



José Bessa

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Bessa, José Cândido, filho (1926–2015)

THE BRAZILIAN WHITE CENTER – UNASP

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José Cândido Bessa, filho, was a district pastor, ministerial secretary, department director, and evangelist¹

Early Life and Baptism

José Cândido Bessa, filho, was born in 1926 in the city of Manaus, State of Amazonas.² He was the only child of José Cândido Bessa and Maria Luzia.³ Orphaned at a very young age, he learned about Adventism from Pastor Gustavo Storch.⁴ In 1946, when he was 20 years old, he became aware of certain meetings that would take place in the city of Manaus. The meetings would be held close to his home, so, out of curiosity, he attended the evangelistic series. The message presented touched his heart, leading to his baptism that same year.⁵

After his baptism, José was recruited into the army, where he faced challenges due to his beliefs. After a while, he was dismissed from military service since he was an only son and responsible for his family's provisions.⁶

He married Nair de Freitas Saraiva in 1947 in the city of Manaus, State of Amazonas. The ceremony was held by Pastor Leo Halliwell, a distinguished Adventist missionary in the State of Amazonas. José and Nair had two children, Itacy and Itamy.⁷ Nair was a pioneer in Adventist education in the State of Maranhão and accompanied her husband in almost every state of the country as a Bible worker.⁸ She also taught the culinary arts to church members and other interested people and worked in evangelism with her husband in the churches he pastored.

⁹ Nair died on September 2013 at 88 years old in the city of Curitiba, Paraná.¹⁰

Education and Ministry

After the marriage, Pastor Storch inspired José to study theology at the Adventist Theological Institute (now Petrópolis Adventist Academy).¹¹ José took his studies seriously and, in 1949, graduated with a degree in theology.¹²

After his graduation, he was called to work in the field. José Cândido Bessa started his pastoral ministry in the city of Teresina, State of Piauí, where he established the first Seventh-day Adventist Church in the State of Piauí.

¹³ Between 1950 and 1953, he served as a licensed missionary in the territory of the North Coast Mission,¹⁴ which is now part of the territory of the Northeast Brazil Union Mission.¹⁵ He was ordained in 1954¹⁶ by the

same pastor who held his marriage ceremony, Pastor Leo Halliwell.¹⁷ After his ordination, between 1954¹⁸ and 1960,¹⁹ he worked in the education, temperance, and sabbath school departments.²⁰

Between 1967 and 1970, he served the Adventist Church in the Paraná Conference (now Central Paraná Conference) working in several departments such as personal ministry and radio/TV (1967);²¹ personal ministries and evangelism (1968),²² evangelism (1969),²³ and public relations and radio/TV (1970).²⁴ Between 1971 and 1976, he was called to lead the ministerial department of the South Brazil Union Conference.

Between 1977 and 1989, he worked at the headquarters of the South American Division.²⁵ He served as an associate ministerial secretary (1977-1981),²⁶ director of the sabbath school and personal ministries department (1982-1984),²⁷ member of the executive committee (1985),²⁸ and associate ministerial secretary between 1986²⁹ and 1989.³⁰

Besides working as a pastor in the city of Teresina and São Luís in the State of Maranhão, Pastor José Bessa also worked in the States of Fortaleza, Recife, Paraná, São Paulo, and Brasília. He worked for 14 years in Brasília as director of the South American Division in the ministerial and evangelism areas.³¹ As an evangelist, he conducted at least one series of evangelistic campaigns on an annual basis.³²

Retirement and Contribution

He retired as an evangelist of the South American Division in 1991.³³ Even after his retirement, Pastor José Bessa continued collaborating with the churches, preaching or participating in other jobs to which he was called.³⁴ From 2010, Pastor José Bessa started to live in Curitiba in the State of Paraná, where he was a member of the church in Bom Retiro.³⁵ After his retirement, he still served the church as a retired minister in the East Brazil Union Conference,³⁶ Southeast Brazil Union Conference,³⁷ and South Brazil Union Conference.³⁸

Pastor José Bessa spent 41 years working in the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a district pastor, ministerial secretary, and department director.³⁹ Pastor Bessa's ministry years were very helpful to the progress of Adventist missionary work in Brazil. He performed important roles as a pioneer of Adventist evangelism in the northeast region of Brazil by establishing the first church in the State of Piauí⁴⁰ and when he served the South American Division.⁴¹ His favorite book was *The Desire of Ages* by Ellen G. White, and he recommended it to all who wished to strengthen their faith in Jesus.⁴² Pastor José Cândido Bessa, filho, died on February 22, 2015, at 88 years old.⁴³

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NOTES

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7. *Ibid.*, 275 and 277.
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