

allowed to swim with you? Does the large meeting room allow others to come in and practice their beliefs? I addressed my Arab brothers and asked them about the Friday prayers and whether the Imam will use his sermons to curse the Jew and the Christian. Our friend was not able to answer. So I asked again, why do you want to implement such a huge project, with no accommodation for non-Muslims, when the number of Muslims in the area would be no greater than a few hundred? At this point I think the message became clear to our friends, but the argument continued with him pointing to the French girl, telling me that she was a new Muslim and now she wears *hijab*. “God bless her,” I answered, “but is wearing hijab the only basis upon which a French girl converts to Islam? And is this alone a good enough reason to convince me to donate?”

The conversation took longer than it should have, but I managed to cut it short by saying that what Europe needs from Muslims is the restoration of the ideology of *Da'wah*—or proselytizing—in a way that can be accepted by others, based on our religion’s true teachings of tolerance, which drives them to like us. I concluded with the story of Bhamdoun Mosque and Sidon Mosque, built by the late Abdullah Al-Othman in the late fifties in Lebanon. Bhamdoun Mosque was built in a Christian village and Sidon Mosque was built on land donated by a Christian man. The delegation was taken aback by this success story of *Da'wah* which was based on tolerance toward other religions and sects. It’s a story worth studying, where they might find the answer to their dilemma.