

Subj: **Baptism, Conversion, Seekers Weekend**
 Date: 11/25/2005 11:39:16 PM Central Standard Time
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Dear Praying Friends,

The following was just written by our teammates Nader and Ella...

BAPTISM

Three weeks ago, we held a baptism service in a Greek Church attended by some of the witnesses from the short-term team from US, two visitors from Holland, some of the IT/Athens team and some of the members of the Persian Christian Fellowship. This Iranian man named "D" was attending the fellowship before but had not shown up for a long time. He came back and confessed that he had been baptized in another church without any real understanding of what he was doing.

He said that he had had a dream. Somebody came in his dream and told him, "Now that you know Me, you should be baptized and follow Me."

He confessed to me that he was in the darkness and he wanted to come to the Lord and surrender to Him with all his heart. He wanted to join in the fellowship with believers and grow.

I said, "You don't need to be baptized again, just confess and come back to the Lord." But he strongly believed that he should be baptized because he did not know what it meant before. So, we held a baptism for him and he accepts that Jesus is Lord and Savior and proclaimed Jesus is God. He was sleeping in the park but God provided to help him for a shelter for one month. He was seeking God from his heart with many questions and continues to come every Sunday for the fellowship and Monday for prayer meeting.

Please pray for his physical needs and his spiritual growth.

THE PERSIAN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

One Sunday in the Persian Christian Fellowship, "W", an Iranian brother came in with a newcomer in the church. When I welcomed the newcomer I was surprised that he called me by my name. He said that he knew me from Turkey since 1998 and he stayed there until 2002. I told him that I don't remember him. He said he came to the Iranian Church in Turkey during that time and saw me in the church. He heard about Jesus but didn't believe what he heard about Him. He left Turkey in 2002 and came to Greece. That time when he came to Greece, he came also in this Fellowship two times, heard the message about Jesus and did not come back again.

A couple of months ago he met accidentally his neighbor from Iran.

He said, "I knew my neighbor very well because we grew up together in one place. I was happy to see him but more than my surprise at meeting him, he was not the person I knew before. I asked him how he became a new person and got changed. He said, "It's because of Christ."

This newcomer said, "All those years I heard much preaching and it didn't touch me as much as what I saw in my friend's life. Now I understand that if Jesus can change him, He has the power to change my life too. Now I understand what is meant "born again". I can't explain but something inside me is changed. I accept Him with all my heart." And he began weeping. He accepted Jesus personally and let Him come in to his life! He came from Turkish part of Iran and it's so sweet to hear from him his praise for Jesus in his own language.

Pray for this man. He said he wants to always come to church, for God's direction in his journey with the Lord, to grow in Christ and be used for his people to shine also to others.

SEEKERS WEEKEND RETREAT

We were 18 people total who went for a retreat outside of Athens. We were two Afghans, 2 Arabs, 9 Iranians and 5 Americans who went for the weekend retreat. The purpose of the retreat was to show the love of God for them, to

build relationship, to create the atmosphere of brotherly hood, to spent time with them for fun, game, sharing testimonies, and teaching to answer questions about Christianity. The short term team from ROSE DRIVE FRIENDS CHURCH in California prepareD lessons to teach them.

On the first night, one Iranian guy asked me why Christians have different branches and why do they believe in 3 Gods: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. While I was explaining, many questions came after another until almost 4 o'clock in the morning. The Muslims understood that Ishmael was the sacrifice for God, but now he understood that it was Isaac who is the promise and the sacrifice of God. He understood the example of H2O, but cannot accept the truth about Jesus is the Son of God and God Himself. He is thirsty for the truth. That night he reminded me of Nicodemus in the Bible. Pray for him to be enlightened by the word of God.

Another one Iranian asked 3 questions. "Why are you Christians showing love? Why did you invite me to come for the retreat? Why I cannot understand you Christians?"

I said, "It is a good question. If we show love, it is not from us, it is from Christ because first, He loved us and gave His life for us. He is also an example of love, to love our neighbor and our enemy. Secondly, we invite you because I thought in this weekend retreat that God will talk to you and you might be sensitive to His voice. And third, if you look on us and Christ with knowledge, philosophy and science, it will be hard to understand but I encourage you to accept Him with your heart, not only with your mind. He said, "That is excellent, I never heard that before."

We also showed the "Passion of the Christ one night." One of the American guys shared his testimony. He had been a homosexual before, but God delivered him from homosexuality. Afterward, I heard from another room next to mine a conversation about it:

"How God forgave him? That is a big sin."

And one answered him that small and big sin is the same in the eyes of God.

"Did really God forgive him?"

"Yes, because He died on the cross to forgive us our sins. He sacrificed His life for us. God forgave him and changed him."

The word of God and our lives bring question to the unbelievers.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Pray for all the seekers and new believers.

Pray for guidance and direction to lead the Muslim people to the Lord.

Pray for the coming Christmas celebration that will be given to the refugees.

Pray for the financial support for all the different ministries of the Helping Hands.

We thank you for keeping us in your prayer for our situation here in Athens.

May the Lord hear all the prayers of those who love Him and care for us.

Nader and Ella

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Saturday, November 26, 2005 America Online: Macnmony