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I was raised in a moderately Christian home in Colorado. Religion was never much of an issue in my house. My father was raised as a Mormon, my mother as a Protestant. As I grew into adolescence, I became curious about God, wondering whether He existed, and if so, what did that mean to humans. I studied the Bible and other Christian literature earnestly. Even when I was in high school, I noticed that there were apparent discrepancies in the Bible, particularly concerning the nature of Jesus (may God raise his name). In some places, it seemed to say he was God, in others, the son of God, and in others, only human. However, I thought that these discrepancies existed only because I did not truly understand what I was reading. I first turned to the Church of God after receiving literature from them in the mail. I was impressed because they approached religion in a more logical and scientific manner than I had seen before. They followed such practices as not eating pork, keeping the same holidays as Jesus, etc. I attended their services once, but for some reason, I did not keep going.

When I went to college, I became involved in Bible studies through Campus Crusade for Christ. I wanted to really understand God's truth, but I just couldn't see what it was, and I thought the Bible studies would help me. They did. Around the same time, I met a Muslim man. I became curious as to why he prayed the way he did, so I started to read the Qur'an. I soon realized that there was an aspect to Islam which I had really missed in Christianity: worship. All the prayers I had ever heard consisted mostly of "I want this, I need this, please give it to me," with the only real worship being "thank you Jesus for dying for my sins." I wondered, what about God? I was convinced that the God of Islam was the same as the God I believed in, but I was still unsure about who Jesus was. I was afraid to believe that he was not the son of God, because all my life I had been taught that such a belief meant eternal punishment in hellfire.

The leader of my Bible study had done missionary work to Muslims in Algeria, so I decided to ask him some questions, because at the time I was quite

confused. I asked him what would happen to my Muslim friend, and he told me he would go to hell, without a doubt. I asked him how the Qur'an, which was so similar to the Bible, could be false. He said it was an instrument of the devil to persuade people to disbelief. Finally, I asked him if he had read the Qur'an, intending to next ask him a specific question about something I had read in it. He answered, "No. I tried, but it makes me sick to my stomach." I was astounded and quickly left. This man, whom I respected as a knowledgeable leader, who had worked with Muslims several times, did not know as much about Islam as I had learned in a few months. And yet, he was not questioning or curious. He was sure that my friend was going to hell and that the Qur'an was the work of the devil. I suddenly realized that there was no way he could be sure unless he had studied, and he clearly had not. This was my biggest clue that Islam was the path of God's truth. Alhamdoolellah (Thanks be to Allah) that I had that conversation.

I began to study Qur'an more, and in several months I said the Shahada [i.e. stated and accepted the creed of Islam]. That was less than a year ago. I am still learning, striving to find God's truth. I am so grateful that God has guided me so. Here is a religion of truth, which can stand up to any test of logic and reason! Just as I always thought religion should be. It should make sense, it should be logical.

This is how I came to Islam. However, I think it should be said that I am grateful I did not meet many Muslims before I became Muslim. At the university I attend, the majority of Muslims are cold and distant. They seem to be judgmental of anyone who is, or appears to be, non-Muslim. If I had known these people, I would have been turned off from Islam because its representatives seem so cold. Muslims have an incredible message to share -- the message of truth! I had no idea what Islam was before I met my friend, if Americans just understood what it was, they would be more open to it, because it is TRUTH.

Also, I think it should be said that this was one of the hardest things I have ever done. Converting to Islam has forced me to be disobedient to my parents, because they do not agree with such things as fasting, wearing the veil, or avoiding forbidden foods. They think it is nonsense, and I have had to struggle all the way to do what I believe and at the same time try not to lose my family. I have not begun wearing the veil yet, but I very much want to shortly. I fear that in doing so, I may be disowned (at least temporarily), but I am still eager to do it, because I long to be modest before God in the manner ordained for women.