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“Thank God, I became one of them!”

By Berhanu Ayano

As many of you may know, I left for mission trip to Ethiopia on September 18, 2018. Thank God, I came back on October 26, 2018.

The Faithful Lord is in the business of changing lives. I have many stories from the mission field to share with you. In this article, I will share with you the story of Sofia who was conservative Muslim and used to hate Christians. She was married and had two children (a nine years old daughter and a son). She served in her local Mosque as religious police who checked women’s mosque attendance and as one who is responsible for the distribution of Islamic Relief Aid in her community. Her hatred for Christians was immense. To put it in her own words:

*“I used hate Christians to the point of not to see them at all”, says Sofia. “Today, thank God, I became one of them. One day, as I was praying, I saw **Isa Al – Masih** (the Arabic phrase for “Jesus the Messiah”). When I told my family members and Muslim friends, they laughed at me. Those who mocked me were not few. I told the Imam of the Mosque (the leader of the Mosque). He told me that Jesus is in the heaven and will come only on the Day of Judgment. Until then no one can see Him.”*



Regardless of different reactions, Sofia was confident that her vision was true. So, she decided to follow the vision that she saw and stopped going to the Mosque. They laughed at her; but their laughter did not stop Sofia from believing in Jesus. They mocked and labelled her as crazy. This strategy did not work either. Then, they moved to the next form of pressure. They gave her a brand-new woolen blanket as a bribe hoping that she will change her mind and drop her claim. Her response was a bit harsh and far beyond what they had expected. *“You cannot give what you do not have. You offered me material thing, temporary and earthly thing to lure me into giving up the vision of hope for eternal life. You offered me your blanket; but **Isa Al – Masih** offered me an invitation for Eternal life. I make a choice, which one to take. I accepted the offer of **Isa Al – Masih**.”*

The Muslims’ community understood the seriousness of the issue and its implications. The pressure mounted on her husband either to bring Sofia back to Islamic faith or divorce her. She resisted the pressure and her husband divorced her. None of these actions forced Sofia to give up her new faith in Christ. For the sake of her faith in Christ, she left her husband, home, property, relatives and everything she had. She took her two children (nine years old daughter and son) and left her village. Few months later, her daughter died. Her

relatives came to Sofia not only to comfort but also to confront her about her new faith. Her elder sister was the leading opponent of Sofia’s new faith. *“The child of my mother, you have seen the result of your new faith. If **Isa Al – Masih** revealed Himself to you, why did He allow your daughter to die in her young age? Why didn’t He help you? Come back to your ancestor’s faith.”* Sofia’s response was, *“My daughter did not belong to me; she belonged to her creator. He created her and gave to me, so I became her guardian. He has the right to call her to Himself whenever He wants. That was what He did.”* Sofia’s relatives and friends run out of options to convince and win her back to the Islamic faith. They gave up on her. But God didn’t give up on her relatives, specifically, on Sofia’s elder sister who begun seeing challenging dreams after dreams. Few months after the death of Sofia’s daughter, her elder sister surrendered her life to the Lord with her two sons and were baptized. *“In His wisdom”,* says Sofia, *“The Lord detached me from my relatives in order to attach me to the body of Christ (to His saints).”* Currently, Sofia works as a local missionary by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ among Muslim women. She is among the many local missionaries in Ethiopia who received a one-time financial support because of you who has contributed to C.E.O.’s Mission – Ethiopia’s work in 2018.



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Thank you for all your support thus far, and for all who will continue to support in the future. May the Lord bless you with good health and joy.

Ethiopia Mission Trip Snapshots: September 18–October 26

1. **Support given to pastors and missionaries:** 42 pastors and missionaries received a one-time financial gift



2. **Bible purchase and distribution;** 101 Bibles were purchased and distributed; \$4, 852 given to 3 churches to purchase more Bibles

3. **Baptism of new converts** 78



4. **Training pastors and church leaders** 365



5. **Place of worship:** Financial help in the amount of \$2,741.94 was given to a local church construct a place of worship.

6. **Helped 20 children purchase school uniforms and supplies**

7. **Supported sheik Aman to be enrolled in a seminary**

8. **Humanitarian help was given to 13 individuals and 2 institutions**





9. Meetings were called to encouraged leaders and missionaries for what they have done so far, and to challenge them to do more.



I went out with the team on a cold winter night a week ago and we stopped to minister to many by giving toques, gloves, sandwiches, chocolate bars and sharing in prayer and encouragement with everyone that accepted our invites for prayer and food.

We picked up one lady in her late 30's who was very cold and offered her a ride and some warmth in the van. It soon became apparent that she had more serious problems and we called for an emergency ambulance that met us down town and we transferred her into their care. There is no doubt in my mind that if we had not picked her up late that night she would have died.

This organization has been working in this city for over a decade and has recently needed some help and asked us to get involved with them. Our Board agreed and they come under our umbrella on December 1. ***This is what CEO means.***

Heart of the City

Reaching the Prostitutes, Homeless, and Refugees in Winnipeg.

Providing Rides, Finding Shelter, Connecting Medical help.

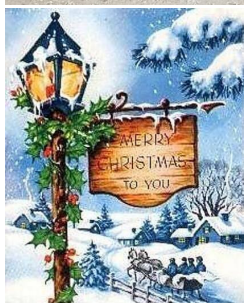
Share the HOPE in Jesus with prayer & encouragement.

Provide clothing, Bibles, food hampers, protection in Safe places.

Counselling for Addictions, Marriage, Relationships.



Heart of the City



You can see that volunteers young and old are part of the teams and you might want to arrange to become part of these "encouragers" and "prayer warriors" as they deal with the needy individuals and families in our city. One of the volunteers makes all the sandwiches every week for the team to distribute. For the month of December, we are going to need hampers, especially for those who have difficulty with transportation. There are single moms who need help and those who are prostituting themselves just to stay alive. Mental health issues are a real problem on the streets so "rational" explanations do not always work. Some are belligerent because they feel like life's circumstances have trapped them in a corner and they cannot get free.

We need to raise about \$ 2000 / month to pay for the fuel and insurance on the van along with purchasing food and clothing items to help desperate people with some of the basic needs that will help them live another day. We also need others to join us in praying for the neediest in our city and for freedom from drugs, violence, and abuse. Please, join us in this HOPE.

Alix & Terry Mission Trip: November 19-26

We covet your prayer support for safety, health, wisdom, resources, and effectiveness in ministry. It has been a few years since I have been able to encourage our leaders on this field. Noelson now has a wife and two children as he leads a team that teaches at the school in Sosua where they teach and feed more than 70 students and their parents. These students are not allowed to go to the Public School.

Namphy and his team are doing an amazing job in ministering in Haiti. Evangelism, discipleship, and personal mentoring has been very effective in building the kingdom. In the midst of Voodoo and corruption and violence God has put a bright light in this dark region of the world.



Preparing for Christmas

I am wondering how the Father and the Son discussed preparing for the first Noel. As they might have been discussing the best gift they could bestow on their creation they loved they chose to give the very best They had—The Son of God. Then when they discussed the gift they wanted to give at Easter they chose to give the very best They had—The Holy Spirit. What discussions are you having in your homes about what you want to give for Christmas—will you choose to give the very best that you have—yourselves—all that you are and all that you have to the One that gave you all that you are and all that you have. Talk it over with Jesus and let Him guide you and let His Spirit fill, empower, and transform you. You are part of His family and Christmas is a time for all of us to come home and enjoy being with the Father. Let His love flood your life, your home, and your family.



Speaking Personally... After 50 years of ministry there is a sense of greater hunger for something more of what God has for us. When I look at the stories through scriptures and history God has done amazing things. How much do we do, out of our personalities, our skills and training, and not from anointing of His Spirit? God, in His amazing Grace and Mercy still uses us and blesses the meagerness of what we do in our own power but He wants so much, much, more for us. So, if we want more of what God has for us, and He wants more for us, what do we need to do.

Are we desperate enough for it? Are we broken enough for it? God tells me if I seek Him... I will find Him... If I search for Him like treasures... I will find Him. Lord, break us, make us more desperate for you. Father, we need you in ways we do not even understand and we ask you to touch our blindness... soften our hearts... open our hearts... transform our lives.

We are a Team...

Empowering Ministries to ...

Reach the Lost, Revive the weak, Rescue the fallen, Restore the broken, Reconcile the offended, Release the Discipled
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