

Faith Is Action

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A Modern Day Testimony

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (1Tim. 1:15).

I want to share with you a modern day testimony you may have seen on the 700 Club: A former Muslim, Kamal Saleem is from Lebanon, which is just north of Israel. He was born into an Islamic family, and at the age of 4 years, he started studying the Koran at the kitchen table with his mother. One day his mother said to him, “Kamal, you will be a martyr, and you will die for the sake of Allah, and will exalt Islam. If you kill a Jew, your hands will light up from the throne of Allah, and the host of Heaven will celebrate what you have done.”

At age 7, he was sent away to a Muslim training center to learn

how to use weapons and to kill the enemy—“the infidels,” which would be Jews and Christians. At this particular camp, they not only taught them how to use weapons, but they also taught the subtle weaponry of “cultural Jihad.” Cultural Jihad is applied where they cannot come in with conventional weapons, so they try to shift the culture, using psychology to convert people.

By the time he was in his twenties, he was chosen to come to America to wage cultural Jihad. He believed that what we view as emblems of liberty, such as our flag, the Statue of Liberty, or anything that represents American liberty are idols. As idols, they must be torn down, because they are anti-Islamic. Personally, I don’t get it. Can anything be more ironic than the very liberties they want to tear down are what allow them to come here and have freedom of speech to teach their cul-

tural Jihad!)

When he came to America in the 1980's, he went to the Mid-West. He wanted to go to the Bible Belt, because he felt that's where the stout, real Christians are. He wanted to find the best of the best Christians, because he considered himself to be "the sword of Islam" and anointed by Allah with the power to change American culture from within.

He entrenched himself in a small town and began to target men from poor neighborhoods to recruit them to Islam. One day while driving to one of his recruitment appointments, he had a very serious car accident. He was ejected from the car, landed on his neck, and broke it in two places. A man on the scene ran up to him and said, *"Don't worry, we are going to take care of you, and everything is going to be alright."* An ambulance came and took him to the hospital. When he got in the ER, they called for an orthopedic surgeon to look at his chart and x-rays. The surgeon looked at him, turned and smiled and said, *"Don't worry, we are going to take good care of you, and everything is going to be alright."* The operation to fix his neck was successful. Afterwards, the head of physical therapy came and said to him, *"Don't worry, we are going to take good care of you, and everything is going to be alright."* By this time he was very worried,

because in terrorist terms when you tell somebody, "We are going to take care of you," it means "We are going to kill you!"

Living With Christians

When the time came for him to be discharged from the hospital, he was told that he was not well enough to be alone. He needed someone to nurse him and take care of him till he fully recovered. But he had no one, so the surgeon who did the operation took him in to his Christian home and Christian family. They gave him their best bedroom furnished with the most beautiful furnishings, and told him, "You are a part of the family."

They treated him as family, took care of him, and nursed him. They even put a basket out on the counter with his name on it for anyone to put money in it to help pay for his hospital bills. He was so overwhelmed by the outpouring of their Christian love, he just couldn't get over it. As he got better and able to get around, he started helping around the house and cooking meals for the family. They happened to have a Jewish friend from Israel whom they invited over for dinner, and Kamal found himself cooking dinner for Christians and Jews! Not only that, he found himself hugging them, and he couldn't get over it! He thought to himself, *What has happened to me?*

Finally the time came that he was well enough to go home, and the day that he was to go home, the family gave him a set of keys to their house and said, *“You are family, and you can come anytime you want.”* They also gave him a set of keys to a new car and said, *“This is for you. We love you, and we want you to know you are always welcome here. We want to bless you.”* He was amazed as he took the keys to his new car and went back to his apartment. He had not been there for months, and it was dusty and cold.

As soon as he got in the door, he went right for the eastern most window and fell on his knees and began to cry out: *“Allah, Allah, my Lord and King, what have you done to me? Why have you done such a thing to me? I’m okay with the car accident; really I am, but why did you put me with Christians and Jews? I’m so confused. They are good people. There’s nothing wrong with them. They are not like what I learned about and was taught. They don’t want to kill us, and not only that, they have a relationship with their God. They talk to their God, and He answers them. They cry out to their God, and He answers their prayers. Allah, I want to hear your voice. I want to know that you love me too. If you are real, speak to me.”*

Do you know what Allah said? Absolutely nothing. At this

point, Kamal felt that he had betrayed his faith in speaking such. The guilt and the shame of what he had just done overwhelmed him, and he felt unworthy to live. So he went and got his gun, and put his it to his head. He was ready to shoot himself in the head when he heard a voice call his name three times. *“Kamal, Kamal, Kamal, why don’t you call on the God and Father of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?”* He fell to his knees and raised his arms to Heaven, and he cried out, *“Oh Father Abraham, if you are real, would you please speak to me. I want to know you.”*

In that moment the glory of God filled the room. A light from Heaven, much like that light that came to Saul on the road to Damascus filled the room, and there stood a glorious being before him. Just like Saul, Kamal said, *“Who are you, Lord?”* And He answered, *“I Am that I Am.”*

Kamal said, *“I’m a very simple man with a very simple mind, and what is that supposed to mean?”* Jesus answered, *“I Am the Alpha, and the Omega. I Am the beginning and the end, and I am everything in between. I have known you before I formed the foundation of the world. I have **loved** you before I formed you in your mother’s womb. Rise up, rise up, Kamal. Come, you are My warrior. You are not their warrior.”*

Kamal said, *“Lord, I will live and die for You,”* and the Lord said, *“Do not die for Me. I died for you that you may live.”*

That was over 20 years ago, and today Kamal is a minister of the Gospel. His life has been threatened many times, but he doesn't let that stop him. He's bent on winning Muslims to Jesus Christ. Because as Paul said, *“I am the pattern, of the long suffering mercy and grace of God for all those who would come after me and believe on Jesus Christ”* (1Tim 1:16).

Do you know how he could have said it today? *“I am the poster child for God's mercy. I am the poster child for God's grace. If God could save me, Public Sinner Number One, He can save Kamal Saleem, and if He can save Kamal Saleem, He can save every sinner, no matter how hard they are.”*

Picture Paul taking his thumb and pointing to himself, saying, *“Look at me, Public Sinner Number One—the worst of the worse, God saved me, and I am a pattern for everyone else who will ever believe.”* There is no one that God can't save. There is no one that Jesus cannot save. But He said, *“I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life. I am the Door to Heaven, and no man can come to the Father but by Me”* (John 14:6, 10:9). There is no other way, because Jesus is the only One who tasted death for every man (Heb.

2:9, 14-15). He died, went to Hell and ripped the keys of “Hades House” out of Satan's hands. He conquered Hell. He conquered Death, and He rose again. He's the only One that has been to Hell and back, and the only One who can save us from death and Hell. It doesn't matter how far someone is in sin.

One of my favorite verses is Romans 5:20: *“Where sin did abound, the grace of God did much more abound.”* The greater the sin, the greater the grace. The greater the sinner, the greater God's grace. The greater the sinner, the greater His mercy, and the greater His power to save. To the utmost Jesus saves! It seems to me, *the worst sinners make the best Christians!* Because like Paul, like Zacchaeus, like Kamal, they are deeply aware of the grace and mercy of God it took to open their eyes and set them free. And Jesus said about the sinners who have been saved of much: *“They love much!”*

A Very Sinful Woman

“And one of the Pharisees desired of him that he would eat with him. And he (Jesus) went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And behold, a woman in the city which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment. And stood at his feet behind

him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that touches him: for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have something to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on” (Luke 7:36-40).

Then Jesus spoke this parable, and remember, Jesus had read his thoughts, and now He will answer his thoughts. Simon had not said anything out loud, and this is how some self-righteous people are.

“There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said, unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

“And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss;” (The

Eastern custom is to kiss on both cheeks), *“but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.”* (This was not just ordinary olive oil, but a perfume, spikenard that was worth a year’s salary.)

“Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, thy sins are forgiven....Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace” (Lk. 7:36-50).

Look at this picture: Jesus was the guest, and Simon was His host. When we invite people to dinner, we greet them at the door and say, “Come on in and have a seat.” Because they didn’t have paved roads, they had dirty feet, so their custom was to have someone wash their feet so they wouldn’t bring dust and dirt to the table. They didn’t sit on chairs at the table. They reclined on couches, so their feet were close to their food. But Simon didn’t bother to wash Jesus’ feet. He didn’t greet Him with the customary kiss; nor did he anoint his head with oil. But this sinner woman heard that Jesus was there, and she came to see Him.

The inference in Simon’s thoughts was that she was a wretched sinner: *If you knew what*

manner of woman she is! We can only imagine her reputation was one of the worst in the town. In His parable, two people owed one creditor. One owed 10 times more than the other, but the fact was, neither one of them could pay. Maybe you've heard someone say, "He owes me ten thousand dollars," and he replies, "It may as well be a million dollars, because I can't pay you." And that's the point: Jesus said that the creditor forgave them both, because neither one of them could pay. Then He asked Simon, "Now which of them is going to love that benefactor most?" The answer was, obvious—"The one he forgave the most." Jesus said, "You judged rightly! Good for you!"

Jesus knew what kind of woman she was, and yes, her sins were many. **Jesus did not gloss over her sins, and He never does.**

However, many people love to pull out that other story in John 8 of the sinful woman "caught in the very act of adultery", and the Pharisees were getting ready to stone her. Then Jesus said, "*He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone*" (John 8:7). I don't know how many times people have thrown this verse at preachers who are trying to clean the church of sin and cover-up in the church. But they never go on to quote what Jesus said next to the woman: "*Neither do I con-*

demn thee: go, and sin no more" (vs. 11). They never attach "*And sin no more*" to the story!

When Jesus looked at the woman and said: "*Your sins, which are many,*" He was saying: *You are the worst of sinners. You are Public Sinner Number One in this town. But your sins that are many are forgiven you.*" He did not gloss over her sins. He *mercified* them—He *gracified* them! And when Jesus has saved you from many sins, you too will love much!

Jesus Still Saves to the Uttermost!

In closing, I have one more story to share with you. This letter is from a woman in our church who has given me permission to share it:

"Dear Sister Sharon, I want to tell you a little bit about myself. I moved near the church nearly two years ago. I asked the Lord to lead me to a church home that I could get to easily, because I know that as much as I was out there in the streets chasing drugs, I need to be chasing God even more. You see, the devil's tried to take my life several times through drug addiction, a car accident, and an incurable disease which the Lord has protected me from. I know now that I have a call on my life to preach the gospel. In particular, I have a desire to minister to women who are drug addicted and are

doing any and everything to get those drugs. You see, I've been there and done that.

"I was molested by my father (who was a Washington, DC police officer) from age 7 to 16. I didn't tell anyone, because I didn't think anyone would believe me. My mother passed away when I was three. My father used to tell me that I looked just like my mother, and he would do things to me that have caused me to do things that I don't believe I would have done under different circumstances.

"I started drinking vodka at age 10, because I was tired of crying in school after being molested all night long. I thought that the alcohol would take away the pain. I found later in life that it only escalated my desires to get even higher, so I started smoking marijuana. Eventually, that didn't do the trick either. Next I did PCP, and believe it or not, that didn't do it either. Finally, I was introduced to crack cocaine by my kingpin drug boyfriend, which after 15 years of using, I overdosed and was left for dead in the hallway of a crack house by "my friend."

"My stepmother, my father, and my sister and two brothers all crowded around my bedside as the doctors told them I would not pull through after smoking through the pain of a ruptured appendix for two weeks and being

completely dehydrated. It was in 2001, **when I heard Jesus tell me that I will live and not die.** Something was still rooted in me that attracted me to men who had the characteristics of my father. I had been in abusive relationships all my life: physically, verbally, and one actually tried to take my life by setting my apartment building on fire. Thirty families lost their homes two weeks after Christmas when an ex-boyfriend tried to kill me.

"Today I desire to be in complete obedience to the Lord. My God, His anointing is so strong upon me right now, as I open up to you and being told by the devil, 'If you share this with anyone, they will think that you're a nut.'—**The devil is a liar!**"
(*Pamela Howard*)

To this I say, "Amen! The devil is a liar! Jesus saves to the uttermost!" If you want to be set free, He will set you free right now. If you have been on drugs and alcohol, and you have tried everything and failed, you have just read the true testimony of a living witness that God is merciful. You too can be set free. God is no respecter of persons. What He has done for Pamela Howard, Kamal Saleem, Zaccheus, Saul, and people like me, who were saved as a young child, He will do for you too.

"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradven-

ture for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commended (manifested) His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:7-8).

Even for all the Public Sinners
Number One!

Please Note:

Part One of this message is available online at www.rghardy.org.