



## STORIES FOR HOPE

<http://www.storiesforhope.org> • ph: 734.678.5512 (US) / 0788260317 (RW) • email: [ppasick@gmail.com](mailto:ppasick@gmail.com)

### Kabatesi Donatha & Binta Samantha

Story Number: SFH0061

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**Facilitator:** Goodmorning

**Kabatesi Donatha:** Goodmoring

**Facilitator:** We wish to thank you for coming here and accepting to share your story with us.

**Kabatesi Donatha:** We are happy too.

**Facilitator:** My name is Kabanyana Laurette and I work with the Stories for Hope project.

**Kabatesi Donatha:** My name is Kabatesi Donatha and a servant of God (*member of clergy or pastor*) at Calvary temple.

**Facilitator:** What is your relationship?

**Kabatesi Donatha:** She is my sister's daughter and we live together.

**Samantha Binta:** My names are Samantha Kabatesi and I would like to thank you for inviting us here.

**Facilitator:** You may proceed and ask your questions.

**Samantha Binta** Ok aunt I have a question to ask you. I would like you to tell me about your life as child and youth, the issues you faced both good and bad. This will help me to prepare better for this life I am starting.

**Kabatesi Donatha:** Thank you Binta for asking me because it is good for you to know about my life -- honestly life was not good to me at when I was much younger. I went through some hardships. I had parents



**A conversation between Kabatesi Donatha and Binta Samantha**

who loved me but they were uneducated and they were not Christian. They were involved in pagan ways. This is what they knew so they did not teach me about God. Because they did not teach me about God, I lived an unchristian life as well. This made my life miserable. My parents tried to set me on the right path but they did so by quarrelling with me, insulting me and telling me I could go to school on some days but I could not go on other days. This made me hate school. For instance when I got to secondary school, I would return home for holidays and papa would say, 'You have now come to take my cows away.' *(laughter)* 'Now that you have studied this term, you will not study next term. This made me realize that studying .....

**Samantha Binta:**

*(studying...)* ..was not important?

**Kabatesi Donatha:**

I knew I want it (studying) but because I knew that I would not be going back, I did not have the morale to desire to study. When I completed my fourth year, my mother used to tell me, 'Normally a girl should get married, this business of going to school will turn you into a prostitute.' She regularly called me a prostitute and this motivated me to find a husband. In my search, I was impatient and did not make the right choice (because) I felt that I would go whoever came first since I would not be going to school anyway. This made me realize that in this life, if a parent does not encourage their child, this causes the child to be unhappy. It is not that my parents hated me, it is just what they knew. Eventually I found a husband. What I had been aiming for in life was to find a wealthy husband who would help me send my siblings to school. This would save them from going through what I had gone through with my father who was more worried that tuition fees would lead him to sell off all his cattle. When I found a husband, he told me he was wealthy. I did not check, ask or take time to find out any further. He was a Tanzanian. I always thought that if when I meet a husband, all my problems and worries would be solved. I would be wealthy but when it happened, life was not good at all. We were together for ten years and we separated. After the separation, I started living independently but in a life of full of hardships that I was never happy with. However, I finally found a good life when I encountered God and got born again. Before, I had been told so much about God but I thought all this was not important. I





**A conversation between Kabatesi Donatha and Binta Samantha**

thought being born again was only needed by old women who had seen enough of life.

I would like to take you back a little bit to my marriage. I was married to an adulterous man and by the time I left, I had contracted AIDS. Therefore my child, the lesson I want you to take, the one thing that you should avoid in life at all costs is men who will lie to you and distract you from your education and your God. If I had known God earlier, I would not have encountered these problems. I would have prayed to Him to help me find a decent husband but I used my own mind and only sought a wealthy man but in his wealth, I never found peace. In his wealth I never found life but instead I earned death.

When I left Tanzania, I came back home to Uganda and setup a business. Sometimes it went well and sometimes it was slow. This whole time, I never knew I had AIDS. I finally found out when I came to Rwanda got tested after another man had expressed interest in marrying me. This is when I found out I was sick. After I found out, I decided that I would commit suicide. The thought of getting really sick made me feel like committing suicide. At the time, I still didn't know God and never prayed but I had heard these words from some people that, 'If Judas Iscariot who sold Jesus Christ, had asked God for forgiveness, He might have forgiven him but because he committed suicide, he would not go to heaven.' These words inspired me to get saved and pray to God instead of committing suicide. I told my partner that I didn't know how to pray but I was going to ask God for forgiveness and I would go to heaven. He encouraged me and told me that that I would be forgiven by God and that God even had the power to heal my sickness. I did not believe him or agree with him. I told him that all I desired was to go to heaven. He told me that if God created you and your blood, he had the power to heal you. I disagreed and told him that all I wanted was to go to heaven. I kept on praying and going closer to God. This made me fear death less and less. What I need to tell you is that the word of God can give you a new beginning. The word of God can give you hope. Even if you are sick of AIDS, God has a plan for you. Just because you have AIDS, doesn't mean it is the end of you. Life goes on. Sometimes you are sick of AIDS then you hear that someone else has died of an car accident yet you remain alive. Whenever you encounter a big challenge or problem that burdens



**A conversation between Kabatesi Donatha and Binta Samantha**

your heart and you avoid going to the Lord with it, your problem continues to weigh on your life. But once you meet the Lord, he changes your destiny. Even if you are sick of AIDS, he has the power to heal you. As you pray, the first thing you get is a peace of mind, then you get peace to believe that life goes on. You don't lose hope and say you are dead instead you continue to say the word of the Lord which says, 'I will not die, I will live long so I can spread your word.' I separated with my husband in 1990 and I was sick when we parted ways, but to this day am alive and I don't even notice that AIDS exists. I have a peace of mind. I always thought I would get saved when I became an old woman but this should not be the case for you. Seek the Lord.

**Samantha Binta:**

Well aunt, these days there are many distractions we meet. For instance the country is developing fast and as it develops there are many distractions. You find that one can only have some fun when they are still young. This is when one can go to clubs, dance and enjoy but at the same time because of the economic crisis, most girls don't have the pocket money. This is what causes them to go to older men. In order to avoid this kind of life and to avoid following into the same life you lived what advice do you have to offer me? I am still young and about to join the university and university life is not very good because one needs money, what advice can you give me to avoid these distractions and stay away from such men?

**Kabatesi Donatha:**

My dear the advice I wish to give you.. I understand what you are telling me, you do need to have a life and there are others like you who don't have the means to enjoy such a life. But the word of God says that, 'Those who have faith in Almighty will not be shamed.' Binta my child, if you have faith in God and you find a good church, you will meet friends, parents and a community and if you pray to the Lord he will use all his means to take care of you. Let me give you an example of the bible story of Esther...

**Facilitator:**

Without interrupting you, could you please tell us, what gave you the strengths to carry on to today after you knew you were sick?





A conversation between Kabatesi Donatha and Binta Samantha

**Kabatesi Donatha:**

Truly and I will tell you the truth from the bottom of my heart, when I found out I was sick I knew then that I was going to commit suicide. But God rescued me, I met someone and accepted Christ. At the time Anti Retroviral drugs were not readily available to everyone and I did not even have the money to afford these drugs. So I resorted to giving myself to God and praying. I went to various religious crusades and got in touch with many preachers. One of them told me, 'Let me give you the source of healing for AIDS because right now medicines are not accessible. In order to make your sickness less painful, I suggest the word of the Lord.'

He told me to read the bible every morning, in the afternoon and at night as though I was taking a medication dosage. He told me to always confess to the Lord that I would not die and I would live very long in order to say the works of the Lord. I remained faithful and went on telling people the truth of my HIV status. This made some of them think I was crazy. I continued to work very hard and follow the Lord and pastors like Gitwaza. One day during one of his sermons he said, 'There is a woman here who was told by the Lord that she would be healed she should remain faithful and wait for her healing.' I separated with my husband in 1990 and found out I was sick in 1994 but I have never taken any medication ever since. I used to fall sick of malaria, headaches and wounds but I simply kept my faith and prayed. After a while, my body got better and I started feeling much better. I have never been retested and got a negative result but physically my appearance itself is a testimony of the work of the Lord. After a while, I went into full service of the God. I was sent to Uganda and many other places. I no longer think of AIDS much as a personal problem, I only think about other people who may be sick.

**Facilitator:**

Do you have any questions that you are curious about?

**Samantha Binta:**

I want to know what happened after you found out that you were sick? Did you remain in touch with your husband, do you know



**A conversation between Kabatesi Donatha and Binta Samantha**

where he is? Did you forgive him for what he did to you and causing you to live a life you did not like?

**Kabatesi Donatha:**

Honestly when I found out I was sick, I focused on God and He was generous to me so I did moved on. Before this, I was no angel myself – my own so I did not lay all blame on him. He died in 1997 but I never let it all weigh me down.

**Samantha Binta:**

What about your parents what do you have to say to them? What advice do you have for other parents who need to help their children?

**Kabatesi Donatha:**

I strongly advise parents to support their children to show them that they are happy with their education. They should not insult their children by calling them stupid and wasteful of their resources instead they should show the children that they are supportive and happy with their children' education and that it is beneficial to both the child and the parent. When a parent considers their child's education a burden and a waste, this causes the child to lose interest and find other ways to survive.





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### Kabaiesi Donatha & Binta Samantha

Story Number: SFH0061

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**Donatha:** I'm Kabaiesi Donatha, I am a servant of God. She is my sister's daughter.

**Samantha:** I am Samantha. Auntie, I want to ask you a question about your life, what you went through...

**Donatha:** Thank you my girl, it is always good to know. My life story is not impressive. I had parents and they loved me, but they were illiterate and did not know God. I managed to go to school but my parents used to threaten me, like my father would always accuse me of killing his cows, because he would sell one of his cows to get me school fees. My mother too used to tell me that the future of a girl is to get married...

Later on I got married. At first my dream was to get married to a rich man so that I could educate my sisters. My husband was a Tanzanian, I was nothing but a senior four graduate. I thought life was going to be better for me, but it wasn't the case...

After 10 years of marriage, we divorced. I started a normal life with challenges, started creating small businesses... but it was only one day when I got saved that my entire life changed. My heart was heavy, my husband used to cheat on me, I came to learn that I was positive. How I wish I had known God before...

I came back from Tanzania then, and went back home to Uganda. There I met another man who wanted to remarry me. That is when I went for a check-up, and I found out that I was positive... I almost committed suicide. I remembered Judah's story in the Bible and got strengthened and started praying so hard

What do I want to tell you here?





A conversation between Kabaiesi Donatha and Binta Samantha

God can formulate a new life for you. When you feel stranded, he can modify you into a new creature. Anything can come, you can be killed by an accident or any other minor thing... don't wait! Start now and serve God.

**Samantha:** But Auntie, you see this life, there are a lot of temptations, and the fact that we need to enjoy them before we get old. This wishing... it can make you do anything for life! What advice can you give me to help me get through?

**Donatha:** I very much understand, you're young and you need to enjoy your life. If you trust in God, he will never let you down... go to church, and get close to His people, I am sure they will help you. Follow and read Esther's story in the Bible. I remember when I got to know that I was positive, I thought it was the end of life... I was poor and had nothing, not even money to buy medicine. I was touched, I believed that God could save me and indeed he did! One servant of God prayed for me, recommended me to read at least three scriptures a day! Just like I would do for the dose... (?)

I did so, and saw God working for me. My immunity was down, I was ever down, with flu, headache, and etcetera... I have never taken any medicine before but I am looking strong and healthy! God has helped me up to date.

My advice to parents is to encourage their children, however much they could be struggling, to get their school requirements. They should not be showing them that their studying is a threat, it is bad and discourages them.

First and foremost God... thank you!

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