

“Growing in Your Relationship with the Lost World: *Muslims*”

I. Background

- Abraham, Ishmael, Esau
- Muhammad (“highly praised”) [also spelled Muhammed or Mohammed]
- **Six basic tenets of Islam:** 1) Allah is the one true God. 2) The Koran is the most holy book. 3) Muhammad is Allah’s greatest prophet. 4) There are many angels and demons, and there is a Satan. 5) Allah has predetermined all things by unchangeable decree. He is absolutely sovereign. 6) There will be a day of judgment when all will find out whether they go to heaven or hell.
- **Five duties (pillars) of Islam:** 1) Recite the creed many times each day: “There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet.” 2) Prayer 5 times per day. 3) Give to the poor. 4) Month of fasting called Ramadan (can’t eat during daylight). 5) Make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in your lifetime (unless absolutely impossible).

II. Biblical Similarities

A. One God (Deut. 6:4)

B. The Bible is the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16)

C. Jesus was a Prophet sent from God (Luke 7:16)

D. Coming Judgment & Literal Heaven and Hell (Rev. 20:1ff)

III. Biblical Differences (see notes from our study of cults)

A. Nature of God / Trinity

- Allah is not a _____ (that would imply to them that he was part of the created realm like angels).
 - **BUT** God is spirit (John 4:24; Is. 31:3; 1 Tim. 1:17; Col. 1:15; John 1:18) and He is eternal, not a part of creation (1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16; Rev. 1:8; Is. 44:6; 48:12; 43:13; Ps. 90:2; 41:13; Is. 57:15).
- Allah is _____, not three. Christians who believe in a Trinity are infidels. Footnote: Muslims believe the Trinity = God, Mary & Jesus!
 - **BUT** God is Three Persons in the Godhead (see notes from cults)
- Allah is _____. He is not personally involved in the affairs of men but uses angels as intermediaries.
 - **BUT** God is Transcendent and _____ (Deut. 4:39; Is. 57:15; Jer. 23:23-24)
- Allah loves only _____, not sinners.
 - **BUT** God loves even sinners (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8, 10).
- Allah is _____.
 - **BUT** God is _____ (Jer. 9:23-24; Gen. 3:8; 5:24; 6:9). God speaks directly to people (Gen. 6:13; 12:1; 26:24; 28:13; Ex. 3:4; Joshua 1:1; Judges 6:24; 1 Sam. 3:4; 23:9-12; 1 Kings 17:2-4; Is. 6:8; Mk. 9:7; Acts 8:29; 9:4-6, 10). We can become a part of God’s family (John 1:12-13; Gal. 3:26; Rom. 8:14)

B. Sufficiency of Scripture

- The Quran is their _____ revelation.
 - Previous revelations from Allah are abrogated (replaced) by newer ones.
- They claim the Scriptures have been _____ to include things that are not true.
- The Quran _____ the Bible!

C. Person and Work of Jesus

- Koran says that Abraham was a _____ and Jesus was a _____ (prophet of Allah).
 - **BUT** Abraham and Jesus were Jews!
- Islam teaches that Jesus was only a _____, not God the Son. Anyone that says Jesus is God = an infidel. This is an unforgivable sin that will send you to hell forever. God has no wives or associates and cannot have a Son.
 - **BUT** the Bible says that Jesus is the SON OF GOD! (John 3:16)
- Jesus did not _____ on the cross because he was a prophet of Allah and Allah would not let this happen. Some say that _____ actually died on the cross.
 - **BUT** the Bible says that Jesus did die on the cross (all four Gospels; 1 Cor. 15). Also, other prophets of God suffered terribly as they carried out His will.
- Islam says that Jesus is just a Prophet, not God. Christ was merely a human prophet who announced God's message, performed miracles "by God's permission," was saved by God from being crucified and was transported alive to heaven, from which he will return to embrace Islam and judge the world according to its tenets. (Suras 2:81,254; 3:37-52; 4:155-6,169; 5:19, 50-51, 76-79,112-117; 19:16-36; 23:52; 47:57-64; 57:26-27).
 - **BUT** Jesus is more than a great Prophet. He is God! (see notes from Cults)

D. Salvation by _____ Alone through _____ Alone in the _____ _____ of _____ Alone

- Islam teaches that man does not have _____ from Adam. It teaches that human sin emerges not as a result of an active rebellion against God, or because of an inner sin nature, but rather because people have an inherent feebleness and forgetfulness (Sura 4:28). That is why we need Allah's laws – to serve as a constant reminder of what is expected of humankind.
- Islam has no _____! They have no _____ / sacrifice for sin because they say there is no need. No objective basis for _____. They die not knowing for sure where they go.
 - **BUT** the Bible says we all have sinned (Rom. 3:10, 23) and sin will bring ultimate judgment and death (Rom. 6:23). Jesus died on the cross as the substitute for our sins (Rom. 6:23; 2 Cor. 5:21). The death of Jesus on the cross, His burial and resurrection, give objective basis for God to forgive us. We die knowing for sure that we will go to Heaven!
- The agenda of Islam is to **conquer** for Allah and rid the land of all infidels.
 - **BUT** God's Word says we are to **LOVE** our enemies, not kill them.

IV. Suggestions for Sharing the Gospel

- **Be Humble** (Col. 3:12).
- **Be Loving** (Eph. 5:2; 1 Tim. 4:12; 1 Cor. 16:14). Let the love of Christ shine through to them. Many Muslims who have converted to Christianity say the thing that got their attention is the Christlike love of Christians. Do not consider the Muslim an enemy to be conquered, but rather a person to be loved.
- **Learn As Much As You Can About Islam.** Be aware of the ways Muslims define terms so you don't unwittingly agree to something that you don't believe (i.e., saying that you believe in the "prophets" may signify to a Muslim that you accept the 124,000 prophets that Allah supposedly sent into the world at different times in history). Muslims will take you more seriously and respect you if you have gone to the trouble to learn what they believe. [Recommended books to read: "*Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims*," by Ron Rhodes; "*The Islamic Invasion: Confronting the World's Fastest Growing Religion*," by Robert Morey; "*Secrets of the Koran*," by Don Richardson; "*Fast Facts on Islam*," by John Ankerberg and John Weldon; "*Inside Islam*," by Reza F. Safa]
- **Avoid a Critical Approach.** Do not start off by criticizing Muhammad, Allah, or the Quran. Start by focusing on a positive presentation of the Bible, Jesus, and His gospel of grace. As your relationship with the person grows you can begin to tactfully bring up concerns you have about Muhammad, the Quran, and other Islamic distinctives.
- **Quote from the Bible.** Remember that "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ" (Romans 10:17; see also Ps. 119:130). Be ready to explain what the verses mean in their context. Always show a high level of respect for your Bible as the Muslims do for the Quran (they never place anything on top of their Quran and keep it in the highest place in their house; they never write in the Quran either so you may want to use an unmarked Bible). If they tell you that the Bible has been corrupted be ready to demonstrate to them why you trust in the Bible's accuracy.
- **Ask Your Muslim Friend to Read One of the Gospels.** The Gospel of **Luke** addresses themes they are familiar with already (angelic announcement to Mary that she would bear Jesus, the birth of John the Baptist, etc.). It also contains a lot of parables and Muslims love stories! It shows that God loves and accepts people who are considered the worst sinners (5:27-31; 15:1-24). The Gospel of **Matthew** will also have appeal to them as it addresses issues such as ritual prayer, fasting, almsgiving, social justice, marriage, divorce, etc. The Gospel of **John** is great for focusing on the deity of Jesus. After they read it ask them to get together with you and discuss the "I am" passages (John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9, 11; 11:25-26; 14:6; 15:5). Point out that Exodus 3:14 tells us that God's name is "I am."
- **Emphasize the Love of God.** God is not just characterized by love; God is love (1 John 4:8). God also demonstrated His love to us when we were sinners (Romans 5:8) by sending Jesus to die in our place (1 John 3:16). One Muslim convert to Christianity wrote: "There is much fear in Islam because God is not recognized as a loving father. Once the Muslim has a real taste of the divine love of God the Father, all his fear will vanish, and he will be ready to be introduced to the salvation available for him through Jesus Christ – God the Son." (Reza F. Safa, *Inside Islam: Exposing and Reaching the Word of Islam* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 1996), p. 94)
- **Emphasize God's Wonderful Grace.** Since Muslims believe in a works-oriented salvation, show them what the Bible says about this (Rom. 3:20; Eph. 2:8-9). Show them that even the smallest failure brings condemnation (James 2:10), but the grace of God in Jesus brings eternal life!
- **Christianity Involves a Relationship, Not a Religion.** Tell them about an eternal relationship with God through Jesus that begins the moment one trusts Jesus for salvation (Acts 16:31; John 3:16).
- **Give Your Testimony.** Tell them how Jesus has changed your life forever (1 John 1:3). Tell them of the full assurance you have that your sins are forgiven and you will spend eternity with Jesus. Speak with joy and enthusiasm about how God has changed your life and that without His wonderful grace you would be lost forever. You are not an expert on every verse in the Bible but you are an expert on what God has done in your life!
- **Urge Consideration of Jesus' Truth-Claims.** Muslims are taught to believe in and honor all the prophets of God (Sura 2:136). Encourage them to focus on who Jesus is, what claims He made, and the significance of His death and resurrection from the dead (1 Cor. 15:1-8). Use the story of

Abraham's sacrifice of his own son (Gen. 22). At the critical moment, God provided a ram to die as a substitute for Abraham's son. In the same way, Jesus died as a substitute for our sins. John the Baptist referred to Jesus as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Because Jesus took care of our sin problem at the cross, the crucifixion was not a defeat (as Muslims often assume) but rather was a great victory. Sin and death were defeated at the cross, after which Jesus resurrected from the dead. Also point out to them that Jesus is the only substitute that can help us because He is the God-Man (God in human flesh). See John 14:6; Acts 4:12. If they attempt to say that Jesus was simply a good man and a great prophet, ask them "How can a good man and a prophet like Jesus teach that He is the only way to God and even equal with God? How can a good man and prophet make such incredible statements if they are not true?"

- **Gently Correct Quranic Misinterpretations About Jesus.** Although they believe that Jesus was born of a virgin, had miraculous ability to heal people and raise them from the dead, was Messiah, a word from God, sinless, and will one day return to the earth (Suras 3:45; 4:158), they generally interpret these things differently than Christians do. For example, you can point out that whereas Muhammad was exhorted in the Quran to seek forgiveness for his faults (Suras 16:61; 40:55; 42:5, 30; 47:19; 48:1-2), Jesus was sinless (Hebrews 5:14-15) and came to solve humankind's sin dilemma (2 Cor. 5:19-21). You might acknowledge that since you are aware *you* are a sinner, you want to make sure that the person to whom you entrust your eternal destiny is sinless.
- **Share the Gospel.** Use the 10 Commandments to show them that they cannot live a good life before God. Then focus the attention on Jesus. Ask them to compare the Christ of the Gospels to the Christ of the Quran. Once they see how wonderful the Christ of the Gospels is you can share what He said about how to be saved (John 3:16-17). Emphasize that they can know for sure!
- **Distinguish Between Christianity and the United States.** Many Muslims think that everyone in the U.S. is a Christian; therefore all the bad things about the U.S. are related to Christianity (i.e., low state of morality, high divorce rates, abortions, drinking and drugs, sex on TV, etc.). Let them know that you are very concerned about these problems in the United States and are doing everything you can to be salt and light in our society (Mt. 5:13-14).
- **A Committed Christian Lifestyle Is Important.** One of the best ways to dispel their stereotypes is to "walk the walk" in a committed relationship with Jesus Christ.
- **Arguments without Quarrels.** In many Arab countries, a heated debate with someone is considered something that adds a little spice to life. Be aware that this is "common fare" among Muslims and do not be intimidated. Just keep your cool and keep making your points in a calm manner without raising your voice. Continue to be charitable, tactful, and friendly. Make sure you do not lose your temper but be patient, gentle, and respectful (2 Timothy 2:24; 1 Pet. 3:15).
- **Trust in the Work of the Holy Spirit.** He is the One that convinces them of their need for the Savior (John 16:8) and draws them to faith in Christ.
- **Do Not Pressure a Muslim to Become a Christian.** Ask them to make a decision for Christ but do not pressure them. Allow the Holy Spirit to convict and compel them to faith.
- **Be Caution about the First Church Invitation.** Make sure they are prepared for the experience. Warn them that people may write in their Bibles or put them on the ground; men may put their arms around their wives; and people may dress casually. You might consider inviting them to a small Bible study prior to inviting them to a church service.
- **Practical Issues to Consider:**
 - **Wear appropriate clothes.** If you invite them to your home make sure that everyone dresses modestly (especially the women).
 - **Serve appropriate food.** Muslims do not eat foods that come from pigs (pork, ham, bacon, etc.). Ask them what kind of food they would like to be served.
 - **Be cautious about eye contact.** Direct eye contact is not considered good manners among Muslims.
 - **Don't be offended if they don't like your pets.** Muslims generally view dogs as unclean farm animals.