

# FOR THE LOVE OF MUSLIMS

## *Lessons for Online Missionaries dealing with Muslims*

### **Lesson 29: I've Turned Away from God**

*I am a young woman from Dubai, U.A.E. I feel like I've turned away from God. I want to come back. I want to offer my life again... Is it possible that I can have the opportunity to give worship to God? Is it possible that he is calling me again as his servant?*

*-Fatima*

This is a good question. Muslims are raised to respect God and follow his laws. Even within their own culture, some do turn away and later want to return – perhaps return to the Muslim faith as they know it. How could we encourage Fatima that she still has hope – and point her to Christ as the God she needs? Here is a portion of what an Online Missionary wrote in response:

*I hear the pain in your voice. You said you feel like you've turned away from God and that you want to come back. I've got good news for you. God is waiting with open arms to welcome you. How do I know? The Bible tells me so.*

The OM specifically pointed to the example of Peter: although Peter completely turned his back on Jesus and betrayed him, Jesus brought Peter back into relationship with him. We pick up the narrative in Luke 22:54-62:

*So they arrested him and led him to the high priest's home. And Peter followed at a distance. The guards lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat around it, and Peter joined them there. A servant girl noticed him in the firelight and began staring at him. Finally she said, "This man was one of Jesus' followers!"*

*But Peter denied it. "Woman," he said, "I don't even know him!"*

*After a while someone else looked at him and said, "You must be one of them!"*

*"No, man, I'm not!" Peter retorted.*

*About an hour later someone else insisted, "This must be one of them, because he is a Galilean, too."*

*But Peter said, "Man, I don't know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed.*

*At that moment the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Suddenly, the Lord's words flashed through Peter's mind: "Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me." And Peter left the courtyard, weeping bitterly.*

The OM went on to explain:

*How did God respond to Peter's denial? He sent an angel to proclaim Jesus' resurrection: "Now go and tell his disciples, including Peter, that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died" (Mark 16:7). You see how Peter is singled out. God knew that Peter needed special reassurance that he was still accepted. But Jesus wasn't finished with Peter. He wanted to bring him back into relationship with him completely. Jesus did this in John 21:15-19:*

*After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"*

*"Yes, Lord," Peter replied, "you know I love you."*

*"Then feed my lambs," Jesus told him.*

*Jesus repeated the question: "Simon son of John, do you love me?"*

*"Yes, Lord," Peter said, "you know I love you."*

*"Then take care of my sheep," Jesus said.*

*A third time he asked him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"*

*Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, "Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you."*

*Jesus said, "Then feed my sheep. I tell you the truth, when you were young, you were able to do as you liked; you dressed yourself and went wherever you wanted to go. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and others will dress you and take you where you don't want to go." Jesus said this to let him know by what kind of death he would glorify God. Then Jesus told him, "Follow me."*

*This shows how Peter was given an important role to play in the early church.*

*Before I go, can I pray for you? "Jesus, thank you for Fatima. I know that you love Fatima and want what is best for her. Continue to help Fatima grow in her knowledge of you and allow her to experience your love and perfect plan for her life. In Jesus name I pray. Amen."*

This is a great story for those who desire to turn back to God. Another story you could point to is the story of the prodigal son, in Luke 15:11-32. God is always waiting for us to return to him! What an amazing truth this is!

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