

Shannon Abulnasr, Ex Christian, USA (part 3 of 3)

Description: In this part of her story of conversion, Shannon tells us how she converted and how she feels about those who had the opportunity to share the knowledge of Islam with her but simply ignored it.

By Shannon Abulnasr

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I sat down and talked to Sr. Jameelah for several hours in her office at the Islamic Center of Irving. I cried the entire time I was there. Sr. Jameelah also cried and when I asked her why she was crying, she said she felt like she was looking at herself, because we had similar problems in our lives, and had many, many of the same things in our past history. But when I was there, the emotional feelings that were making me cry turned into different emotions. I realized that my emotions had calmed and I really felt at peace. I had made this self discovery when she had to leave her office to take care of something. I was thinking to myself that it was so strange to have met a woman like her, just by "chance", and that this was destined for me to meet her in particular, of all people. She was an American Muslim woman, with a similar story to mine. I am sure now, looking back, that no one would have understood my problems and issues better than her, because she had been through many of the same things I experienced. I went out immediately and found her in the lobby of the masjid talking to a school teacher about her daughter, and right then, I told her I wanted to become Muslim. When I told her that, she smiled broadly and she told me to come with her after handing me a hijab and helping me pin it and putting it on. She then took me to a classroom of about 30-40 young children between 5-10 years of age and told the teacher that I wanted to become Muslim and thought it would be nice to have the kids witness my conversion. She asked him to recite the shahada to me. I was crying before, during, and after reciting the shahada, and was overwhelmed with feelings of happiness. I was crying so many tears, that everything was blurry, but then a little boy approximately six years old stood up and came to me and told me that I shouldn't be crying because I've not only found a new religion, but also a beautiful way of life. *SubhanAllah*. I am crying just remembering this ! This young boy, inshaAllah, will grow up to be a very pious man. I just wish I remember who the little boy was.

At the time, all I knew about the man that helped me recite my shahada was a teacher. Several months later, I discovered he was the Quran teacher at the Quranic School in the Masjid. This man was Sheikh Abdelkarim Edghouch. After my reversion, I began taking classes at the masjid, and attending the prayers. I began wearing hijab, and the rest is history.

Something else interesting is that on that day, I felt that I was guided directly to Sr. Jameelah in more than one way. The woman on the phone gave me the number and didn't tell me it was a masjid first off. Secondly, anytime you call the Islamic Center of Irving,

you are answered by an automated menu asking you who you want to talk to. On the day that I called, I never got that message, it went directly to Sr. Jameelah, and to this day, we can't figure out how that happened. Allah only knows what I would, or would not have done if I had received a voicemail, or worse, no answer that day. *SubhanAllah.*

Today, I am thankful to Allah for giving me the road signs to find Him. I feel embarrassed that I was lost for so long. Now I look back to see all the Muslims that I had met before I met Sr. Jameelah and I sadly realize that they had so much to share with me but were selfish, lazy, and stingy and didn't take the time to teach me about Islam. May Allah have mercy on them.

So many Muslims had the opportunity to share this beautiful religion with me but chose to dismiss me as "not serious". If they only knew! Allah is the only one who knows the heart of a person and their intentions, and will guide them. So, if someone ever asks you anything about Islam, tell them everything you know. If they ask you questions that seem "silly" or "stupid", don't disregard them, as they may be seriously enquiring about Islam. Some people don't have a way with words, and they usually are not intending to be rude, or insulting. They are just ignorant on the subject and don't know how to ask. Many Muslims get offended easily when a non-Muslim asks questions, and then don't want to talk to them anymore because they feel disrespected. I've had this happen to me...even after I reverted. I had no intention to be offensive...it was strictly just ignorance of the topic. Think about it... if you know nothing about it, then you wouldn't know if you are being offensive or not. Remember this when you are talking to non-Muslims because your reaction to their curiosity, just might be what turns them away from Islam.

Thank you for taking the time to read my story. I pray to Allah that He guides us all and protects us from falling into disbelief.

Ameen.

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