

Shaardas' Story

It's God's Story!

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Resonate™
GLOBAL MISSION

Josh, Mandy, Lydia, Grace, Luka & Emalai

Working together with local believers to disciple and train village churches.

PRISON MINISTRY CHANGING LIVES

I sat across from "A" (not his real name) as he sipped his pineapple-flavored soft drink. In the local restaurant today was the first time I had ever seen him wearing something other than his prison uniform. I listened as he shared his story.

"Before I went to prison I drank a lot of alcohol and chased women. I brought a lot of problems to my family, especially to my wife. We had a lot of struggles. She was born again but I was not.

It was good for me to go to prison because I met Jesus in the prison. Soon after arriving "O" told me I needed to give my life to Jesus Christ, so I did. Being in prison gave me the chance to see where my life was heading. Through the fellowship of Christians in the prison, the Discipleship Course, the Timothy Leadership training, and other teachings, I have completely changed. Those teachings gave me strength and helped me grow.

When I got home I told my wife I am a new person completely. I promised her I will not bring her problems anymore because I do not drink – I have stopped. I also do not chase women now. We now stay together in peace. I now fellowship with other born again people and we are talking about starting a church in our community."

The next day I sat under the tree in prison yard talking to "O". I have known him for a year, but did not know his crime. I felt led to ask.

He answered, *"Double murder. I was concubining with a lady who was not my wife and we produced two children together. I worked very hard to get her a job. However, once she had the contract to guarantee the job, she left me and started sleeping with another man. I was so upset and depressed that I decided to commit suicide. However, the devil put it in my mind that my two boys*

produced with that lady would be in a horrible situation without me because nobody would care for them, so I decided they should also die. I thought they would be better off dead than alive. I locked all three of us in a house and lit the house on fire. The neighbors saw the fire and broke the door open. They pulled me out but both of the children died.

Taking the Discipleship Course helped me see that the battle was for my mind. I believed lies and had been completely deceived. As a result, I fell for Satan's tricks. I also saw a lot of truth in the marriage course. It made clear in my mind what had happened."

He went on to tell me that he is now changed. I asked "O" what created that change in him. He answered, *"When I was put in prison I started reading the Bible cover to cover. God's word brought light to my mind and helped me understand the right way. The Bible began to change me."*

We are thankful for the opportunity that God has given us to minister in the prison. God is clearly working in the lives of the inmates and it is a privilege, together with you, to be one of the tools God is using to shape the men there. Josh recently resumed leading Bible study there on Fridays using the Freedom in Christ materials. He is also using Timothy Leadership materials to train ward pastors on Mondays. One inmate who took the course last year encouraged the other inmates to faithfully attend. He said, *"I came to this prison a fool. But thanks to the training we received last year, I now have wisdom."* Thank God for the open doors to minister in the prison. Pray that God will work mightily among the inmates there.

PRIORITIES THIS YEAR

Upon our return to Obule, Josh took time to lay out his priorities for this year. We want to invite you to pray with us regarding these objectives, recognizing that they will only be met if God chooses to make them happen.

1. The **teaching teams** will complete the Freedom in Christ training they are leading in all six locations. Our goal is for them to complete by the end of this term.
2. The **prison ministry** will continue in Soroti and will expand to two other prisons as well. Josh is asking that God raise up other workers to serve in at least one of these other prisons.
3. We will develop two more **discipleship tools** which can easily be used in rural settings. These will focus enjoying our identity in Christ and helping other people find freedom in Christ. We also need to translate these to Ateso.
4. We pray that God will help us expand to three **new areas of Uganda** so more church leaders have access to the Freedom in Christ training.
5. We are trying to **register Freedom in Christ Ministries (FICM) as a nonprofit company** in Uganda. Doing this will make it easier for us to distribute discipleship materials, hopefully throughout Uganda.
6. Pray that God raises up a **Ugandan believer to be a FICM national representative**. Pray that this person walks in freedom in Christ, is passionate about the message and method of FICM, and has the administrative gifts needed to serve this role.
7. Pray that Josh will know how to be an **effective team member** among the FICM workers in other African countries.



Transition Back Home in Obule

Thank you for all your prayers as we transitioned back to life in Uganda. At first we were blown away and exhausted by the heat,

but God provided early rains this year to cool things off. Thank the Lord! We were also tired out by how much more work it is to live here. The kids have done great and are back to home schooling, playing with friends, singing in the choir, and enjoying village life. Their friends are thrilled to have them back! Our kids amaze me how they fit in so well culturally.

We had a wedding the other week and Lydia and Grace helped serve food with their friends. They even ate offals (intestines) with them when they were done. They said it tasted ok but was rubbery. I asked them why they ate it. They said, "Because that is what our friends ate."



Adjusting back takes time. We have had both encouragements and discouragements. They focus us on the Lord and prompt us to trust His will fully. There have been about six burials in our first month

back. Each time we go to a burial I am aware of the urgent need for Christians to grow in Christ and for the lost to be saved. This world is full of sin but we have the Hope. God keeps teaching us. We are constantly challenged and encouraged by His Word and Spirit. It is our prayer that, as we abide in Him, He will use us.



Prayer

- Thank God for rain! Pray for a proper rainy season so that people can have an abundant harvest. Pray for seeds and cuttings to plant. Because of the drought last year, people do not have enough to plant. Pray for health and strength for people as it is a busy time in their gardens.
- Praise God for the prisoners whose lives have been changed by Christ! Pray for those taking the Bible courses to continue to grow and for others to be transformed by God's truth.
- Pray for God's continued direction, wisdom and power for the work He wants to do here.
- Pray for marriages here. Pray for God's plan for marriage to be known and for Christians to follow God's way.
- Pray for the local leaders as they teach.
- Pray for Mandy's parents who are living with us while they are in the process of adopting Achia.

*Check out more pictures and stories on our blog shaarda.blogspot.com!

Please Send Support To:

Freedom in Christ Ministries – USA
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Thank you for your partnership!