

July 11, 2013

Day Three

Greetings everyone,

I pray that by the time your eyes feast upon this page, everything is well with you and your loved ones, but if not, I pray that things get better.

For many of you who've been following my blog regularly, you know that I recently changed the title from Keeping it real to A Day in The Life, where I share with you the ups and downs of my everyday life. Today I thought what better way to give you guys a glimpse into my life than to share this part of me with you. That part that I'm referring to is that Muslim part of me; The religious part that no one seems to want to talk about.

I have been a Muslim for the past year and a half. I took my Shahadah (declaration of faith) on Feb. 27th 2012. If God's willing, I'll share more about the whole process of why and how I became a Muslim and what led me in that direction. As you can recall, I mentioned in my last post the difficulties of trying to find yourself as a man behind these four walls.

To be honest, I had no clue what Islam was before I was incarcerated. Then when I found out, I had this idea in my mind that to be a Muslim meant that you go around blowing people and yourself up. But that couldn't have been further from the true essence of Islam. In fact, to harm innocent people and take one's own life is Haram (Evil) not Halal (Permissible).

What I really want to share with you is the process of fasting during Ramadan (The holy month) where Muslims fast from sun up to sun down. It's the 9th month on the lunar calendar. The Holy month of Ramadan is all about worshipping and praising Allah (God). It's also about unity and humility.

Today I woke up at 2:07 a.m. to get my morning bag meal. It consists of 2 servings of cereal, 2 small milks, 1 orange, 2 slices of bread and a serving of PB & J. This has to be eaten by 3:31 today because that's the time that Fajr (Morning) prayer comes in. After that, no eating or drinking of any sort is allowed until Maghrib (Evening) prayer at 8:37 p.m. So that's 17 hrs total without any eating or drinking.

The month of Ramadan is meant to show your gratitude to Allah. It only comes one time a year, ten days ahead of the previous year. Last year it started on the 19th, so this year on the 9th. It's that way so that you can fast at all times of the year. It prepares you for everything because some days are longer or shorter than others.

It is the duty of every Muslim to fast if they are able to. except small children, a non Muslim (Kafir) or pregnant women because it may harm their child,

or someone who is really ill. Fasting has many benefits. It cleanses the soul of sin because you are sacrificing your earthly desires to please Allah. It teaches you humility and discipline. How? Because during times when you are really hungry, you are reminded of the unfortunate. You only have to wait until Maghrib, while many starving people in Africa, Arabia, or even right here in America may have to wait for a merical that may never come. And discipline because you are building true character. There's nothing Allah dislikes in a person than one who doesn't keep his word. No one will know whether you're keeping your promise to Allah, but he and you. You can pretend to be as devout and pious as you want, but if you are eating and breaking your fasts, you'll know. ~~Allah~~ Allah will know. If you can't keep it real with the person who has created you, then who can you keep it real real with. Apparently not yourself.

I'll do my best to check in with you guys at least two times a week about my progress and struggles of trying to keep my fast. But there are many temptations. I work in commissary inside of the institution where i'm around junk food and sweets all day. So yes, it's definitely not going to be easy. Have you ever tried something like this? It doesn't necessarily have to be about religious matters ~~and~~, but other things as well. It could be about a journey you took, a three day fast, a ten day cleansing, an expedition, whatever. Just share what you can. You can even ask questions. I'm here all day:)

The first two days are down, only twenty-eight more to go. Check in every chance you get to see how it's going. I'd love to see outside support or ~~even~~ ^{hear from} other brothers or sisters who are also fasting.

Before I let you guys go, I feel obligated to say this, I respect all religions. I'm not the kind of person who pushes my beliefs on others because I would hate to be the person you dread to see walking ~~down~~ down the hall and you don't want to make eye contact because you know i'll start preaching. Guy'll be like "it's your turn to talk to him, I got stuck last time."

What I want to do is get the discussion going. We are all people, one ~~is~~ ^{where you} is no i'm better than ~~am~~ ^{me} because of such and such. If you want to show your support or have questions, feel free to leave a comment. As I mentioned in my opening statement upon becoming a blogger, "Any and everything is up for discussion." You're on A DAY IN THE LIFE, with

Yours Truly,

Michael McThune