

ZAINAB, EX-CHRISTIAN, USA (PART 1 OF 2)

Rating: 4.2

Description: A young girl involves herself greatly with Christianity but still feels something missing.

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This is a very long, detailed description of the topics I am most questioned about; my spiritual life, my conversion, my familial response to my conversion, and my future plans in Islam.

“No, a guy did not convert me”

My Spiritual Life:

I have been enamored with God since I was young. Like many children, I would stare into the clouds or stars and wonder who, what, where, why, and how was God. Trying to verify His presence, I would set up quasi-experiments to find proof. For instance, setting a glass on a table, and ask God to move it, to prove His existence. With no result, I would vary the object, time, and tried not watching (maybe God did not want me to see Him move it?). Another time, I tested different methods of prayer to see which ones “worked.” Among many other things, I tried praying on my face, on my knees, standing up, lying down, closing my eyes, having good posture, straightening my fingers, begging Him, offering a sacrifice, i.e., “God if you help me get a bicycle, I will never eat ice cream again.” After a while, I realized that if God did what I asked Him to do to prove Himself to me, or if there was a prayer method that guaranteed my desired result, then I would have been God, not He.

I was raised as a Christian, and as I grew up, I would go to different church denominations and ask the ministers how they knew, for sure, that God existed. Now, I would think, that this would be the question they are asked most often, but as it turns out, they are almost never asked this question, and even more surprisingly, for the most part, they do not appear to like being asked this question. Eventually, I met a pastor who was not afraid of this question, who, in fact, loved it, and who enjoyed and appreciated the genuine honesty of a searching soul. He was an intellectual - Rice University - Suma Cum Laude, but, more importantly, he was a highly spiritual individual. He answered every question I ever had, introduced me to many spiritual theories and principles, and helped me transform my prayer life from the childish

behavior of asking God for everything, as if my prayers were a holiday presents wish list, into the more mature meditative prayer and follower that listens for God's guidance and follows His direction. My life was blessed by having known both he and his wife.

I began teaching Sunday School to children when I was age sixteen. I love teaching children about God more than any other activity in the world, and believe that through God, this is my best talent. I have many funny stories about my experiences in teaching, however, if I go into it now, this already too lengthy page will be even longer.

A year later, I was asked to begin Christian Leadership Training. It was a very valuable experience, because besides learning additional worthwhile spiritual principles, I learned what pastors are taught in terms of the strengths and weaknesses of the argument for Christianity. This gives me a uniquely strong basis for arguing Islam over Christianity.

The next year, I was asked to serve on a Healing Ministries Team to aid those going through physical, spiritual, or emotional difficulty. I felt very fortunate to serve in this capacity because I was surrounded by the best people, in the best church that I had ever attended. I was much younger and inexperienced than the rest of the group and completely out of my league. Yet I stayed with it, because they possessed a knowledge that I desired. I always wanted to know "what to say," and "what not to say," to those in dire circumstances. I decide that unless the rest of the team figured out that I was in over my head, I was not going to tell them. Once again, I felt my life had been undeservedly blessed by getting to hang out and learn from those I most admired. Sometimes though, since I was not even close to their advanced level, I would look around the room and start thinking of the song from "Sesame Street,"

"One of these things is not like the others. One of these things just doesn't belong."

I also have many funny and interesting stories from working on this Healing Team, but again, it would make this much longer.

At some point, I began to consider my fellow team members - the people I thought the most spiritually elite and wise. Although they were superior to me in every way, I thought to myself that they were not where I would like to be when I reach their age. I perceived a distance from God in Christianity. I discussed this with my pastor, stating that I wanted to develop my relationship with God. He suggested I might try praying more often during the day, mentioning that Muslims pray five times daily which is suppose to aid in this matter. Of course he was not trying to peek my interest in Islam. Yet he did.

I had other difficulties with Christianity. The concept that heaven can only be obtained through having Jesus as your Savior with good and bad deeds having no relevance in the scheme of things, was an idea that always defied common sense to me.

Theoretically, in Christianity, a person who sins all day, every day of his life, will go to heaven if he accepts Jesus as his Savior, one second before he dies. The man that does all good, every day of his life, who does not accept Jesus as his Savior in his

lifetime, is sentenced to eternal hell. How much sense does that make? There are many additional problems with Christianity, but I will not go into them at this point.

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