

Muslim Man Wakes From Coma, Converts to Christianity

Growing up as a Muslim in Syria, Karim Shamsi-Basha longed for a God of which he didn't have to be afraid. In the Islamic world, such an ideal was simply difficult to come by.

After moving to the United States and experiencing a miracle and God's infinite mercy, the concept became more of a reality to him.

In 1992, Shamsi-Basha suffered a sudden brain aneurysm that left him in a coma for a month. Doctors told his wife that he had less than a 10 percent chance of surviving past the first night.

When he came out of it, he began a journey—one that would take 20 years and see him endure incredible hardship—toward the full acceptance of Jesus as his savior.

His life experiences led him to write a book titled *Paul and Me*, including chapters about the apostle Paul, whose conversion to Christianity took place on the road to Damascus, Syria.

Shamsi-Basha told the *Huffington Post U.K.* that he practiced Islam “very seriously in his teenage years.” He prayed five times a day, walking to his mosque every day before sunrise.

“Throughout my growing up as a Muslim, I searched for a God I can love more than I can fear,” Shamsi-Basha told the *Huff Post UK*. “That was not available to me. Love is available in Islam, but it is not the main offering. In Christianity, it is the total offering. What I would like to say is this: Instead of turning my back on Islam, I opened my heart to the love of God, in the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Shamsi-Basha told the U.K.'s *Daily Mail* that his neurosurgeon, following the brain aneurysm, told him he had seen very few people go on to make a full recovery and suggested that he find out why he survived. That led him on his long journey toward Christianity.

Along the way, Shamsi-Basha endured a divorce, the failure of another relationship, the death of a parent and a period of homelessness.

Meanwhile, following his father's death, he told his family about his change in theology, and surprisingly, they were fine with it. Shamsi-Basha's two sisters, one of whom now lives in New York City, continue to practice Islam including wearing a hajib, a scarf that covers a woman's hair.

Carpe Diem—latin for “seize the day”—has become Shamsi-Basha's daily motto, and he believes everyone should adopt it.

“If I have any ulterior motives with this book, it is to get you to seize your day,” he said.

Although his novel doesn't say anything negative about Islam, Shamsi-Basha has a message for those practicing the religion.

“I would like to address any Muslim who might not agree with me,” Shamsi-Basha told the *Huff Post U.K.* “Love is mentioned in the Bible more than 500 times. A generous look at the Quran, and find out it is mentioned less than 30 times. I think it is worth investigating.”