



the WYATTS Tanzania

Dear Friends,

March/April 2023

Return to Tanzania:

The beginning of January, we returned to Tanzania from our furlough. Although our time in the States was refreshing and energizing, we were so glad to be back "home" where we belong! We were able to get readjusted very quickly and dove right into the new year, looking forward to what God has in store for 2023!

Discipleship Sunday:

We were blessed to hold our Discipleship Sunday. On this Sunday, we graduated 3 people from our discipleship program. We also had 27 new signups for the program. This program consists of 20 lessons and 4 tests, walking them through discipleship. Please pray for the new ones who have signed up for this, as well as for the many others who are in the program already!

Story:

It was our usual busy Sunday after the morning service. People were milling around and chatting with one another while enjoying their meal of beans and rice. As usual, there was a small crowd around the table containing the discipleship lessons as they turned in their completed lessons and received the new one. As I approached the table greeting people, one of our members began telling me what a blessing these discipleship lessons had been to her and how they had helped her grow in her faith. She began telling me this story:

She is the only Christian in her all-Muslim family. A few weeks before, there had been a funeral of a family member, which brought all of the family together. Being the only Christian, she is hated by the rest of the family, and they wanted to get rid of her. The family was able to convince the local authorities that she had done some wrongdoing and wanted her jailed. After spending three days in jail, the authorities told the family that since this was a religious and family matter, they would not continue to hold this woman and that the family should deal with her as they saw fit. She was released from jail and brought before the family again. They sat her in the middle of them and demanded that she recant Christ and convert to Islam. She refused to do this, so they began to beat her mercilessly. Her family continued their physical beating of her, as well as berating her with harsh and hateful words, demanding that she turn from Christianity to Islam. She said, "Pastor, it was terrible. They were beating me so badly, but I just couldn't deny Christ."

Finally, after some time, one of the older men in the family stood up and said, "Look, if she is not going to listen and recant her faith, then just let her be. She is old enough to make her own choices. Let her go her way." Thankfully, the rest of the family listened to him and left her lying alone, bruised, and beaten. She wanted to continue coming to our church but knew that she would need to get her Muslim husband's permission to do so. With fear and trembling, she went to her husband and asked permission. She said, "Pastor, through a miracle of God, he said that I could come back to church!"

The joy on that lady's face as she stood there clutching her next discipleship lesson was something that I will never forget. I looked at this precious African lady and thought about what her faith had cost her. I am reminded of Jesus' words in Matthew 5:11-12, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." I am sure that many of us will be ashamed when we reach Heaven and stand next to those whose faith truly cost them something—family, friends, physical health, and some, even their lives.

What has our faith cost you and me? A little extra time on our weekend? Perhaps some embarrassment as we witness to someone or maybe some of our finances? Oh, that we would all be bold and courageous in our stand for Christ and be able to say along with countless others, including our Saviour: "My faith has cost me everything that I have. I give my life. I give my all."

Serving the people of Tanzania,

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