

May 2012

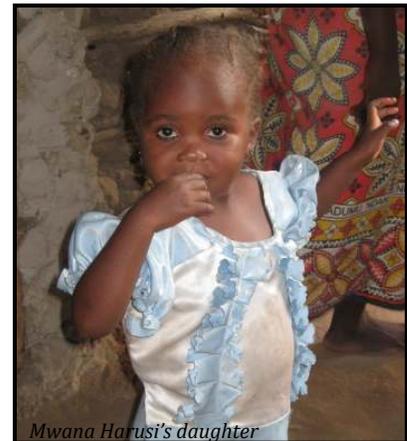


Meet Mwana Harusi

The conversion of this 22 year old Muslim woman, mother of a 3 year old girl, happened when we least expected it. It wasn't the fruit of an evangelism campaign or crusade, or even because of an investment of personal evangelism. As she herself revealed in a conversation, for years she has looking for the strength to obey the still, small, yet deep voice that spoke to her spirit... "Go to that church; give your life to Jesus." Mwana Harusi went on to say that it wasn't just a voice but "a real person talking to me even though I couldn't see with my natural eyes. I knew that I was dealing with someone alive." She decided to obey this voice, which according to her testimony, filled her with peace, and exchanged her fear for courage. To the surprise of everyone, she went to the Sunday service at the Masalani Church. It was there, on that day in the month of March, that she accepted Jesus as the Lord and Savior of her life.

The Price of her New Faith

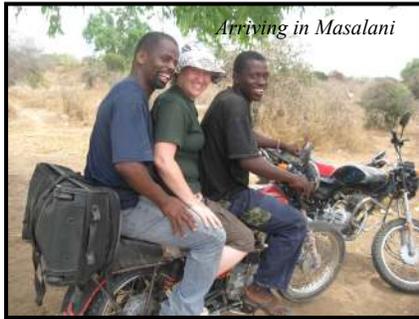
First of all, we have to understand that people who abandon Islam and give their lives to Jesus, and become Christians in conservative Muslim communities pay a very high price for their new faith. For example, persecution and hatred expressed through exclusion, death threats and in some cases actual killings are done by the family of the new convert. Mwana Harusi said that after the service on Sunday, when she was still on her way home, her mother met her on the way, grabbed her by the neck and shouted "mkafiki mkafiri" (pagan... pagan...), then she threw her to the ground and gave her an embarrassing punch in the presence of the villagers in broad daylight. A short time later this new convert found herself thrown out of the house, her belongings and those of her daughter thrown out. Her mother informed her relatives of the "occurrence" (her daughter's conversion), and said that to them Mwana Harusi is dead. So in the blink of an eye, this woman finds herself confronting probably the biggest challenge of her life as a consequence of making the biggest decision of her life. This reality causes desperation for any member of these communities where there are no jobs and everything (houses, fields, animals, etc.) is considered common family property. This is a condition that, in addition to discouraging Muslims from converting to Christianity, has also caused many new converts to go back and renounce the faith that they had embraced.



Mwana Harusi's daughter

Church Response

Our faith was tremendously impacted and encouraged by the way the church responded to this challenge. We visited Mwana Harusi and her daughter in their new home. During the conversation, she pointed out different things in the single room which serves as the bedroom, kitchen, and sitting room, she said, "The brothers and sisters of the church gave me those pans, dishes, they gave me clothes and a mattress, above all, they gave me love. I feel at home and am free with the Christians." This testimony is one more indication that the church in this community is growing strong. Masalani is, in general, a poor community, but it was evident here that generosity and faith are abundant enough to harvest the Muslim converts. Mwana Harusi urgently needs 100 USD to start a small business to sustain herself and her daughter. Don't miss this opportunity and don't let the chance pass by to be part of the rescue team for Muslims. Share about this cause, mobilize, contribute!



Masalani Church- A faithful Replica of Acts

Since 2008 when the church planting process began in the Pokomo tribe in Masalani, there has been an intense and systematic work designed to turn this new-born church into a replica of the early church as mentioned in the book of Acts, exhibiting qualities of maturity, in holiness, worship, faith, obedience to the Word and loving your neighbor. In our recent trip to Masalani we understood that this already plays a part in the lives of the members and is being cultivated daily, as evidence by the way that the church immediately responded in the face of the persecution that came upon Mwana Harusi after accepting Jesus. Similar to the church in Acts, and in one accord, they gave her love, food, clothing, shelter, and freedom and joy in belonging to the local church.

Truly, the church here is an attraction, a real spectacle of the manifestation of the love of God. In reality, there are four or five Muslims who have participated in the services at one time or another. Others have watched the worship through the window, afraid to enter, and some have sought out the pastor for counseling and to address doubts about the Bible and the Koran. Also in Masalani, a poor village, it has become the costume that the believers bring food and drinks (non-alcoholic) from their houses to share together after the service on Sunday. Isn't this what the church of Acts did? Not that we are reducing the early church to food, drink and clothing, but we are talking about the posture of the church that expresses true love and executes it through a sacrificial commitment to Jesus that is visible in the lives of others. The interesting thing is that when we asked them how this got started no one could remember the day or the circumstances. We know that love is the fruit of a work of the Holy Spirit, who quietly molds lives and transforms them into the likeness of Christ.

What happens is this: the more a person turns over his life to Jesus, the more it becomes natural for him to do good. From there, many times it is not necessary to force him to do something, but it becomes something natural. This is exactly what the church has done- turned over their lives- in fasting, prayer, love, doctrine, breaking of bread... That's why it is a logical conclusion that there is nothing obstructing the Holy Spirit from transforming this Muslim community, as he did 2000 years ago with the communities rooted in the Jewish religion. Because of this opening nothing can hinder the Lord from adding daily to the number being saved! Acts 2:47

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"They devoted themselves to the apostles' doctrine and to the fellowship, to breaking of bread, and prayer. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread together in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts. Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."
Acts 2:42,44,46-47



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