Handbook of Ministry to Muslims for Apostolic Pentecostals

Apostolic Ministry to Muslims

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Introduction To Islam

Islam is the second largest religion in the world. About 1.2 billion people in the world (one out of five) call themselves Muslims. Islam is not a race and is not limited only to the Middle East. Muslims are spread all over the world. About 40 countries consider themselves Muslim countries. The largest Muslim country in the world is Indonesia located in southeast Asia. People of all races and colors call themselves Muslims.

About 8 million Muslims live in North America. Since 1960, large numbers of Muslims have immigrated from different Muslim countries to North America. At the same time there has been a revival of Islam among African-Americans. American Muslim leaders such as Farakhan and Elijah Muhammad have found fame. Muslims have opened around 2000 mosques and Islamic Centers. At the same time, Muslim Students Association has branches in about 500 college and university campuses.

Islam was started in the 6th century AD (550 years after Christ) in Saudi Arabia by a man called Muhammad Ibn Abdullah. Muhammad was 40 years old when he proclaimed himself a prophet and died at age 63. He had numerous wives and one daughter (Fatima).

Islam's holy book is called the Quran (Koran). It has 114 suras or chapters. It is written in Arabic in a poetic form.

One becomes a Muslim by repeating the statement "there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet". Practicing Muslims are expected to observe the pillars of Islam which include praying five times a day, fasting for one month from sun-up to sun-down every year, pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia once in a life time and paying of alms.

Islam spread to other parts of the world after the death of Muhammad. At one time, the Islamic empire bordered China in the east and Spain in the west. Crusades were wars between Catholics and Muslims (some over the control of Jerusalem).

Today Islam is the fastest growing faith in the World. Belief in one God and living disciplined lives is attractive to many individuals. Much of the Middle East's oil wealth has been directed specifically to the propagation of Islam around the world. Many Muslim leaders have often been quoted as saying that they want to dominate the world with the Islamic religion. In the United Kingdom (England) 300 churches were purchased by petro-dollars and converted to mosques. The vice-president of the Islamic college in Chicago has said "My dream is that the USA becomes a Muslim nation in twenty first century".

Islam is the greatest threat and at the same time the greatest challenge facing Apostolic oneness Pentecostals. We can either feel threatened by Muslims and become antagonistic toward them or respond with the love of Christ and bring them to the truth of Acts 2:38. We must look at the Muslim as a person in need of salvation for whom Jesus died on the cross.

My Testimony

I was born in a Presbyterian missions hospital in Tabriz, Iran. The Christian missionary doctors prayed for the babies they delivered that they might find the Lord later on in their lives. I believe because of this, God's hand was upon my life from the beginning. When I was three years old, I had typhoid fever and a relapse followed by hepatitis, but the Lord saved my life. A few years ago when I related this experience to my microbiology professor he said, "you are lucky to be alive". But I know it was more than luck that kept me alive. Then I remember the time in the Black Sea when I was drowning and again the same Lord saved my life. My mind also goes back to my last month in Iran, when God opened the door for me to come out of Iran before the Islamic Revolution. I was able to get my passport in two hours when it usually takes six to eight months. I also received my American visa in twenty minutes when it usually takes two to three weeks. My plane was one of the last IranAir planes that left Iran before the revolution. I came to the U.S. and went to a Catholic High School in Lincoln, Nebraska. That school was experiencing financial difficulties and thought that Iranian students could solve their financial problems. There, they treated us like dogs and forced sixteen Iranians, ages 15 to 17, to live in a seventy year-old house with an ex-policewoman as our housemother. The housemother professed to be a Christian, but began a sexual relationship with one of the 17 year old boys. After four months, the Nebraska Health Department threatened to condemn the house if the school did not close it down. So the school, which was our legal guardian, had to send us to host-families. I went to a Catholic family's house. The father of the family was an alcoholic who fought with his wife almost every day, and even cursed me out. The mother of the family was mentally ill and at the end of each month she would not talk to me until I gave her money for living expenses. They would go to church on Sunday mornings but would smoke and drink at night. After four months, I fled that house and went to Denver to go to high school. The

first person I met in Denver was an ex-nun who was committing adultery with one of my Iranian friends. Because of my Shiite-Muslim background, I had prejudice against other religions. My experiences in Lincoln and Denver added to this prejudice and I thought that Christianity was just a joke.

One day while I was in Denver, a gray haired lady came to our door and told me that Jesus Christ had changed her life and healed her blind eyes. I laughed at her and told her, "I know about you Christians; your faith is just a joke." Then I said to myself, "let me go and make fun of a Christian Church". So I went to church (Landmark Tabernacle) with that lady on Sunday, but I saw something different in those people. They were the happiest and most joyful Americans I had ever known. They would get drunk in the Spirit without drinking. They also had freedom to worship God with hands, feet, mouth, body, shouting, dancing, running and so on. They also had strong moral standards. This got my attention, and I started researching this faith more carefully. One day the youth leader came to me and explained his faith and told me about Christ as best as he could, even though he had never met a foreigner before in his life. The next Sunday night before church, when I was sitting in the prayer room I prayed "Jesus if you are real, come and prove yourself to me and soften my heart." A few minutes later in the church service, the power of God came over me and shook me from head to toe, and I felt something that I had not felt before in the 17 years of my life. A few days later, a young lady gave me a King James Version Bible (I had been in the U.S. only nine months and could only read at elementary school level). By reading the Bible and through a home bible study, the Lord opened my understanding and I knew that Jesus was the Lord of all and that He had died for my sins. I also found out that I needed to be baptized in Jesus name for the remission of my sins like the Apostle Peter says in Acts 2:38. A few weeks later, I received the gift of the Holy Spirit as the Lord took my body and tongue into His hand, and I began to speak with other tongues as the spirit gave me the utterance. That was 1979, and still I can say that Jesus is the best thing that

ever happened in my life.

I was saved in October of 1979, and one month later, the Iranian hostage crisis started. The Lord's hand was upon me through it all. The Lord also protected my family who lived in Iran during the 8-year war between Iran and Iraq. Bombs came as close as 500 yards to their house, but I had prayed in Jesus name for their protection and the Lord was faithful and answered my prayers. Over the years, people have tried to discourage me spiritually but God has proven them wrong. When I first became a Christian in 1979, people told me "you are on an emotional trip and you will come out of it soon." The Lord has kept me under His shadow for the last 26 years, but those same friends are either dead or have miserable lives. Over the years I have seen that Christ is the winner and the world that does not believe in Him is the loser.

Five Pillars of Islam

Recitation of Word of Witness (Shahada)

* "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the apostle of Allah"
* Become Muslim by saying it ; Repeated in call to prayer; Used much in private.

Fasting

* Ramadan (Ninth month of Muslim year); abstinence from eating, drinking, smoking and sexual relationships from sunrise to sunset.
* Changes according to lunar calender

* Sleep during the day, feast at night

Legal Alms

5% of all income must be given . Goes to the poor, homeless, slaves, debtors, travelers, and those fighting for Islam.

3% of income goes to mosque and Muslim priests (Mullahs).

Prayer (Salat)

* Five times a day (dawn/noon/ before sunset/sunset/dark). First surah is always included.
* Accompanied with ceremonial washing, prescribed postures, facing toward Mecca
* Greater merit if said in a group, if performed in a mosque
* Every Friday: prayer at mosque
* Orthodox Islam: Must be recited in Arabic; usually memorized verses from Quran

Pilgrimage

* Pilgrimage to Mecca is required of every pious Muslim who can afford it (physically and economically) once in a lifetime.
* Ceremonial ablutions/wear two seamless tunics/kiss the black stone in Kaaba/ circle the Kaaba seven times/ drink from the well of Zemzem/run between the hills of Safa and Marina in imitation of Hagar without touching oneself/visit Arafat/throw stones at the statues of Devil/animal sacrifices

* Mecca is the holiest city of Islam
* Kaaba is the black structure considered as house of Allah

Allah: God of Islam

Is the Allah of Islam the Jehovah of the Judo-Christian Faith?

The word Allah comes from al(the)-ilah(deity) which literally means the god. This word was not introduced by Muhammad. It existed for centuries before him. Certain tribes in Arabia were aware of the existence of a supreme, living god and who created the heavens and the earth.

Tradition traces Allah to the monolithic faith of Abraham. He allegedly visited Ishmael who was believed to have lived with his ousted mother, Hagar, in Mecca. Abraham was believed to have introduced the belief in the living God to the Arabian tribes. But there is no scripture to back up this traditional faith. So Allah became some kind of a mysterious God, invisible, aloof and unknowable. In the midst of 360 visible gods, stones and statutes in Mecca, Allah receded to the background and though he was known, he was not well known and believers in him, known as Hanifites, also believed in a hosts of other gods.

Muhammad who had learned about the faith of the Jews and the Christians and who also believed in the one God, was intrigued that all Jews, Christians and the Hanifites considered Abraham grandfather of their faith. Muhammad saw in this common denominator, a factor which potentially could unite all inhabitants of Arabia of all religious backgrounds.

Muhammad chose the Arabic name Allah and attributed to him all pagan, Jewish and Christian characteristics and hoped that this would be a drawing card to mobilize enough support for his newly formulated religion.

With this in mind, we can without doubt say that the Allah of Islam, though he has characteristics similar to the God of Bible, is but a man-made god used as a political tool to unite the Arabs under the ambitious leader Muhammad.

As a rule of thumb, anything you can say about a person, cannot be said about Allah. He is better described by what he is not rather than what he is. He is vague in the mind of Muslims. This makes him more frightening and mysterious.

Doctrines of Islam (Articles of Faith)

Allah

* Arithmetic unity in opposition to polytheism of Meccans, Bedouins, and heretical Trinitarian views of Christians
* Transcendent God: omnipotent, omniscient, merciful
* Author of both good and evil (will send astray if he wants to)

Predestination

* All things, good or bad, are foreordained by unchangeable decrees of Allah
* Denial of human responsibility (in some sects)
* Leads to fatalism (all things are predetermined), no assurance of salvation.

Angels

* Hierarchy of these reasoning beings who are created of light.
1. Gabriel-transmitted Quran
2. Asrafel- to sound trumpet for day of judgment
3. Lesser angels - Each person has two recording angels (one on each shoulder) to write down his good and evil deeds.
4. Devil (shaytan or Iblis)
5. Jinn: Spirits created from fire; usually evil-leads to superstition and fear (use of amulets, charms, etc. for protection)

Holy Books

* Books given to Adam, Seth, Enoch and Noah - all lost

* One to Moses (Torah), One to David (Zabur), One to Jesus (Injil)- All Exist only in corrupted form (Christians and Jews have changed their holy book).
* One to Muhammad (Quran or Koran) - Uncreated, eternal, abrogates all preceding scripture.
* In reality, only Quran is respected - No need for Old or New Testament.

Day of Judgment

* Prominent in early preaching of Muhammad
* Resurrection of dead; final judgment; Existence of heaven & hell; destiny by work and foreordination of Allah
* Hell for unbeliever; Heaven for believers and those that die for Allah

Doctrines of Islam (Articles of Faith)

Prophets

124,000 prophets all together

Six major ones:

Adam	Chosen of Allah
Noah	Preacher of Allah
Abraham	Friend of Allah
Moses	Speaker of Allah
Jesus	Word of Allah
Muhammad	Apostle of Allah

Muhammad is considered as last of prophets, sinless, perfect in character, dwells in highest heaven

Sin

* Sin is not inherited

* Man is born sinless and without sin.

* Man has good nature and environment changes him.

* Situational ethics (5:3)

* Good deeds can outweigh or neutralize bad deeds (sins).

* Worst sin: Making any being equal to Allah (sherk) 19:89-92

* Turning away from Islam is considered as a sin worthy of death.

Characteristics of Allah

1. Allah is one

No other deity exists, he is not triune

2. Allah is transcendent:

Aloof, unknowable, far away, separated from man, uninvolved in the affairs of man. Relationships between deity and man is impossible.

3. Allah is impersonal:

Has no personality and is indescribable by any characteristic attributable to man.
His attributes are absolute qualities. Non-relational. He is incomprehensible to man.
The Gap between God and man is unbridgeable and must be accepted.

4. Allah is amoral:

Morality is applied only to man. Allah's separation from man has no sin dimension.
Can have both good and bad qualities. Attributing only good to him limits his will.

5. Allah is absolutely free:

Cannot be bound by law, covenant, or moral code, even his own.
Cannot be bound by consistency. He is arbitrary and unpredictable.
Allah rewards and condemns at will... as he pleases, when he pleases, if he pleases.

6. Allah is unemotional:

We must not attribute to Allah pleasure or displeasure, joy or sadness.

Allah in Islam has 99 names/attributes. Agape is not one of them.

AD	Events in Muhammad's life
570	Birth of Muhammad. Tribe of Quraish in the line of Abraham through Ishmael. His father died a few months before his birth.
576	His mother, Amina, died when he was 6 years old. He was cared for by his grandfather for two years before his death. After this, he was under the care of his uncle, Abu Talib.
582	Muhammad began to accompany trading caravans into Syria. His earlier contacts with Judaism and Christianity in Mecca were thus reinforced.
593	Trading missions to Syria in service of Khadija, a wealthy widow.
595	At age 25, he married Khadija (age 40) giving him security and status. Muhammad who was practically illiterate, was in contact with Hanifs (ascetics, and monotheists) and began meditation.
610	At age 40, he had his first "revelation" in a cave on Mount Hira. He was visited by Gabriel who brought him a message that convinced him that he was being called by God to a special mission. His first converts were his wife and Ali (his son-in-law).
616	Persecution by Quraish at height of its power. Many of Muhammad's followers fled from Mecca. They found refuge in the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia.
617	Boycott of the Muslims by the people of Mecca.
621	Abu Talib dies. Khadija dies. Muhammad contracts other marriages. Content of suras mainly condemnation of idolatry and judgment for those who do not believe. Muhammad gained some adherents from Medina. People of Medina invited Muhammad and his followers to come to Medina to be their leader.

622	The Hijra, flight to Yithrib (Medina). Muslim lunar calendar dates from this point. Muhammad is no longer the captain of a small band of persecuted followers but a spiritual leader, military leader, and politician, fighting those that opposed him and subjugating other tribes.
624	Battle of Badr vs. Meccans. Muhammad won
625	Battle of Uhud vs. Meccans. Muhammad lost (Jews deserted him)
627	Battle of Ahzab. Defended Medina against attack.
629	Massacred Jews who opposed his teachings. “Invitation” to rulers to accept Islam; Accepted: Chief of Bahrain, Emperor of Ethiopia; Rejected: Emperor of Iran, Byzantine Emperor.
630	Muhammad took Mecca- Meccans had broken treaty by attacking a tribe with whom Muhammad was in league. Battle of Hunain. Muhammad won and distributed booty amongst Meccans. Returned to Medina-delegates came from all over Arabia announcing acceptance of Islam
631	Muhammad went on pilgrimage to Mecca. Delivered “Farewell Address”. Returned to Medina.
632	Muhammad was poisoned by a Jewish woman. Fell ill and died. He was buried in Medina. He was 63 years old.

What do Muslims Believe about Christ and Christianity?

Muslims believe in the virgin birth of Christ, and call Christ, “the son of Mary”. They believe that he was a sinless prophet. They also believe he spoke when he was a few days old. They teach that he performed miracles and healed many people, and that he was not crucified. According to Koran, the face of Judas was changed, and he was crucified instead of Jesus Christ. Jesus ascended into heaven without seeing death. Since man has a good nature, and does not need to be delivered from original sin, death of Christ on cross is useless.

Muslims believe that Christ foretold the coming of Muhammad and point to the book of John chapter 14 as a proof. They believe that Muhammad was the promised Comforter and the Spirit of truth. One of the names of Muhammad was Ahmad which means “the Perfect One”. They say that the Greek word for “the comforter” was supposed to be translated the perfect one and has been mistranslated and changed.

Muslims believe that making anyone equal to Allah is the greatest sin known to man. So the concept of the co-equal “god the son” of the Trinitarian doctrine is the greatest sin known (called shirk in Arabic).

The Catholic concept of the “mother of god” is rebuked many times in Koran. Many Muslims believe that Christians believe in three gods: god the father, god the son and the mother of god.

Muslims believe that Christians and Jews have conspired, and have changed the Bible so Muslims will not accept the Bible, and will not read it. They believe that Koran replaced the Bible and has all the truth they need to know.

Some Muslims believe that Christ will return at the end of the world along with Muslim messiah (Mahdi), and will marry many wives, will have many children, and will die because one verse in Koran must be fulfilled because it talks about Christ’s death.

ISLAM VS. ONENESS PENTECOSTALISM SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

A. Nature of God.

Similarities: Both Muslims and oneness pentecostals believe that God is one in essence. He is not made up of three distinct separatable persons united in one. In other words, He is not a tri-unity or Trinity. (James 2: 19)

Differences:

1. According to orthodox Islam, Allah is a god who can not be known. He is too far above man and man can never know him (this is where sufism is different from orthodox Islam; sufis believe that man can get close to god by meditation and other methods). Pentecostals believe that God can be known intimately and we can have a relationship with God and call Him our Heavenly Father. We can get close to Him through the power of His Spirit. (Romans 8: 14-16)

2. According to orthodox Islam, god is the author of both good and evil. God can put you in straight path or he can put you in the wrong path. Everything that happens to man was written and it was his faith and this faith can never be changed. Oneness pentecostals believe that all good comes from God and all evil comes from Satan. God never tempts man with evil. Temptation comes from man's own lust. (James 1: 13-15)

B. Nature of Man.

Islam teaches that man's nature is good and he is born sinless and man's environment corrupts him, and that all of god's prophets were sinless. Even though Muslims believe that Adam and Eve sinned in the garden and their eyes were opened and they found out they were naked. Oneness pentecostals believe that all men have sinned and have come short of the glory of God and all men are born in sin. They believe Jesus Christ was the only perfect and sinless man ever lived and all other men of God including Mosses, Abraham, & David sinned and came short of the glory of God. (Romans 3: 23)

C. Nature of Christ.

Both Muslims and Oneness Pentecostals believe that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin. Islam teaches that Jesus Christ was just a prophet and His nature was similar to Adam's nature even though Koran calls Jesus Ruh-Allah (a spirit from God) and Kalamat-Allah (a word from God). Oneness pentecostals believe in dual nature of Jesus Christ. He was fully man and He was fully God. The spirit of God dwelled in Him without a measure. (John 3: 34)

D. Salvation.

Koran teaches that there is a balance in heaven and if your good works outweighs your bad ones, you will go to heaven otherwise you will go to hell. These good works include the five pillars of Islam:

1. Making the declaration that "there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His prophet (repeating these words makes one a Muslim)
2. Prayer: Repeating a ritual prayer (in Arabic for most Muslims) five times a day along with ritual washing and ablution.
3. Fasting: Going without food, water, and other worldly pleasures from sun up to sun down during the month of Ramadan.
4. Giving of alms: one fortieth of one's income must go to poor, homeless, travelers and those fighting for Islam.
5. Pilgrimage to Mecca once in a life-time.

Oneness Pentecostals believe that we are saved by grace through faith. It is not of ourselves, but it is a gift of God. (Ephis. 2: 8-9) For salvation, man has to repent of his sins, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of his sins and he will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2: 38)

E. Holiness standards.

To a Muslim, living holy and abstaining from sin is a ritual and some of the good work that might outweigh his bad ones. Pentecostals believe that God is holy and any child of God who wants to be close to Him must also be holy and abstain from sin. Holiness by

itself will not save anyone. (Hebrews 12: 14)

F. Holy Spirit.
Koran talks about Holy Spirit but most Muslim scholars interpret it as the angle Gabriel. Pentecostals believe that Holy Spirit is the working power of God active in the lives of children of God. It is the promised comforter and the spirit of truth. (John 14-17)

G. The word of God.
Muslims believe that Jews and Christians have corrupted their own scripture and that the only reliable scripture is Koran. Even though, Koran encourages the Jews and Christians to read their own scripture. Oneness pentecostals believe that God has preserved His word for thousands of years and will not allow any man to change His word and that God's word is inspired and infallible. (Isaiah 40: 8 & 45: 23)

H. Crucifiction of Jesus Christ.
Muslims believe that Christ was not crucified but He was taken to heaven and the face of Judas was changed to look like the face of Christ. So Jews caught Judas and crucified him as Jesus Christ. So since Jesus was not crucified, He did not rise from death either. Oneness pentecostals believe that Jesus was beaten and crucified and died on the cross. They put His body in a grave but He rose from the death after three days.

I. Remission and forgiveness of sins.
Muslims believe that god forgives whom he forgives and since he is all-powerful, he can say the word and men's sins disappear in a second. Muslims practice animal sacrifice as a ritual but do not know the reason for it. Oneness pentecostals believe that God set the rule that without the shedding of blood, there can never be remission of sins. Since God set the rules and laws, He will not violate His own law. That is why the blood of Jesus was shed and since He was the only sinless man ever lived, His blood could cleanse men from their sins. (Hebrews 9: 22)

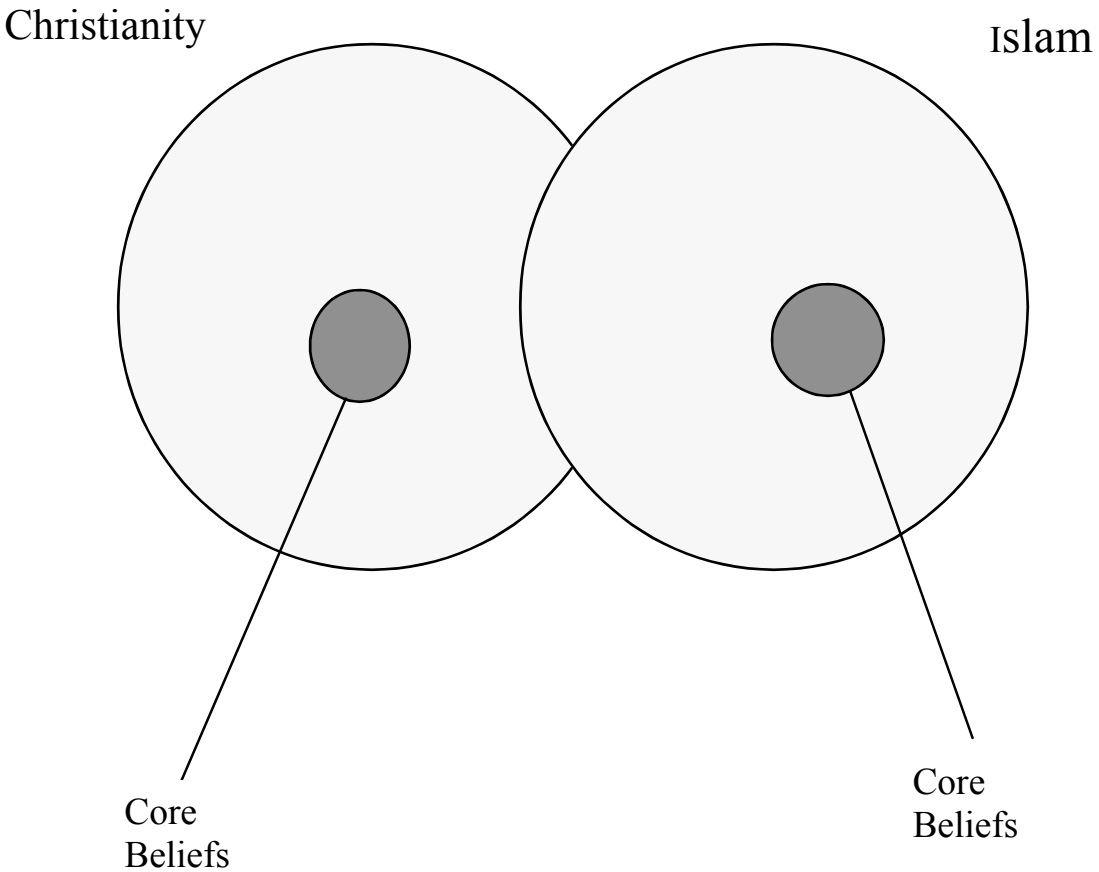
J. The Judgement Day.

Muslims believe that all men will stand before God on judgement day and will be judged for their good and bad works. If they have more bad works they will go hell (sinners will burn in hell) and if they have more good works, they will go to heaven (heaven is a place with clean streams and dark-eyed virgins). Oneness pentecostals believe Jesus Christ will judge believers and non-believers at different times and those who have not obtained salvation will go hell (a place of fire). For pentecostals, Heaven is a place of worship and praise and only believers will go there. (Rev. 20: 11-15)

K. Prayer.

For Muslims prayer is a ritual and a good deed. Many people pray in Arabic without knowing what they are saying since eighty percent of Muslims do not speak Arabic. For Pentecostals, prayer, praise and worship are ways of communicating with God and worshiping Him and talking to Him as a son talks to his father.

Comparing Islam and Christianity



Jehovah is:
One spirit manifested in different ways
Personal/ Relational
Good = No evil in Him
Consistent
Faithful
Holy
Loving-Just
Forgiving

Man is
Sinful
Has free choice
Believer is child of God
Fellowship with God

Allah is:

One = singular, alone
Impersonal = non-relational
Amoral = good and evil
Unpredictable, arbitrary
Free, not bound by any rules
Mighty
Dictator-Judge
Merciful

Man is
Good but weak
Predestined
Believer is slave of Allah
Cannot fellowship with Allah

Cultural Sensitivities

If we want to be Christ-like and win Muslims to the truth, we must be culturally sensitive. These sensitivities are prudent practices that will preserve our witness (we must be holyer than Muslims to win them to the truth).

Food: It is against dietary restrictions for a Muslim to use pork products and alcohol including cooking wine. Please refrain from using these products in cooking when inviting Muslims to your home.

Dogs: Most Muslims consider dogs as unclean animals. Do not let your dogs lick all over your guests. It is better to keep your dogs away from the room where your guests are sitting.

Relationship between males and females: In most Muslim countries, the relationship between males and females are usually of a sexual nature. Casual friendships between males and females do not exist. It is recommended that men witness to men and women to women. Most Muslim men have very strong personalities and many Pentecostal ladies have fallen for these strong personalities and have left the Lord. Missionary dating is one hundred percent discouraged. Couples can witness to couples or couples can witness to single men.

Respect for your Bible: Muslims treat their holy book with respect and expect you to respect your Bible. Do not through your Bible on the floor or other places. For us it might be just a book (what is written in it that is important) but for them it is the word of God that needs to be respected.

Going to a Muslim's Home: Most Muslims remove their shoes before entering their houses. To be sensitive, follow their practice. It is common practice to take flowers or a small gift when you go to someone's house for the first time.

Divisions of Islam

Islam has many different sects but not as many as Christian denominations. The major sects are

1. Sunnis

Found in Arabia, North Africa, Mediterranean, Pakistan, India and Southeast Asia.
87% of all Muslims
Orthodox in belief
Accept the four Caliphs that came after Muhammad (Abu Baker, Omar, Othman, & Ali).
Compareable to Christian Protestants.
Can read the Koran for themselves.
Four divisions are (which Ulama they follow in matters of faith)
a. Hanafi
b. Shafi'i
c. Maliki
d. Hanbali

2. Shiites

Believe that Ali should have been the first Caliph and that Ali and 11 of his children and grandchildren are representatives of Muhammad on earth. They are called Imams.
Ali married Muhammad's daughter, Fatima (So Ali was his son-in-law)
Most of the Imams died as martyrs that is why dying in a holy war is very important to Shiites.
Comparable to Catholics.
Cannot interpret the Koran for themselves. They follow the teachings of Ayatollahs who interpret the Koran for them.
Imams are considered as sinless and infallible.
They are treated like Catholic Saints. They are capable of performing miracles so Shiites make vows to them.

Last Imam (Mahdi) is believed to have disappeared and is expected to return in the last days and convert all the world to Islam.
Some Shiites consider Jihad (holy war) as the sixth pillar of Islam.
Shiites are found in Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Syria and Pakistan.

3. Sufis

Sufis (Dervishes) are similar to Catholic monks. They live far from civilization in simple and plain houses.
Most are poets.
They are into pantheism and mysticism.
They think they can get close to Allah by chanting and meditation. They sit in one place and repeat the word Allah 5000 times.
They are becoming very popular among nominal Muslims. They sit around in a circle, hold hands, read poetry, sing songs and play mystical music.

Modern Sects:

1. Ahmdiya

Began in 1879 in Punjab, India
Interpret faith by rationalistic methods & modernist view of doctrines
Strong missionary force
Famous Muslim debaters including Ahmad Deedad belong to this sect

2. Wahabis

Conservative; began in Saudi Arabia in 18th century.
Very fundamentalist (cut off fingers and hands for stealing, cut off heads for murder, no non-Muslim can come within 60 kilometers of Mecca, etc.)
Most Saudi Arabians and Taliban belong to this Sect

Expansion of Islam

1. Muhammad: By 632 nearly all Arabia was under the control of Islam

2. Abu Bakr (First Calipha, successor): 632-634 AD
Reconverted tribesmen who had deserted Islam after Muhammad's death.
Gained economic possessions in North Arabia

3. Umar (Second Calipha): 633-642 AD
Iraq, Iran, Syria and Egypt conquered and forced to convert to Islam

4. Uthman (Third Calipha): 644-656 AD
North Africa, all of Persia and Cyprus conquered and forced to convert to Islam.

5. Ali (Fourth Calipha): 656-661 AD
Civil war between Ali and Muawiya of Syria (Ali surrendered).

6. Dynasties:

A. 661-750 Umayyad dynasty (Started by Muawiya)
Conquest westwards to Atlantic in North Africa

711-713	Spain taken
718-720	Invasion of France
732	Battle of Tours where Martel stopped Muslim advance to Europe

B. 750 - 1000 Abbasid (Baghdad was capital)

827	Invasion of Sicily
869	Malta taken

C. 1,000 - 1,300 Seljuk Turks

1064	Captured Armenia, Advances into India
1091	Recovery of Sicily and Malta by Christian forces
1099	Crusaders capture Jerusalem
1187	Saladin defeated Christian crusaders

D. 1,258 - 1,500 Mongols
(Genghis Khan's children became Muslims)
Islam spread to central Asia, Afghanistan, further parts of India

E. 1,417 - 1,921 Ottoman Turks (empire in Middle East)

1,453	Fall of Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey)
1,492	Moors expelled from Spain Closed Giberalter, Columbus discovered America while looking for India
15th Cent.	Spread of Islam throughout Africa by more peaceful methods
18th Cent.	Decline of Ottoman military power
1923	Abolition of empire and Caliphate by Ataturk in Turkey.

Misconceptions About Christianity

Our Muslim friends have many misconceptions about Christianity. In this article, I would like to correct some of those misunderstandings.

1. **One God**. True Christians do not believe in three Gods. Moses in the old Testament wrote "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deuteronomy 6:4). In the New Testament, James brother of Jesus wrote " Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble" (James 2:19). Also Apostle Paul wrote "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5).

2. **Son of God**. When the word son of God is used, it does not mean God had sexual relationship with Mary. It refers to the spiritual relationship between Jesus Christ and God.

3. **Christian Nations**. There are no Christian nations in the world because true Christianity is a personal experience and is not inherited from parents. In other words no one can say "I was born a Christian". The countries in which Christians have freedom of worship are mislabeled as Christian countries.

4. **Three Gods**. God is a spirit. That means we can feel His presence but we cannot see Him. The eternal, infinite God has manifested Himself as father in creation of the universe and the mankind, as son in delivering and washing away human sins and as Holy Spirit in regenerating and changing the lives of the people who believe in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ shows the way to God and Holy Spirit reveals the thoughts of God. Also true Christians never worship Mary as the mother of God.

5. **True Christians**. True Christians are those that follow the Bible and keep the commandments of Jesus Christ. Not everyone who calls himself a Christian is a true Christian. You must use the Bible to evaluate the claim of a person. If he/she is living contrary to the word of God, he/she must be called a false Christian.

6. **Bible**. Many Muslim friends believe that Bible has been corrupted. If we look at the Bible we will see that there are many prophecies in the old Testament written by Jewish prophets that came true in the New Testament in the life of Jesus Christ including His virgin birth, His identity and His death on the cross. Either these prophecies are about Jesus Christ or we should wait for another Messiah.
How could Jews who do not believe in Jesus Christ conspire and unite with Christians who believe that Jesus is the Messiah to change the Bible?
Also in this space age, would anyone keep a corrupted book in some of the most prestigious museums in the world? So no one can prove that Bible has been corrupted.

Muhammad and the Jews

If you study Islam and Judaism, you will see that they are very similar. Muhammad borrowed my practices from Jews. These practices include:

1. Shama of Israel became shahada. Shama says " Hear o Israel, the Lord your God is one Lord". Shahada says " There is not God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet".

2. Jews prayed three times a day. He would not be out-done by Jews. He instituted praying five times a day.

3. Jews had mikvah for ritual washing. Mikvah became gosl in Islam.

4. Jews had set times for fasting. Muhammad instituted set times for fasting (the month of Ramadan).

5. Jews were supposed to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem three times a year, Muhammad instituted pilgrimage to Mecca.

6. Muhammad borrowed circumcision from Jews (Many Muslims believe that Muhammad invented circumcision and use that in proving that he was a wise man. They are shocked when they find out that it had been around 2000 years before Muhammad).

7. Jews turned their heads towards Jerusalem to pray and Muslims first prayed facing Jerusalem. Muhammad later changed that and instituted facing Mecca during prayer.

8. Some of the Muslim feasts resemble Jewish feasts. The day of atonement became the feast of sacrifice. Jews celebrated after their fast days, Muslims celebrate after their fast days.

9. Muhammad borrowed the kosher foods from Jews and set similar dietary restrictions with a few differences (such as eating of camels).

10. Jews believed that doing mitzvahs bring them salvation. Muhammad taught that doing good deeds earns one a place in heaven.

11. Jews all over the world prayed in Hebrew. He insisted that Muslims pray in Arabic all over the world (he knew that a common language of prayer would unite people).

12. Jews taught that both good and evil comes from God. Muhammad borrowed this idea from Jews. Many times Koran says that "Allah will send astray whom he wills".

Muhammad and His Early Dealings with Christians

If we study the life of Muhammad, we will see that he had many dealings with Christians before his call to prophethood at age forty.

Christianity had been present in Arabia since the day of Pentecost. Arabic speaking Jews heard the truth preached by Peter on the day of Pentecost. The two main Christian groups in 6th century Arabia were Monophysites and Nestorians. Armenian Apostolic, Coptic Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox and Syrian Orthodox churches were considered as Monophysites. Nestorian doctrine was preached by the Assyrian churches of Iraq and Persia (Iran). These two groups has totally opposite view of the nature of Christ. Monophysites believed that "Jesus Christ's nature remains altogether divine and not human even though he has taken on an earthly and human body"[1]. It asserted that in the person of Christ there was one divine nature rather than two natures, divine and human. Nestorians believed that divine and human nature of Christ remained separate and that in effect they were two persons loosely united. They stressed the humanity of Christ. Muhammad heard the discussion and arguments between these two groups and saw their confusion about the nature of Christ. That is why he declared that Jesus Christ was just a man like Adam.

In the study of Hadith, two "Christian" characters stand out. One was a monk by the name of Bahira. When Muhammad was 12 years old, he had accompanied his uncle (Abu-Talib) to Syria and it was near Basra (in Southern Iraq) that the Christian monk Bahira is alleged to have seen in him the marking of a prophet. Bahira told Abu-Talib "This child is destined to greatness". When Muhammad had his vision in the cave, he described it to his wife. His wife, Khadijah, had a cousin by the name of Waraqa ibn-Nawfal who was a blind monk. He told Muhammad that he sees in him the signs of prophethood and predicted hardships for his mission.[2]

Muhammad's contacts with Christians and Jews had given him some familiarization with the scripture. But this familiarization was not result of contact with anyone who had an educated knowledge of the sacred scripture. This is seen in him reciting the Catholic traditional story of Jesus blowing life into clay pigeons. He also made a mistake between Miriam, sister of Moses and Mary mother of Jesus and wrote that Mary, mother of Jesus, had a brother by the name of Aaron.

[1]www.britanica.com/bcom/eb/article/5/0,5716,54745+1+53408,00.html
[2]"Islam: Beliefs and Observances" by Farrah (1970)

What do Muslims Believe about Christ and Christianity?

Muslims believe in the virgin birth of Christ, and call Christ, “the son of Mary”. They believe that he was a sinless prophet. They also believe he spoke when he was a few days old. They teach that he performed miracles and healed many people, and that he was not crucified. According to Koran, the face of Judas was changed, and he was crucified instead of Jesus Christ. Jesus ascended into heaven without seeing death. Since man has a good nature, and does not need to be delivered from original sin, death of Christ on cross is useless.

Muslims believe that Christ foretold the coming of Muhammad and point to the book of John chapter 14 as a proof. They believe that Muhammad was the promised Comforter and the Spirit of truth. One of the names of Muhammad was Ahmad which means “the Perfect One”. They say that the Greek word for “the comforter” was supposed to be translated the perfect one and has been mistranslated and changed.

Muslims believe that making anyone equal to Allah is the greatest sin known to man. So the concept of the co-equal “god the son” of the Trinitarian doctrine is the greatest sin known (called shirk in Arabic).

The Catholic concept of the “mother of god” is rebuked many times in Koran. Many Muslims believe that Christians believe in three gods: god the father, god the son and the mother of god.

Muslims believe that Christians and Jews have conspired, and have changed the Bible so Muslims will not accept the Bible, and will not read it. They believe that Koran replaced the Bible and has all the truth they need to know.

Some Muslims believe that Christ will return at the end of the world along with Muslim messiah (Mahdi), and will marry many wives, will have many children, and will die because one verse in Koran must be fulfilled because it talks about Christ’s death.

Practical Points in Witnessing to Muslims

1. Where can I meet Muslims?

Muslims in the United States are found in both urban and rural areas. They work as businessmen, engineers, doctors, etc. Large number of Muslims come to this country as university and college students. You can meet Muslims in college campus cultural events, in their businesses and ethnic community centers. Many Urban areas sponsor ethnic cultural events during the summer months where Muslims participate. In some urban areas such as Los Angles and Detroit, large number of businesses belong to Muslims and they are found at almost all street corners. Some churches have friendship dinners for International Students where International Students can meet with Americans and practice their English. Some suggest using other community buildings such as community centers, lodges, etc. (other than the church) because people would feel less threatened in these buildings. Most Internationals, including Muslims living in this country, might have never been in an American home. They are more open to invitation for dinner or lunch. Also Important holidays such as Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas is a good time to introduce the Internationals to American traditions and relate these holidays to the Lord. Keep in mind the dietary restrictions of the Muslims. They are not allowed to eat Pork or use any form of alcohol including cooking wine.

2. What approach should I take?

a. Friendship Evangelism: Muslims are suspicious of strangers who do not know them and try to share the gospel with them. They think that Islam is like a great empire that the United States wants to destroy and it will use any means to do so including sending CIA agents as Christian witnesses. Many Muslims believe that people who try to reach out to them are working for the US government and trying to spy on them.

So friendship evangelism is the best way of witnessing to Muslims. Live your holy life in front of them and let them see that you are different than other Americans. After you have gotten their trust, then share the gospel with them. Share your testimony. Your testimony is one thing that a person cannot deny. Especially, if you have pictures of you before Holy Ghost baptism, show them to Muslims. Do not emphasize speaking in other tongues. This phenomena is very confusing to them. Talk about a supernatural encounter with Christ and being able to feel God's presence. Most Muslims have a desire to feel God's presence. Tell how wonderful Jesus is in your life and the impact of your faith on your day to day life. Tell them how sinful you were and how Jesus delivered you from sin.

b. Praying for the Sick: If someone is sick in the Muslim's family, offer to pray for them in Jesus name. The Koran talks about Christ healing the sick and you can show them that Christ is still able to heal the sick. Most Muslims are emotional people and are more

open to the supernatural than the Western world. For this reason we need to appeal to their emotions. Christian poetry and Christian music in the native tongue and with native tunes are the most effective. Praise Music with American tunes and native tongue tends to turn off non-believers.

c. Inviting your Muslim friend to church: If you would like to invite your Muslim friend to church, explain to them what will happen in service. Small attention to detail might improve the experience of your friend. Experience has shown to me not to let my male Muslim friend to sit in the same pew as young girls specially if they are visitors and are not modestly dressed. This produces distraction and they cannot concentrate on the service. If you have the words of the choruses that are sung, give them to your friend so he/she can follow. When the preacher stands up to preach find the verses of the Bible for your Muslim friend and let him/her read them. Encourage your church members to go and shake hands with your friend and make them feel welcome to your church. Happiness of the saints and their friendliness is what will attract your Muslim friend to Christ and His church.

d. Home Bible Study: If they are interested in knowing more about Christianity, offer to teach them a Home Bible study such as *Exploring God's Word* or *Search for Truth*. The Koran contains stories about Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, John the Baptist and Jesus. The Old Testament could be a bridge to new ideas. Of course there are some differences between what Koran teaches and the Old Testament. Many Muslims believe that circumcision was Muhammad's idea and are shocked to hear that Abraham was the father of circumcision. Also, Koran teaches that it was Ishmael not Isaac that Abraham was trying to sacrifice to God.

It is recommended that you teach the Bible study to one Muslim at a time on a one on one basis. If two Muslims are present, they fear for their reputation and are forced to defend Islam rather than ask honest questions about spiritual life. Pray before going to the Muslim's house so that you would be protected from demonic attack and plead the blood of Christ over the place where you will be teaching the Bible study. You should limit the Bible study to one hour so you would not outgrow your welcome.

e. Defense of the Bible: At the beginning of the Bible study, it is important to emphasize the truth of the Bible and how we know it has not been corrupted. One argument is that Christians believe that Christ is the Messiah but Jews deny this fact. So how could they conspire together to change the Bible? Tell them that many copies of the Bible were available all over the world in many different languages before Muhammad's birth. How could Christians gather all of them and change them after Muhammad declared himself a prophet in 623 AD?

Not even the Muslim Imam can point to a date when the Bible was altered nor to a person who altered it. Suggest your friend to ask his religious leaders about when the Bible was altered and who altered it. Also God is not so weak as to allow His sacred

book to be corrupted by man because it is a contract that God has made with man. The Koran states that God protects His word.

3. Some Questions Muslims might ask:

a. Why are there so many Bible Versions? Islam teaches that the person who wants to learn the Koran it must read it in Arabic so the concept of translation is new to Muslims. Explain to the Muslim that God speaks our language. Express your thankfulness that God does not expect us to learn Hebrew and Greek in order to understand Him. Help them come to realization that this is a weakness in Islam rather than a strength. When God spoke to Hebrews, He spoke in their language. When He spoke to Greeks, He spoke in their language. So God spoke Hebrew and Greek and gave them scriptures in these two languages. Right from the start, there were translations into many languages. Say that it is wonderful that the Bible is now exists in several thousand different languages because we want all people to understand the scripture in their own languages. If there are differences, they are linguistic. The original is available for study.

Most Muslims live outside of the Arab world and do not know the Arabic language. Muslims are obligated to pray in the Arabic language without understanding what they say. They are also required to memorize the Koran in Arabic. Could God give us a revelation and not expect us to understand it? Or does He expect us to learn a very difficult foreign language such as Arabic in order to know about and Pray to Him? Does it make sense that God, the creator of the Infinite universe only speaks Arabic?

b. What about the Gospel of Barnabas? Gospel of Barnabas is a false Gospel found around 800 AD written in Italian. Its authenticity has been disproved. In it supposedly Christ declares that Muhammad will come after Him. Most Muslims refer to the Gospel of the Barnabas as a proof that Christ prophesied about Muhammad. You can disprove the authenticity of this gospel by mentioning that all 27 books of the New Testament were written in Greek. Why there is no Greek text of this Gospel found and why it is written in the language of the ninth century Rome?

c. What do you think about Muhammad? Saying that Muhammad is a prophet misleads a person by giving the impression that Muhammad is a man they can trust. Avoid directly answering the question by telling them, "I am interested in telling you who Jesus was and what He can do for you. It is not up to me to answer who Muhammad is. God knows."
A more positive answer is " I believe Muhammad was a very faithful seeker after God. He looked into false Christianity, Judaism and Paganism and found dissatisfaction with all of them. As he was thinking through these things, he found a way of reconciling the three religions in a new faith. He wanted to destroy the idols and bring people to belief in God. But he did not know about true Christians that believe in One God he only met

false Christians". If the Muslim keeps persisting with this question, you at one time have to say that you personally do not believe that Muhammad is a prophet of God. At the same time, speak of their prophet with respect. Some people want you to say something negative so they can attack back but others really want to know what a Christian thinks of their prophet.

d. Was Muhammad the promised comforter? Most Muslims will refer to the Gospel of John Chapter 14, verse 16 where Christ talks about the comforter. Muslims believe that Muhammad was the Spirit of the Truth that Christ talked about. You can refer the Muslim to the verse 18 where Jesus says that "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." How could Jesus come to them in the body of Muhammad? Also refer them to the verse 26 where Jesus says "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name ..." So, here it is clearly shown that the comforter is the Holy Ghost.

e. What is the Holy Ghost? The concept of the Holy Ghost is very confusing and strange to Muslims. Even though Koran talks about the Holy Ghost, Muslim scholars interpret it as the Angel Gabriel. You can start by explaining that God is a spirit. That means he does not have physical appearance so we cannot see Him but we can feel his presence. Spirit of God is His presence and power that we can feel. He sends a part of his presence to our lives to change us and give us the power to live for him.

f. Why do not you want to try Islam?

1. Let us look at the life of Muhammad and compare it with the life of Jesus Christ. Muhammad did and lived the life natural man dictates for a man to live. He married nine wives, fought and killed his enemies and wished and prayed for the destruction of his enemies. But Christ did what was against Human nature. He healed the sick, raised the dead, only did good to this world and did not give in to the desires of flesh. Muhammad died and was buried in Medina, and If you go to Haj, you will see his grave. But Jesus died, was resurrected, and ascended into heaven. No grave could hold his body down.

2. God gave Jews the law and asked them to keep it but they failed miserably. God knew that the sin nature of man cannot keep His law. That is why Christ came to write the law in the hearts of men. How is it that even though God knew that man cannot keep the law in his own power, went back to the same way and gave the law again to Muhammad and asked the Muslims to keep it? Man cannot be saved with his good works. Our good works never cancel out our sins. Only grace of God can save us. If a man is saved with his own works, he will pound his chest with pride and say look at my good works, my good works gave me eternal life. Our good works are like dirty rags in the presence of God. God's grace can only save us.

3. Islam gives a set of rules to observe and a set of traditions to follow but does not give the power to follow those rules. Christ gives us the power to keep his rules. In the Muslim world, Sufis chant and meditate to get close to God. They try to get close to God

by living simple lives and chanting the name of Allah 5000 times. But we do not have to chant to get close to God. God's power reaches down and engulf's us and we can feel His presence. We have what Sufis are looking for and are seeking after.

4. Muslims do not have assurance of salvation. Since Heaven and Hell is in Allah's hands, and since he is the author of both good and evil, if he wills, he can send me either to Heaven or Hell. This means I am predestined to go to hell or heaven regardless of what I do. However, Christ gives me assurance of salvation. The Bible says that if I truly believe in Christ, I will have eternal life. It is not God's will that anyone should perish, but all come to the knowledge of truth. Our God is only the author of good, and only good things come from Him (James 1: 13-14).

5. Shiite Muslims still cry for their Imams that died 1300 years ago but I do not have to cry for Christ because He was crucified. I can rejoice that He rose from the death and is alive.

6. I have the freedom to worship God. Islamic tradition teaches that If a Muslim does not follow the ritual of prayer exactly and say the same words exactly, his prayer is void and not accepted. But I thank God that I have freedom of worship in Christ. I can worship Him with my mouth, hands, feet, body. I can praise Him with songs, music, dance, shouting, with hands lifted up or kneeling down in English, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Arabic, Pashtu, and all other languages.

g. Why do you say that man has a fallen nature? Bible says that "all man have sinned and come short of the glory of God," and that "there is none righteous, no not one" (Romans 3:10, 23). David said in the book of psalms, "Behold I was shappen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalms 51:5). If man has a good nature, why we cannot find a single perfect person in the world? Also, if children are born with a good nature and environment corrupts them, are you willing to give your life to a 3 year old's hand. If he/she has a good nature, he/she will do no evil to you. Not many of us are willing to put our lives in the hand of a 3 year old.

h. Why do you say Jesus was crucified? Muslims argues that Jesus was not crucified. When Jews came to arrest him, God took him to heaven and placed someone else in the place of Jesus. The Jews crucified that person who looked like Jesus because God miraculously deceived them. Muslims also believe that Jesus will return in the end of the days and he will live to be an old man and die a natural death.

This argument is based on the Islamic belief that God would not possibly allow Jews to kill a good prophet. If it were true, God would be weak, so they deny it strongly. Besides, Muslims cannot understand why Jesus needed to be killed in this way. They do not believe that man is sinful and needs to be atoned. How do you answer this objection?

One successful method is to relate them to the story of Abraham and the sacrifice of his

son (do not mention son's name). Ask you Muslim friend the question: Why did God provide the ram for the sacrifice in place of Abraham's son? Most Muslims would not be able to answer this question. Then explain that you think that since God had already condemned Abraham's son to be sacrificed, God does not go back on His word. Instead He provided a ram to replace the boy as a sacrifice. God has always accepted sacrifices of animals in the Jewish tradition to redeem man's sin. From there you can take your friend through the Bible, briefly explaining some of the passages that deal with sacrifices and lead them to Jesus, the great sacrifice.

This subject is very hard for a Muslim to understand and accept. Your job is to explain and pray that the Holy Ghost would reveal this truth to your friend as a revelation.

i. Why do Americans/Christians favor Israel? This question will arise sooner or later when talking to Arabs about the Lord. We need to be careful in discussing politics, regardless of what we think or our position is. Our first priority is to have the Christian attitude of being wise, but also loving and courteous. We need to take as a neutral position as possible. You want your Muslim friend to think that you are fair and you think fairly about others.

If someone asks me about this, I assure them that I am not a 100% supporter of either side. Killing on either side is wrong. I never want to give the impression that I am a full supporter of Arabs because they are wrong in many ways. If any side is wrong, acknowledge that wrong. If they are right, acknowledge it too. We need to be fair. Assure them that our God is a God of forgiveness and will give them the power to forgive their enemies and will wash away the bitterness from their hearts.

4. Giving a Bible to your Muslim Friend:

It is recommended that you give your Muslim friend a good Bible in his own language. They can be ordered from American Bible Society. Some are the translations of the King James Version others are the translation of the New International Version. Some translations of the King James Version to other languages are old and use archaic words in those languages. you can recommend a dictionary. If you want to give them an English King James version Bible, ask them to purchase an Oxford dictionary to find the words they do not understand. Ask them to read the Book of Luke followed by the Book of Acts. Many people start with the Book of Matthew and do not finish the first page. Nice thing about the Book of Luke is that it sets up a nice historical setting. The Book of Acts, in truth, is the continuation of the Book of Luke.

5. Leading the Muslim in the steps of salvation:

a. Repentance: If a Muslim is willing to believe in Christ, then you can explain to them the concept of repentance. Repentance is asking God to forgive one's sins and making a decision to turn one's back on sin and not commit those sins anymore. Most Muslims do not consider themselves as sinners. Sin for them means: adultery, murder, stealing,

etc. White lies that they tell or the jealousy they feel is not considered as sin. Tell them that God hates any form of sin, and will punish it and, that He wants to cleanse us and set us free from all sin and bad habits. Tell the Muslim friend to kneel down and in his own language ask Christ to forgive his/her sins. Since most Muslims are not used to praying to God in their own language, they may not know how to talk to God. You might have to lead them in a prayer of repentance. A prayer might be like this:
"Jesus I confess that I believe in you and I know that I have many sins and have sinned against you with my hands, with my eyes, with my tongue, with my heart and with my mind. Please forgive me my sins and wash my sins with your blood. Please wash my mouth, hands, eyes, heart and mind with you blood and make me clean. In your presence I make a decision to forsake all my sins. Help me Jesus I need you. Amen".

b. Baptism in Water: The concept of baptism is not understood by Muslims. They have a ritual called "gosl" where they submerge themselves in water after sexual relationship or after menstrual cycle. You can explain to them that baptism is a spiritual gosl while what they do is a physical gosl. The same way that water washes away their physical impurities, baptism (gosl) in Jesus name will wash away their spiritual impurities. It is wise to teach them the concept of Baptism and the concepts of different steps of salvation before baptizing them. If a Muslim is baptized and it is known to other Muslims, he will be attacked by many people at once. Some recommend not baptizing Muslims for at least six months after Holy Ghost Baptism until they learn about the faith. Baptizing the Muslims too soon has resulted in them coming under strong attack from friends, family and religious leaders. Not too many people are spiritually strong enough to endure these attacks.

c. Baptism of the Holy Ghost: Muslims believe that man is made up of body, soul and spirit but the concept of the Holy Ghost is very strange to them. When the word "spirit" is mentioned to them they think of demons (jins) that they have heard about or think of the scary movies of Alfred Hitchcock. I had two Muslim friends who went to an Apostolic church for seven years but could not understand the concept of the Holy Ghost. The sad thing is that no one took the time to explain to my friends the concept of the Holy Ghost in simple language without using big, theological words. Have you simplified the gospel? Can you explain the gospel in simple words that even a 3 year could understand? Here is an example of a simple explanation:

" A lot of people in all religions are trying to get close to God. Muslims are trying to get close to God and feel His presence through prayer and fasting. Sufis try to get close to God through meditation, reading of poetry and chanting. All of these are men's efforts to get to close to God. While Christ offers believers in Him a gift that draws them close to God and gives them power to win in the battles of life. This gift is the best gift God has ever given to man. It lets man feel God's presence and draw close to Him. God wants you to seek for this gift and receive this gift from him. When you receive this gift, God will take you whole body in His hands and He will take the most rebellious part of your body into His hands which is your tongue and will give you power to speak in other languages. This experience is the greatest experience that you can have and man's

words are not strong enough to describe it. You have to taste this experience and judge for yourself. "

Ask your Muslim friend to relax, close his/her eyes, lift up his hands to God and worship Him with simple phrases such as "I love you Jesus", "I need you Jesus", "I cannot live without you Lord". Ask the spiritually strong saints to come around your friend and pray with him/her.

d. Dealing with Demon Possession: Many Muslims are into witchcraft and other demonic activity so demonic possession will be experienced. It is recommended to ask a minister with experience in deliverance to deal with the possessed person. You should ask the spiritually stronger saints to surround the person and use the name of Jesus which demons cannot tolerate.

6. Judging the True Motives of Muslim Seekers:

It is a known fact that some Muslims might be interested in Christ for non-spiritual reasons. Some illegal immigrants or short-term visitors believe that they can apply for political asylum in this country if they become Christians, so they want to become a Christian to stay in this country. Others believe that Pentecostals are simple people and can be conned easily if someone gets their trust. Some believe that Christians and churches are rich and might be a source of financial gain. Still others might be interested in a romantic relationship with a member of the church and might pretend to be a seeker. Our church in Kentucky has a rule that no member of the church can marry a new convert until that new convert has received the Holy Ghost and has been faithful to church for at least one year. It is wise to follow this rule when dealing with Muslims. It is important to pray for the gift of the discerning of spirits so you can know the true intentions of your Muslim friend's heart.

7. Making Disciples of Muslims:

It is important to teach the Muslim convert from the start how to pray, talk to God like a son talks to his father, read the Bible daily and study other books about Pentecostal apologetics. Also a new converts course is recommended. The majority of Muslims tend to listen more than read. Therefore, Bible on tape in their own language and Christian music is recommended. Ask the members of your church to pray for the Muslim convert daily, since from the start he/she will be under strong spiritual attack. When a Muslim converts to Christianity, he/she becomes a castaway from the Muslim society and is rejected by the family. There have been cases of Muslim converts going back to their homeland and getting killed by the member of their family. Encourage the Muslim convert to exercise wisdom in revealing his faith to his family.

8. Publicizing a Muslim's conversion: Because of the violent nature of Islam, do not publicize the full names or addresses of converts or those who minister among Muslims.

Do not publish full face pictures of Muslim converts and ministers to Muslims.

Problems Between Christianity & Islam

Subject	Muslim View
Sonship of Christ	Only a man; A sinless prophet God can never have a son
Crucifixion	No crucifixion for a messenger of God (Judas's face changed to look like Jesus, Judas was crucified)
Fatherhood of God	Allah favors some, rejects some Jews = Humiliated Christians = Gone astray
Holy Spirit	Mentioned in Koran; Most think it meant Angel Gabriel
Sanctification, Inner Holiness	Ritual holiness, outward observation
Salvation by grace	Salvation by works: Word of witness Pray Fasting Alms Hajj
Exclusiveness of Jesus	Allah only accepts Islam Muhammad was the last of the prophets, superseded Christ
Text of the New Testament	Corrupted by Jews and Christians Been abrogated by Quran which contains all truth; Quran is eternal
Virgin Birth	Teaches virgin birth of Christ

Sins of Muhammad

Surah 47: 19 “So know that there is no God save Allah and ask forgiveness for thy sin ...”

His father and mother were polytheists and when he asked god to forgive them, it was denied.

Muhammad spent 40 years in paganism worshiping al-lat, al-Uzza and Manat (93: 8-9) “ Did he not find you erring and guide thee ... “

His praise for the idols of Koraish. 53: 19-20 “ Have you considered El-Lat, El-Uzza and Manat the third ... “ (The origin of satanic verses).

It is cited in hadith that Muhammad said “ My heart is overwhelmed by Satan thus I ask forgiveness seventy times a day.

He was famous for his raids, treason and vengefulness.

He married his adopted son’s (Zaid’s) wife (zainab)

His god was quick to allow all that his sinful heart desired. He allowed Muhammad to abandon or sleep with any of his 9 wives according to his wish.

He had a reputation for cruelty and hatred. He ordered a lady by the name of Asthma bin Marwau be killed because she had laughed at him.

He beheaded 700 Jews in one day.

He used the sword to spread his mission. He participated in 29 battles. He shed blood with his own hands.

See “The Infallibility of Revelation and the Sins of the Prophets”

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All Muslims are not the Same

Islam is often thought of as a unified, homogenous and integrated structure. Many Christians imagine the Muslim as a practicing religious person who prays five times a day and knows the Quran by heart.

This image of the Muslim, spoken above, is representative of only a small, though growing minority of Muslims in a small number of cities and towns.

The fact is that Islamic nations, like the rest of the world, are passing through "explosive change." All cultures are moving in the direction of a Global System (technological culture). Modernization has caused developing Islamic nations to be increasingly dependent on the technology of the west for their economic growth.

At the same time, Muslims have been battling with religious and ideological trends which are tearing their nations apart. On the one hand, socialism has attracted a new generation of Muslims who seek social and economic justice. On the other hand, there is a growing number of Muslims who have been disillusioned by both socialism and technology. They therefore are looking for answers within their culture and religion. In the last twenty years, Ayatollah Khomaini has become a symbol for this return to traditional norms of life and belief.

Furthermore, education has played a major role in exposing the growing numbers of educated Muslims to the various political, economic, philosophical and religious trends in the world. Other factors that have influenced the Muslim world in one way or the other are: mass media (TV, radio, cinema, magazines, and other printed materials), the petro-dollar, travel, immigration, urbanization and exposure to Westerners working in Muslim lands.

Therefore, a close look at Islam and Muslims today shows us that not all Muslims are the same. We need to identify the differences within Islam so that we know how to relate to each person according to where he is.

One can identify the following trends within Islam:

1. Religious Muslims:
    a) Fanatical: "Islam is the only true religion"
    b) Moderate: "Islam is the best religion"
    c) Open: "Other religions may be OK"
    d) Traditional: "Unaware of other religions."

2. Non-religious
    a) Does not deny Islam but does not practice it
    b) "My religion is my conscience" and good deeds

3. Anti-religious

a) Disappointed with religion (many Iranians)
b) Political (Communist, Socialist)
c) Philosophical (Agnostic, Atheist)

4. Secular
a) "Religion is not useful to man"
b) "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die"
c) Materialist

5. Secular mind - religious heart (largest number)
Open to change until his religion is challenged, then he defends it.

6) Searchers:
a)Philosophical questions to be answered
b) Religious contradictions to settle
c) Political choices to make

Each of these categories represents a large number of Muslim people. For an effective witness to your Muslim friend, it is imperative for you to know where he/she is. Understanding what category a Muslim belongs to helps us to identify the areas of openness and need. It also helps us to know what to communicate and when.

One thing we need to bear in mind is that every individual, regardless of religion, passes through a certain stage where he or she is most receptive to change. This normally occurs when there is a transition (from high-school to college, village to city, one country to another). We need to reach people when they are ripe and ready in order to be efficient in our ministry. Muslims who leave their home countries to study or work in North America are likely to be in that stage of receptivity, provided we approach them in the right manner. Being strangers who need friendship and who have many other needs, they are vulnerable and more tolerant than they would be back home.

We also need to mention Black (African-American) Muslims. Their conversion to Islam is a rebellion towards the racist America. We can reach them by convincing them that true Christianity is not racist and that Islam is not an African religion and that all Muslims do not have dark skins

Why is it Hard for Muslims to Convert?

In the western world, most people have a secular life separate from their spiritual life. Most practice their spiritual life on Sundays and their secular life during the other days of the week. That is not the case with Islam. Islam is more that a religion. It is a culture, it is a way of life, it is very strongly bonded to the society in general.

When a Muslim converts to Christianity, he/she is cut off from the society in general. Many families consider it a shame to the reputation of the family and cut off the relationship with the convert. So a convert becomes a cast away from his friends and his family.

It takes a very strong man or woman to go against the tide of the society and confess their faith in Christ. It is specially hard for women to convert because of their place in society and number of conversions are much larger among men.

The Koran teaches that the apostate must be killed. So if a practicing Muslim becomes a Christian in most Muslim countries his life will be in danger. Countries such as Iran, Saudi Arabia and Egypt have executed known Muslim converts. Rev. Saiah was an Assemblies of God minister in Iran that was hanged in 1990. Rev. Dibaj was another minister who was jailed for 10 years and then executed in 1994. Both of these men were Muslim converts.

When a Muslim is considering conversion to Christianity, he must consider all these facts before making a decision.

Islam is like a big bully who threatens anyone who tries to challenge it. The last person who openly challenged Islam was Salmon Rushdie. Ayatollah Khomini of Iran put 2.5 million dollars price on his head. That is why the perverted life of Prophet Muhammad (such as marrying a nine year old girl when he was in his fifties) has never be publicized by the Western media and Hollywood.

Women in Islam

Before Muhammad, Arabs would bury their daughters alive. Muhammad outlawed this practice but did not give much rights to women.

Muhammad himself had nine wives. The youngest one (Aeshe) was nine years old when he married her (would be considered as child abuse by today's standards).

A man can marry up to four wives, and can have numerous temporary marriages. They claim this prevents the problem of prostitution that exists in the westtern countries. Also if a child is produced, the man is responsible to support him/her. In most Muslim countries, a man must obtain the permission of his wife to marry a second wife.

In the court of law, testimony of two woman is equal to the testimony of one man.

In the laws of inheritance, sons get twice as much inheritance as the daughters.

In most Muslim countries, a woman could not do much without the permission of her husband. She cannot obtain a passport or leave the country without his permission.

It is very easy for man to divorce his wife but it might take up to ten years for wife to obtain a divorce from her husband.

In more fundamentalist states such as Gulf States and Saudi Arabia, women cannot drive, vote or hold most jobs.

Koran gives permission for men to beat up and punish their wives.

In some Arab countries, if a female is not a virgin on her wedding night, she might be killed by her father and brothers.

Women are not supposed to show any part of their bodies except their faces and hands. All other body parts must be covered.