

INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM Victor Khalil

Muslims and Christians in the Middle East live, work and associate with each other, yet an Arab senses the great difference between the two. This feeling makes social life and communication almost nonexistent between Muslims and Christians, therefore, culture is diversified.

We first must understand that the word “Christian” in the Middle East does not have the same connotation as it does in the West. A Christian in the Middle East is simply someone who is not a Muslim or Drouz (the latter is a sect found only in Lebanon).

The various Christian denominations found in the Middle East are 1) Coptic and Greek Orthodox, 2) Catholic and 3) Protestant churches. Members of these groups are not necessarily born again Christians, but are influenced by their particular cultural backgrounds.

Born-again Christians are distinguished from “nominal” Christians with the terms “converted”, “saved”, “born again”, “evangelical”, or “believer”. Confusion can still occur because Muslims call themselves believers, and “evangelical” could simply be used for a Presbyterian. The best description of the Christian is a follower of the “Injil”, ie. The Bible.

If you were to ask a Muslim when Islam began, you would probably get an unexpected answer such as, “It is as old as time; it is as old as God’s creation; as old as Adam and Abraham and Moses; was not Abraham himself a Muslim, and his son Ishmael the father of the Arab race? Did not God establish His covenant with Ishmael for all generations? Did not Hagar find water for Ishmael at the well Zamzam in Mecca, which was one day to be the very heart of the Muslim world? Does not the Quaran contain the unchangeable and eternal word of God, which was revealed in the Arabic tongue?” All this is part of the orthodox Muslim belief.

If we are to find what is distinctive in the Muslim belief, we must first look at the person, character, and career of

Mohammed himself.

Mohammed: The Founder of Islam

His background Mohammed was born in the wealthy city of Mecca, which was a very important trading center for

Western Arabia, and on the main caravan routes. Mecca was also famous for its shrine, the Ka'ba, and was the center of pilgrimage for tribes throughout Arabia. Before Mohammed preached among them, the Arabs were mostly animists; some worshipped the stars and believed in spirits. However, Mohammed also came into contact with both Jews and Christians at this time. The Jews, being traders, had settled in the trading cities on the caravan routes, taking with them their rabbis, scriptures and synagogues. Thus the Arabs had a superficial knowledge of the Old Testament stories and Jewish folklore, which we find in the pages of the Quaran.

His early Life Mohammed was born about 570 AD of the tribe of Quraish. His father died before he was born, and his

mother when he was six years old. His grandfather took care of him, but died shortly afterwards. He was then brought up by his uncle, Abu Talib. His contacts with Judaism and Christianity in Mecca influenced his later religious life.

A wealthy widow, Khadija, put him in charge of her caravans, and when he was twenty-five, she rewarded his fidelity by marrying him. The marriage seems to have death some twenty-five years later. A number of children were born to them, but only one daughter, Gatima, survived. Khadija's wealth enabled Mohammed to have a good deal of leisure time, and thus time for seclusion and prayer.

His later life and call At the age of forty he began to experience visions which convinced him that God had a special task for

him. One day when he was meditating in a cave on Mount Hira, outside the city of Mecca, he was visited by the angel Gabriel. The angel commanded him to preach God's warning to men.

The first converts The response to his preaching was poor. His first converts included his nephew, who was only nine

years old at the time of his first revelation, and his adopted son who had formerly been his slave. The first adult to make profession of Islam was Abu Kahr, a wealthy merchant, who was a significant early convert. There were fifty converts during the period of 610 to 613 AD.

5. Opposition Six years after the beginning Mohammed's call and mission, there was such strong opposition to him

that many of his followers had to flee from Mecca and found refuge in the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia. It was a long hard struggle for another six years. Then Mohammed took the decisive step of withdrawing with his followers, some two hundred in all, from Mecca to Medina. He had been invited there by a party of its inhabitants who had met him, accepted his claims and prepared their fellow townsmen for his advent. This withdrawal or "hijra" was the turning point in Mohammed's career, and has been chosen to mark the beginning of the Muslim era (622 AD). In Mecca he had been rejected prophet pointing his countrymen to the one true God and warning them of judgment to come. In Medina he at once became the statesman, legislator and judge.

Jewish opposition to Islam At first Mohammed recognized the validity of the Jewish and Christian religions, being content to

preach as the prophet to his own people. Jerusalem was chosen as the direction in which man should face when praying, and he

adopted several Jewish practices. However, friction developed when the Jewish tribes failed to recognize him as a true prophet or to practice the customs of Islam.

Troubled by this, Mohammed began to assert the absolute character of the revelation which had been given to him, and claimed that it was a renewal of the religion that Abraham had professed. In this way he gave up any attempt to reconcile Islam with Judaism. It was toward the Ka'ba at Mecca that the Muslim community was now to face during prayer and not toward Jerusalem as previously commanded.

The spread of Islam As Mohammed's power and influence increased, so did large scale warfare, conquering the whole of

Arabia, and stamping it with the religion of Islam. After Mohammed died in 632, at the age of 63, Islam continued to spread until it became one of the dominate religions of mankind. Mohammed was the first man to unify the Arabs into one people. Muslims number about 800 million of the world's population.

The Beliefs of Islam: The Six Articles of Faith

Allah The central point of Islam is the unity of God, and it is against any idea or concept which might tend to

associate anything with God, either as equal or partner. Thus God is said to have no partner, or wife or children. His is one, a self-existent unity. Muslims deny the Trinity and the Lordship of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is because they interpret the sonship of Jesus literally and physically, saying that Christians believe that the Virgin

Mary was the Mother of God. Jesus is depicted by the Quaran as the great miracle worker and one of the greatest prophets. The Quaran emphatically denies that he ever died on a cross, instead,

when the Jews sought to crucify him, God called him up to heaven and threw his likeness on someone else who was crucified by mistake in his place. Traditions add that Christ is to come again, and have children to break the symbol of the cross and acknowledge Islam.

The God of the Quaran is the god of judgment and justice. God demands that human conduct shall be given its due reward or punishment.

Muslims believe that God created the heaven and the earth in six days. His work did not end with creating heaven and earth but his activities are still going on. The creation of Adam and Eve in heaven was the start of man. Adam and Eve were simultaneously deceived by Satan, who tempted them to eat the forbidden fruit. God accepted their repentance, the sin was forgiven, and both were sent down to earth. Muslims believe all children are born free from sin, and if they die during childhood they are sinless and to live in paradise.

Angels Great prominence is given to angels in the Quaran, and anyone who denies them is an infidel. They are

regarded as servants of God through whom he reveals his will. The greatest is Gabriel or Jibril, the revealer of God to Mohammed; he is also called the Holy Spirit. It is he who strengthened Jesus. The other archangels include Michael or Mika'il, Israfil, the trumpeter of doom, and Israil, the custodian and the one that had the care of the faithful at death. There are also an indefinite number of ordinary angels. Two recording angels attend on every man; one on his right records his good deeds, and the one on his left his sins. There are also two angels called Munkar and Nakir, who visit every newly buried corpse in the grave. Making the corpse sit up, these ngels examine it in faith. If the replies are satisfactory it is allowed to sleep in peace, but if it does not confess the apostle Mohammed they beat it servely ~ some say until the day of

resurrection. Animals are said to hear its

cries, although mortals cannot. The angels are fighting for believers against evil spirits. There are also demons or jinns.

The Scriptures Jews and Christians are regarded as people of the Book. Muslims hold that the Law was revealed to

Moses, the Psalms to David, the Gospel to Jesus, and the Quaran to Mohammed. They claim that Jews and Christians have changed and distorted their own scriptures, so God sent the Quaran as the final revelation to man.

The Prophets Muslims accept all the prophets of the Old Testament, and John the Baptist in the New Testament. They

believe that Jesus was the greatest of the prophets prior to Mohammed. He was the sinless one, not the son of God, but the servant of God. Mohammed was the final prophet or warner. To disobey him leads to the fires of hell. Mohammed is not regarded as sinless, but as needing the forgiveness of God. The fact that Mohammed was a sinner is taken as a virtue, as he is able to sympathize with others.

The Day of Judgment Muslims hold that the judgment Day has been appointed by Allah, and will be proceeded by gigantic

natural catastrophes. On that day the righteous will be presented with a book of his deeds in his right hand, and the damned with the book in his left hand. It is only one's works that will be taken into account.

Everyone must walk on the "syrat" or path on the brink of hell, which is sharper than a sword's edge and finer than a hair. The righteous with his book in his right hand will walk across into heaven; the sinner will not be able to get across but will fall into the fires of hell. The righteous will thus enter paradise where all material

fits will be lavished upon him, and he will engage in physical pleasures.

The Decrees of Allah Everything is dependent on the will of Allah, and is preordained. This includes belief, disbelief and condemnation. There is no free will, so fatalism can result. As the Quaran says, “Allah wills what he wills.”

The Five Pillars of Islam: The Practical Duties

These are the practices expected of the Muslim: Recital of the “kalima” or creed

The creed is a simple one: “There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the prophet of God.” A recital of the creed is enough to enroll a new convert into the ranks of Islam.

Prayer Ritual prayer plays a large part in the life of the devout Muslim. “Salat” is the name given to the

prescribed worship, with ritual movements which must be performed five times a day, at the fixed times. These prayers are compulsory for men and women over the age of ten, and may be performed alone, or in a congregation. There is more merit if they are offered in a mosque.

Before prayer a Muslim must clean himself, a ritual which is known as ablutions. This consists of repeating the name of Allah, the Benificent, the Merciful, while he washes his face, arms, hands, ankles and feet with clean water.

The Call to Prayer

Before the beginning of each set of daily prayers in the mosque, the muezzin goes up and calls the faithful to prayer, crying “God is the greatest, I bear witness that Mohammed is the messenger of

Allah. Come to prayer. Come to security.”

Once inside the mosque the congregation take up their positions facing Mecca. There are set postures to be adopted. Each of these is called a “raka”, and consists of eight separate acts of devotion. For the first three acts the Muslim stands, for the fourth he bows, for the fifth he stands and for the sixth he kneels, his forehead touching the ground. He then kneels up, bows down to the ground again and then kneels again. Once the required number of rakas has been performed, the ceremony is completed by saying, “Peace be upon you and the mercy of God.” The Muslim has to pray three rakas at dawn, four at midday, four in the afternoon, three just after sunset, and four rakas ninety minutes after sunset.

The Mosque The Mosque is the focal point of the Muslim’s devotions. It must have a court or fountain to provide

pure water for ablutions. Other features include a pulpit, a lectern carrying a copy of the Quaran, and the “mihrab”, a small recess shaped like a semi-circle facing in the direction of Mecca. All Muslims face the mihrab during prayers. Women are not prohibited from attending the services in the mosque, but are not encouraged to do so because of the responsibilities at home. However, women often do attend services, and many mosques have special quarters for the women to worship in.

Fasting Fasting means abstaining from food, drink, smoking and sexual intercourse from dawn to sunset, in the

month of Ramadan. It is compulsory for all men, women and children above the age of ten, who are not sick, weak, or old. It is primarily a spiritual and moral discipline, and man is thus taught to conquer his physical

desires. Because the Muslim calendar is lunar, Ramadan falls at a different time each year.

Almsgiving There are two types of almsgiving required. “Zakat” means purification, and is the amount which a

Muslim must give annually. It consists of one fortieth of the money and merchandise, one tenth or one twentieth of agricultural produce, and different rates for cattle, etc. Zakat is described as the wealth taken away from the rich to be given to the poor. The second type is “Zaqaah” or free will offering. This offering is regarded as a solemn duty, as generosity is highly regarded in Islam.

Hajj ~ The Pilgrimage to Mecca This is obligatory to those who can afford it, once in a lifetime. There is great merit in going to Mecca, to

ask for forgiveness and to perform the ritual around the black stone or “Ka’ba”. Muslims believe that the casting out of Ishmael by Abraham was so that Ishmael could establish a shrine at Mecca. The great sacrifice of Ishmael being cast out is the basis of the Pilgrimage to Mecca.

Islam: The True Religion

Islam, according to the teaching of the Quran, is the only religion and the final revelation from Allah; all of mankind must accept Islam as the only way to receive eternal life in “al-janna:”, paradise.

Here are two of the many Quranic verses which reflect this better:

“Surely, the true religion in the estimation of Allah is Islam.” Sura Al-Imran, 3:20 *“Who so seeks a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the life to come he shall be among the losers.” Sura Al-Imran, 3:86*

The nature of Islam is discussed in the book, Call to the Truth, written by a former Muslim sheik (leader), who has become a Christian and is helping others to reach Muslims for Christ. “The

Imam Al-Ray in his commentary 'Islam' explains that Islam has three perspectives in the original Arabic language. (1) Islam is guidance. (2) Islam is peace; whoever becomes a Muslim has entered a peaceful stage. (3) Islam is a belief." (Translation from Arabic mine.) Abn-Alanbary says, "A Muslim is someone who is sincere in honoring and worshipping Allah (God); so Islam is sincerity toward religion and the belief of Allah, the Almighty." Muslims Today in the West

Since Ayatollah Al-Khomeini, the Muslim and political leader of Iran, launched his attack against the West and Christianity (mainly in the United States), and pushed Islam as his main reason for political views, many Muslims (especially Iranians), have turned away from Islam. Many Arabs have tried to strip themselves from the words "Arabic" or "Islam," and prefer to be identified with their home countries. If you were to ask an Arab in the U.S. today, "Are you an Arab?" the answer might be, "No, I am a Coptic, Phoenician, Lebanese, Chaldean, Assyrian (Iraqi), etc."

This is even true in the Middle East, for example in Egypt. President Sadat, in one of his speeches concerning his visit to Jerusalem, said, "I am not an Arab, I am a Pharoah."

Cultural Division

The division in culture and society between Muslims and Christians is striking. For example, a person's name identifies him by his religion. Christian names are usually Peter, John, Paul, etc. while Muslims have names such as Mohammed, Ahmed, Ali, etc. There are a few common names among them, such as Moses,

David, or Khalil. Searching the origin of these names, however, reveals that many of the Muslim names came from Christian names.

Let us look briefly at Egyptian history to see how this common

background has given way to the present diversity.

In 641 AD, Muslim armies conquered Egypt and founded a new capitol, Al-Fustat, which is now Cairo. Islam became the official religion.

Egypt, at that time, was a nominal Christian society. It is believed that the apostle Mark had preached the gospel there and the whole country became Christian. Omar-Ibn Elas, a Muslim “khalifa” and successor of Mohammed, took advantage of the friction between the Coptic and Catholic Churches in Egypt to launch his attack and take over the country. He promised the Coptics political power over Egypt (and over the Catholics) if they would open the doors to him. Of course, as soon as he was allowed to enter, he overthrew that power. He established a law which said, “An Egyptian should accept Islam, or pay the duty (tax), or be killed by the sword of Omar.”

What remained was a twofold society: rich Christians (nominal and believers), and poor Muslims. This continued in Egypt until the reign of President Nasar who nationalized everything since 1956.

The Church of Egypt is still the Coptic Church. (“Coptic” comes from the original name for Egypt.) It is no longer affiliated with nationality but is simply a denomination similar to the Greek Orthodox Church.

Women in Middle Eastern Society

We live in a world which cries out for liberty for women and for their equality with men. People realize over and over again that monogamy is far better for a close-knit happy family than polygamy. Divorce without reason and lack of birth control leads to instability. The Quaranic teaching about women is largely implicative,

and many Muslim scholars of today are trying to paraphrase it to suit society. Again, Egypt can be used as an example of the controversy between culture and women's struggle for

liberty. The country is divided into two sections. Upper Egypt is the south portion; lower Egypt is the north

portion, because the River Nile runs from the south to the north. (It might sound confusing but it's just like the language ~ all backwards!)

At the time of the rule of the Pharaohs, Egypt was two countries, until King Ramses united them under his rule. Egyptians still see the country as two, however, for the cultures differ greatly. Lower Egypt is considered the civilized part of the country; while upper Egypt, called the "Alsaad," is poor and uncivilized. Lower Egyptians look down at the upper Egyptians and categorize them as "fallahean," farmers and villagers. The word also implies the uneducated. Another name given to the upper Egyptians, "saaedah," means "hard-headed" and "ignorant."

Egypt is known as the most militarily powerful country in the Middle East. Also, it is known as most civilized, as far as education. Egyptian women, especially those in upper Egypt, are known to be the most liberal in the entire Middle East; yet, the upper Egyptian women have not yet known as much liberty as the lower Egyptian women.

When President Nasar nationalized the country, education became free. This was a key in helping women's liberation. Soon, women in lower Egypt rushed to school and today most of those who received education in the new generation are working women, while women in upper Egypt are only slowly moving toward education.

Today, Egyptian society has accepted the idea of a full time

working woman. The marriage-minded man now looks for a working woman to marry, because of the country's economic situation.

Jehan Al-Sadat, the wife of the former President of Egypt, has played the biggest part in freeing the

Egyptian women. She began many activities for women and founded many organizations to liberalize women. A recent movie was documented, "I Need a Solution," dealing with the right of women to file for divorce, since until today the law forbids a woman to divorce her husband.

Muslim scholars have found themselves in a critical situation, seeing that the Quran does not agree with the way Arab women are living today. Here are several examples:

The Quran teaches that women should be veiled...Egypt is the only country in the Middle East never to have veiled women.

The Quranic teaching Polygamy, allowing up to four wives at one time, has brought a controversial war between Muslim scholars, husbands and wives.

"If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your own desire: two, or three or four." Al-Nisa, 4:3

Muslims have found it is difficult to have more than one wife. Education has increased women's independence, besides the fact that inflation has hand-cuffed the men from changing wives. Moreover, men have begun to believe in family life rather than filling cultural quota. The average Muslim husband would rather have one wife and two children, in order to give them the best living.

The government in Egypt has now allowed a few women to

become members of Parliament, to speak for the Egyptian women. The first woman to become a pastor was ordained in 1963 ~ by my father.

Many Arab women are standing against the Quaranic teaching about how wives are to be treated. This has embarrassed Muslim scholars who have found themselves trying to explain the following verses:

“The male has the equal of the portion of two females.” Al-Nisa, 4:11 “And if you desire to take a wife in the place of another and you have given one of them a treasure, take not

back aught therefrom.” Al-Nisa, 4:20 “.....Admonish those of them on whose part you apprehend disobedience, and leave them alone in their beds and chastise them (beat them).” Al-Nisa, 4:34

Imam Abdu Barry, in his book “The Spiritual Growth and Reforming of Society,” suggests that the way to reform society is by revolution and sacrifice through gradual peaceful ways. Unfortunately, women in the Middle East found that the peaceful ways did not get them anywhere with men, so they have taken the revolutionary and sacrificial means to obtain their liberty.

Results and the Christian Response

The result is conflict, on top of an already inconsistent and divisive society. Though the Muslim’s religion may appear to bring order and peace to his life, what he is experiencing now is upheaval. He is being forced to question what he has been forbidden to question, and what was not allowed is now a part of his everyday life. What is this going to mean in terms of the Muslim’s willingness to accept a Gospel that he has rejected and hated? Is the ground being ploughed, so that new seed can be sown? How can we use an understanding of the Muslim’s background and experiences to present to him an answer that fits exactly the questions that now fill his heart?

ISLAMIC ETHICS AND LAW

Islamic Ethics are based on two sources: the Quaran and the Traditions (Sunna). Since the Quaran did not give details of conduct for every circumstance of life, it is supplemented by the Sunna, which in ancient Arabia meant ancestral precedent, the custom of the tribe. In the earliest Islamic times, the Sunna was still the living, growing tradition of the community, which evolved from the policies and actions of the Prophet and the first caliphs. Departure or deviation from these orthodox precepts and practices might be condemned, according to circumstances, as error, crime or sin.

The ethics of the Quaran might be summed up in the trite formula: “Believe and do right.” Prime among human virtues is the bestowing of benefits ~ especially alms to the poor, the needy, the orphan, the stranger, the slave and the prisoner. (Sura 2:274, 275). According to one of the traditions, Mohammed says: “The best of

alms are those given by a man of small means, who gives of that which he has earned by labor and gives as much as he is able.” This liberality governs both religious and social actions. There are five major types of ethical actions found in the Quaran and in the traditions, each with its corresponding rewards and punishments. They are:

Obligatory (Fard). Required; obedience is rewarded, disobedience is punished. Preferred (Mustahabb). Obedience is rewarded, failure is not punished.

Permissible (Halal). Diliked, (Makruh) Forbidden (Haram).

Optional; no reward or punishment either way. Disliked, but not forbidden. No punishment for doing it, a reward for not doing it.

These must not be done under any circumstances, otherwise punishment ensues. Abstinence brings rewards.

The moral actions of Muslims are governed by the Islamic concept of sin, namely what Allah forbids. Islamic theology does not include the doctrine of original sin or the sin-natured. According to the Quaran, some things are permitted (halal) and others are forbidden (haram). On this basis, Muslim theologians divide sin into two categories: Kabira (“great sins”) and Saghira (“little sins”). Kabira can only be forgiven after repentance. Saghira are easily forgiven if the greater sins are avoided and if some meritorious actions are performed.

Polygamy of up to four wives is permitted, but with the strict condition that all must be well cared for. Divorce also is permitted at any time and for any reason. Similarly, remarriage is permitted. Islam prohibits the manufacture and use of intoxicating liquors.

While Islamic theology tells a Muslim what he should believe, the Sharia (sacred law) teaches him what he should do or leave undone. The Sharia covers every aspect of secular authority and no secular law. Mosque and state are upholds, serves a divine law, firmly based on revelation. Its sources were the Quaran, the Sunna, the Ijma, and the Giyas (analogical deduction from these three primary sources).

AWARENESS IN OUR WITNESS

Islam is a theistic religion, more monotheistic than Christianity (according to them). The stress is on absolute oneness and unity of God which rejects the idea of a Trinity. The implication this is that when a Muslim becomes a Christian his God remains the same, though his understanding of and his approach to that same God changes in terms of relationship. It is similar to the contact of the Apostle Paul with the religious people of Athens (Acts 17) As will be true in the case of a Muslim, Paul did not introduce a new god,

rather he used their belief as a point of contact when he said, “the God whom you worship unknowingly I therefore proclaim..” He uses the theology of creation. “It is this same God who created all things, the earth, the mountains, the stars, the sun and the moon and you yourselves.” Paul then quoted from one of their poets, “As one of your writers said, “Forasmuch as we are the offspring of God, He is not inanimate as to worship Him through stones and this kind of thing. For this Unknown God has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ and He has appointed a day of judgment. Bur prior to that day of judgment He is giving you time to repent.” Like Paul we need to be aware of where they are and then take them to where they ought to be.

In our witness to Muslims, therefore, we need to share our personal experiences of God, e.g., answered prayer, spiritual awareness, assurance of God’s leading in our lives, etc... Muslims are very keen to hear about the reality of God in contemporary experiences.

Islam is a missionary religion, just like Christianity. Actually, many Muslims are quite evangelical about their faith - much more so than many Christians about their faith. They proudly proclaim that in Islam they have a complete way of life. There are rules and guidelines available to instruct a believer in every possible situation in life. They are very subtle in their evangelism. A Muslim missionary will usually come into a new situation unannounced and uncelebrated. Many come as merchants and settle down to a normal life,

identifying with the local social, economic and political struggles. Before long one sees a mosque going up!

They are wiser in their witness than many of us.

Islamic orthodoxy refused the dichotomy between the sacred and the secular, the religious and the political. Thus it is logical that “renewal” has often been associated with political movements.

When you look into

the history of Islam in Nigeria, for example, it started gaining upper hand during the early part of the 19th century when it was used as a force to fight colonialism or imperialism. Many people do not understand why Ayatollah Khomeini will become such a “thorn in the flesh” in Iran’s political history. But to them, the Ayatollah is more or less like Allah on earth - whatever he says is final. As the Pope is to Roman Catholics so is Khomeini to the Shias of Iran.

The goal of Islam is to subjugate the whole world. They dream of a world-wide empire. It is what Jesus Christ demanded of His disciples when He said, “Make disciples of all nation.” Through its long and amazing history, Islam has borne witness to its inherent urge for an empire. In our generation and in our own country, we have lived to see the fulfillment of the late Sarduana of Sokoto’s dream - to take the Koran to the South and to dip the sword at the Ocean. Today the spread throughout Africa is enormous and there are over two million Muslims living in different parts of Europe.

Many Muslim world leaders consider Islam as an alternative to Communism, Capitalism, and worldwide Secularism. In the communist east the Muslim leaders have identified and rejected their system of godlessness. At the same time they reject the Capitalist West because of the oppression of the poor by the rich and they also reject secularism because it denies the existence of God. For them the only option for government, society and life is Islam.

While Muslims (especially leaders) may be friendly and tolerant, when it comes to statesmanship, ie, governing a society and ruling its people, they can be stubborn and sometimes adamant. In many countries today, Islamic leaders use a census to demand political rights. If it can be proven beyond doubt that Muslims are

in the majority, Muslim leaders in such a country would strongly advocate for an “Islamic State.” They

want political power that commensurates numerical strength.

Islam is more than a religion; it is a culture, a government, a judiciary, a whole way of life. To a true Muslim, life can have real meaning only by total undivided loyalty and submission to Allah. That is because the name Islam means both “surrender and peace.” They believe that to have the peace of God you must be a true Muslim.

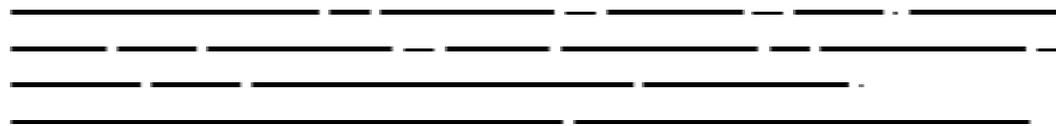
Islam perceives reality by dividing all the world’s people into two camps: Dar ul-Islam (house of those who have submitted), the believers, and Dar ul-harb (house of those who are resisting), the unbelievers, referred to as the “daffirs.” To the latter the former feels compelled to preach and to exert on behalf of God. Those who have believed have a charge to bring those that are resisting to submission either peacefully or forcefully, hence the Jihad.

There are probably more Muslims in Africa today than Christians, 175 million to 150 million. The rich Arab countries are determined to spread Islamic faith and culture throughout the world. Though we

have been liberated from political imperialism, we may still be faced with economic imperialism as well as religious and cultural imperialism. The picture is not as pronounced in the anglophone countries of Africa as it is in the Francophone ones. In Guinea 85% of the population are Muslims, 4% are Christians. In Senegal about 90% are Muslims. From time to time political leaders rise who want to exploit the opportunity of money from the Arab countries by declaring their countries to be Islamic states.

It is more difficult to reach the older Muslims than the younger ones. What should be our strategies for Muslim evangelism? Heretofore, a lot of Christian conversions took place in Christian Schools. This has considerably decreased and may one day disappear completely as more and more Muslim Institutions open.

SOME STRATEGIES FOR MUSLIM EVANGELISM



Identification Jesus Christ who is God had to become man to identify with our helpless plight. He became our High Priest and Shepherd of our souls. We need to incarnate to minister effectively. Christianity used to be a religion of isolation. That time is past. The missionaries used to live in their separate quarters and practice “hit and run.” They would go to the people, tell them about Jesus Christ and retreat to their refuge. We can no longer do that. We must live with the people, learn their language, study their habits and see the strengths and weaknesses of their system. This is Incarnation.

Accommodation This presupposes that you should not demand a Muslim to repudiate Islam per se, saying it is Satanic, diabolical or demonic. Because of such an attitude, Muslims immediately raise barriers and do not listen to us. We must begin to see that there are elements of truth in Islam. There are many areas of similarity and convergence. Having come from this system, I can relate to this. Accommodate them for who they are; Muslims are made in the image of God and are diligent seekers ~ more diligent, I believe, than many Christians. When you meet a devout Muslim you will likely be put to shame by your own lukewarmness.

Toleration We must recognize the fact that our society is pluralistic. If we are going to live side by side and peacefully share

the Gospel, we need to tolerate a Muslim convert. Allowance can be made for him to use his old religious ideologies and expressions. Under this principle of toleration we show love, compassion and the peace of God. God tolerates; so must we.

Conversational Dialogue We need not confront. Paul says to Timothy, “Do not argue with anybody, because argument gains nothing.” You make more enemies than friends by arguing. When you are engaged in conversational dialogue with Muslims, you listen to them and they owe you the courtesy of listening to you, too. Through such an encounter you sharpen their understanding of the Christian faith and may eventually lead them to Christ. We can engage in that even at the church level. Our church can create a congregational forum to which a Muslim leader can be invited. Jesus Christ dialogued with Pharisees of His day. Bur

before you do that, you must know what you believe.

Open Friendship We need to make friends with Muslims. Show concern and love to them in terms of their needs, demonstrating without ulterior motives the love of God towards your neighbors. Unless we do this, we cannot be open-minded and learn from them. Even Jesus said that we should learn from the teaching of the Pharisees but not to do as they do. We can enrich our Christian theology by learning something from Muslim friends.

Adaptation Paul’s strategy of adaptation may, in our case, take us to some Muslim festivals or ceremonies or even to the mosque to see what they do, they way they worship, etc..... We need to go to the water where the fish are. Again, you must know what you believe.

Maximization I repeat. There are many similarities and areas of convergence between the two faiths which we need to maximize. This is evangelistic and diplomatic wisdom. We do not approach a Muslim by talking about the Trinity or the vicarious death of

Christ. They don't believe these teachings. Their concept of sin is not radical enough as to warrant somebody dying on the cross and therefore does not make sense to them. Our witness can include teaching such as the God of creation, revelation, the judgment to come ~ they believe in all of these. You can then talk about the grace of God; go from common grace to the special or "unique" grace of God. Common grace will deal with the providence of God and His preservation of life ~ giving us rain and sun, etc. they are aware of that. From there you can talk about His grace in love which is not found in the pages of the Koran ~ the idea of dying as a substitute in place of a criminal. Then you can talk about our future hope (they have an eschatology) ~ there is another life guaranteed to those who believe in Christ. They want to get to that life and yet they keep searching in uncertainty. We need to exploit this area to the maximum.

Cultural Relevance Christianity came to us (in Africa) through a foreign cultural western tradition. Unfortunately, many of us in our evangelistic outreach, pass on the Gospel with all kinds of Western cultural

paraphernalia which many Muslims dislike. Hence it is our obligation to make Christianity culturally relevant to our people. We must reassess our own symbolism. We must understand their world-view, though forms, customs, etc, and seek meaningful transferrable concepts. Take dress, for example. Do we have to wear shirts and trousers in order to be Christians or can we stick to our African traditional dress? And how about names? Before, it meant that to be a Christian one had to change one's name. What makes one a Christian is the heart, not the name.

Love and Charity Jesus Christ went about doing good. We must do the same thing. We need to engage in community development with them. Let them see the love of Jesus Christ in us. The Christian church has the tradition of playing a leading role in the

areas of health and education with clinics and schools. We need to continue such works. The Bible tells us not to be weary in doing good.

Simplicity in Communicating the Gospel Use parables. In witnessing to the Muslims avoid straight quotations from the Bible. Instead, use

simple stories and parables as Jesus did, stories like the salt of the earth, light and darkness, etc.... Express, don't impress. May Christians start their message by showing how good orators they are and

this turns out to be impression and not expression. We need to vary our style of writing. Usually we write in prose form, but we can use conversation in

our writing. We need to establish correspondence courses. Many churches have been established through

correspondence courses. For instance, 65 local churches have been established in Indonesia through correspondence courses. People long to read. While they may be opposed to personal confrontation, we can put literature in their hands. We can use Arabic names to get the message across to them. The Islam in Africa Project in Nairobi is experimenting in this area. In one of their booklets, Ibrahim is substituted for Abraham. Starting from where they are, the Muslim leaders are led to

where they should be, from the known to the unknown.

Comparative Study of Religion Many Christians are ignorant about Islam. We need to know their main concepts. For example, what is Islamic concept of revelation? To the Muslims, revelation does not consist in acts, whereas Christians believe that God has really acted in history, so that revelation is not just mere words. While we

believe that Jesus is the final revelation of God, the Muslims believe that the Koran is the final revelation. This type of exercise may prove to be very rewarding.

Personal Exchange This means that our church should consider inviting an Arabic-speaking Christian to conduct evangelistic meetings in our community. It warms and wins a heart of a Muslim to hear somebody who can communicate the Gospel in Arabic.

Today many of Islam's intellectuals are more or less convinced that the Mahdi, the Savior they are looking for, is Jesus Christ.

13. **House Evangelism** Family evangelism is very important to the heart of God. Families won to God in the New Testament include the families of Cornelius, Lydia, the Philipian jailer, and Timothy. It is more effective than just personal evangelism. If the family becomes converted it becomes house-church.

MUSLIM FOLLOW-UP When a Muslim becomes a Christian, he is usually cut off from his family, his family life destroyed. He

is considered a nobody. Unfortunately many of our churches are so individualistic that they do not really create a place for him to feel at home. I have heard of many cases of converts going from one church to another. They keep changing because they are not well received. Here are some particular suggestions: Create a community where a Muslim convert can feel at home.

The new Testament mandate is not only to make converts, but also to disciple them. That means that we are to live with them - sharing together, loving them, accepting them as they are and allowing them into our conclave.

Many of our churches are purely sectarian. The New Testament pattern was that they were of one accord with one purpose, having all things in common, waiting for the same Lord. We need to

demonstrate a similar loving concern. One student convert testified that the power that won him to Christ was the loving demonstration of the Christians on campus. "It is a power that cannot be duplicated," he added.

Don't expect too much from them too soon. When a Muslim accepts Christ, we tend to want him to be like we are right away – to pray the way we pray, to sing the way we sing, the use of the same jargon we use. God usually works in a natural way. A child does not begin to walk the day he is born, like the animals. It is a different species. Muslim believers are a different species of believers. We should allow them to grow at their own pace. We should encourage converts to be witnesses to their fellow religionists, because they understand them more

than we do. Remember the story of Barnabas, a Cypriot. When there was a need in Antioch, the believers

sent Barnabas because he was one of them. He understood them better. We should encourage the same. We should enable them to develop their own "Islamic church," especially if worshipping in our own traditional Christian churches will make them uncomfortable. There is nothing in the New Testament to say that there

is only one way to worship. Jesus said that God is Spirit and they that worship Him should do so in Spirit and Truth. We have followed much of western cultural worship which we are trying to fight and replace with our own African expressions. We should make an allowance for these Muslim converts to worship God in their own way, at least initially. "Don't make a Jew out of a Gentile." Let them worship God the way they understand - that way it will be meaningful to them.

CONCLUSION: We need to demonstrate the simplicity and the power of these people. We are the epistles of Christ, written not

with pen, but with the Spirit of God. Muslims are asking us, “What is the Good News according to your lives?” Your devotion - the way you live, pray, express your love to them, constitutes a powerful witness to your Muslim neighbors and friends.

ISLAM - IT'S FAITH AND FORMS STUDY IV THE BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF MUSLIMS

THE BELIEFS: (iman)

Although the Quaran is filled with a wealth of material that lends itself to the creation of large tomes on

theology and jurisprudence, Muslims nevertheless outline their fundamental beliefs as follows:

Belief in God God is one, having no partners and no equals. His otherness keeps human kind from knowing Him according to many orthodox theologians. *

Belief in the Holy Books. These include the Law of Moses, the Psalms of David, the Gospels, and the Quaran as the complete and final revelation as it was given to Muhammad.

Belief in angels. Angelic beings include angels like Gabriel, the intermediary who brought the Quaran to Muhammad, as well as Satan and jinn, some of which are considered to be capricious beings made of fire who can cause much harm and others which are believed to be beneficent.

Belief in the day of judgment. This doctrine received tremendous emphasis in the preaching of Muhammad. Large parts of the Quaran end with exhortations to listen to the word of God lest one come under the fiery judgment reserved for unbelievers.

Belief in the decrees of God. Because God is sovereign, Muslims believe He is responsible for everything that happens. He decides the fate of men and angels, and is responsible for good and evil according to many orthodox theologians. **

* Sufi Muslims believe “God is nearer than your jugular vein.” ** Not according to Mu'tazilites

THE PRACTICES: (DIN) The practices of Islam are of the utmost importance to a Muslim. Though faith is necessary, in the

Quaranic references to the balance scale of judgment, heaven is achieved by one's good deeds having out-weighed one's bad deeds. If the opposite is true, hell is then the result. This explains the Muslim obsession with doing things "the right way" as a means for gaining merit. Their major concern therefore has been for guidance in knowing exactly the right thing to do and the right way to do it in order that there be no mistakes and no loss of merit in their effort to gain Paradise. These practices cover every aspect of life. The basic ones are referred to as "the pillars of Islam."

Recitation of the creed. "There is no God but God and Muhammed is the messenger of God." The Arabic word for reciting the creed is shahada.

Duty of prayers. Called salat in Arabic, the Quaran makes clear reference to prayers being made only three times a day. At an early date, however, five times of prayers

became the established practiced in the community of Islam. These are in the morning, at noon-time, mid-afternoon, sunset, and some time between sunset and retiring for sleep. For Muslim to feel that he is praying, he has to have his prayer rug pointed towards Mecca and enough space to allow him to prostrate himself in a kneeling position and to be able to touch his forehead to the ground. The place must be clean and the Muslim must wash himself ritually (ablution) and, of course, remove his shoes. Some Muslims cover their heads at this time of prayer. It has been reckoned that the devout Muslim who says his prayers five times daily would be touching his head to the ground 87 times a day as a symbol of his "slaveship" to God.

Practice of alms-giving. Called zakat in Arabic, 2 1/2 percent of a Muslim's income is given voluntarily for the cause of the poor and the propagation of Islam.

Practice of fasting. During the lunar month of Ramadan from sunrise to sunset nothing is to pass one's lips. Nothing is swallowed, not even one's own saliva during that period. (Note that this fasting does not go on from sunset to the following sunrise.) This month is also characterized by great socializing and feasting during the evening hours. The purpose of the fast throughout the day is to cause one to say "no" to one's bodily drives and to think more about God and about the teaching of the Quran. It is considered compulsory except for those traveling or sick or pregnant or too young. Since the lunar calendar is shorter than our solar calendar, this month occurs eleven days earlier every year, and hence moves through the seasons. This can be an ordeal of tremendous hardship when it occurs on long summer days in hot countries.

Pilgrimage to Mecca. Long before Muhammad came into prominence, the pagan people of Arabia had been making pilgrimages to the then idolatrous shrine - the Kaaba - in Mecca. When Muhammad entered Mecca and purified the Kaaba, he appropriated this ancient pagan practice for Islam. Islam teaches that the pilgrimage must be made once in a lifetime if possible. At the present time, it might be noted that the Saudi Arabian government subsidizes, when ever necessary, the return fare of pilgrims. In case of certain people, the government even gives full fare for their coming and going to the central shrine of Islam.

Jihad is added as an obligation by some but is almost never listed officially as one of the pillars. Jihad is an Arabic word meaning "exert" or "exertion." It means "to exert or struggle on behalf of God," and hence Islam. It can mean to do so by preaching, by writing, or by the use of the sword. Many modern day Muslims object to this latter mode because they are embarrassed by an avowal of the use of the sword for such purposes. There is a wide variety of interpretations of the concept of jihad. Some scholars maintain there are two kinds: the inner jihad is against sin in

oneself, the outer jihad is against the external enemies of Islam, that is, non-Muslims. The great Islamic Pakistani scholar, S. Abdul A'la Mawdudi, spoke openly about the use of force to advance Muslim causes. Today in current affairs in Iran and Afghanistan, one finds the word Jihad used in the causes of both of these people against their respective enemies. The late King Khalid of Saudi Arabia called for a worldwide jihad for the recapture of Jerusalem for Islam.

THE HAJJ

The Hajj ~ the pilgrimage to Mecca ~ is one of the five basic requirements for a Muslim: all believers, if they have the physical and financial means to do so, must make this pilgrimage at least once in their lifetime.

And for many, it becomes the culmination of a lifelong dream. The Hajj must be made between the eighth day and the 13th days of the 12th month (Dhu al-Hijjah) of

the Muslim lunar year. This year it began October 17th when nearly two million Muslims from all over the world assembled in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

Although there is some flexibility in the sequence of the rites, pilgrims today pretty much follow the route and example set by the Prophet Muhammad when he made his last visit to Mecca 1,348 years ago...the occasion for the first Islamic pilgrimage. Accompanied by 140,000 Muslims, he retold the story of Abraham and instructed them how to reenact the story of Abraham, Hagar, and Ishmael.

The Prophet Abraham, a central figure in both Judaism and Christianity, is considered the father of the Arabs through his son Ishmael and the founder of monotheism, having instructed his

people that there is but one God. The Biblical story is that Hagar, the Egyptian handmaiden of Abraham's wife Sarah, bore him a son, Ishmael, after Sarah had despaired of having any children. In her old age, however, Sarah was blessed with a son Isaac and refused to harbor Hagar and Ishmael in her household any longer. God told Abraham not to worry - that He would build nations from his seed. So Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael into the wilderness. In Islamic faith, it was Ishmael not Isaac that Abraham offered to sacrifice. And the place in the wilderness where Hagar found water to save her son's life is within the present site of the Holy Mosque at Mecca. The rites are simple, but rich in meaning.

Entering Ihram. At designated points outside Mecca, the pilgrim enters the Haram or Sanctuary beyond which borders a non-Muslim is strictly forbidden at all times. The first rite is the Donning of the Ihram, a white seamless garment. For men this consists of two length's of white material, one for covering the body waist to ankle, the other thrown over the shoulders. For women it is customarily a simple white gown and a headcovering without a vei. With the donning of this garment ~ making all men equal in the eyes of men as

well as God ~ the pilgrims enter a state of consecration in which they may not wear any personal adornment, engage in any disputes or violent acts, or indulge in any manner of fleshly pleasures. This act is accompanied by the uttering of the Talbiyah. The phrase, "Doubtly at Thy service, O God," is a declaration of pilgrimage and is frequently repeated during the Hajj. "Labbayk..Labbayk" (Here I am, O God!!) echoes over the stony plain. **Going to Mina.** On the eighth day of Dhu al Hijjah, the assembled pilgrims begin the Hajj ~ some by foot, most by bus, truck and car ~ to Mina, a small desert village five miles east of Mecca, and there spend the night in preparation for the central rite of the Hajj which occurs the next day. **Standing at 'Arafat.** On the morning of the ninth, the pilgrims move en masse from Mina to the Plain of Arafat for the

Standing. In a simple ceremony the pilgrims gather on the plain and , facing the Ka'bah in Mecca, meditate and pray. Some literally stand the entire time (although it is not required) from shortly before noon to just before sunset. Many climb to the summit of a 200 foot hill called the Mount of Mercy, where Muhammad delivered his Farewell Sermon. At 'Arafat, a Muslim's devotional life reaches its culmination. It is the feeling of many that this is the closest man can come to an encounter with God on earth. **Going to Muzdalifah.** Just after sunset the pilgrims proceed en masse to a place called Muzdalifah a few miles back toward Mina. There, traditionally they worship and sleep under the stars after gathering pebbles for use during the rites on the following days. **Stoning the Pillars.** Before daybreak on the tenth, the pilgrims continue their return trip to Mina. Here there are three stone pillars representing three devils. Each pilgrim throws seven pebbles at the pillar closest to Mecca, generally thought to represent Satan, the Great Devil, who three times tried to persuade Abraham to disobey God's command to sacrifice his son. This reliving of Abraham's rejection of the devil symbolizes the pilgrims' repudiation of evil. **Performing the Sacrifice.** Now begins the greatest festival of Islam, the Idal-Adha, the Feast of Sacrifice. Pilgrims who can afford it buy a sheep or goat, sacrifice it and give a portion of the meat to the poor. The

Sacrifice has several meanings: it commemorates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son; symbolizes Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son, symbolizes the believer's preparedness to give up what is dearest to him; offers thanksgiving to God; and reminds the pilgrim to share his blessings with those less fortunate. The Sacrifice is also an integral part of a worldwide Muslim celebration, uniting those on the Hajj with those elsewhere, as Muslims everywhere perform this identical ceremony on the same day. **Dofing the Ihram.** The pilgrims have now completed the major part of the Hajj, and as the final rite on this day of sacrifice men shave their heads or cut their hair and women cut off a

symbolic lock to mark partial deconsecration. At this point the pilgrims may remove the Ihram, bath and put on their regular clothes. **Making the Tawaf.** The pilgrims now proceed to Mecca and the Sacred Mosque, which encloses the Ka'bah, and, on a huge marbled-floored oval, performing the Circling. The Tawaf consists essentially of circling the Ka'bah on foot seven times, reciting a prayer during each circuit. It not only signifies the unity of God and man, but the physical movement implies that not only the pilgrims' thoughts but all the activities of their daily lives must have God as their center.

The Ka'bah is a simple stone structure about 50 ft. high, cubical in shape, which sits in the middle of the vast courtyard of the Sacred Mosque. It is draped with a black cloth on which verses from the Koran are embroidered in gold thread. The original Ka'bah is believed to have been built by Abraham and Ishmael following instructions from God. It is not a temple, not a church, not a shrine ~ at least, not in the usual sense. But it IS the physical axis of the Muslim world, a focal point toward which Muslims all over the world turn to pray. Embedded in an exterior wall is a fragment of polished black stone framed in silver (the Hajar al-Aswad). It is revered as the only remnant of Abraham's original building, and because Muhammad kissed it on his pilgrimage, it is the custom of all pilgrims to kiss or touch the stone while circling the Ka'bah. Those who can't get close enough, salute it in passing.

After completing the last circuit, the pilgrims move to the Station of Abraham ~ a site now marked by an

octagonal metal and crystal structure ~ to worship on the spot where Abraham is believed to have offered up his own devotions to God while building the Ka'bah. The Tawaf is the last essential ritual. The pilgrims are now fully doconsecrated and are hajjis, meaning those who have completed a Hajj. **Making the Sa'y.** Although the key rituals of the Hajj have been completed, most pilgrims also include the Running, a reenactment of the search for

water by Hagar who ran frantically back and forth between two rocky hillocks, al-Safa and al-Marwa, until the Angel Gabriel appeared and brought forth water. This is the origin of the Well of Zamzam, now enclosed in a marble chamber beneath the courtyard. Pilgrims drink from the well before starting the Sa'y. The Place of Running is a spacious enclosed corridor attached to the Mosque, where the pilgrims walk briskly between the two knolls, a distance of about 1,465 ft. seven times.

Returning to Mina. Because the Prophet returned to Mina for another three days of prayer, it is customary for

the pilgrims also to return to Mina between the 11th and the 3th, when they again stone the pillars representing the devils. This time seven pebbles are thrown at each of the three pillars on each of the days they are there. **Departure.** Before leaving Mecca it is also customary to make a final Tawaf around the Ka'bah as a means of bidding the Holy City farewell. And most pilgrims if they have the time, also take this opportunity to pay a visit to the tomb of Muhammad in the Mosque at Medina, 277 miles to the north of Mecca, where the prophet died soon after making his last pilgrimage.

Not only is the Hajj the most sacred personal experience for a Muslim, it is also Islam's key method for creating and strengthening fraternal ties among the millions of its followers. It is annual reunion, ties of brotherhood and love are forged among people representing the nations of the earth. **The 'Umrah.** In reading various descriptions of the Hajj, one sometimes becomes confused over the sequence of the rites. Perhaps an explanation of the Umrah, called the Lesser Pilgrimage or visit, may serve to clear up the confusion.

The Umrah consists of two rites ~ the Tawaf, the circling and the Sa'y, the running. It is essentially a

mark of respect paid to the Holy City of Mecca upon first entering it. It is required for Muslims who visit Mecca at any time of the year (because Muhammed always did it). And during the Hajj, of course, it becomes a prelude to the Pilgrimage; but these two rites as performed upon entering the city are not part of the Pilgrimage itself. As part of the Hajj, these particular rites come later in the sequence of events.

Muhammed's Life

570 Birth of Muhammed (his father having died a few months earlier).

576 Death of his mother Aminah. 595 Marriage of Khadija 610 Beginning of Call 615 Migration of his followers to Ethiopia

. 619 Death of Khadija

. 620 Muhammed's reputed "Night Journey" from Mecca to Jerusalem, and then to the Seventh Heaven.

622 The Hijra (Flight or Migration) of Muhammad and his followers to Medina, and beginning of Muslim era.

. 624 Battle of Badr: The Quraysh defeated by the Muslims

. 625 Battle of Whud: the Muslims defeated

. 626 The Jewish Tribe of al-nadhir crushed and expelled

. 627 The war of the Ditch~ the Meccan's expedition against the Muslims in Medina

627 The Jewish tribe of Qurayza raided by Mohammed. Some 800 men beheaded (only one Jew accepted his

religion to save his life) and all the women and children

were sold as slaves.

- . 628 The treaty of Hudaibiyya, truce with the Qurash who recognize Mohammed's right to preach without hindrance.
- . 629 The Jews of Khaybar put to the sword Mohammad sends letters and messengers to the King of Persia, Yemen, and Ethiopia and the Emperor Heraclius inviting them to accept Islam.
- . 630 Agreement broken by the Quraysh. Mecca taken by Muhammed ~ the entire population converted and the Ka'ba established as the religious center of Islam.
- . 631 "The Year of Embassier" ~ Islam accepted by Arabian tribes.
- . 632 Mohammed's Farewell Pilgrimage to Mecca

632 On June 8, death of Mohammed, three months after his return to Medina.

Muhammed was 63 years old.

ISLAMIC TERMS

ABUBAKR ~ The first Moslem caliph, according to Sunni Muslims. The Shi'te Muslims reject his and instead consider the fourth Caliph, Ali, as the first true successor to Mohammed.

ALLAH ~ The supreme being. The name of God, derived from the Arabic Al-llah.

CALIPH ~ the title given to office of the spiritual and political leadership which took over after Mohammad's death.

FATIMA ~ the daughter of Mohammad and his first wife, and the wife of Ali, the fourth Caliph.

HADITH ~ the sacred sayings of Mohammed, handed down by oral tradition, for generations after Mohammad's death until finally

transcribed.

HAJJ ~ a pilgrimage to Mecca. One of the five pillars of the Islamic faith.

HEGIRA ~ Mohammad's flight from Mecca to present day Medina in 622 A.D.

IMAM ~ a Moslem who is considered by the Sunnis to be an authority in Islamic law and theology or the man who leads the prayers. Also refers to each of the founders of the four principal sects of Islam. The Shi'ites accept 12 great Imams.

ISLAM ~ Literally, "submission to the will of Allah."

KA'ABA ~ A small stone building located in the court of the great mosque at Mecca containing the black stone supposedly given to Abraham by Gabriel.

KORAN ~ Said to be the final and complete inspired word of God transmitted to the prophet Mohammad by the angel Gabriel.

MAHDI ~ "The Guided One." A leader who will cause righteousness to fill the earth. The Sunnites are still awaiting his initial appearance while the Shi'ites hold that the last Imam, who disappeared in 874 AD will someday reappear as the Mahdi.

MEECA ~ The birthplace of Mohammed. This city, located in Saudi Arabia, is considered the most holy city by the Moslems.

MEDINA ~ A holy city of Islam named for Mohammad. It was previously named Yathrib. It is the city to which Mohammad fled in 622 AD.

MOHAMMAD ~ the prophet and founder of Islam. Born around 570 died 632 AD **MOSLEM** ~ a follower of Mohammad, Literally "One who submits". **MOSQUE** ~ An Islamic place of

worship MUEZZIN ~ A Moslem crierr who announces the hour of prayer.

MULLA ~ A teacher of Islamic laws and doctrines

OMAR ~ According to the Sunnites, the second Moslem caliph and principal advisor to the first caliph, Abu Bakr.

PURDAY ~ A veil or covering used by Moslem women to ensure them privacy against public observation, and to indicate their submission.

RAMADAN ~ The ninth month of the Moslem year, when Mohammed received the Quaran from heaven, and now devoted to fasting.

SALAT ~ The Moslem sect which rejects the first three caliphs, insisting that Mohammad's son in law Ali was Mohammad's rightful successor.

SUFIS ~ Iranian (Persian) philosphical mystics who have largley adapted and reinterpreted Islam for themselves.

SUNNITES ~ The largerst Moslem sect which acknowledges the first four caliphs as Mohammad's rightful successors.

SURAH ~ What the chapters of the Quaran are called.

Adam Hud Salih Shu'aib Idris Imran Nuh Ibrahim Lut Ismail Ishak
Yaqub

Yusuf Harun Musa Ilyas Al Yasa Da'ud Suleiman Yunus Aiyub
Uzair Dhul Kifl

Adam Eber Methuselah Jethro Enoch Amram Noah Abraham Lot
Ishmael Isaac

Jacob Joseph

Aaron Moses Elijah Elisha David Solomon Jonah Job

Ezra Ezekiel (Obediah)

2:37 7:65 7:75 7:85 19:56 3:35 6:83-86 6:83-86 6:83-86 6:83-86
6:83-86 6:83-86

6:83-86 6:83-86 6:83-86 6:83-86 6:83-86 6:83-86 6:83-86 6:83-86
6:83-86 9:30 21:85

TWENTY-EIGHT PROPHETS LISTED IN THE QUARAN TWENTY-TWO FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

THREE FROM THE GOSPELS

Zakarya Zachariah 3:39 Yahya John the Baptist 6:84

Isa Jesus

6:84 TWO FROM SECULAR SOURCES

Dul Qarnain Alexander the Great 18:84 Luqman Aesop (Balaam?)
31:12

HOWEVER, THE LAST AND GREATEST Muhammad Seal of
the Prophets Q 33:40

A word of truth. (qawl Al hagg) The Truth from Your Lord. (Al-hagg) A Spirit
from God. (Ruh) The Messiah. (Al-masih) Apostle, Messenger. (Rasul). Prophet.
(Nabiyy) Servant of God. (Abd Allah) Son of Mary. (Ibn Maryam) Witness on
Resurrection Day. (Shahid)

19:35/34 3:53/60

4:169/171,17,21:91 3:40/45,4:156/157

BIBLE

John 14:6, Eph. 1:13 John 8:32-36, 14:6

Matthew 12:28, Luke 1:35 Matthew 16:16, John 1:41

JESUS IN THE QUARAN

TITLES QUARAN A word from God. God's Word. (Kalimah)

3:34/39,40/45,4:169/171 John 1:1,14

2:81/87,254/253,3:43/49 2:130/136,4:161/163 4:170/172,19:31 3:40/45,4:157,171
4:45/1/157/159,5:117

Hebrews 3:1, Matt. 10:40 Matthew 21:11, Luke 4:24 Matthew 12:18, John 4:34
Luke 2:48

Matthew 24

Witness over the people. Mercy from us (God). (Rahman) Bearer of Wisdom.
(Hikmah) Knowledge of the hour. ('Ilm) Sing to all beings. (Ayah) Sign of the
hour (judgment day). An example. A Pattern. (Mathal) The Miracle
Worker Revelation to mankind. (Ayah) The One to be followed. The One to be
obeyed. Giver (bringer) of Good tidings. One of the Righteous (min Salihim) The
Knowledgeable in Scriptures The Like of Adam. (Mathal al Adama) The
Faultless, Holy Most Pure Son. (Zakiyy) One of the closest to God. (Min a/
Muquarrabin) High Honored in this world and after. (Wajjih) The Blessed One.
(Mabarak) The Favored One 43:59 The One with the Holy Spirit. (Ruh Al-
Qudsi) The Noble, Lordly. (Sayyid) The Chaste (Hasuwur) 3:39 A Man of Peace
(Salam) 19:34/33 A PERFECT Man. (Sawiy)

5:120/117

19:21 43:63

43:61 3:44/50,19:21,21:91

23:50 43:57/59

3:49

19:21 43:61

3:52/59 19:19 3:40/41,7:111/114 3:40/45 19:32/31

3:44/50 61:6 3:40/46 3:43/48,5:109/110

John 5:30 Matthew 9:27-30

Luke 2:40,52

Matt. 24:36-44, John 4:25 Matthew 2:2-29

Matthew 24:37-38, Acts 1:11 John 13:1-11

Mark 1:34,5:41-42,6:33

Luke 2:10,30-32 John 1:37, John 10:27

Matt. 17:5,8:27,Mark 1:3 Luke 4:18,Acts 10:38 Matt. 27:19,2 Timothy 4 Matt.
12:25, John 4:25

2:81/87,254/253 3:39

19:17

John :18, Mark 1:11 Mark 1:11, Luke 4:14, Acts

Matt. 21:8-10 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:21

Isaiah 9:6, Daniel 19:25 1 Corinthians 13:10, Hebrews

ISLAM ~ IT'S FAITH AND FORMS STUDY VI

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC CULTURES

Even though there has been a tendency toward uniformity on the part of orthodox Islam, reality indicates that Islam is amazingly diverse. This is true in a theological sense as well as in the hundreds of cultural expressions of Islam.

On the Theological side, as a consequence of interaction with Jewish and Christian theologian, Muslim schools of theology were established world wide to deal with the questions of the nature of God, His unity, transcendence, power, and the place of Muhammad in the scheme of things. A vast body of theological work has been produced over the centuries. And in the course of this development, a variety of theological points of view have emerged such as that of the Sunni, Shiite, Ismaili, Alawite and various Sufi orders.

The main theme permeating all Islamic theologies is the unity and oneness of God. As the focus, it contrasts sharply with all other theological viewpoints that would in any way indicate plurality in

the Godhead, such as Christianity's Trinitarian concept. In the area of jurisprudence, consciously or unconsciously, Muhammad gave rise to whole new schools of law. Because he claimed to be the last messenger of God, the believers considered him to be the model for life in everything he said and did. At first, those sayings and doings of Muhammad were collected and preserved orally by the eye witnesses ~ his close companions. This body of knowledge was

1 Corinthians 15:45-47 Luke 23:4,14,41, Acts 2:14 John 14:9-10, Hebrews 2:9
Philippians 2:9-10, Ephesians Matt. 21:9, Luke 1:42

called the Sunnah, referring to the particular way of life of Muhammad as followed by Muslims. It means "the trodden path."

Through the early decades of Islam, a plethora of traditions about what Muhammad did and said were generated by various other companions and successors more removed from Muhammad. These "accounts" of an action, utterance or decision of Muhammad were called hadith. As all kinds of people invented traditions to justify their own views and practices, decisions about validity had to be made by scholars of Islam. Paying particular attention to the reliability of the chains of witnesses, they identified six major bodies of traditions as being somewhat reliable. The most famous of these traditions is the one by Bukhari in which there are several thousand "authentic" sayings attributed to Muhammad. After the Quran, the Hadith is the second source of Islamic law.

In addition to the sayings and practices of the prophet himself, other ways of deriving laws sprang up based on analogy and consensus and even the private opinion of unusually pious jurists. In this way Islamic law has been able to expand and adjust to meet the exigencies of almost every situation and every culture.

Listed below are several general categories of which we are aware....

Orthodox

Conservative as it is.

Mystic Liberal Syncretist Secularist Communist/

Socialist

Take Quran literally, follow the traditions closely.

Try to conserve as much as possible from Orthodox Islam while adjusting to life

Theologically can be almost anything in practice is seeking some kind of union with God.

Hold to a few Muslim ideas, but make varied interpretations of how to apply them.

Blend Islamic beliefs and practices with many local superstitions that are actually anti-Islamic; includes palm reading, astrology, charms, curses.

Nominally Muslim for social and political purposes, have abandoned most practices.

Usually Marxist or Maoist in economic philosophy, would still identify as Muslim for the sake of expediency.

Learn all you can about what their faith means to them and the religious forms they are most comfortable with. Be alert for those forms and expressions which could be used as bridges for communicating your faith to them. Be aware too of what might hinder them from gaining an understanding of Christ.

FELT NEEDS:

Ask, God to help you discover the real needs of your Muslim friend and how he perceives them. Letting your friend know you

are willing to take time to get to know him will help establish trust between you and will encourage your friend to share his needs with you.

A need in this context is something about which a person feels anxiety to the extent to which he or she is incapable of functioning in full and healthy manner. Some of these needs are listed in the chart on the following pages with some helpful ways to share Christ as being able to meet those needs.

Unacceptable Forms Facilitating Forms kissing the Black Stone of the Kaaba prayer postures confessing Muhammad as he prophet of God Mosques as places of prayer

Neutral Forms

dress styles shaving habits, beards

THE USE OF FORM AND STRUCTURE

Christian workers have discovered that many Muslims are not resistant to the gospel as much as they are to the western communicator or western forms of Christian worship. When they are given opportunities to worship in their mother tongue and culturally congenial forms, they do so. Since some of you will want to experiment in this area, a great deal of care should be taken as to what forms are used.

Listed below are three categories of forms:

These are Islamic forms of practices that are totally unacceptable and unredeemable in Christian worship. Some examples are listed below along with those in the other categories.

There are Islamic forms and practices that lend themselves to Christian worship. One should take great care, if they are used, to make sure they are fully filled with Christian content.

Finally, there are those multitudes of cultural forms which are relatively neutral. They have to do with lifestyle and could be retained. (some would maintain nothing is neutral) This may be true, but no culture will be totally redeemed this side of the return of Christ.

pilgrimage to Mecca

unqualified endorsement of the Quaran

use of Quaranic verses as magic to ward off evil

consulting Muslim holy men for magic potions for problems

polygamy Jihad or Holy war in cause of Islam

sensuous concept of paradise

taking off shoes in place of worship Muslim hymns adapted to praise reverence for the Word of God prayer 3 times a day

caring for the poor practice of fasting

certain Muslim festivals (if properly adapted)

eating habits

Visiting friends in the evening design of houses

toilet habits educational systems washing before prayer

style of gardens

art forms...rugs, pottery, music, calligraphy, mosaics, architecture, etc.

The above listings are only some of the Islamic material that could be so handled. You may want to add to these caolumns as your knowledge of Islam grows.

One of the purposes of this section is to show you that we do not have to reject everything Islamic or Muslim. There is much that can serve as bridges to introducing biblical material. There is much that is praiseworthy and there is much that can be left alone.

Understanding the principles involved in this material can help you develop more effective approaches to your Muslim friends. Note carefully how valuable this becomes in the following case studies.

FORMS OF INCORPORATION

Whether you are brand new to outreach among Muslims or whether you have been involved for some time, it is important to consider and keep in mind the many different forms of Christian fellowship into which new believers can be incorporated into the Body of Christ.

The form of incorporation you are working towards both largely determines your method and style of ministry as well as is determined by the kind of Muslims you are seeking to reach for Christ. Having a good understanding of the Muslims you are working with is critical at this point.

Whatever end result you are working towards, if the Lord blesses your steps of faith with fruit, it is very important to remain flexible on the matter of incorporation, fully allowing the new believer(s) to ultimately choose, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which they find most comfortable.

Following are some options for incorporation..

FORMS OF INCORPORATION:

Total integration into the parent body. This implies that the new believer from Islam is going to give up all or most of his or her culture, language and ethnic identity to totally accept yours.

Dual identification In this case, the new believer attends two types

of meetings. One is with the parent group in its normal style to which the believer acquiesces or joins. The other one is with others of his own ethnic background as a kind of supplementary activity, such as a Bible study fellowship.

An ethnic approach using the facilities of the host church of another ethnic background. Here, the parent church treats the situation as a missionary opportunity in which the other group is encouraged to use the local facilities at alternate times and usually with its own leadership.

A totally separate ethnic approach .

This approach will have to be tailored to the language and culture style of the Muslims you have won or are trying to win. This can start as a small group and grow into one large, completely autonomous church with a central leadership and organization.

New believers who are incorporated into this form of fellowship are more apt to retain contact with their cultural group and are able, there-fore, to more easily lead others of their own people to Christ. If they have learned about Christ and worship Him in another language and cultural form other than their own, they are far less inclined or able to reach others of their own background.

BRIEFING ON THEOLOGICAL ROADBLOCKS

What happens in this episode is very typical. Since Cal had never encountered this kind of situation before, he is not to be blamed. Most of us would have handled it the same way.

Approach To Worship:

Muslim worship is quite different from what most of us are used to. Briefly, some of the highlights are:

The mosque is considered sacred, a space that has been separated and consecrated to God. Hence, there is a sense of reverence that

pervades the enclosure. Even young boys are quiet as they enter with older male relatives.

The worshipper must remove his shoes outside the mosque and rinse his face, hands, and feet in the special way Muhammad did. It is a symbolic act of ablution or cleansing.

In some parts of the Muslim world, the worshipper is supposed to cover his head with a hat, cap or even a handkerchief. It is a gesture of reverence for God.

The only piece of furniture normally found in a mosque is a wooden pulpit. All worshippers sit on prayer mats facing in the direction of Mecca. The presence of furniture would inhibit a worshipper from doing all the proscribed positions of prayer ~ from standing to kneeling, to touching the forehead to the ground in the gesture of submission to God.

Music is never heard in a mosque. In orthodox Islam, it is never associated with worship, for in Muhammad's day it was associated with debauchery. In folk Islam though, music is often used for singing religious songs.

In most of the Muslim world, women never worship with men. When they do, there is usually a curtained off section or a balcony for them. The Muslim solution to the problem of purity is the segregation of the sexes.

A Christian friend should think twice before inviting a Muslim to church. Sometimes it's best not to. You must find out ahead of time what is the right thing to do. Some Muslim friends may want to go to church. Others should only be taken after a thorough explanation of what is going to happen. Our first duty is to introduce them to Jesus Christ. After that, we must search for the most culturally appropriate ways for them to be drawn into fellowship with other believers.

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. POSSIBLE CONVERSATIONAL EXCERPTS A CHRISTIAN MIGHT HAVE WITH A MUSLIM

Muslim: Are you a Christian? Christian: What do you mean by Christian?

M: Well, don't you worship statues, have 3 gods, and 4 bibles? C: Well, personally I don't worship idols, have 3 gods and 4 bibles and I consider myself to be a

follower of Christ. Do you think that worshipping idols, having 3 gods and 4 bibles is what Christianity is all about?

M: Well, that is what we were taught. Or I knew some Christians that went to the Catholic Church and always kissed the pictures and bowed before the statues. Why do they do that and you don't?

C: Did Jesus command his followers to do those things?

M: I don't know. Then what do you call your type of Christian?

C: I like to be known as one who is a follower of Christ and a Believer in the Bible. Who do you believe Christ is?

M: I believe that he was a good prophet and teacher. He was without sin and was the greatest man ever on earth. God was so pleased with him that he translated Jesus to heaven so he wouldn't have to die.

C: Do you believe Jesus is the Son of God?

M: No, God has no equal. He is the greatest. God has no partners with himself. No one can be equal to God. Besides, I don't believe that God had sex with a woman to have a son.

C: Is everything possible with God? M: Yes, but it is impossible for God to have an equal. C: Do you believe that Mary was a

virgin? M: Yes, and she knew no man. C: Then don't you think if God wanted to have a Son, He could do so through Mary by his spirit

without physical interaction? M: God doesn't have a Son. C: Do you see Jesus as sinless? M: Yes C: How could he be sinless if he was human, flesh and bones like we are? M: Maybe he wanted to please God.

C: Since I believe Jesus to be God's Son who is sinless and holy and Mary to be his fleshly mother, do you think Jesus could have been both human and divine? Could he have gotten his human nature from Mary and His sinless nature from God his Father?

M: No, because God is the greatest and he will not have any partners. Besides I feel that Muslims love Christ and respect him more than Christians?

C: Why is that?

M: Because you Christians want Jesus dead on the cross and we Muslims do not want to see him suffering as an innocent man. God would never let someone as righteous as Jesus suffer. God will reward righteousness. Jesus never died on the cross. God put his likeness on another man and they crucified him instead. God took Jesus to Paradise and he never tasted death.

C: Why do you think that Jesus was not crucified?

M: Because the cross was a horrible shameful death used for people who were murderers and thieves. Would you classify Jesus among murderers? God would never let someone he loved as much as Jesus die a death full of shame. He would never let someone as pure as Jesus suffer.

C: How can God forgive our sins?

M: God does not forgive sins. At the Day of Judgment, our good

deeds will hopefully out weigh our bad ones.

C: Why wouldn't God forgive sins? M: Because God does not operate that way.

C: What about in the Old Testament when the children of Israel would offer to God an animal sacrifice so He would pardon them of their sins?

M: Now, we have to be logical and use the mind. These people in the Old Testament were primitive and stupid. They thought that bloodshed and burning of an animal would turn away God's wrath. Besides, you can't believe everything in the Bible since it has been corrupted.

C: When do you think the Bible was corrupted? Before or after Mohammed?

M: Before Mohammed.

C: Well, if it was corrupted before Mohammed, then why did Mohammed tell his followers to take heed to it's words?

M: Well, maybe it was corrupted after Mohammed.

C: If it was corrupted after Mohammed, who did it? The Jews or the Christians? Weren't they enemies? Would both groups decide to get together and change it? If one group decided to change it, wouldn't the other group hear about it? How can anyone decide to collect all the Bibles from all Jews and Christians and decide to revise it? By this time, wasn't the Bible translated into many languages and dispersed all over the world?....

M: Why do Christians think the Paraclete is the Holy Spirit instead of Mohammed?

C: Because of what Jesus said to his disciples concerning the Paraclete. Didn't he say that the comforter will come quickly and

will abide forever? Also, didn't Jesus say that he would not leave his disciples comfortless? Do you believe what Jesus told his disciples concerning the paraclete was true?

M: Probably, since he could not lie.

C: If the Paraclete was Mohammed, then why did Jesus leave his disciples comfortless for 600 years? If the Paraclete was to abide forever, why did Mohammed die?

M: Well, the Bible has been corrupted. C: Are you sure?

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The intent of this conversational excerpt is NOT for the Christian to memorize. The hope is that you will be given an idea by Example to learn how to make a question by a statement. We must always question, otherwise we don't learn. Even though we do not receive a satisfactory answer from Muslim friends, the important thing is that you asked the question. Don't worry, they will think about it long after you are gone. We must remember that the important thing is not to win the argument, to prove that you are right, but to win a friend.

MINISTERING TO WOMEN The following is an excerpt from Share Your Faith With a Muslim by C.R. Marsh, from the chapter on "Outreach to Women and Girls":

Finally, keep in mind these four things about Muslims:

They respond to love, real unaffected love. They know at once those who are transparently sincere in their love for God and for them.

They respond to their own language. Even though she may speak another language really well, if you speak to a woman in her own native tongue you will reach her heart.

They respond to prayer. Pray much for the Lord's wisdom and guidance before contacts, after a conversation, and continually.

They can only be won through suffering. You can only get to know a Muslim woman when you have won her confidence. Then she feels that she can trust you and will open up. This may take five years, or even twenty. Yet, once you have won this confidence, you are well on the

way to winning the woman for your Lord. She often will trust the missionary more than one of her own race. But this trust must be won. It can be won by love and sympathy, but often it is by tears. Women's work is heartbreaking. As I won the confidence of teenage Muslim girls in successive camps in Algeria, put myself in their place, listened to their stories, and prayed for the right answer, my pillow was often wet with tears. It was not until I had wept over them that God used me to win some for Christ. They respond to tears. This is how you can win them for the Lord.

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF WITNESSING TO INTERNATIONALS

General Principles be prepared to witness

be loving communicate effectively be patient develop long term relationships be interested in all aspects of his or her life be alert to every opportunity to witness (Acts 20:31) pray before, during, and after each contact. (Ephesians 6:18) pray with tears (Psalm 17:8) remember this is the work of the Holy Spirit (John 6:63 and 16:8-14) expect results (Matthew 21:22)

Specific Do's create an atmosphere of love and acceptance love him or her sincerely and be gentle listen patiently start with the truth that he or she knows and lead him or her to accept the whole truth of the Word of

God. stress similarities not differences he/she is a human being needing the Savior, appeal to the conscience rather than the intellect explain the Gospel simply in every day terms stress the uniqueness of Jesus Christ encourage reading the New Testament, especially the Gospels (obtain scripture in his/her native tongue) encourage bible study together share how you found peace and assurance of salvation through Jesus Christ show how he/she can have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ answer objections with gentleness and kindness.

Specific Don'ts The aim is not to compare religions but to lead him to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. never criticize his religion or prophet don't be mislead by his belief in Jesus and the Bible don't be fooled that he says he knows everything about Christianity don't speak right away about Jesus being the Son of God with out carefully explaining John 1:1-17 Don't look for dispute or controversy, they only generate anger- one must show that the Bible has an

answer that is logical and true. Never enter into discussion without knowledge, love and prayer, and the necessity for it

(Matthew 16:16-17)

ATTITUDES COMMON AMONG INTERNATIONALS

Desire for personal friendship in depth

Desire to learn

Interest in Christianity

Conceiving of us as "superficial"

Genuine appreciation

Realism about America

BARRIERS TO FRIENSHIP

A patronizing manner

Pride (ethnocentrism) An attempt to force discussion or acceptance of Christianity Superficiality Ignorance and lack of understanding Trying to guess his nationality (just ask him rather than guess) Lack of love for the international

******* MORE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF WITNESSING TO INTERNATIONALS**

General Principles: Be prepared to witness

know why you are witnessing know the Author and Finisher of your faith know the Word.

“...Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.” (I Peter 3:15)

know the one to whom you go (for effective communication) his culture

his educational level and field about his country his religion and religious vocabulary his philosophy of life

Be loving ~ the message we bring is judged by the character of the messenger. They must see Christ in you. Communicate effectively. Be patient ~ develop long term relationships Be interested in all aspects of his life ~ don't befriend him only to “grab his soul”.

Be alert to every opportunity to witness. “Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.”

Pray before each contact, during each contact, and after each

contact. (Ephesians 6:18) Pray with tears. “He who sows in tears shall reap with joy.” Psalm 17:8 Remember this is the work of the Holy Spirit. (John 16:8-14) Expect results.

“And everything you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive...”
Matthew 21:22

SPECIFIC DO'S

Be open to opportunities in which to witness. Create an atmosphere of love and acceptance.

Love him sincerely and be gentle ~ the objective is to win, not to discuss. The goal is to present Jesus Christ, not to defend Christianity.

Listen patiently ~ you will understand him better. Remember, we have two ears and only one mouth.

Do not criticize or condemn his religion or prophet.

Start with the truth that he knows and lead him to accept the whole truth of the Word of God. In his heart, he may have a true fear of God, a sense of sin and a desire to be at one with the Creator.

He is a human being needing a Savior. Appeal to his conscience rather than to his intellect. Explain the Gospel simply. Define words such as sin, prayer, Son of God, faith, trust, sacrifice. Although he

may say he understands, most likely he has a completely different understanding of the terms.

Stress the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. miraculous birth and prophecies concerning birth sinless life ~ extra ordinary teachings unique titles death resurrection, ascension, and return

Encourage reading the New Testament. If it is possible, give him a Bible in his own language. Encourage Bible study. Share how you

found peace and assurance of salvation through Jesus Christ. Show how he can have a personal relationship with Jesus.

Answer objections with gentleness and kindness. He must know that there are rational answers to his questions. At the same time ask:

How do you know the Gospel is not true? Have you read it? Have you ever studied the Bible for yourself? How can you know if God has pardoned you? Do you have assurance of salvation?

Do you have eternal life?

SPECIFIC DON'TS The aim is not to compare religions, but to lead him to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Never criticize his religion or prophet. Don't be misled by his belief in Jesus and the Bible. Normally it is only what he has heard or been told to

believe. Don't be fooled by the claim that he knows everything about Christianity. Give him an opportunity to express

all that he knows. It usually takes only a few minutes. Do not speak right away about Jesus being the Son of God. Don't look for dispute or controversy, they only generate anger ~ but do not avoid them if necessary. One must

show that the Bible has an answer that is logical and true. Never enter into discussion without knowledge, love and prayer, and the necessity for it. "Flesh and blood have

not revealed this...but my Father." Matthew 16:16-17

PRAYER FOR MUSLIMS

Why should we set aside a special time to pray for Muslims? Almost one billion people ~ about 1/5 of the world's people ~ call themselves Muslim and thus miss out on the

salvation offered only through Jesus Christ. Christian researchers say that about 1.2 billion people are “un-evangelized” ~ they have never heard in a clear way how to place their faith in Christ. As many as 70 percent of these are Muslim. Not only that, but Muslim influence is growing, even in areas traditionally considered Christian, such as the United States and Europe. In many countries, Muslims exert political control, sometimes using it to limit or prohibit the activities of other religious groups. Islam’s influence on Muslim families, communities, government, and entire nations is intense. Those who convert to Christianity from Islam often face alienation and persecution. If the Great Commission is to be carried out, Christians must focus prayer on Muslims. The most compelling reason to pray for Muslims is that God will His fatherly and redemptive love be known by everyone.

Where do we begin? Initially our most appropriate prayer might be for ourselves. To be effective communicators and faithful in prayer, we require these things: forgiveness for whatever sins have kept us uninvolved habits and personalities which reflect the mind of Christ awareness of the will of God for us individually increased awareness of Muslims’ unique spiritual needs a love for Muslims as individuals, families, and communities.

What do Muslims need? How should we pray for Muslims? Jesus spoke the disturbing word, “But I tell you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.” (Matt. 5:44) As Christians take this seriously, God blesses by bringing salvation to Muslims in many areas of the world. Muslims comprise the majority in about 40 countries. They live without understanding Christ’s incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection through God’s redemptive love. Instead they base their hope of salvation on successfully observing their written test and the traditions attributed to Muhammad. Specific prayer for Muslims might include these petitions: that they will succeed in their religious quest by discovering Christ that God will intervene

with dreams, visions, and miracles that they will have eyes to see beyond Christians to behold Christ that their suspicion of Christians will be replaced with trust and love that God will help them forgive Christians, past and present that they will understand the mystery of God's revelation in Christ that they will acknowledge their sin and express repentance in faith.

How do we reach out? Prayer for effective, God directed outreach to Muslims is also essential. Each Muslim has different needs. Some have never met a committed follower of Christ. Millions speak only the Arabic language, multitudes can not read any language. Some are completely isolated from Christian influences, other live openly Christian communities and have ready access to truth. Most say they accept some parts of the Bible, but are critical of

what they have been taught are additions to text. Faithful Christians need God's grace as they learn how to witness to Muslims. Radio broadcasts, correspondence programs, Scripture distribution, written materials, personal contact, Bible study groups, prayer meetings, film, preaching, dialogues, friendships, seminars and classroom instruction are some means God has blessed in communicating with Muslims. Pray that God will reveal to every believer how, when and to whom the witness should be given. Pray also that God will call Christians to live out a witness in Muslim cultures.

HOW TO PRAY FOR MUSLIMS IN NORTH AMERICA

Remember them in their humanness, pray for their food integration into the U.S. that they will find a witnessing Christian as a friend for Christian neighbors for their children's good integration into our society for godly employers, employees, classmates, etc...

Consider their cultural biases, pray that god will give you an eagerness to learn about them that they will be eager to learn about

you will give you mutual cultural sensitivity and appreciation will give patience and long-suffering discovering each another

Pray that God will remove or defuse: the hatred prejudice or distrust we might mutually share their unfounded misbelieve against Christianity and Christians anti American feelings which are rightly or wrongly deserved.

Pray for their courage as they are seeking: to understand our culture

the meaning of the true Gospel to find someone for one to one witnessing to accurately calculate the cost of their conversion to accept Christ as Savior and Lord of their life to openly witness for Christ to follow through to discipleship

Pray that God will draw us together in prayer for the Muslims unite our church in mobilizing to reach them draw together with others who have the same vision incorporate this vision into the rest of the church bring team members and leaders to assist in this ministry save enough Muslims to start a Muslim convert church
