

My journey to find him

Thanks to the Lord Jesus Christ for this great blessing: I can now say I am a Christian and belong to the heavenly kingdom. It is an honor to tell what the Lord has done in my life and how He has changed it.

I did not know that following Jesus Christ would be so difficult, that I would have to sacrifice everything I had. But I did it. Yes, I did it from the bottom of my heart. The story in Matthew 13:44 in the Bible tells about a man who sold all he had to buy a field containing a great treasure. That is exactly what I did: I “lost” my family and the life I had known; and I put it all at Jesus’ feet.

The Past – My Family

I was born in Iraq to a conservative Muslim family that valued schooling and carefully practiced Islam. I have three sisters and one brother. My father was educated in Islam at the most famous Islamic university in Egypt, Al Azhar. He went to the mosque to pray five times each day, even for the early morning prayers.

My Childhood

When I was seven, my father got a job in Saudi Arabia. During the three years we lived there, I saw the other face of Islam: men and women were not happy and had no peace.

That was the worst time of my life, but God opened my eyes to see that Islam is incapable of dealing with the problem of sin. Behind closed doors I saw all kinds of sin, but in public people tried to look religious. The religious police showed no mercy in enforcing Islamic Law. Every Friday after noon prayers, those who were guilty of robbery had their hands brutally cut off with a knife.

These horrible memories made me question Islam and ask where God’s grace and mercy were for people.

As I Grew Up

I questioned Islamic Law. For example, why do women have to cover their hair? Why are men allowed to marry four women? And why do men have the power to divorce a woman at any time? Nobody would answer me, and most of the time people asked me to shut my mouth. That made me question Islam even more.

So I became a shallow, selfish, and dishonest person, afraid to say the truth. I was a slave to religion, practicing all the rituals and rules of Islam and preaching Islam to all my friends.

Holland

Later, God gave me my dream and heart’s desire, to live in a safe, beautiful county in freedom. I immigrated to Holland where my Christian neighbors from Iraq used to read the Bible and invite me to read with them. The miracles and the teachings of Jesus Christ amazed me, especially Matthew 5, 6, and 7. I began to compare Christianity and Islam.

At the same time, Dutch Christian believers used to come to help immigrants learn Dutch and invite us to their church's activities. They showed us love, compassion, and respect. One night, a Christian lady brought me her bicycle because she heard I did not have one. She walked the 10 miles back home in the cold weather. Her kindness and care touched my heart deeply. Another Dutch woman invited me to her church and asked me to translate their services into Arabic, even though they knew I was a Muslim.

In July 2002 I was invited to an Arabic Christian conference in Tilburg. The preacher talked about salvation through Jesus Christ. I wept the whole time and felt he was talking to me. I felt the power of Jesus Christ. Then the preacher came and asked me if I wanted to give my life to Jesus. I said yes, and he prayed with me to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of my life. I had come to that conference full of ignorance and sin and with an empty heart. I walked out of it with Jesus Christ as Lord of my life. I was now hungry for the Word of God and with joy began to read the Bible every day for hours. Sunday became the most beautiful day for me. Yet, I hesitated to be baptized.

Then God opened my eyes to see the truth. He used a Christian lady to challenge me to live completely for Jesus. It was very hard for me to give up my old way of life in Islam and make my family angry. But Jesus Christ gave me the strength to completely surrender to God and gain my new identity in Jesus. I got baptized in August 2003. Jesus Christ set me free completely from the bondage of Islam.

I thank the Lord for His love, mercy and forgiveness in honoring me to be His child.

My Life After I Received Jesus Christ

- I have become a positive person; I hold on to Jesus' promises.
- My fear is gone.
- I have a future and the promise of eternal life.
- I am not looking to others for love, but I give love to everybody.
- I love people, even people who oppose my faith.
- I separate myself from the world and live for Jesus.