

Secret believers ... *The real cost of following Jesus*

For a former Muslim, becoming a believer in the Messiah is more than simply changing religion. In leaving Islam, the person has left his identity. The consequences of this choice are terrible: new believers are often rejected by other Muslims, and their family and sometimes they are forced to divorce and they lose their children. They can lose their inheritance, their employment, their lodging, sometimes they receive death threats and some are actually killed. In many cases they are obliged to live their new faith in secret because of the fear of persecution. They become real “secret believers.” Many are isolated, and it is very difficult for them to persevere in their faith. The new believer needs a new identity.

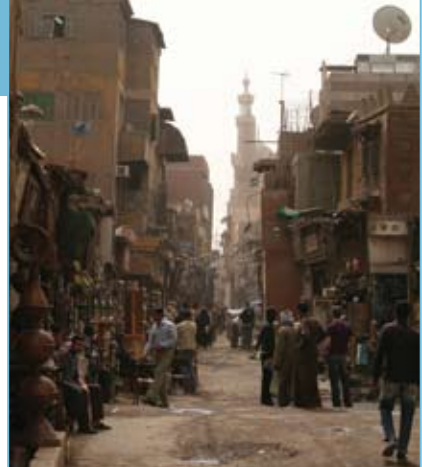
In Islamic countries new believers in the Messiah from a Muslim background can experience very dramatic situations.

According to Islamic law, the sharia, it is forbidden for a Muslim to change religion. In Saudi Arabia, Iran, the Maldives, Afghanistan and Yemen people can be subject to the death penalty if it is discovered that they have changed religion. However, death threats do not always come from governments. In Afghanistan and generally in the countries of the former Soviet Union, the family of a new believer will sometimes try to save their honor by shedding blood (It is considered shameful for the family for someone to leave Islam and become a member of another faith).

In Somalia Islamic fundamentalists will hunt down new believers to put them to death. For more information see the web site: <http://www.secretbelievers.org/>

Prayer Requests:

- ▶ *Pray for the secret believers who are even now facing the possibility of death. May God protect them.*
- ▶ *Pray for their families that they also may be attracted to the light of Christ. Pray that there would be a change of mentality so that Muslims can accept believers in the Messiah as honorable members of society.*
- ▶ *Pray that the situation of the secret believers would be better known and that believers all over the world could give them help.*



Testimony of a secret believer: Even after coming to faith in Jesus, in our passport it is always written that we are Muslims because it is legally forbidden to modify it. One is supposed to present it everywhere. I am very happy that my husband did not lose his job when his employer learned that he had become a follower of Jesus.

