

Revival & REFORMATION

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Lost at Sea, Found by Jesus

By Anonymous

After a great night fishing on the Mediterranean, my friends and I thought it would be refreshing to end the evening with a quick swim. We were strong, young men; nobody was thinking about risks or dangers. The sea was rougher than we'd thought.

In the dark, I lost contact with the friend swimming with me. I couldn't see the boat either. By the time I realized I was lost, I was exhausted. The frightening realization slowly dawned that I didn't have enough strength to reach the shore, a far off shadow dotted with a few dim lights.

I was alone. I knew there was no human being, no help within my reach. I knew this was my end. The thought of my family overwhelmed me; I realized in horror that I would not be able to say good-bye to those I loved the most. Just then, a hand gripped my shoulder and I heard a voice say, "Don't worry. I have walked on water." When the hand released and disappeared, I found myself on land. I did not know how I got there.

The next few days passed, but not normally. I had dreams, frequent strange dreams. I was jobless, and took a temporary job that wasn't even in my field. One day I was telling one of my new coworkers about a dream I had of an old man with a long robe who wanted me to come with him.

"Oh," my coworker assured me, "That is Sidna Issa. Jesus." I didn't understand what that meant, but I agreed to go with my co-worker to a church. I had grown up carefully schooled in my family's faith; it was part of our society. Even though religion was not the center of our personal lives, we deeply respected the state faith. Attending a church was not approved.

That's why, when I stepped into the church, I was surprised to see many of my ethnic group there, many who evidently believed in Jesus. They welcomed me and told me about Christianity. But when they explained who Jesus is, one question kept haunting me. "How can a prophet be God?"

After much research, I did come to the conclusion that only God can raise someone from the dead. That didn't satisfy all my questions about the divinity of Jesus, of course. But one thing I knew—I could not ignore the One who had saved me from death.

Despite my questions, I started to get involved in the church. But I began noticing politics and power struggle within the group. I felt confused. I lost the peace I had experienced when I first learned about Jesus. I even considered returning to my childhood faith, but I

felt compelled to continue searching for truth. I spent hours searching YouTube and watching countless videos, trying to remove the doubts in my heart.

During one of the many nights I spent surfing YouTube videos, I dozed off. The clips continued to play. I don't know what made me wake up, but when I did a video was playing in my mother tongue. I picked up my phone and looked at the screen closer. It was a new speaker I'd never followed before, even a new style of teaching. I knew I couldn't watch it right then, but I decided it would be my first duty the next day. I began watching video after video of the series, topic after topic. I heard answers to questions no one else had ever addressed. The peace returned. I was happy.

When the speaker accepted my Facebook invitation, I immediately called him and we began discussing my questions, my doubts. I discovered many topics I hadn't even thought about—the Sabbath as a holy day, the end of sin and hellfire. I learned and studied more than I'd ever thought possible. I was convicted.

The leaders from the church I'd been attending heard I was studying with Adventists. The day after my baptism into the Seventh-day Adventist Church, they contacted me, very concerned for my well-being. They tried to convince me that I was studying with members of a sect and that it was not the truth. They put more pressure on me than the leaders and family members from my childhood faith. I was not moved. I have found the full truth as it is in Jesus and have decided to follow Him.

Please pray for me. I am the only Adventist in my entire region, and every day I face criticism from all sides. Those from my childhood faith question Christianity, and my Christian friends criticize Adventism. But I have discovered a complete set of beautiful truth. It all comes from the Bible. And the Jesus who gave me life that night on the Mediterranean has now given me peace and purpose.

This story comes from the MENA Union and the author is kept private for safety purposes. Please pray for the work in the Middle East.

World Church Prayer Requests

March 18 - 24, 2022

- Keep praying for our brothers and sisters in Ukraine as well as Russia. Many are still in dangerous situations. Pray for God to intervene and protect His people.
- Pray especially for the men in both countries who are religious objectors and who don't want to participate in war. Pray for special protection for these men!
- Pray for the Ukrainian refugees and displaced citizens throughout Ukraine.
- Pray for the 115,000 Belitung in Indonesia, only 0.05% of whom have been reached.
- Pray for Global Youth Day and Global Children's Day this Sabbath March 19, 2022, when youth and children around the world will find creative ways to reach the "forgotten" members of society.