

My Name is Counselor



I grew up in a Muslim family. In the seventh grade I began to read the Koran, praying five times a day and held the Ramadan and Urasa – the end of the fasting period.

When I was in prison, I was put into a cell with 14 other women. I spoke the Namaz (prayer) regularly and everyone listened. Every time I had finished the prayer, another woman began to read the Bible. Then we talked about the Word of God. I liked that the Bible was written in a clear and understandable language. I could not

understand anything from reading the Koran and there was nothing for my heart there. When we, the prisoners, were transferred to another prison in Leninabad, I began to attend services in the prison's prayer room. On July 16, 2000 I confessed my sins before the Lord Jesus Christ. When I was released from prison, I first began looking for a church. I found one, was baptized and became a member of the local family of God.

God gave me a Christian husband. He had also heard about Jesus in prison and repented there. We have two daughters. As a family we serve the Lord. I am very grateful to my God for the gifts in my life that He gives me. I'm just speechless when I think of the wonderful works of God. God leads me through ups and downs. I was expecting a child, but I miscarried. During this time I had to relearn to trust in God, and He gave me back the joy of salvation.

Independent Bible Correspondence School

I am very grateful for Bible Mission (*our partners in Central Asia*) and for the textbooks of IBCS that they have sent to me. While studying I have come closer to God. My husband and my daughter also have completed courses of the IBCS. From my heart I am grateful to God for his grace. We are able to study the Word of God in the quiet and simplicity of our home, as someone paid the expenses for the school. Any student who is studying is being strengthened spiritually, his thoughts are changed and his understanding of Scripture grows. Learning in the IBCS is a great

opportunity to come closer to God. I am sure that God rewards those who help us here in Tajikistan to understand the Word of God. A special gift is waiting for them in Heaven. I encourage my brothers and sisters in communities to enroll at IBCS also.

A special joy for me is memorizing whole chapters and psalms from the Bible. It is enrichment for me and the congregation and also for people I meet on the streets when I recite the Word of God in worship.

Personal Evangelism

I thank God and the Lord Jesus Christ, that He is risen in my life and heart. Anyone who has met me once knows that I believe in Jesus. This is the most important thing and the first thing I say when I address a person. I always begin a conversation with first talking to God in prayer. Then I listen carefully to what is said. Mostly people talk about their problems in life. Then I quote the Scriptures, sharing examples from the lives of the prophets. I often mention the words of Jesus, "where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I am with them." The Muslims are listening very carefully to what I am telling them, because they believe that Jesus is alive and sits at the right hand of the Father in Heaven, and that He will be coming back. I often mention the many passages from the Koran that speak of Jesus. This is a very good reference and arouses interest, and they want to hear more and more about Jesus Christ. I see how their faces start to shine, and their view of Christianity begins to change. I stay in touch with the people with whom I have had spiritual conversations and help them where necessary.

Counseling

My friends, neighbors and sisters from the church congregation often come to me with their problems. The Holy Spirit helps me to give them the right advice. After such discussions, I always look forward and thank God that He could use me as His tool. I am grateful to God for my great spiritual family. I love all the brothers and sisters. There is a group of women in the community particularly close to my heart. They are the single sisters. We meet regularly for prayer and sharing. In the communities, there are few

men and many girls remain single. In our country this is a big problem, because the Muslim relatives see it as a curse and they want forced marriages.

Fridays

God has answered our prayers and we have held church services in our house every Friday for six years. One week we have worship service in the Uzbek language, the next week in Tajik. Tears of joy flow often when the women see how God answers their prayers. They are grateful that they can hear the Word of God in their own language, play their instruments and sing to the glory of God. Three women are always responsible for each service: one is leading the service, the other is responsible for the music and singing, the third one teaches from the Word of God.

There is only one Uzbek Christian group in our nation and it is in our house! We live in a neighborhood with many Uzbek families. Our neighbors know that we serve God, the Lord Jesus Christ with our family. Even our relatives know us as an Uzbek Christian family. They often like to come to the worship services.

We are celebrating the Christian holidays like Christmas and Easter with great joy. The goal is to bring many neighbors, relatives and acquaintances together. It is a great testimony for the visitors. We talk openly about problems in our lives and pray for one another. We are happy that we can gather together and no one bothers us. In these meetings I often share from the Scriptures, and that's why I'm so glad that I am able to study in the IBCS, where I learn so many new things for myself and can teach others. Fundamental Muslims visit our worship as well, and it is very important to explain the basic Christian doctrine in a right way. They ask a lot of questions and it would be embarrassing if I did not know what I believe. Often our home church is invited to other villages to sing and share the Gospel.

Today

I thank God for every moment of my life, that the words from the Bible are sealed in my heart and in my thoughts. Each day, the Scriptures speak to my heart, teach me and give guidance for life. It opens my spiritual world and directs my gaze on God. I often think of my former Muslim life and it scares me. Then again I beg the Lord for mercy. It is so wonderful that God forgives and gives new life. Thank God, he changes me every day and my family can see how God blesses us abundantly. The Word of God helps me do my work on the job. When I communicate with my clients, I often quote the Scriptures. They tell me that they know that I have read very much, and therefore know the Scriptures and the prophets.

God has called me into a new service! Many Tajiks are looking for work in the vast expanses of Russia. Girls and women often have to find their way alone in a foreign country. The church in Tajikistan is concerned about those who leave home. I was asked to go to Russia to strengthen the sisters in the Lord in faith, and to teach them the Word of God and to encourage other women to follow Jesus. Please pray for me.