

the Son of God. That is not to say they don't respect Him, but in their mind, to associate someone with Allah is blasphemy and unforgivable (Sura 4:48 ,116). It is critical to gently teach your friend that no Christian believes that Jesus is the result of a physical, sexual union between God and Mary. In fact, Christians, will find this just as abhorrent as Muslims will. The sonship of Jesus refers to an eternal intimate relationship between the Father and Jesus. If your friend calls himself 'a son of the oneness of Allah,' they will have a similar idea. Thus, it is very important to understand the doctrine of the Trinity and how to explain it in such a way that it opposes the idea of belief in three (3) gods. Also, you need to understand the Muslim's views on Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Muslims do believe that Jesus was sinless and that He ascended into heaven (unlike Muhammad), and will return at the end of the age. Even though they believe that Jesus was sinless, they also believe that all the prophets were sinless. You need to gently show them that Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jonah, David, and Muhammad all sinned (Sura 2:35-37; 7:22-23; 26:82; 28:15-16; 37:142; 38:24-25; 47:19; 48:1-2; 33:36-38). The Qur'an records Jesus as being sinless (Sura 19:19), therefore do not be afraid to exalt Jesus.

Our Scriptures, Muslims believe, have been corrupted. (See our tract on the *Authenticity of the Bible* for further insight and help.) They believe that the Qur'an is perfect and infallible because it was revealed letter by letter by Allah to an illiterate prophet. Thus, they believe that the Qur'an is perfect in every way, although they will allow that some of the ahadith may contain errors.

In Islam the concept of original sin and the gravity of sin are completely different from that of Christianity. In Islam, there is no inherited sin and sin is a relatively minor thing that is easily forgiven. The idea of someone atoning for your sins is repugnant to Muslims, and especially the idea of a sinless person dying in your stead.

Finally, be genuine and prayerful in your approach. It is important that Muslims see the character of Christ Jesus in you. Give them a copy of the Gospel according to Luke or John and encourage them to read it for themselves. Do not denigrate the Qur'an, Allah or Muhammad, as we would not like it if they denigrated Jesus. Above all, trust that Holy Spirit will work in your friend's life— in His time, not yours! We hope and pray that these tracts will be useful in understanding Islam and

evangelism.

Notes:

To read the Holy Bible online visit:

<http://www.ibs.org/bibles>

To watch the Jesus Film online visit:

<http://www.jesusfilm.org/languages>

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Sharing the Gospel

How to effectively share the Gospel with Muslim inquirers



Sharing your faith is essential as a believer, it is not an optional extra. Jesus commanded his disciples to go into all the world and make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20). Additionally you are, along with Timothy, told to preach the Gospel in season and out of season (2 Timothy 4:2) and told to have “your feet shod with the Gospel of Peace” (Ephesians 6:15). There are many other passages that make it abundantly clear that you are required to share the Gospel. Of course, beyond all that, the love of Jesus compels you to share the grace of God with others.

Let us say at the outset that there is no ‘*saving formula*’ - no special rules, sayings, arguments, tracts or prayers that will guarantee that an unbeliever becomes a Christian. Secondly, people are not saved through the earnestness of *your* beliefs, fervor, or arguments, but as the Holy Spirit convicts them of their need for a saviour, and the righteousness of Jesus. These are not things that you can do; it is a sovereign work of God - which leads us to ponder how to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with Muslims:

1. **Prayer.** Because only the Holy Spirit can save someone, we need to spend time in prayer. Revivals in a country or in a heart never came without prayer.
2. **Love.** You must love the person with whom you want to share the Gospel. If you don’t love them, remembering that, while you were an enemy of God, Christ loved *you* enough to die for you, then go back to step one and ask that the love of Jesus will fill your heart and also fill you with compassion for the lost and dying.
3. **Hospitality.** There are numerous examples in Scripture where people were hospitable. In fact, through the example and teachings of Jesus, we know that God expects us to be hospitable. Being hospitable, welcoming people into our homes, sharing our lives, is exactly what Jesus wants to do with Muslims. Share male to male, and female to female, or else you open up the charge of immorality! Do not make friends just to share the Gospel, be genuine in your desire to care for them. Remember that we are to be a blessing to the world in word and deed.
4. **Understand them.** Seek to understand their customs, beliefs, food, clothing and values. Understand that how they communicate is probably very different from the way you do. Seek to understand their attitude to Christ and Christianity, Allah, Muhammad

and Islam. Where are they in their search for truth?

5. **‘Know thyself.’** Understand your own culture from a Biblical perspective. How close is our “Christian” country to the standard that Jesus demands? Prepare your testimony.
6. **Identify points in common.** Islam and Christianity do have some common teachings due to Muhammad’s exposure to Judaism and Christianity.
7. **Dialogue not debate.** Do not preach! Debating pits you *against* him. Remember you are *for* him and are praying *for* him. Arguments that you win are likely to be souls that you lose.

Pray continually. Salvation is a sovereign work of the Holy Spirit; it cannot be timed, rushed or manipulated. Overcoming decades of false teaching is an extremely difficult thing you are asking them to do; coupled with the fact that, if they convert, there is the strong possibility that their own families will reject them, and in some cases attempt to kill them. This is a monumental hurdle, something through which only the Holy Spirit can carry them. Pray that He will guide them and protect them.

Salvation

As you engage with the Muslim in love, and as they learn that they can trust you completely, ask probing questions regarding salvation:

1. On what basis do you expect to go to heaven?
2. If you have sinned, how should a just and moral God deal with you?
3. What does the Qur’an teach about forgiveness?
4. Do you have assurance that God will accept you?
 - Muhammad had no assurance (Sura 46:8,9);
 - Abu Bakr had no assurance;
 - Allah only forgives whom he wants to forgive (Sura 2:284; 3:129 etc);
 - Allah sends astray whom he wants (see tracts on *The Straight Path, Sin, and Truth*);
 - Good deeds bring no assurance (Bukhari, Vol. 7, Hadith No. 577 and Vol. 8, Hadith No. 474).
5. May I tell you what the Bible says on these things?

God and Spirit

Muslims do not like to attribute any earthly characteristics to Allah. Thus, to say that Allah must act in a righteous manner is to limit Allah’s sovereignty. The God of the Bible, on the other hand, says that He only acts in a righteous manner, in love, truth, holiness, and justice.

God desires to know us and wants us to call Him ‘Father.’ He wants fellowship and goes to great lengths to have fellowship with us because He is love. This concept is completely foreign to a Muslim.

The Christian God is Spirit, infinite, uncreated, uncaused, eternal, omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. His nature is always and completely love, justice, holiness and mercy. He cannot be seen or comprehended by sinful man.

When differences emerge

When entering topics that have potential for argument, agree on the following rules.

1. Listen, without interruption, unless there is something that isn’t clearly understood. Ask genuine questions related to the topic under discussion.
2. Do not criticize each other despite differences.
3. Only agree with each other when you believe the point being made is true.
4. Discussions of this nature are often complex, so only deal with one topic at a time – write other topics or questions down to discuss later.
5. Summarize what you have learnt from each other at the end of the discussion.

Other Challenges

Logical: Westerners and many others do not follow the same reasoning patterns as Muslims. This is important to understand. Westerners follow logic laws: $a + b = c$, whereas Muslims usually follow associative laws. For example: Saudi Arabia is a Muslim country; you come from Saudi Arabia; you must be a Muslim. Or, Christianity is a Western religion; you are a Westerner; you must be a Christian.

This different way of thinking will cast many a spanner in your discussions with him, through no fault of his. Remember to keep praying and ask that the Lord will open the eyes of his heart.

Theological: Muslims do not accept that Jesus Christ is