SEEKING ALLAH, FINDING JESUS

A Devout Muslim Encounters Christianity

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BOOK SUMMARY

A Devout Muslim Upbringing

- **Faith inherited in love becomes identity.** Qureshi opens by welcoming the reader into a warm, devout Pakistani-American Muslim home where prayer, Quran recitation, fasting, hospitality, and family honor shaped every part of daily life. Islam was not simply a set of beliefs to him; it was the air he breathed, and his family belonged to a long line of people who had given their lives to defending and spreading the faith. He also explains the honor–shame worldview that drives much of the Muslim East, in which a person's virtue is measured by how well he meets social expectations and respects positional authority, rather than by individual innocence or guilt. This background establishes the stakes of everything that follows: to question Islam is to risk not only a belief system but a family, a community, and an entire identity.

  > *"I was honored to have been spanked by God Himself."*
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  > *"Correct and incorrect courses of action are assessed socially, not individually."*
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  > *"Your undying love for me . . . is second only to God's love for His children."*

Friendship as the Bridge

- **Truth travels best through trust.** At university, Qureshi befriends David Wood, a Christian who is patient, curious, and unafraid of disagreement. Over shared meals, late-night conversations, and sharp exchanges about the Quran, Muhammad, Jesus, and the Bible, the two press each other's claims while the friendship absorbs the tension. Qureshi, who believes he is defending the truth, finds that the relationship keeps the conversation going long after an ordinary argument would have ended. He concludes that sustained relationship is the missing ingredient in most religious dialogue: cultural and hospitality barriers keep Muslim immigrants and Western Christians from truly understanding one another, and only love, humility, hospitality, and persistence can overcome them. A surface-level acquaintance would have snapped under the strain, but a deep friendship forced both men to stay and reconcile.

  > *"Political correctness is for acquaintances, not friends."*
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  > *"Effective evangelism requires relationships. There are very few exceptions."*
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  > *"Only the exceptional blend of love, humility, hospitality, and persistence can overcome these barriers."*

Testing the New Testament

- **Examine the claims you were taught to dismiss.** Raised to believe that the Bible had been corrupted over the centuries, Qureshi sets out to prove it. He studies the manuscript evidence, the dating of the Gospels, and the authorship of the New Testament writings, expecting to confirm what he had always been told. Instead, he discovers that the New Testament documents were written within decades of Jesus' life by authors who either knew Him personally or knew people who did. He also recognizes that Christians and Muslims understand inspiration differently: Muslims tie the Quran's inspiration to its exact Arabic words, while Christians locate the Bible's inspiration in its message, which is why it can be translated and why textual variants do not threaten its core. The more he reads, the harder it becomes to set the Bible aside.

    "I could not put the Bible down."

    "They all either knew Jesus personally or knew people who had known Jesus personally."

    "The words do matter, but they matter because they constitute a message."

The Crux: The Cross and the Resurrection

- **Christianity stands or falls on the death and resurrection of Jesus.** Qureshi identifies the central dividing line between the two faiths: Muslims traditionally teach that Jesus was never crucified, while Christians affirm that He died on the cross and rose again. Working through the historical evidence with Christian scholars, he learns that Jesus' crucifixion is accepted even by many skeptical historians, and that the disciples' conviction that they had seen Him risen, along with the transformation of skeptics, demands an explanation. He also comes to understand why the cross matters theologically. Humanity owes a debt it cannot repay, and God in His mercy pays it Himself. Yet grace is not permission to sin: Christ's death forgives and also begins to heal, as the Holy Spirit changes the believer from the inside out. This stands in sharp contrast to the scale of good and bad deeds that defined his Islamic understanding of salvation.

    "...that Jesus died on the cross and that Jesus claimed to be God."

    "Jesus not only canceled our spiritual debt but also cured our spiritual disease."

    "He died on our behalf, balancing the accounts."

Truth Over Comfort

- **Truth must be pursued even when it threatens everything you love.** As the evidence accumulates, Qureshi's first instinct is not to follow it but to flee it. He recognizes that people who want to avoid the truth usually succeed, and that he is capable of doing exactly that. He reasons that objective truth must exist, since even the denial of truth is itself a claim that purports to be true, and that his loyalty therefore belongs to what is real rather than to what is familiar or socially safe. This turns his search into a moral test rather than a purely intellectual one. He must decide whether he is willing to be corrected by the facts, even if the cost includes his reputation, his family's approval, and the faith that gave his life meaning.

    "There is no alternative; truth must exist."

    "...people who wanted to avoid the truth usually succeeded."

    "Truth silences falsehood."

Jesus: Mortal Messiah or Divine Son?

- **The deity of Jesus emerges from the earliest sources, not from later invention.** Islam honors Jesus as a prophet and the Messiah but denies that He is God and condemns the Trinity as the gravest of sins. Qureshi examines what the earliest New Testament authors actually claim and finds that every principal writer attests to Jesus' divine identity and prerogatives. He works through passages that seem to place the Father above the Son, learning to read them in light of Jewish concepts of honor and authority, and he comes to see the Trinity as one Being in three Persons rather than three gods. The deepest obstacle, however, is emotional and theological: the idea that the majestic Creator would enter His filthy world, be born, grow weary, and die seems an offense to God's glory. What finally shifts his thinking is the possibility that God values His children more than His own majesty.

    "...attest to the divine claims, nature, and prerogatives of Jesus."

    "God deserves infinitely more. His majesty is far greater than this."

    "...what if His majesty is not as important to Him as His children are?"

The Truth About Muhammad and the Quran

- **Examine your own tradition with the same rigor you apply to another.** Having scrutinized the Bible and the claims about Jesus, Qureshi applies the same historical standards to Islam. He explains that the Quran occupies a role in Islam far closer to that of Jesus in Christianity than to that of the Bible: it is regarded as the very speech of Allah and serves as the primary proof of Islam's truth. For that reason, questions about how the Quran was compiled and transmitted, and about what the earliest sources actually say about Muhammad's life and claims, go to the very heart of the faith. Qureshi reports that when he looks at the earliest Islamic sources with the same honesty he had demanded of the New Testament, the foundations he had assumed to be secure are far less certain than he had been taught, and this realization is among the most painful of his journey.

    "...the Quran is the closest thing to an incarnation of Allah."

    "The best parallel in Christianity is Jesus himself, the Word made flesh."

    "That is how central the Quran is to Islamic theology."

Faith in Doubt: Dreams and Surrender

- **Intellectual conviction opens the door, but surrender must walk through it.** Even after the arguments have largely settled, Qureshi remains frozen by fear of losing his family and by the lifelong pull of Islam. He turns to prayer, asking God to show him the truth, and he describes a series of dreams that he takes as symbolic invitations to follow Jesus. Through this period he realizes what apologetics can and cannot do: the arguments tore down the barriers that had kept him from approaching God humbly, but the decision to approach was still his own. Reason had cleared the road to the altar; faith required him to cast himself on God's mercy and love, trusting that God would reveal Himself. In his most agonizing moment of grief and confusion, he asks why this must happen and senses an answer that reorients his entire perspective.

    "The work of my intellect was done."

    "I had to cast myself upon His mercy and love..."

    "Because this is not about you."

Guided by the Hand of God: The Cost of Discipleship

- **Following Jesus is worth every loss, and it sends the follower outward in love.** Qureshi's conversion costs him dearly, wounding the parents he loves and straining the family that had shaped his world. He does not present the decision as a triumph but as costly obedience: if Jesus is not God, then no sacrifice is worth it, but if He is God, then no suffering is too great for the privilege of being bound to Him. The book closes by redefining what it means to follow God, not through ritual obligation alone but by walking in the Spirit of grace and love, with confidence in the everlasting life given through the Son. Having found Jesus, Qureshi turns his attention outward to the billions who do not know Him, resolving to love the unloved and offer hope to those without it.

  > *"All suffering is worth it to follow Jesus. He is that amazing."*
  >
  > *"To love the unloved and give hope to the hopeless?"*
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  > *"Now I had found Jesus."*