirali. “We had a choice to make.”

Sabbaths were fun for Shirali. Being able to go to church and enjoy Adventures/Pathfinders is a memory that she’s fond of. The majority of her schooling has
been in the Adventist education system. Prior to entering college, her father did not mind that she was in an SDA school.

The issues arose when Shirali and Prianca decided to come to Southern.

“My dad was very against it ’cause he wanted us to be home, and he didn’t understand why we wanted to continue going to an Adventist school,” she said.

Because of this, supporting Shirali and her sister financially for school has fallen on their mother, she said. Although it is difficult sometimes, when the topic of religion comes up, Shirali remains thankful that her father is understanding and respects her decision of being a Christian.