

Conversation in Dubai

Recently a believer got into a taxi on his way to the airport in Dubai. After a few minutes he asked the taxi driver which country he was from. The driver responded “Pakistan” and then he continued, “Pakistan is really a bad country, the government is corrupt, people are corrupt and the economy is bad. That is why I am here in Dubai.” He continued, “I have four children: three boys and one girl. The girl was born nine months after my last visit to my home almost a year ago. Here I work practically every night driving for 12 hours just to survive and to send money home to my family.”

As the conversation continued he said he was from Peshawar near the Afghan border, which is a real hotspot for militant and violent Islamists. He described himself as a Pashtun, one of the great tribal peoples of South Asia. He had developed enough language ability to speak some English, Arabic and Hindi in addition to Pashto. One of his last comments was striking. “Working all night I see a lot of things which I would prefer not to see. There are too many prostitutes here. Too many Ruskies [Russians], too many illegal things at night.”

Dubai is a small city state in the United Arab Emirates. In recent years, however, it has become a world class city of gleaming towers and walled villas. Dubai’s shopping centers even have a ski slope, an aquarium and underwater zoo along with luxurious shops. But unfortunately, the city is not only made of outward beauty. About 85% of the inhabitants are non-Emiratis. A majority of the foreign workers come from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and other Arab countries. Many live in substandard or crowded housing and work terribly long hours. Muslims, including the local Emiratis, make up about 50%+ of the 1.6 million population. (In all the United Arab Emirates - population 5 million - the figures are: Muslim 65%, Hindu 17%, Christian 9% Buddhist 4% other or unknown 5%.) While the vast majority of foreign workers are men, women from various countries have also arrived, and work mostly in house-keeping and service jobs; some are employed in Dubai’s night life as indicated by the Pakistani taxi driver. The city definitely has its dark side. The large amounts of money in Dubai’s financial and real estate markets attracts all kinds of legal and illegal activities (1 Tim 6:10).



▶ Prayer REQUESTS

Many of the foreign workers who consider themselves Christian are actually fairly nominal in their faith. Some are true and committed believers in the Messiah.

▶ *Pray that these believers may really provide an example to Muslims and non-Muslims about what it means to walk in God’s ways (Mt. 4:16, John 8:12).*

▶ *Pray that the knowledge of God could come to the Emiratis, other Arabs, the Pakistanis and the Bangladeshis. Emirati society is especially closed to outsiders. The actual contact between Emiratis and non-Emiratis is fairly limited. Pray for openings so that all these peoples could discover the Messiah.*