



# ISLAM

## An Examination of the World's Second Largest Religion

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In this teaching I will talk about...

- I. The Origin of Islam
- II. The Growth of Islam in Our Time
- III. Islamic Beliefs and Practices
- IV. The Qur'an: Evidence It's Not the Word of God
- V. Tips on Sharing the Truth in Love with Muslims

### I. The Origin and Founder of Islam

The religion of Islam began with a man named Muhammad. Muhammad was born in A.D. 570 into a violent, pagan, and polytheistic culture in the city of Mecca, in modern day Saudi Arabia.

One night, in 610, at the age of 40, while contemplating inside a cave on the outskirts of Mecca, Muhammad was supposedly visited by the angel Gabriel (the same angel who appeared to Daniel and the virgin Mary in the Bible). According to Muhammad, that night began a series of angelic visitations and revelations that soon after became the teachings of Muhammad and ultimately the text of the Qur'an, the sacred book of Islam.

In 620 Muslims believe the angel Gabriel brought Muhammad by night to Jerusalem on the back of a heavenly horse (Qur'an 17:1). In Jerusalem, it's said that Muhammad conversed with Jesus, Moses, and Abraham, before being taken by a ladder to Heaven for a night.

The Dome of the Rock (see DVD cover above), completed in A.D. 691, was built at the spot in Jerusalem where Muslims believe Muhammad ascended into Heaven for a night.

By the end of the first decade of Muhammad's preaching, several hundred families were convinced that he was a prophet of God. Having converted to monotheism (belief in one God, Allah), Muhammad and his followers were a minority and persecuted by those who would not convert.

To stamp out this newly invented religion, a plan was devised to assassinate Muhammad. So in 622, Muhammad and his followers fled from Mecca. They went 250 miles north to the friendlier city of Medina.

Eight years later, in the year 630, after winning a series of bloody military battles, Muhammad and his army of 10,000 men went back to and conquered Mecca. Muhammad proceeded to the main sanctuary in Mecca, known as the Ka'bah, and ordered that all the idols be destroyed and that it be dedicated to Allah.

In 632, at the age of 63, Muhammad died a sudden but natural death in the arms of Aisha, one of his twelve wives, in the city of Medina, where his tomb is today. The Qur'an limits the number of wives a

man can marry to four (Qur'an 4:3). Joseph Smith—I mean Muhammad (I get those two confused sometimes)—believed that Allah made a special allowance for him, which accounts for him marrying twelve women. The Qur'an also states that a young girl cannot get married “until they reach the age of puberty” (Qur'an 4:6). Apparently Muhammad believed an exception was available for him in this area as well. Aisha, the wife in whose arms he died, was only six years old when Muhammad took her to be his wife (Sahih al-Bukhari Hadith 7.62.64).

Disagreements concerning who was to succeed Muhammad as the new political and religious leader of Islam caused a division in Islam between two groups, the Sunnis and the Shi'ites. Sunnis believe the successors to Muhammad were to be elected democratically from among Muhammad's closest followers. Shi'ites believe that Muhammad's successors were to be related to Muhammad.

The disagreements between the two groups continue to this day. I'm sure you've heard about the tension that exists between them and how they blow up one another's mosques.

In an attempt to paint Islam as a superior religion to Christianity, it is not uncommon to hear Muslims boast about how unified they are. But that is often just an attempt to play on our ignorance. There are approximately 150 sects in Islam. One of the better-known sects is the ultra-conservative, legalistic, and often terrorism friendly Wahhabi sect, to which Osama Bin Laden belongs.

Wahhabism began in the 18th century under the teachings of 'Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792), who called on Muslims to return to the “pure” form of Islam as preached by Muhammad.

Now, what happened over the course of the next 100 years after Muhammad's death still amazes historians to this day.

By 638—only six years after Muhammad's death—Muslims seized the Holy Land by force. Within that first century after Muhammad's death in 632 A.D. Muslim armies spread the Islamic Empire up into Israel, into Central Asia, into the confines of China, across North Africa, and all the way to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean in Southern France and Spain.

Were it not for God using a man by the name of Charles Martel in 732 at the Battle of Tours (in France) we might all be speaking Arabic and kneeling toward Mecca five times a day to pray! It was there in France, in 732, that Martel, a ruler of the Franks (a tribe of Germany) defeated the advancing Muslim armies and ended their advance into Europe. Many historians believe that if it were not for that successful battle, all of Europe may have fallen to Islam.

So Islam spread far and wide, but its growth happened much differently than the spread of Christianity.

Christianity, as you know, spread over the first three centuries through the simple preaching of the gospel. It was the *Christians* who were being put to death!

Islam was forced upon tens of millions by military conquest ( *jihad* ). It is an undeniable fact of history that Islam spread by the sword.

**SKEPTIC:** “What about the Crusades Charlie? Christians are guilty being violent also!”

**RESPONSE:** That is a good question. Many Muslims still remember the Crusades of a thousand years ago when people in the name of Christ did some terrible things to Muslims (and others). Something most people don't realize is that the initial rationale for the Crusades was actually to take back the land the Muslims previously had seized by military conquest from the Christians. That's for another talk. What's the difference between the Crusades and the spread of Islam? Here's the difference:

The violence carried out during the spread of Islam was carried out in obedience to the teachings of Muhammad (as I will show). The atrocities committed during the Crusades contradicted the teachings of Christ. Jesus said:

Matthew 5:44

“But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.”

At His arrest, Jesus rebuked Peter for using his sword and said, “Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword” (Matthew 26:52).

Christianity was never to be advanced with violence. That’s the difference between the Crusades and the spread of Islam!

So that is a brief overview of the origin of Islam. Secondly, let’s talk about...

## II. The Growth of Islam in Our Time

Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in the world today. What started with a lone man in the seventh century has grown into a huge worldwide religion. Consider these sobering statistics:

In 1982, there were 450 million Muslims in the world. Today there are approximately 1.5 billion Muslims worldwide. This religion has more than doubled in size over the past thirty years.

That means today that one out of every four people alive is a Muslim. And Islam is not only growing in places like Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and India. It’s growing here in America as well. According to an article in the *New York Times*, in 1990 there were only thirty mosques in the United States. Today there more than 3,000! [Ron Rhodes, *The Ten Things You Should Know About Islam*, p. 9] There are more practicing Muslims in the United States than Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses combined.

And not only is Islam spreading here in America, it’s spreading in Europe. In 1945, England had only one mosque. Now it has thousands. In France (where Islam was once turned back by Charles Martel) there was only one mosque in 1974. Now it has thousands. [Rhodes, p. 10]

Today there are more Muslims in the world than there are Catholics!

Now, many Muslims like to point to the size and growth of Islam as evidence that Islam is the one true religion. Well, the size and growth of a particular religion is hardly a reliable means of testing a religion for truth. There were only eight people on Noah’s ark.

The number of adherents a religion has does not have any bearing on whether or not it is true. And if size was indicative of truth, Christianity would be the winner anyway. Christianity has more adherents than Islam.

Now, statistics like the ones I just mentioned regarding the growth of Islam raise a question:

### How is this religion growing so quickly?

Well, much of the growth is biological rather than through evangelistic efforts. By that I mean that the explosion in these numbers is largely related to Muslims having large families, rather than them winning the hearts and minds of outsiders—especially here in the West.

Another factor involved in the large number of Islam’s adherents is...

### FEAR.

Not only did Islam spread by the sword, Islam maintains itself today in many countries today (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Iran, Sudan, Pakistan) by threatening death (for males) or life imprisonment (for females) for any Muslim converts to another religion. There are about 36 countries in the world today where you can legally be put to death for leaving Islam.

These countries have simply put into place what Muhammad himself taught. Muhammad said:

**“If somebody (a Muslim) discards his religion, kill him.”**

[*The Hadith*, Volume 4, Book 52, Number 260. Also, see Volume 9, Book 84, Number 64]

And not only do *Muslims* lose their lives for converting, but so do those who seek to evangelize Muslims. According to the Qur'an, people of other faiths who seek to evangelize Muslims ("spreading mischief in the land" 5:32) are subject to one of four punishments:

"...execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands, and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land. That is their disgrace in this world, and a heavy punishment is theirs in the Hereafter." (Qur'an 5:33)

No Islamic republic or nation governed by Islamic law espouses religious liberty. Not one.

## Is Islam a Peaceful Religion?

Now, for months after the September 11th attack we all heard and read interviews with Muslim scholars who were saying that Islam is a religion of peace and that the hijackers were not true Muslims. And these Muslim scholars would quote verses from the Qur'an that *did* seem to say that violence, murder, and terrorism were not part of Islam.

Well, that was pretty confusing I think for a lot of people because we would then hear other non-Muslim scholars say that the Qur'an does support violence and murder.

Why is there so much confusion on this issue? Because the Qur'an advocates both peace and violence. The *earlier* teachings of Muhammad (while he was in Mecca) when he was part of a religious minority have a moderate tone of peace and tolerance toward other religions (e.g., 2:190, 29:46).

But in the *later* teachings of Muhammad (after he gained numerous followers and political power in Medina) he began to contradict himself by advocating a much more hostile attitude toward people of other faiths. For example (and please note that the chapters in the Qur'an are not arranged chronologically, but by size)...

Qur'an 8:39

“Make war on them until idolatry shall cease and God’s religion shall reign supreme”

Qur'an 9:5

“So when the sacred months have passed away, then slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and take them captives and besiege them and lie in wait for them in every ambush, then if they repent and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, leave their way free to them”

Qur'an 9:29

“Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day...even if they are of the People of the Book, until they pay the tax and they are in a state of subjection.”

And there are others.

Muslim terrorists believe that because these verses came later in Muhammad's ministry that these instructions abrogate (repeal or supersede) previous revelation. And these are the kinds of verses they cite to justify their fight against Christians and Jews.

So it's kind of up to each Muslim to decide which verses he wants his own beliefs to be based upon. If a Muslim wants to live in peace with his neighbors and happily co-exist with others, then he can find some verses in the Qur'an that support that.

But if a Muslim wants to hate people of other faiths (including Jews and Christians) and wants to spread Islam around the world with violence, then he can find ample justification in the Qur'an to support that kind of a belief.

To say that Islam is a "peaceful religion" that does not advocate violence, is incorrect. Such a statement contradicts the track record of history and the Qur'an itself.

All right, we've talked about the origin and growth of Islam. Thirdly, let's talk about....

### III. Islamic Beliefs and Practices

First their beliefs. There are five main beliefs that Muslims hold to.

#### 1. Belief in One God, Allah.

For Muslims there is only one God: "Allah." The word "Allah" is an Arabic word that literally means: "the God." In many ways Allah sounds similar to the God of the Bible. The Qur'an teaches that Allah is just, all-knowing, mighty, compassionate, merciful, sovereign, and even loving. So some have concluded that Muslims and Christians are worshipping the same God.

This is not true. There are some major differences between the god presented in the Qur'an and the God of the Bible. Unlike the God of the Bible, the Qur'an teaches that Allah is not triune in nature (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). The Qur'an teaches that Allah has no Son. And in fact, to say that God has a Son, or is a Trinity of persons is an unforgivable sin known as *shirk* to Muslims (e.g., Qur'an 112:1-4, 4:48)

Not only does the Qur'an teach that Allah has no Son, it states over and over again that Allah does not love sinners. Here are just a couple of examples:

Qur'an 2:276

"Allah does not love any ungrateful sinner."

Qur'an 3:32

"Surely Allah does not love the unbelievers."

Qur'an 4:36

"Surely Allah does not love him who is proud."

Qur'an 5:64

"Allah does not love the mischief-makers"

Qur'an 6:14

"Surely He does not love the extravagant."

If you are a sinner, an unbeliever, proud, or extravagant, the Qur'an says that Allah does not love you.

Oh, how different the God of the Bible is!

The Bible says that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob loves the whole world, including sinners! Of course Jesus said in...

John 3:16

"God so loved the world [that's everybody!] that He gave His one and only unique Son, that whosoever believes in Him, would not perish but have everlasting life."

Romans 5:8

"God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still *sinners*, Christ died for us."

This is good news for those of us who realize we are sinners! The Bible also teaches that believers are adopted into God's family (Ephesians 1:5) and can personally address God as "Father" (Matthew 6:9, Romans 8:15).

The God of the Bible offers mankind a personal relationship of great intimacy. That is not the case in Islam. In Islam there is no fatherly concept of God. To most Muslims, Allah is seen more as a remote judge, who is not personally involved with mankind.

Islam is not about fellowship with God, but service, submission and allegiance to God. These are just some of the differences between the Qur'an's portrayal of God and the Bible's.

The second main belief for Muslims is what they call...

## 2. The Belief in Prophets

Muslims believe that Allah has sent 124,000 different prophets to mankind down through the ages. Even Biblical characters such as Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, John the Baptist, and Jesus, make their list of prophets (see Qur'an 6:84-86).

The last and most respected of all Allah's prophets, is Muhammad. Having come last, the Qur'an teaches that Muhammad's teachings supersede the others'. It is interesting that the Qur'an does speak of Jesus quite often. It speaks of:

- His birth to the virgin Mary (Qur'an 3:46-48)
- His holy life
- His wise teaching and love
- and His many miracles (Qur'an 5:110)

Yet, the Qur'an seeks to strip Jesus of His true identity by demoting Him to a mere human.

The Jesus of the Qur'an is an example of "another Jesus" that the apostle Paul warned some would come and preach in 2 Corinthians 11:4. The Jesus of the Islamic religion is going to return to the Earth one day to prepare the way for the universal acceptance of Islam. He's going to destroy the false doctrines that pass under His name, break the crosses, kill the Jews and Christians who won't believe in Him, marry, have children and make a pilgrimage to Mecca, after which He will die. His funeral will take place in Medina, where He will be buried beside Muhammad.

This is obviously "another Jesus" (2 Corinthians 11:4).

## 3. Belief in Angels

Muslims believe angels function as guardians, recorders, and messengers for Allah.

Muslims believe that each person has two angels, one on his right who records his good deeds and one on his left who records the bad deeds (Qur'an 50:17).

A fourth belief of Muslims is what they call their...

## 4. Belief in the Holy Books

Muslims believe that Allah has given four books to mankind:

1. The Law of Moses
2. The Psalms of David
3. "The Gospel of Jesus"
4. The Qur'an of Muhammad

In addition to the Qur'an, Muslims look to another collection of writings that record many of the sayings and deeds of Muhammad. That collection of writings is known as *The Hadith*.

Although very important to Muslims, the Hadith are not considered as authoritative as the Qur'an.

Supreme among all these books for the Muslims is the Qur'an. The reason Muslims believe that the Qur'an has superseded all previous revelation is because the Qur'an says these other books have been corrupted.

Of course, we disagree with them on this. There is an overwhelming amount of evidence that proves the Bible has not been corrupted.

### **Evidence No. 1: THE MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE**

Today there survives more than 25,000 partial and complete, ancient handwritten manuscript copies of the New Testament not to mention tens of thousands of Old Testament manuscripts.

An examination of these manuscripts by scholars and textual critics has verified that the Bible we have in our possession today is the same Bible that the early church possessed 2,000 years ago.

You can view these manuscripts yourself in places like the British Museum, the Israel Museum and the Oxford University Library.

### **Evidence No. 2: THE WRITINGS OF THE CHURCH FATHERS**

Another evidence that the Bible has not seen corruption are the writings of the Church Fathers (men like Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and Tertullian, who were leaders in the early Christian church during the first and second century A.D.).

In their writings, they quoted the New Testament alone 86,000 times! In fact, they referred to it so often and so thoroughly that textual critics can reconstruct 99.86% of the New Testament just from their quotes.

This has served as a second evidence that the Bible we have today is the same Bible the church had 2,000 years ago. (A good book on this topic of the reliability of the text of the Bible is: [From God to Us—How we got the Bible](#), by Norman Geisler & William Nix).

## **5. Belief in the Final Judgment**

The Qur'an teaches that all human beings will be physically resurrected on what it calls "the Last Day." A person's life will be examined and they will be permitted to spend eternity in Heaven (Qur'an 4:57) or Hell (Qur'an 4:56; 14:48-51).

Let's consider fourthly...

## **Important Islamic Practices**

Beside the major beliefs or doctrines in Islam, there are also five foundational practices that every Muslim must observe. These are called "The Five Pillars of Islam." The first practice or pillar is...

### **1. Confession**

To become a Muslim one must confess aloud and publicly the following words: "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet."

This declaration of faith is called the *shahada* and is repeated constantly by faithful Muslims.

### **2. Prayer**

Muslims are required to pray at five specific times a day, facing the city of Mecca. Those times are: daybreak, noon, mid-afternoon, after sunset, early evening. Each time of prayer has set sequences of standing, bowing, kneeling, and prostrating while reciting specific verses from the Qur'an or other prayer formulas.

On Fridays the male community is required to be present at the mosque at noon to participate in prayer and to listen to a teaching from the Qur'an. The word mosque literally means: "a place for prostration before God."

Women are allowed to attend but are required, for modesty's sake, to stand in the back separated by a curtain or in a side room. The community leader, the imam, is considered a teacher and prayer leader.

### **3. Giving**

It is required that Muslims give one-fortieth (or 2.5%) of their finances to help the poor and for emergency situations.

### **4. Fasting**

Fasting is an annual, lifelong requirement for Muslims. In the month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, Muslims fast from sunrise until sundown (Qur'an 2:183-185).

Ramadan is the month that Muslims believe Muhammad first received the revelation of the Qur'an. During this time Muslims must abstain from food, drink, smoking, and sexual relations

Those who are sick, elderly, or on a journey, as well as women who are pregnant or nursing, are permitted to break the fast and make up an equal number of days later in the year. If they are physically unable to do this, they must feed a needy person for every day missed.

### **5. Pilgrimage**

It is required within Islam that all who are physically and financially able go to Mecca at least once in their lifetime (Qur'an 2:196). While in Mecca, Muslims are required to circle the Ka'bah seven times and run seven times between two hills, amongst other activities.

And every year approximately two million people from all around the world do.

Let's consider fourthly, for a few minutes...

## **IV. The Qur'an: Evidence It Is Not the Word of God**

Muslims believe that Allah himself gave the Qur'an in finished form to the angel Gabriel. As the story goes, Gabriel then dictated it to the prophet Muhammad in intervals over a period of twenty-three years from 610 to the time of Muhammad's death in 632. Could the Qur'an be an authentic revelation from God as Muslims believe? No. Why not? I'll give you five reasons to reject the Qur'an.

### **1. The Qur'an Contradicts Authentic Scripture.**

By authentic Scripture, of course I am referring to the Bible. Many teachings in the Qur'an directly contradict the Bible (a book that uniquely, among all other religious literature, provides hundreds of fulfilled prophecies as proof of its divine inspiration).

How does the Qur'an contradict the Bible? I already demonstrated how the god of Islam does not love sinners, that itself could qualify. Here is another example:

The Qur'an teaches that salvation comes by works, not by God's grace. For example...

Qur'an 23:102-3

"Then those whose balance (of good deeds) is heavy, they will attain salvation: But those whose balance is light, will be those who have lost their souls, in Hell will they abide."



Qur'an 18:107

“As to those who believe and work righteous deeds, they have, for their entertainment, the Gardens of Paradise”

Qur'an 18:110

“And whoever hopeth for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work”

The Bible teaches the exact opposite.

Romans 6:23

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Ephesians 2:8-9

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

Titus 3:5

“...not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us...”

Six hundred years before Muhammad was born, the Apostle Paul warned of those that would come on the scene and preach another gospel:

Galatians 1:8-9

“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.”

The Qur'an's teaching regarding salvation is just one of many teachings that contradicts the teaching of the Bible. God gives this warning in...

Isaiah 8:20

“To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word [the Bible], it is because there is no light in them.”

## **2. The Qur'an Contradicts Known Facts of Science.**

The Qur'an, like other ancient religious writings, has made some serious errors when it comes to science—errors that prove that it cannot be the product of an omniscient, divine mind. Here's an example...

In 18:86 the Qur'an speaks of a man traveling west until he actually finds the place where the Sun descends down into the Earth.

It says he traveled “till, when he reached the setting-place of the Sun, he found it setting in a muddy spring” (Qur'an 18:86).

This is an error of astronomical proportions. The Sun—as you know— is thousands of times bigger than the Earth and is 93 million miles away from the planet. But you could get away with a statement like that in certain parts of the world in the seventh century. Of course today with the help of modern satellites and telescopes we realize the Sun does not go down into the Earth, much less a muddy spring! (See Norman Geisler and Abdul Saleeb, *Answering Islam*, p. 200 for more on this error in the Qur'an).

### **Other scientific errors in the Qur'an include:**

- A hard sky that can fall on the inhabitants of the Earth (22:65, 34:9)
- Stars that fly away when Abraham glances at them (37:88-90)
- A moon that is further away than the stars (67:3, 5 and 71:15-16)

- Mountains that were created to hold down the earth and prevent earthquakes (31:10-11)
- Meteors that are a form of divine retribution being hurled at devils who might try to spy on the heavenly council (37:6-10; 72:8-9)

### 3. The Qur'an Contradicts Known Facts of History.

One of the most well-attested facts of history is that Jesus of Nazareth was put to death on a cross. It is a fact of history so well confirmed by historical sources—even outside of the Bible—that even the most liberal of scholars—like those who are part of the Jesus Seminar—consider it an undisputable fact.

And yet, the Qur'an makes a fatal error by saying that this historical event never occurred.

Qur'an 4:157 says...

“And for claiming that they killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of GOD. In fact, they [speaking of the Jews] never killed him, they never crucified him - they were made to think that they did. All factions who are disputing in this matter are full of doubt concerning this issue. They possess no knowledge; they only conjecture. For certain, they never killed him.”

What should we trust—the New Testament or the Qur'an?

The New Testament was written down within the first generation after the events surrounding Jesus' life, while the eyewitnesses were still alive. It has been validated by archaeological discoveries and the writings of secular sources like the Jewish Talmud, the Roman historian Flavius Josephus and others.

The Qur'an is a book that was written down 600 years after the events surrounding Jesus' life by men who were hundreds of miles removed from Jerusalem and the events that happened there.

That answers the question for me; I'll trust the New Testament.

### 4. The Qur'an Has Many Internal Inconsistencies.

Here are just a couple of examples...

The Qur'an teaches that Noah and all of his family survived the flood in one place (Qur'an 21:76), but in another place it states that one of Noah's sons drowned (Qur'an 11:42-43)

The Qur'an states that Pharaoh drowned (Qur'an 28:40 and others 17:103, 43:55) while chasing the Israelites but in another place it says say that he survived (Qur'an 10:90-92).

There are more than a hundred of these kinds of internal inconsistencies in the Qur'an. [Click here](#) for more.

### 5. There are No Particularly Good Reasons to Accept the Qur'an as Inspired Scripture.

The most popular proof Muslims give for the inspiration of the Qur'an is the Qur'an's literary beauty and eloquence. Muslims believe it is unsurpassed. Muslims believe that the words of the Qur'an are so beautiful that it could only have come from God (Qur'an 10:37).

Well, this is a highly questionable means of testing a document for divine inspiration. If beauty and eloquence is a means of proving divine inspiration and authority, well then what's to stop us from believing that Shakespeare's writings are also inspired? His writings are very beautiful and eloquent, but we don't believe that they are divinely authoritative.

So, for these reasons and others, it is wise to conclude that the Qur'an is not the word of God.

## V. Tips on Sharing the Truth in Love With Muslims

It is vitally important that Christians share the gospel with Muslims, not only because Jesus commanded us to (Mark 16:15), not only for their salvation and eternal good, but for the sake of religious freedom around the world and even here in our own country. As I mentioned earlier, wherever Islam becomes the dominant religion, freedom of worship vanishes.

So, what can we do to be more effective in reaching them with the gospel?

### 1. Genuinely befriend and love them (1 Corinthians 13:1).

1 Corinthians 13:1-2

“If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.”

A prevailing mindset amongst Muslims is that Christians hate Muslims and love Jews. The best way to overcome their preconceived ideas about Christians is to love and befriend them, and not just with the intention of evangelizing them! Genuinely befriend them.

### 2. Be prepared to defend the trustworthiness of Scripture.

As I mentioned earlier, Muslims question the reliability and trustworthiness of the Bible. You will need to know how to answer the common questions they will have about its trustworthiness.

### 3. Respect gender distinctions.

Men should avoid speaking directly to a Muslim woman (even as neighbors across the backyard fence) and likewise for women speaking to men.

Muslims tend to see cross-gender communication as offensive. Respecting their traditions is a way that we can fulfill the command to be respectful in 1 Peter 3:15.

### 4. Be patient.

2 Timothy 2:24-25

"A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, *patient*, in humility correcting those who are in opposition."

Muslims who have converted to Christianity say that confrontational one-time evangelism is largely ineffective. It's important for us to remember that peer pressure in Muslim communities to stay committed to Islam is enormous. For a Muslim to convert to another faith is a sin worthy of death in Islam, especially to Christianity. For a Muslim to abandon Islam and become a disciple of Jesus, could likely result in the loss of all of his friends and family members.

So you need to be patient and prayerful as they weigh the cost of following Jesus.

### 5. Stay away from peripheral issues.

And by peripheral issues, I'm talking about topics like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, U.S. foreign policy, the war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

These geopolitical matters can be a can of worms that is not worth opening. The main questions/issues I would talk about (when the time is right) are:

- Where will you spend eternity?
- How can a person be saved from his sins?

- Who is Jesus?
- Can the Bible be trusted?
- Can the Qur'an be trusted?

## **6. Be candid about the sins of supposed Christians.**

Many Muslims still remember the Crusades of a thousand years ago [they began 1095 A.D.] when people in the name of Christ did some terrible things to Muslims and others.

Agree with the Muslim that these things were horrible, but also let him or her know that these actions contradicted the teachings of Christ (Matthew 5:44, 26:52)

## **7. Emphasize God's grace and His love.**

Fuller Seminary recently did a survey of 600 former Muslims who had become Christians. One of the leading factors involved in the conversions of these former Muslims was the emphasis on the love of God and the intimacy that believers can have with God as their heavenly Father. This was an important factor in drawing these former Muslims to Christ. [R.C. Sproul and Abdul Saleeb, *The Dark Side of Islam*, p. 33]

Many Muslims live with a sense of fear regarding their salvation and the Day of Judgment. Why? Muslims have no assurance of their salvation. Why? Muslims have no assurance of their salvation. Muslims believe that the only way a person can be guaranteed a spot in paradise is through martyrdom. So many of them have no real, inner peace like you and I experience.

So, when you talk to a Muslim about their eternal destiny, let them feel the weight of their sins (talk to them about that) but then make sure to emphasize to them that their sins can be totally done away with, totally forgiven, if they will put their faith in Jesus and His gracious work on the cross. Explain to them that faith in Christ's work on the cross means liberation from their works-based attempt to earn salvation and their fear of the scales of justice.

God's grace is something that Muslims never hear about. Why? Grace is a teaching that is unique to Christianity. So share it with them! Many Muslims who have left Islam to become Christians, say it was that very thing (the grace of God) that spoke so powerfully to them.

## **8. Invite them to church.**

Explain to them ahead of time some of the things that will be different...We leave our shoes on. People write in their Bibles, the women sit with the men, etc. ("Our God is not concerned about these matters. He's interested in the cleanliness of our hearts, not our shoes. He's wants to write His word on our hearts; He's not concerned about us writing in our Bibles.")

## **9. Give them a copy of the Bible and pray for them.**

Many Muslims have never read the New Testament and will be happy to receive a copy. Give them a copy and encourage them to read one of the Gospels. I recommend the Gospel of Luke. It starts with the account of Jesus' birth and it's easier for non Christians to understand than John's Gospel.

God's Word is powerful (Hebrews 4:12) and has opened the minds of many Muslims to reconsider the person and claims of Jesus Christ.

## **10. Prayerfully consider supporting a Christian ministry or missionary who is working to further the gospel in Muslim countries.**

You may not have any Muslim friends or co-workers, but you can still be used by the Lord to reach them with the Gospel. Three great ministries that I am familiar with are:

1. Gospel for Asia: [gfa.org](http://gfa.org)

2. Voice of the Martyrs: persecution.com
3. Jesus Film Project: jesusfilm.org

All of these groups are doing a tremendous work in Muslim nations.

(Special thanks to Ergun and Emir Caner for their suggestions on reaching Muslims in their great book [Unveiling Islam](#).)

### Book Recommendations:

Three excellent books on the topic of Islam, written by Christian apologists:

1. [Unveiling Islam](#) by Ergun and Emir Caner
2. [Answering Islam](#) by Norman Geisler & Abdul Saleeb
3. [Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims](#) by Ron Rhodes

### About Charlie Campbell:



Charlie Campbell is the Director of The Always Be Ready Apologetics Ministry, the author of [One Minute Answers to Skeptics' Top Forty Questions](#), and a popular guest speaker at churches around the United States on issues related to the defense of the Christian faith. His teachings and resources have been endorsed by Dr. Norman Geisler, Charles Colson, Chuck Smith, Nancy Leigh DeMoss, Jeremy Camp, and Brian Brodersen. He resides in southern California with his wife and five children.

### Scheduling Charlie to Teach:

Charlie would love to come and teach at your church, conference, school or retreat. Please [click here](#) for further details.

### Additional Resources by Charlie Campbell

[DVDS. BOOKS. CDS. MP3S.](#)

### Supporting Charlie Financially

Charlie Campbell is a full time missionary traveling the world seeking to spread the gospel and help believers stand strong in the truth. If you'd like to help support him financially, [click here](#). Thank you!