

From Muslim to Catholic

By Michael A. (name withheld for protection)

When I thought about writing my testimony many things came to my head. Should I write it in order to share my Catholic and Christian faith with others? Should I add more reasons that will help others convert and see the light of the truth and the darkness of false teachings? What do I want from sharing my conversion? I decided to write my story as it is with nothing made up. Since I am trying to be honest and of course I can share more reasons about why Islam is a false religion or why Protestantism is not for me. Yet, this is not what my conversion is all about, my conversion was something real which I went through and I believe every person has their own story, so it will not be fair to share my story as a tool for conversion. But as a reason to give thanks and Glory to the Almighty.

Childhood

I grew up in Saudi Arabia and was raised in a liberal Sunni Muslim family. Religion to my family was a secondary thing and not important. Of course it is part of our identity since our society is a very conservative and religious one. We never claimed that we were against Islam or think of ourselves in a way that we are less Muslim than others. We didn't really follow the teachings and embrace it as a guidance to our life and that's what made us unique and unlike the rest of the Saudi society. However in school It was a different story since our education system focuses a lot on religion... From a very early age we study Quran (Islamic word of God), Tawheed (Islamic Theology), Fiqh (Islamic laws), Hadith (the sayings of Mohammed), Tafsir (commentary on the Quran) and Islamic History. All this material made a very big impact on the young Saudi students and shaped them into being more religious and more loyal to their faith, The Sunni Salfi Islamic faith, to oppose other religions and ideas such as Shiaism, Christianity, Secularism, Atheism and Liberalism. As a result many Saudis will never consider to take a look at different opinions in the world and they will stick with what they were taught. I like to call it a brainwashing from a very early age.

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I was taught many things in school about Christianity which for many years blocked me from seeing the truth of the Christian message. First I was taught that the Bible is corrupted and the real Bible contained the name Ahmed (another name of Mohammed) and Christians and Jews corrupted the bible because they wanted to hide the truth. Second, that Jesus is not the Son of God, we were taught that Christians loved Jesus so much that they made him another God with Allah (the Arabic name for God) when he was only a prophet and Messiah (we called him Messiah without even knowing the meaning of it). Third, Jesus didn't die on the cross and that another person took his place. Since God would never allow one of his prophets to experience this kind of humiliation. As a result Christians worship the other person who died on the cross. Fourth, Christians worship three Gods according to the Quran whom are Allah, Jesus and Mary. Finally, Christianity is a false religion and every Christian is an infidel which according to Mohammed I should not begin them with greeting. I knew all of this information before the age of 10! As a matter of fact, I tried to convert my Filipino housemaid to the one true religion at that age.

God and Religion

I always believed in God, I knew him in my heart, when I had hard time with my parents, I would go to my room and start to cry to him and asked him many questions. God became a friend of mine who is a very good listener. However, I didn't practice Islam very well, I didn't pray the five prayers and to me it was only a ritual that my heart wasn't into. My family didn't push it hard on me, they advised me to pray without forcing me or beating me (which Islam orders you to do with your children).

When I was 11 years old I started to become religious, Jesus had a big role in it too! It started when I listened to a long sermon by a famous Arab Shaikh whose name is Dr. Tariq Al Suwaidan, Al suwaidan was talking about the signs of the end of the World and the second coming of Jesus (Muslims too believe in the second coming) and how close we are toward

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the end, he said that when Jesus comes back he will kill the pigs, and break the cross and rule the Islamic world for 7 years after killing the False messiah (the anti-Christ). What controlled me at the moment was the fear of dying and going to hell, because I was not praying the 5 prayers. According to Islam who ever doesn't pray the 5 prayers is an apostate! So I started to pray since then and I ended this religious experience with prayer to God, where I asked him when Jesus comes back I want to be in his Army (And I think God answered this prayer many years later). After this sermon, Islam took over my thoughts. I wanted to please God with whatever he wanted. I dreamed that Islam would take over the world and the glory of the Islamic caliphate (the Islamic papacy) will be restored soon. In the west these words might be wrong, but in the middle east most Muslims have such dreams. After all, the media and the culture pictured to us that more Islam equals more glory. The Islamic Shaikhs were encouraging us to dream that Rome will fall to Islam soon, as Constantinople was conquered centuries ago.

My experience and days with radical Islam began to slow down and shift to the other side, for two main reason. First , the jihadist start to attack the westerners in my own city, bombing places and attacking the Saudi police. Until that time, I never had any problem with jihad (Holy War). In fact Al Qardawi (the most influential shaikh in the Islamic world) made a fatwa, giving permission for Muslims to commit a suicide attacks. Saudi schools taught us that jihad is great thing. But killing innocent Muslims or attacking Muslim forces and infidels who live in our country for work, was a new thing that I could not understand or accept. The second reason happen when I went to Germany for a vacation. After ending my prayers in a mosque, a Tunisian Shaikh came to me and asked, "what brought you to Germany?" I answered, "I came here for a tourism" he replied in an angry tone saying, "This is not a good place for tourism, this is a land of infidels and sensuality.. " He continues, "Is there any person in the world leave the the holy land of Islam [Saudi Arabia] and come to the land of infidels?" I

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asked him a similar question, asking him why did he left a Muslim country like Tunisia and come to (bad) Germany, he answered me saying he came to Germany for studying because the German government gave him scholarship. After the conversation I knew that I couldn't consider those people as an example of Islam or life. These experiences marked the end of radical Islam within me and I became a "normal Muslim". (A Muslim who picks and choose teachings from Islam and ignores other teachings). Interestingly a few months after this conversation, there was a young German Muslim who is from a Turkish background was arrested for attempting to bomb a bus in Germany. He was attending this same mosque that I spoke with this Shaikh at.

Crisis of Faith

My father sent me to the USA at the age of 17 to learn English. I lived for 6 month with a Catholic family. But we rarely talked about religion (I tried to say to them that Islam was hijacked and it is a very peaceful religion). One time they invited me to a church, but I refused to go since I believed Christianity is a false religion at the first place, so why I should go? However I fell in love with the American values and culture. I admired the West in general for the freedom of speech and the civil rights. It was not a hard thing to embrace since they were very reasonable and I did not only like it but I started to believe in it also. I went back to Saudi in 2008 with these ideas which are to consider liberal in my culture. I started to struggle with my society since they reject women rights, freedom of Speech, freedom of religion, secularism and many other westerner ideas. However my faith in Islam was in good status. I was still believing in it, practicing it, but as rituals, not as an ideology to control my life.

The turning point in my life was in 2009, in that year a famous (infidel) person died. I was chatting with my friends about it. I said "may God bless his soul". Surprisingly, these word made my friends angry, they said to me that asking forgiveness and praying for infidels is a wrong and false thing to

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do. I told them it is something between me and God and I can't understand why they will feel so offended from my action. However they were right. Allah in the Quran forbade Muslims to pray for a dead non-believers after knowing the he or she didn't embrace Islam and Shaikhs made a lot of fatwas forbidding us from praying to non-Muslims and even attending to their funerals. All of that left a big question mark in my head, since I always felt in my heart that God is love and good. But now in the books and in Islam I find God in a different picture than the one I always assumed to be. For the first time in my life I start to dare and examine my beliefs with a skeptic mindset.

What made things worse is a conversation I had with a Shia Muslim, where he gave me some hadith from Sunni books to support the Shia position on Ali as the successor of Mohammed and that Abu baker and Omar (the first two successors of Mohammed) betrayed Mohammed's clear declaration that Ali is his successor, in Hadith of the pond of Khumm. I was terrified from the idea that Shia may have got it right. Since they are doing very wrong things in their practices, that will make most Sunnis call them polytheist (which is the biggest crime against Allah), for example they ask the Intercession of dead people to pray for them. They believe in the authority of the house of Mohammed.

Plus they hit themselves with knives every year in the celebration of Ashura. They do mutrt'ah marriage (which is almost the same as protestation) even though Mohammed allowed this kind of marriage when he was a prophet). So I can't believe that a religion like that is a true religion since it goes against the authentic towhead by praying for others than Allah where we Sunni's only pray to Allah (the funny thing is, that there is an authentic Sunni hadith about a blind man who asked god through the intercession of Mohammed and many leaders of the Sunnis and Suffies used this hadith as an example that intercession of saints is fine. However modern Salfi Sunnis try to ignore that fact).

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Another fact that took my attention was about the book of bukhari (the most authentic Sunni book after the Quran). The book was written 260 years after the death of Mohammed and even though most Muslims will try to defend it by saying that bukhari thousands of sayings of Mohammed are backed up with the lines of people date back to the time of Mohammed. However one can easily question the reliability of Mohammed sahaba's (friends) since they themselves fought against each with hadiths before they would fight with weapons.

I started to ask myself, how can the people whom we were told that they are the example for us to follow and who saw the prophet himself and lived with him, killed their Muslim brothers and curse each other? Who can assure us that they didn't lie and make this stuff up for political games? Since they didn't act with any kind of holiness and killed one another. For example, Mohammed wife Aisha fought against Mohammed cousin Ali (who was the leader of half of the Islamic world at the time) and the sahaba Muawiyah fought too against Ali and we are told by the Muslim Shaikhs that both of them are good people and their words are authentic since they saw the prophet! Not only that, but Abu Hurairah, who spent 3 years in the company of the Prophet narrated around 5,000 hadith which surpassed others who lived with the prophet their whole life. By looking at Islam this way, Islam as whole started to fall apart.

Christians ..worship one God!

While I was searching for the truth about Islam, another option which I didn't consider become appealing. Suddenly I started to search for the name of "JESUS CHRIST". I never wanted to investigate Christianity since I always assumed that it is polytheistic corrupted religion. I can't understand what made me look for it at the time. But the Holy Spirit was pushing me to look for Jesus, I saw videos and testimonies on the YouTube about Muslims who accepted Christ as their personal Lord and savior. Each story

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goes like this "Christ appear to me in a dream" or "Christ proved himself to me in a vision" and "Jesus paid everything for me on the Cross" therefore "I became Christian". To me the videos were nonsense, I thought this is American Hollywood propaganda in order to make us Christians. However, one video stayed in my mind, the video was about a pastor who was saying, "God left his heavenly Glory and took on human flesh by the person of Jesus and died on the Cross so he can save you by his blood". The message to me was something new, it was the first time I heard about the incarnation.

I always thought that Christ was made God by the Christians, but seeing God becoming a man is a new view. The concept of one God in itself shocked me, for I thought Christians worshiped three Gods. I wanted to know more about Jesus. In Islam , they taught us about Adam, Noah , Moses, Mohammed and other prophets but never they told us the story of Jesus, they only tell us who Jesus is not. So I thought the best way to learn more about his life is by watching a movie. I watched the first hour of "Jesus of Nazareth" but I didn't continue viewing it because my parents came to my room and I didn't want them to see me watching a Christian movie. I was planning to go the USA again so I asked God, in my heart to allow me to go the US. So I can feel free when I search for him, 2 months later I was in the US.

I didn't keep my promises to search for the truth, I came to the US and wasted my time with my friends, partying and clubbing. Falling down into all kinds of sins. My deep questions created a crisis to my faith which was not helping my spiritual needs. My soul was damaged because of my lifestyle. Months later, I entered a teen Christian forums, by chance, and I register by the name of 'Lost Arabian'. My name was an clear example of who I was at the time. I made many statements and asked the people over there very hard questions. Such as, "all main religions says that believe this or go to hell". For example , " Muslims will tell you to believe in their religion or you will go to hell and Christians do the same thing. If I was a born and raised

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in another culture and never knew the truth about Jesus, do I will go to hell?" and I asked them about their differences. I mentioned to them that I saw Seven Day Adventist who claimed that the pope is the Anti Christ, how can you want me to believe in a religion when you have all this differences?

The Christians tried very hard to answer my questions but two of them sent me messages in private asking me if I would accept Jesus. One of them was a Baptist girl who started to quote scriptures for me to prove that Mohammed is liar and that Muslims will burn in hell fire. She told me she will pray for me. The other person was trying to convince me that Jesus is Lord, so he told me, " why don't you ask Jesus to prove himself to you?". I answered him by saying , "I can't". To me, asking others than God means I am worshipping more than one God and I am still Muslim (even though it was just by name) so I found it a scary thing to challenge God since there is no proof, at that time that Islam is not from God. So that person asked me if I wanted to ask God to prove to me that Jesus is his son and I told him I am fine with that kind of prayer. I asked God and told him that I am lost and if Jesus is your son prove it to me. Since I did that prayer, I experienced a very deep love for Christ. I am not sure that the words can express what I mean by that. But since then Jesus started taking over my mind. I couldn't take him out of my thoughts. I didn't want this feeling to take over me. I said to myself "just because I feel that way about Christ, does not mean I will end up Christian , After all , I didn't want to be like those videos on YouTube whom I was laughing at them and accusing them to be frauds. I wanted more reasons than 'feeling'."

Reading a Bible was not an idea, but I felt that I did understand the Christian message through viewing websites. I agree with the message of the gospel, I can't earn eternity by my good deeds only, since God is Holy, I can't stand in front of him telling him I deserve heaven. I need his mercy not his justice. Jesus Christ paid it all through his work on the cross. As I told a Saudi friend about it after my conversion, she said to me that the story is so beautiful that it is so hard to accept. I had the same problem too,

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the Christian message is very attractive but I had a lot of questions in my mind. When I was searching about Jesus on YouTube, I usually ended up with Islamic videos attacking the divinity of Jesus. I even watched the de Vinci code movie, all of this made me more hungry for Christ, I want to know the truth about Jesus.

I was lost and Christ found me.

Before Ramadan 2010, I decided not call myself a Muslim anymore. But I gave the God of Islam one last chance. I told him, if Islam is his religion then he should prove it to me. I didn't believe in Islam at that time since I came to the point that I disagree with most of it's principles and I saw a lot of false accusations made against other religions like Christianity , and Judaism. But I didn't see a way or an idea to replace it. I wanted to give God a chance to say something about Islam. I got the sign during Ramadan, while I was reading the Quran I knew that I can't believe in this religion anymore.

Each verse I read was about hating the Jews and attacking them . Since we were children, we were raised with the idea to hate Jews. Because God hated them and they are the brothers of pigs and monkeys. And of course one day a tree will talk and say: "here is a Jew behind me come o Muslim and kill him". In every Friday prayer back home we will hear these words. however, now there are no reasons to hate the Jews and I reject when religion teaches me to hate other human beings because of their color , race and religion. Interestingly, God gave me a very clear sign about where I was headed. It was happening during the last days of Ramadan where I came in front of a picture of the Archangel Michael who was standing on the head of Satan.

In Islam we believe in the Angel Michael, but we don't know a lot about him. I had a very special feeling while viewing the Image and a strong desire to know more about him. I started to search about him and learn more from both Islamic and Christian sources. This Angel according to the Christian

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sources was a Warrior to God's Army in Heaven and in the ancient time. He threw Satan and the Falling Angels from Heaven. After days of searching and reading about him I made a weird prayer where I asked the Almighty to help me to find the truth by sending this Angel to lead me to truth. As soon as I end the prayer something touched my spirit and my heart, I felt that an answer was given to me.

A voice inside me was saying to me Jesus is the Truth and calling me to accept him. I might consider this experience a Supernatural one, since I never experience the reality of anything supernatural in my life. But this one was very real and new thing. I was scared because of it , but I knew that I will have peace once I surrender to it. For the voice which called me to Jesus was burning my soul and put upon my heart the love of Christ. The name of Jesus Christ was so sacred to me that a flame of adoration was in my heart towered him. I couldn't sleep for three days, the invitation to surrender to Jesus took over my mind.

I started to cry, wanting any one to help me and guide me to Christ. I couldn't avoid this voice and the voice would not leave me alone. In those three days I was struggling between my fear of committing polytheism and the voice inside me that plainly calling me to Christ. That struggle is a true battle between Islam and the 21 years which I was raised in and Christ. I found a Catholic hymn called, "Guardian Angel from Heaven so bright", I sang it with tears , knowing that I am heading to unknown future. I felt the presence of God more in the next two days, I knew it was he who is calling me to him, yes Jesus is God and the King of Kings himself called me to him. That thought made me speechless. I bowed down on the third day and prayed the most heretical prayer ever, yet a very honest one. I said to him something like this :

"Jesus, I don't know if I should pray for you or to the Father or the Holy Spirit. I am afraid to pray for you, and God The Father will get mad because

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I forget him, or the Holy Spirit will get annoyed too. I really don't understand how the trinity works, but I know that you are real and you are my God. and I accept you as my personal Lord and Savior. I am not sure what will happen to me , but please Jesus take care of me I put my trust on you.

Amen”

After the prayer I went to sleep. I woke up the next day and I knew I was different. I am a Christian now, even though I don't realize what that really meant. When I accepted Jesus, I didn't want to change my life style or make any commitment. I just wanted to continue my life, the only change would be was that I accept Jesus as a divine being. However God had another plan for me. The next day after my conversion , I sent a private message to a YouTuber thanking him for a video about Jesus.

The Youtuber response to me after seeing that my hometown is Saudi Arabia, he asked me if I was Christian I told him yes and I converted yesterday. He asked me if I read the Gospel which my Response to him was no, he asked me for my address and sent to me a New Testament. I read the gospel of John, it was a shock to me ,the gospel was very clear, easy and plain to read.. While the Quran you need a commentary for every verse to understand it. I stopped when I read this words, "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God".

I started to cry, it was the greatest gift I ever received. Now, I can call God 'Father' and I can be his Child. It was the first time I could have this relationship with God. It was something new and revolutionary, since I was only a slave of God and that's what Islam taught us about him. The teachings of Christ was what I was looking for. Christ didn't make jihad or order his followers to kill others, he didn't ask us to hate others. On the contrary, he taught us to love our enemies and pray for them. He asked us to be pure from inside and to fight sin and remove it from our thoughts. He forgive even those who crucified him. When I prayed I felt the Holy Spirit in

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my heart. and many times I started to cry because of the joy and love towered God. Through Jesus I started to know God . This is the God I who I knew when I was a child, the God of heart not the God of the Quran.

What's Next ?

Two days after my conversion I went to the Christian website, where I asked them many questions and I sent a message to the Baptist girl. I thanked her for her prayers and notifying her that God answered them and I asked her "what is next?", she told me that Baptism is the next step. However, she gave me advice that would change my world. She asked me to go to any church, such as the Baptist Church, non-denomination churches, Bible churches or any other protestant Churches. But she gave me a warning from joining three groups Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses and Catholics.

Now, from historical point view I knew that Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses can't be Christians. Yet Catholicism is the Face of Christianity for 2000 years. My views about Catholicism was negative since they believe that the Pope is the vicar of Christ and they put statues and ask the intercession of Saints. All of these stuff I was raised against. I knew that Martin Luther made the protestant church by declaring the bible alone is the source of the Christian doctrine but did the early Christian believe in what Luther taught? I had many questions and I knew going to a Protestant church and ignoring the Catholic/ Orthodox Churches because of the Islamic influence is not a fair thing to do. Especially because of my lack of knowledge about Church history. I ignored her advice for a while and focused for the next month on reading the bible and growing in faith. But the Church thing will come again very soon.

I went to Paltalk (voice chat program) were there are many Arabic Christians who gather together to read the bible, chat about faith and debate Muslims. I found out, I was not alone, that there are many converts. I was amazed by the work of God. I went there and learn a lot about my

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Christian faith. During that time, I felt a great joy with Jesus that I left my Saudi friends and refused to answer their calls to go to night clubs or partying . I would have more Joy with Jesus than going out with my Saudi friends. Plus my friends were a straight road to sin, and I started to hate sin. In Paltalk , I found out more about how fake the Islamic religion is.

How it is an Anti Christ Religion and how Jesus fulfilled prophecies of the Old Testament. however, I found some views of Christians that are contradictory, for example a girl (who later I discovered she had a Calvinistic point of view) started to scare me that I am not Christian unless I go and confess in front of all the world that I am Christian. I knew if I did that I will lose my future and my family and maybe my life! I started to cry to God, " Forgive me Father, I am so weak and coward". Yet , other Christians would tell me to hide my faith and to be careful that no one will report me to the Saudi government.

I found people who supported baptizing babies because it was similar to circumcision and replaced circumcision. Yet others attacked it and said it was not Biblical. I saw people who believed in the Real presence of Jesus in The Eucharist, others saw it as only a symbol. Baptism itself was only a symbol according to some Christians, while others viewed it as a necessity for Salvation. These contradictions are only few things about what I found between the Christians.

After being away from my Saudi friends, I started to feel lonely. I wanted to share my faiths with other Christians. So I thought I would go to Church. But the question was, "which Church?". I knew if I went to an Evangelical Church, that means I will judge others to be false. After all , The Catholic Church puts a great claims upon itself as Christ one true Church and The Pope is the Successor of Saint Peter who Christ Gave him the Keys and the authority to guide his Sheep. and Evangelicals will easily come and tell me that the Catholic Church is the Whore of Babylon and there are no biblical evidences for the Catholic claims. If I would follow my feelings , I

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would chose the evangelical churches, because it lines up with my Islamic background. I went to Jesus, I asked him, can you show me which Church I should go to? I got a straight and unexpected answer. I knew I should go to the Catholic Church. I went to my computer to search for one and I found one near my university. I sent a message to the Campus priest (who was not a priest of the same parish but an Assistant Priest) asking him that I want to know more about the Catholic Faith. He wrote me back and invited me to meet him.

I went there wearing the best of my clothes, putting the most expensive of my perfumes as if I was going to a date. I met the young Priest in the Church, he was surprised about my story and about my nationality and background. He called an RCIA person who the priest called him “a half Catholic”, to help me to understand the Catholic Faith. Since he himself is a former Baptist and had the desire to enter the Church that Easter. Then the Priest took me to the Alter. where there was a big Crucifix, we knelt and prayed and then he blessed me with the sign of the cross. I said to myself “wow, this is The Church, which we see in the movies!” The priest invited me to come to the Mass next Sunday. I discovered that the name of the Church was St. Michael. The Crucifix had a big impact on me which made me cry when I thought about it in home, because it was symbolizing Our Lord, who died for us .

I went to Paltalk and I started to ask people over there if it is okay to be a Catholic. The responses I got was not the same. Some people told me all the churches are the same and they are the houses of God, another person told me that he would recommend me a Bible church than a Catholic one so I can grow in faith. But the most extreme view I got is when I asked a Pentecostal Pastor. The Pastor told me that he himself is a former Catholic. And he bag me to not to go to the Catholic Church, which he called it a "road to hell". He said to me the Papacy was made in the Middle ages to control people. And that the real presence of Jesus is a “waste of time”. I told him I bought a Catholic Bible. He said to me throw it in the garbage,

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because they added 7 books into it to teach purgatory. He quoted me scriptures to convince me that Catholicism is not from God. I asked him questions about the Bible and where did it come from and when did the Church get corrupted? He didn't give me a convincing answer.

We switched to talking about Mary and the saints and how wrong and unBiblical it is to pray for the saints. He did use my Sunni background to tell me how these actions are wrong. He gave me a file he wrote about the history of the Christian Church, it began with the early church, jumps to Nicea then started to attack the Medieval Catholic Church and accusing her of killing the reformation Saints and than how the gift of speaking in tongues was re-discovered in the 20th century. Now I consider that file a garbage, but back then I thought that this was a summery of the history of Christianity. The Pastor supported me with lot of attractive things that gave me the impression that Jesus opened a lot of doors to me.

Such as promises to take care of me, to put me with an American Christian family, to give me all that I need for my spiritual journey for Christ and to even help me to settle here in the US. After all of this, I thought about all my worries and the future would end soon and Jesus is taking care of me. I got the impression that Catholicism is a Pagan Satanic Cult. However, days later questions started to pop into my head. If Catholicism is that bad, why is it that the Pope and the one billion Catholics , didn't know all of that? Why would they believe what they believe and continue to believe it? I heard a lot of objections to the Catholic Faith, but I hardly let Catholicism to explain itself. Just because this pastor was going to take care of me, does not mean I should accept it and ignore Catholicism. I wanted to search for the truth, not for pleasures.

Seeking the fullness of the Truth.

I went to the RCIA person and started to ask him a lot of questions. He said to me that he understands my objection since he used to be protestant himself. He didn't condemn or attack his former faith and told me it's a great

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place to start. But the Catholic Church has the fullness of truth. He gave me a book by Patrick Madrid called "where is this in the bible". After reading it, I came to the conclusion that Catholics have answers to every objection. I decided to take my time to study the Catholic faith and the Protestant objections and decide for myself. I can't let pastors and priests take away the joy of Christ. I want to find the fullness of Jesus teachings, I don't want to gamble my eternity. Either the Catholic Church is Christ Church or it is an apostate church, if it is his Church I want to be part of it. If not, than it is a big lie. I spend thousands of dollars on books and videos materials to study the Catholic Faith and the objections which were already in my mind. The result of that six months of studying was amazing to me.

I began first with the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, my question was not to about what Jesus words meant. After all, the Eucharist is either his body or just symbol. And people can interrupt the words of the Lord as they like. The only way to know about what Jesus meant it is by going to the early Christian church and see what they believed about it. The Catholic Church got it right, All of the Church fathers believe that the Eucharist was not only a symbol, but the real presence of Jesus Christ.

And we can begin with Ignatius who was the disciple of the apostle John where he did believe the real presence. And saint Polycarp another disciple of John believed too on the real presence. To me, I didn't need anymore evidence (which there are many). If the early Christians, who saw the apostles accept the Eucharist as the body and blood of Jesus, then I will accept their views. The practice in itself was tied to the Passover, since you can't have forgiveness of sins until you eat the sacrifice and Jesus is the new Passover Lamb.

Second was the bible, "After Reading Rome Sweet Home", by the former evangelical pastor Scott Hahn. I noticed that the idea of Bible alone was not Biblical in itself nor did the apostles practice it, on the contrary, the bible taught us that the Church is the foundation of the truth and Jesus didn't

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leave for us a book but a Church. Which he promised to guide through the holy spirit to all truth. The New Testament canon had a lot of debate about which books should be in and out. Many churches read the letters of the Pope Clement of Rome as Scriptures and many believed that 1st and 2nd Peter was not scripture and others argued the book of Revelation does not belong to the Bible.

The Catholic Church using the quotations of the Bible from the early Christians and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit which works in the bishops, closed the canon of scripture of the new testament in 382 at the council of Rome under the authority of Pope Damasus I. So for hundreds of years, Christians didn't have the Bible as we have it today. And it is the Catholic Church who made that decision. Yet I am told to ignore this tradition and the authority of the Church and appeal to man made idea called "Sola Scriptura". The church didn't add 7 books to the old testament as the Pastor claimed, but it used the canon of Scripture that was used by the Jews in Egypt, which is written in Greek, modern Judaism uses a canon which they put together in 100 AD and they throw books from it which clearly teach about Christ suffering on the Cross.

While the Catholic Church used an older canon and the same councils that declare the canon of the New testament, gave a list of the books of the Old testament too. So it is hypocrisy to me to throw 7 books which Martin Luther did and accept the other books as the word of God just because another religion decided in 100 AD to remove those books from their Canon. Martin Luther tried to take the book of James and Revelation too from the Bible. My Protestant friends will use passages from the Bible to define their belief, yet every one of them will preach something different than the other. For example, some of them believe that you can lose your salvation, others believe that once you accept Jesus you are saved forever.

Some Protestants believe in the rapture and build whole theories from it. Those who believe it have no doubts about the Biblical roles of the rapture,

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yet another Protestant will deny such a thing. Acknowledging that the whole thing was not taught in the early church nor by Jesus and the apostles and the Bible doesn't say anything about it. I used to hear a lot of people come to me and say, "the Bible said so", but now I know that it's their human interpretation of the Bible but not the Bible itself. After all, using the Bible and making a private interpretation has led people to fall in error and many new denominations and religions started to appear because of it.

The Bible is the Word of God, but the Bible point out clearly to the Church, the people were baptized and got the Holy spirit threw the apostles laying hands on them, others like Simon Magus wanted that authority and peter rebuked him. So it is clear evidence that the apostles are not like every one of us, since they themselves chose Matthias to take the place of Judas, if people want to deny the apostolic secession than they must ask why the apostles need to chose new apostles, if everyone is his own bishop and pope?

We do see a hierarchy church in that first century church itself and Peter was appointed by The Good Shepherd Jesus to shepherd his sheep. We see a council to declare a matter of faith like the end of circumcision, when they disagree there is a way of solving the problem by a council, they just didn't go out and start a new church when they disagree with each other. Since it is one true faith and the Holy Spirit will teach it all truth. It's clear that the church did practice the authority of losing and binding.

The role of the Bishop of Rome is clear in the early church, I was told that the Papacy was a later invention in the middle ages by the Pastor. Yet we see Clement of Rome at the first century talk with authority which is given to him by the apostles, writing to the church of Corinth which was not under the Roman territory to end their rebellions against the bishop. Pope Victor in the second century wrote to the eastern bishops, warning them with excommunication if they didn't agree with the dates of Easter, no one questioned the Pope's authority to do such thing. St. Iranues who was a

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hearer of Polycarp said that every church must agree with the Church of Rome since the Apostles Peter and Paul build it and it holds the ancient teachings of the apostles. All of this evidence is in the first two centuries, yet I am told that the primacy of the Bishop of Rome was a later invention. My view of the Church started to change, I didn't need always to use the Bible to prove a teaching, but I can trust the Holy Spirit that guide the church since 2000 years.

The intercession of Saints and the Marian doctrine were very hard to me at the beginning, since I didn't like the idea of asking others than God. Of course I was deeply influenced by my Islamic upbringing which was against such actions. However, as a Christian I should not let Islam shape the way I view things. Many Muslims, when they convert to Christianity chose to not go to Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican Churches, not because something wrong with those churches, but because they allow Islam to guide them into the sect of Christianity that is plain and simple like Islam. To me, either I accept the truth as it is or I am picking and choosing. Since we are all alive in Christ and part of his body I can ask saints and Mary to pray for me like I will ask any person here on earth to pray for me.

After reading a book called, "Hail holy Queen", by Scott Hahn. I knew that all the Marian dogmas by the Church had a Biblical root. I discovered much more about the role of Mary from the Bible through the guidance of the church and its tradition which gave me more respect to the Catholic Church for teaching a full truth, not part of the truth like other churches do. I feared Mary at the beginning, but after praying the gospel with her through the Rosary. I started to love my "Mother", she always took me to her son. Jesus gave us his Mother on the Cross and showing honor and respect to our mother is not something we should be afraid of.

Becoming Catholic.

After this long search and examine of the Catholic dogmas and teachings, I came to the Conclusion that I founded Christ Church. That does not mean

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that Protestants as individual to me are not my brothers and sisters in Christ. In fact, most of them are very saintly people and we learn a lot from them. However, without the church authority, Protestantism will produce a lot of errors and false religions and doctrines which will make confusion in the Christian world. I and many other new Christians suffered from these differences of where is the truth within Christianity. Another good thing that came out of this, is that it affirmed my Christian faith. I discovered that the Gospels do go back to the time of Jesus' apostles and was not corrupted as Muslims want us to think.

The De Vinci code is nothing but false history, to anyone who studied church history. Christ was God from the beginning and the early Christian viewed him this way. The idea that the church made him God or a god in 325 is a joke, since we have many writings which wrote about the divinity of Christ from a very early time. I started to know why other gospels such as the gnostic and infancy are false and fabrication and why they didn't enter the cannon of the New testament.

And by knowing that it helped me to see more about how fake Islam is, since Islam stole many things and claimed that it is from God, but those stories were taken from fabrication books such as the infancy Gospel. The story of Jesus creating bird from clay which is mentioned in the Quran was stolen from the infancy gospel of Thomas, that dates to the third century. There many things in the Church tradition that shake the foundation of the Islamic religion. So I believe God wanted me to go through all of that so my faith could be affirmed and to help me witness to Muslims.

My parents knew about my conversion after visiting me in the U.S. My father said to me that I should come back to Islam or I am no longer his son. And that he will not pay my university tuition. I said to him I will not leave Jesus, so he kicked me out of my house. I was happy that I was persecuted for Christ at the moment, yet I was very sad about what will happen to me. My liberal family were ashamed of me. They accused me of

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being brainwashed, a traitor and coward who wanted to be like “them” (Westerners). They accused me of everything, but never once did they want to accept that I searched for the truth. I said to Jesus that I am so broken inside and I want his help. I went to the Cathedral and prayed and many Catholics prayed for me too. My parents changed their mind in two days and accepted me to come back with one condition, that is not tell anyone back home about my Christian faith, so I don't end up with a trouble with the government.

I entered RCIA at September 2011. My RCIA program was going well, but I had to leave to my country for an unexpected event which occurred in my life that forced me to leave the US. I asked the deacon if he would allow me to get baptized, since there is no Catholic Church in Saudi Arabia. But he gave me a negative answer that left me with little hope to getting baptized before I had to leave. I was sad at the moment, I wanted to receive the Body and Blood of Our Lord and to enter a full communion with his Church.

I went to talk to the same priest who welcomed me to the church. I told him that I am leaving in ten days to Saudi Arabia and I want to enter the Catholic Church since I can't do it in Easter. He promised me to ask the permission from the archbishop for my baptism since he thought that I was ready. I was praying that the archbishop will give his approval, which he did five days before leaving to Saudi. Three days before my trip to Saudi I was Baptized, Confirmed and received my First Communion. Jesus continues his blessings upon me. My baptism marked the end of the beginning of my journey toward Go and a beginning of a long pilgrimage toward the promised land, The Kingdom of Heaven, where Jesus is our bread and shepherd during this long journey.