

Ruslan KD's Amazing Testimony of Escaping Communism, Atheism

Ruslan KD is a podcaster, performer, influencer, refugee and, most importantly, a believer.

His powerful cultural commentaries are seen around social media, offering powerful, biblical takes on the issues of the day. But it's his origin story some might not be familiar with – a journey filled with pain, doubt and eventual surrender.

"I'm ... ethnically Armenian," Ruslan recently told CBN News. "My father is full Armenian. My mother is adopted by an Armenian family in Azerbaijan – Baku. So, that's the city we come from is Baku, right in the Middle East, off the Caspian Sea."

Ruslan noted this region is well-known for its tensions, with Armenians being mistreated, targeted and even killed. The Armenian Genocide, which began in 1915, is one of the most horrific examples of the dire situations that have plagued the region.

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The Armenian Genocide unfolded during World War I and led to Turkey – which has historically denied these events occurred – killing 1.5 million Armenians. Troubles for the Armenians have since persisted, with Ruslan's family suffering amid the chaos.

"As the Soviet Union was starting to go through things in the '80s and things are becoming tumultuous ... my father, my grandfather ... pretty much all the men had to get out of there

as quickly as possible,” he said. “And they, at one point, borrowed police uniforms from their friends to just dress up and just try to get on the train and get out of there as quickly as possible.”

Ruslan and his mother stayed behind while his dad went to Moscow.

“And that is where we kind of saw some pretty gnarly ... stuff of ... soldiers coming to our house, people coming to our house, getting reports that we were Armenian,” he said. “And my mom saying, ‘Hey, no, no, we’re not Armenian. We’re Russian.’ And to the point where our physical health was in danger.”

Ruslan said “by the grace of God” they were able to get out of Baku and stayed in Moscow before immigrating to the United States in 1991 when he was just 6 years old. The family had applied for refugee status in Israel, Australia and America, thus Ruslan said his life could have gone many different ways.

This experience and the opportunities America has afforded Ruslan have made him “substantially more appreciative” of the U.S.



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Despite eventually becoming a well-known Christian influencer, Ruslan, at one point, struggled with belief and essentially rejected God.

“In Baku, we never went to church,” he said. “I don’t remember anything about church.”

But, in America, he and his family joined the Armenian Orthodox Church, which became a community hub for them. Ruslan was christened and even became an altar boy.

But something happened that shattered Ruslan’s experience. He

said a group of older boys who were teenagers when he was just 7 or 8 years old abused him.

"[They] ended up showing me same-sex porn and then re-enacting the things that they saw in the videos on me when I was a child," Ruslan said. "And that really, really jacked me up. But what jacked me up even more was the way the church responded – or didn't respond. It was kind of brushed under the rug. No one really wanted to talk about it. There was no real accountability for them."

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The teens reportedly made it seem like Ruslan, a small child, was the aggressor.

To top off the chaotic events unfolding in his life, Ruslan said his parents split up and his mother spiraled into an amalgam of alcoholism and relationships with toxic men, with additional family chaos unfolding.

The church also reportedly allowed Ruslan's father to marry another woman despite his mother's claims there was no official divorce, further creating contention, frustration, and confusion.

"My mom is telling me that the church is wrong for doing this," he said. "And, so I became very, very hardened to the idea of God to the point where I'm ... full-on an atheist."

In the midst of Ruslan's personal chaos, he had to do some community service hours. It turns out a woman named Sheree – the mother of his friend, Steven – got into legal trouble and had to do hours alongside him. In jail, Sheree became a Christian and, in turn, started impacting her entire neighborhood.

“She ends up doing a couple years in jail, and in jail, she ends up getting radically, radically converted,” he said. “While she gets radically converted, she leads ... most of our apartment complex to start going to church with her.”

While doing community service with Sheree and two other neighbors, Ruslan heard the Gospel – and the seed was planted.

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