

You Must Be Born Again

John 3:1-21

3 of 14

For some years we have worked with a ministry to refugees in Athens, Greece. Athens is part of the "Refugee Highway," where people from around the world pass through on the road to a better life. In May 2006, one of the missionaries in Athens, Kallie Skaife, reported what happened to an Iranian man identified as "M."

In 2003, everything "M" knew was destroyed by an earthquake measuring 7.45 on the Richter scale. He was tortured by the question of why something like this would happen. "M" went to live with relatives in Afghanistan, was married, and had a daughter. But he was still filled with despair.

Leaving his family behind, "M" headed west and ended up in Athens, staying with more relatives. Though he and all his family were Muslim, "M" became interested in Christianity, finding himself strangely moved by the sight of the crosses he saw decorating the Orthodox churches in the city. "M" was given a Bible and started reading. Since his relatives forbade such a thing, "M" used a tiny flashlight to read during the night after his uncles were asleep.

He studied the Bible this way for two years. Finally, "M" realized God was calling him to be born again. He contacted the refugee ministry center, declaring his faith in Christ and asking for more information.

On Sunday, May 7, 2006, "M" set his alarm for 6 a.m. He wanted to spend time reading his Bible and praying that morning, because on that day he was to be baptized at a fellowship with other Iranian believers. But "M's" cousin had discovered the plan. Before "M's" alarm went off, the cousin boiled water in a saucepan and poured it on "M" while he slept, scalding both thighs and one arm.



northeast daily reading

June 19, 2011

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"M" came to the baptism anyway. Standing before those gathered, the burns on his arms clearly visible, "M" declared, "No matter what they do to me, I will love Jesus."

After the baptism, "M" said he felt like standing in the center of the city of Athens and shouting to everybody, "I belong to Christ!" (John Beukema, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania; source: a personal e-mail sent by Ilir and Kate Cami of International Teams)

This week's Daily Bible Reading will consist of scriptures that speak to the importance of baptism.

- DAY ONE – John 3
- DAY TWO – Matthew 3:13-17
- DAY THREE – Romans 6:3-5
- DAY FOUR – Acts 8:26-40
- DAY FIVE – Acts 2:38-41

Memory Verse:

"Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" (Acts 2:38)



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