

Mission for the month - Arab World Ministries - AWM

Focus on Morocco

Compared with other Muslim countries, Morocco is thought to be more lenient towards the Christian faith. But a lot of people struggle to overcome the fear of following Christ. In a state where the constitution allows for the freedom to practice one's religion and encourages religious tolerance, why is it so hard to become a Christian in Morocco?

1. **You're one in a million** - It's a cliché, but it's undoubtedly true for Moroccan seekers. With a population of over 35 million, there are thought to be fewer than 6,000 local believers.
2. **Folk Islam** - this continues to be an issue for many Moroccans. It is a range of superstitious beliefs and practices, some of which would be considered witchcraft. Many fear that they will bring misfortune upon themselves, their house, or their community by leaving their religion.
3. **What's your social status?** - Access to Christian resources is often determined by wealth. Approximately 30% of the adult population is unable to read. If you cannot read, how do you access information?
4. **Abandoning traditions** - A Muslim who decides to follow Jesus is regarded as bringing shame to their family and community. Abandoning traditions is a big concern, raising questions in their minds like what they do during the month of Ramadan.
5. **Splitting the family** - Marriage and children are essentially the two most important things in Moroccan life. Seekers who want to profess faith in Christ are aware that they may be putting their whole family life in jeopardy. And for many, this fear is insurmountable.

But it is not all bad news; it is known that at least 13 Moroccans made a profession of faith in the last month!

Vicar's Comment

I wonder how you view a New Year. Perhaps it depends on whether you are naturally more of a planner or a 'live in the moment' sort of person? If you're the former, perhaps it's tempting to think of new seasons of life such as a new year as opportunities to clear all the rubble away and build from scratch again - this, that or the other will change this year, this year's it's going to be different!!

As Christians, we are called to seek God and His perfect ways day after day, month after month and year after year; this is a good and godly thing to do. But if things don't go to plan, if your attempts to build from scratch don't turn out as you hoped, remember that God is big enough to handle any unexpected challenges which come your way as you seek to follow Jesus. As Romans 8:28 says, 'in all things God works for the good of those who love Him' (Romans 8:28 NIV). So pursue God in 2020 and remember - He is big enough for anything coming your way.

St Christopher's Church

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Sunset in Morocco

Memory Verse

'A time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.'

John 4:23

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