

FROM VIOLENT PERSECUTOR TO FERVENT EVANGELIST

“As a disciple of Jesus, I must spread His Word regardless of the sacrifices and the personal difficulties I have to endure.”



Barnabas Fund supports evangelists and converts in East Africa

These rousing words were spoken by “Mustafa”, an ardent Christian with a Muslim background who is working as a missionary in Islamic areas of East Africa after attending a three-month discipleship training course for converts from Islam, which was financed by Barnabas Fund.

A couple of years earlier Mustafa had been a militant Muslim, believing in jihad and supporting Islamic terrorism throughout the world. His commitment even drove him to lead a Muslim youth gang in destroying a church building in September 2008 in his home town.

But Mustafa’s Islamic beliefs were challenged when his sister, who had emigrated to Saudi Arabia to work for a wealthy Saudi Muslim family, was murdered by her boss. He was perplexed that a fellow Muslim in an Islamic holy land could butcher another Muslim believer like that. Also his sister was going to send him money for helping him expand his business of selling bicycle spare parts, and now he would not get it.

Enraged, Mustafa decided to consult his sheikh to seek some sort of justice within the Islamic community and compel the Saudi man to compensate the family. But the sheikh supported the Saudi man’s actions, saying, “A woman must always be under the mercy of a man. If that Saudi man killed your sister, it must have been for a justifiable reason.”

The sheikh’s response infuriated Mustafa even more. He stopped attending the mosque and began to question and even to hate Islamic practices. Life became meaningless. In this disillusioned state, he was given an evangelistic DVD by some evangelists. After watching the message of the Good News, he decided to follow Christ. The missionaries disciplined him further, and in May 2010 Mustafa was baptised.

Soon afterwards, Mustafa felt great remorse for having led Muslim youths to destroy a church building. The destruction had been very costly for the congregation; one and a half years later they were still worshipping in the sweltering heat of the open air. He gathered his courage and went to the pastor and congregation to confess his mistakes and ask for forgiveness. The congregation welcomed him warmly, and he started worshipping in that church, which has since relocated to a new building.

“ Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. 1 Timothy 1:15-16 ”

Because of his remarkable growth in Christ, Mustafa was selected, together with 39 other Muslim-background Christians, to attend the three-month training course in discipleship at a Bible institute nearby. Mustafa graduated in March 2011 with the highest marks.

Now he has gone back to his business and spends 36 hours per week witnessing to others who are still Muslims, a seemingly impossible task but one that is gradually bearing fruit. The skills he acquired from the training greatly help him to carry out his discipleship work effectively and be a good manager and leader.

Mustafa testifies, “Missionary work is not easy but that’s not a reason for not doing it. We should all be doing the work of an evangelist, making people followers of Jesus. He wants us to help as many people as possible to find salvation in Him. To be a disciple of Jesus means that you must study His Word and live the Word.”