Open Doors NEWSLETTER

Strengthening what remains in Yemen

Zaid lost everything when his faith in Christ was discovered . . . but was his new faith worth it?

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Yemeni Christian Zaid has a vision for 40 000 house churches.

It was a chilly evening when Zaid* was kicked out of his parents' house.

He wandered the streets of his city in Yemen, lost, confused. Doubts ran through his mind: *"Is this new faith worth it? Is everything I'm going through worth it?"*

He'd grown up in a conservative Muslim family and tried his best to please God. His doubts about Islam led him to search for the truth. His journey has not been easy or pain-free.

But listening to this bold Yemeni brother is a reminder of what God does in the lives of millions of people who risk everything for their faith.

And it all started with a dream.

"Save me"

During his search for truth, Zaid began to learn more about Christianity. One night, Zaid decided to call out to this new God that he was reading about: "Before I went to sleep, I asked Him: 'God, if you exist in Christianity, tell me, and I will come to you. If you exist, tell me: Where are you? Save me.'"

That night, and for several consecutive nights after, Zaid dreamed the same dream.

"I was in a lush, green garden, and I saw a strong light shining.

**Representative name used*

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This light was approaching me, and then a voice said, 'I left the 99, and I came for you.' I woke up, startled," Zaid shares, with tears in his eyes as he recalls the vivid dream. "I opened my phone, and as soon as I scrolled, a photo appeared on my screen: a lush, green garden and a figure of Jesus standing there with sheep surrounding Him. Written on that photo were the same words I heard: 'He left the 99 and came for you.' In that moment, I felt like the world stopped."

Zaid realised he had received the confirmation that he had been searching for!

Zaid's faith in Jesus put him in immediate danger in Yemen. His father found out about Zaid's Christianity when he discovered his Bible. "[My father] beat me badly," Zaid says. "I had bruises all over my body. It was the first time he had ever laid hands on me. I saw a side of him I had never seen. My father is a kind and sweet man, but his reaction was the opposite."

After he was expelled from his family's house, Zaid eventually found a new home in another city, and he entered the ministry. Now, through the help of Open Doors local partners, Zaid is starting a local discipleship house where new believers can meet, live together and be discipled day after day. His vision is to provide a safe place that offers daily Bible studies where believers can discuss difficult questions and tough topics together – a place to equip believers to lead house churches across the country. "The population of Yemen is 40 million," Zaid says. "My vision is to have 40 000 active house churches. We want to reach a stage where we have one house church for every 1 000 Yemenis, a place where they can enjoy fellowship and grow together."

Thank you for supporting Zaid and other believers like him through your gifts and prayers!

Through your gifts and prayers, Open Doors partners with believers like Zaid to bring hope and healing to Christians around the world. To find out how you can help, visit www.opendoors.org.za/strengthen-what-remains

Your support at work

A snapshot of how your gifts and prayers are helping persecuted Christians around the world

AN OUTCAST FOR CHRIST



"If you do not return to Islam, you are no longer my daughter."

These are the words that haunt 20-year-old Leila* every day.

At 18, her Muslim father discovered her faith and forcefully dragged her home to her community in the Southern Philippines. She was enrolled in a Madrasah (Islamic school) and became more and more isolated, especially once her Christian grandmother passed away. She was the only believer in her family.

Now, two years after her persecution from her family began, the silence in Leila's home has grown even heavier. The ultimatum from her father has reached a breaking point: Return to her traditional roots or face being disowned forever.

Yet, her faith in Jesus has led her to a beautiful, quiet act of defiance. Leila risks her safety to attend a monthly youth fellowship supported by Open Doors. This gathering is her only source of spiritual oxygen.

"When she enters that room, you can see the weight of the Madrasah fall away," shares Ann*, Open Doors' local partner. "In these fellowships, she is reminded of who she truly is. Here, she isn't a disappointment or a project to be fixed; she is a beloved daughter of the King."

Will you commit to prayer and standing with your sister on her journey? You can also help through your financial support to Open Doors to help us in our work for Leila and other Christians around the world. By providing her with these secret fellowships, we ensure that while Leila may be an outcast in her own home, she is never alone in the Body of Christ.

HOUSELESS IN LAOS



For years, the Houang* family lived peaceably in their village in rural Laos, in the house where their four children, two teenagers and two younger ones, were growing up.

But everything changed in August 2025 when one of the Houang's neighbours shared the Gospel with the family. Soon after, the Houang family trusted Jesus and began attending a Sunday fellowship in a nearby village.

It didn't take long for word to spread throughout the small village that the Houang family had become Christians. Outraged by their decision, village elders and local officers confronted the Houangs and demanded that they renounce their faith.

Despite repeated threats, the family refused and continued to attend church. In early 2026, villagers issued a final warning: "Leave our village now, or we will destroy your house."

The next day, an angry mob showed up at the Houang's home and carried out their threats, tearing the house apart piece by piece.

After destroying the house, the mob scattered the family's belongings outside the village, along the road.

Thankfully, the local church was able to help and, because of your prayers and support, our partners and church leaders can address the Houang family's immediate needs while working on a long-term solution for the family. Please pray for the Houangs for strength, encouragement and steadfast faith as they continue to endure severe persecution.

**Photo still taken from a video showing the destruction of the Houang's home.*

HEALING IN SYRIA



A small group of five children sits on blue chairs around two small tables. On them are balls of colourful clay and little moulds to form animals, hearts and stars.

Sitting with the kids is a woman in her 20s. She has long, curly black hair and is wearing a jean jacket with funny slogans on it. She talks to one of the children while advising the rest of the group on how to use the clay.

You could find this scene at any number of nursery schools in the world.

But this isn't a preschool or a kindergarten. The kids work with the clay, their faces serious – there is no laughter, no excited talk. This is not a random group of Syrian children. The woman is a counsellor, and these youngsters are here because they've seen things no child should have witnessed.

These children were all at Saint Elias Church in Damascus when a suicide bomber attacked their church. The attack on 22 June 2025, has left a mark on the hearts and minds of many Syrian Christians and has left these little brothers and sisters traumatised.

Today, the group is at the end of one of the counselling sessions supported by Open Doors local partners in Syria. Scars from the explosion are still visible. Young Sarah can no longer see out of one of her eyes, and she has lost two of her uncles and an aunt. She continues to see her father struggle to recover from his severe leg injury.

As the kids finish up their clay, the counselling session ends. They will soon return home – not healed, but hopefully assured that Jesus loves them and will walk through their pain with them. The road to wholeness will not be quick or easy, but by God's grace and thanks to the gifts and prayers of Open Doors supporters, these sessions are a start.

Your gifts and prayers make this work possible and show Syrian kids that they're not alone. Thank you!

Encourage fearless faith!

In many places around the world, followers of Jesus risk everything to follow Him but they do it anyway. Your gift today can help strengthen believers who share your faith – but not your freedom.
Visit www.opendoors.org.za/strengthen-what-remains to learn more. Your gifts and prayers make such a big difference for those who face persecution and oppression for their faith in Christ!



*Throughout this newsletter, representative names used for security reasons.