

Chapter 19 **Witnessing to Muslims**

Bridging the Barriers

As a natural bridge forms the pathway between two land masses, it is our desire to form a bridge that Christians can use to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Muslim people. This chapter is meant to provide a method by which we may share the wonderful news of the gospel of Jesus Christ to Muslim people.

Acts 17:22-24

“Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription:

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD

Therefore, the one whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you:” NKJV

The Muslim people do revere and love the Jesus Christ of the Qur’an. They believe that they honor Him more than Christians because of the fact that they do not believe that He was crucified. They don’t feel that God would have subjected Him to the humiliation and pain! However, even the Qur’an addresses the fact that Jesus prophesied his death and resurrection. In fact, many of the references in the Qur’an speak of Him as being the Word, the Messiah, the one Nearest to God, and the Spirit of God. But even as the men of Areopagus worshipped the unknown God, many Muslim people

honor Jesus, yet their minds and hearts have been blinded from the truth of His mission.

Acts 17:27

“...so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.” NKJV

The bridge we need to apply in order to connect with the Muslim faith is the mighty name of Jesus Christ. The challenge is in trusting that the Holy Spirit will remove the blindness as we begin to speak about the things that we may readily agree upon. Most Muslims will agree with the statements that Jesus is the Messiah, as well as the Word of God. However, they are left with the conclusion that He was just a prophet!

Philippians 2:9-11

“Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” NKJV

The truth is that the name of Jesus Christ is the only name by which one may be saved! Paul, in the book of Acts, said that there is no other name by which we must be saved.

Acts 4:12

“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” NKJV

Josh McDowell, in his book “More Than a Carpenter,” wrote that there were only three options of who Jesus Christ could be: ‘either He is Lord, Liar, or a Lunatic.’ The truth is Jesus claimed that He was the Son of God, He was clear about His mission! He was the lamb that would take away the sins of the world with His sacrifice! The approach to take in witnessing to Muslims is very similar to the approach Jesus took with His disciples in Matthew 16:13-18.

He first asks them, *“Who do men say that I the Son of man am?”* He then asks them *“Who do you say that I am?”* Our question to the Muslim people is, “Who does the Qur’an say that Jesus Christ is? And who do you say that Jesus Christ is?” Our approach should be to have friendly dialogue about who Jesus Christ is. We should discuss Jesus from the Qur’an perspective as well as the perspective of individual we are speaking to, without shutting them down. This focuses the conversation on Jesus and allows the individual to really question their true beliefs and perspectives. This will allow the Holy Spirit to start working.

Matthew 16:16-18

“Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.” NKJV

Revelation is brought through the Lord, as Jesus revealed to Peter. The Jesus that the Muslim people worship without knowing will be revealed through our sharing and love .It is our earnest prayer that as you read this

chapter, you will gain reliance and trust when speaking the name of Jesus Christ. We pray that all men will be drawn to the knowledge of what He has done for each and everyone of us.

Let's pray:

Lord, we ask that as we begin this journey, You would give us Your heart for the Muslim people. We pray that we would walk in boldness knowing that in speaking the name of Jesus Christ, sinners are brought to repentance and signs and wonders are done in Your Name! Lord give us opportunities to speak Your Name to the Muslim people, Amen!

General Information

Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world today, nearly 1 out of every 5 people is a Muslim. According to Scholastic Update, Islam is the fastest growing religion in the United States. Of the eleven hundred mosques in America, 80% have been built in the last 12 years.

Since 1900, the Muslim religion has doubled every 24 years. From 1944 to 1979 the number doubled from 400 million to 800 million. It doubled again in 2003 to around 1.6 billion. Sadly, Christianity only doubles on average every 47 years based on this same study.

This article appeared in Time Magazine on April 16, 1979:

“Islam is the world’s youngest universal faith, and second largest, with 750 million Adherents, to about 985 million for Christianity. Across the eastern hemisphere but primarily in that strategic crescent that straddles the crossroads of three continents, Muslims are rediscovering their spiritual roots and reasserting the political power

of the Islamic way of life. Repelled by the bitter fruits of modernization and fired by a zealous pride in its ancient heritage, the Emma (world community) of Islam is stirring with revival.... The West can no longer afford to ignore or dismiss the living power of the Prophets message.”

Definitions

- Allah:** The word for God in Arabic.
- Arab:** A person whose native tongue is Arabic or who identifies with other Arabs of an ethnic group. Arab is defined independent of religious identity.
- Islam:** Submission to God or total commitment to the authority and power of God. It is the faith, submission, and practice of the Muslim people.
- Jihad:** Struggle or effort in the path of God. It can be used to describe a personal internal struggle, but it is usually used to describe a defensive “Just War” to protect or spread Islam. They call it “Holy War.”
- Muslim:** One who is submitted to God, one whose religion is Islam. Qur’an: Recitation in Arabic; they believe that this book contains a message from God recited by Muhammad and recorded by his followers.

Did you know that 6 out of every 7 Muslims are not Arab!

Religious Terminology Comparing Christianity and Islam

<u>Term</u>	<u>Islam</u>	<u>Christianity</u>
GOD	Similar to Christianity but emphasize on severity and power	Similar to Muslims but emphasizes personal revelation
GOD’S NATURE	Allah changes, changes in affections, Allah deceives.	Is eternal and changeless, loves indefinitely, cannot lie.
JESUS CHRIST	Prophet	Son of God, God in the flesh 2 nd person of the Trinity
BIBLE	Revelation from God, changed and corrupted	100% the Word of God, final authority.
TRINITY	God, Mary, Jesus	The Father, The Son (Jesus), The Holy Spirit. In one God three distinct persons.
FAITH	Object: God and Qur’an	Object: God and Jesus
SIN	Rebellion against God	Inherent in the nature of man, “there is none who does good”
SALVATION	Requirement: Faith and works Allah alone can save. No assurance.	Saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and His death, burial and resurrection. Salvation is a gift from God. Not a result of our good works or any human effort.
HEAVEN	Known as Paradise, strictly Muslims. Based on whether your good deeds outweigh the bad deeds.	Heaven is the eternal dwelling place of all believers in the Gospel of Christ.

A Method to Use in Bridging the Gap

As we discussed earlier, it is our goal to apply Matthew 16:13-18. We must first find out what the Qur’an has to say about Jesus Christ. Then, find out what the person that we are communicating with has to say about Jesus. The goal of this method is to keep the conversation to the name of Jesus,

discussing its use in the Qur'an, while showing them what the Holy Bible has to say.

While writing this material, I had the opportunity to put this method into action. Rather than getting defensive or trying to disprove Islam, what I found was that I was able to direct the conversation to what was important, the name of Jesus Christ! Keep in mind that it is our goal to create bridges, not destroy them. By attempting to attack Muhammad, or Allah, the Muslim's distaste for Christians only grows, creating walls and barriers. We trust that the Holy Spirit will do the real work and change their hearts as we simply speak of the Jesus Christ that is found in the Bible!

2 Corinthians 4:3-5

“But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.” NKJV

BEGIN BY ASKING THEM:

- 1) Isn't it true that the Qur'an says that Jesus is the Word of God?
- 2) Isn't it true that the Qur'an affirms that Jesus was born of a virgin birth?
- 3) Isn't it true that the Qur'an says that Jesus is the Messiah?
- 4) Doesn't the Qur'an indicate that Jesus was sinless?
- 5) Doesn't the Qur'an say that Jesus prophesied His death and His resurrection?
- 6) Doesn't the Qur'an indicate that Jesus is the Spirit of God?

Begin to explore what the Bible says about these issues, as well as what the Qur'an says. In John 14:6, the Word tells us that no one comes to the Father unless through Jesus Christ. The greatest bridge that we can build to a Muslim is built through Jesus Christ!

Romans 10:14-15

“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?” NKJV

Romans 10:17

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” NKJV

Faith comes by hearing. Let us trust that the Holy Spirit will do the work of opening eyes and ears as we are obedient to reveal Jesus Christ and His mission.

A DEEPER LOOK AT EACH QUESTION:

- 1) Isn't it true that the Qu'ran says that Jesus is the Word of God?**

QU'RAN REFERENCES:

Surah 4:171

“People of the Book, do not transgress the bounds of your religion. Speak nothing but the truth about God. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, no more than God's apostle and His Word which He cast to Mary”

Surah 3:45

“The angels said to Mary: “God bids you rejoice in a Word from Him. His name is Messiah, Jesus son of Mary.”

BIBLE REFERENCES:

John 1:1-5

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” NKJV

Hebrews 1:1-3

“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” NKJV

The Word is Jesus Christ; the eternal, divine expression of God.
Additional scriptures Genesis 1:1-3

The ancient Christian apologists John of Damascus and Timothy of Baghdad argued that the “Word of God” in the Qu’ran means that Jesus Christ is the eternal Word of God.

Muslims believe that God has no partners or equals. Nothing can, therefore, be eternal but God alone. But Muslims also believe the Word of God to be eternal. Therefore, the Word of God must be God. Jesus is called the Word of God in the Qu’ran. Therefore Jesus must be God!

2) Isn’t it true that the Qu’ran affirms that Jesus Christ was born of a Virgin birth?

QU’RAN REFERENCES:

Surah 3:47

“Lord,’ she said, ‘how can I bear a child when no man has touched me?’ ‘Even thus God creates whom He will”

Surah 19:20

“How shall I bear a child,’ she answered, ‘when I have neither been touched by any man nor ever been unchaste?”

BIBLE REFERENCES:

Matthew 1:22-23

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." NKJV

Isaiah 7:14-15

“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” NKJV

3) Isn't it true that the Qu'ran says that Jesus Christ is the Messiah?

QU'RAN REFERENCES:

Surah 3:45 *“His name is the Messiah”*

Surah 5:75 *“The Messiah, the son of Mary”*

BIBLE REFERENCES:

John 1:41-42

“He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.” NKJV

John 4:25-26

“The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ).“When He comes, He will tell us all things.” Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.” NKJV

Isaiah 53:11 - describes the sin bearing Messiah:

“He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.” NKJV

Additional references: Psalms 2:2, Daniel 9:25-26, Isaiah 9:6
“Messiah” is the Hebrew title for God’s anointed Savior.
According to the Bible, the word “Messiah” means Anointed
One, or the name given to the promised Deliverer of Israel,
Savior and Redeemer. The Qur’an uses the same name as the
Bible, “Messiah, to Describe Jesus.

4) Doesn’t the Qu’ran say that Jesus was sinless?

QU’RAN REFERENCE:

Ibn ‘Abbas (Common Law Tracts) Volume 9, Book 93,
Number 482

Abdullah bin, Amr Volume 9, Book 93, Number 485

Commentator, Al Razi says: “The name “Messiah” was given
to Jesus because He was kept clean of the taint of sin.”

Surah 19:30

*“He has exhorted me to honor my mother and has purged me of
vanity and wickedness.”*

Explain the context of some of the Quran quotes, such as
putting (Jesus) in parentheses after He or Him to not confuse
the readers.

BIBLE REFERENCES:

Hebrews 4:15

“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” NKJV

James 1:13-14

“Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.” NKJV

1 Peter 2:22

“Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth.” NKJV

5) Doesn’t the Qu’ran say that Jesus prophesied His death and resurrection?

Qu’ran References:

Surah 3:56

“God said: ‘Jesus, I am about to claim you back and lift you up to Me. I shall take you away from the unbelievers and exalt your followers above them until the Day of Resurrection”

Surah 19:34

“Blessed was I on the day I was born, and blessed I shall be on the day of my death and on the day I shall be raised to life.”

Bible References:

Mark 8:31-32

“And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.” NKJV

Matthew 17:22-23

“Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, 23 and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.” NKJV

Matthew 20:17-19

“Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again.”

1 Corinthians 15:14

“And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.” NKJV

1 Corinthians 15:17

“And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!” NKJV

6) Doesn't the Qu'ran say that Jesus Christ is the Spirit of God?

Qu'ran References:

Surah 4:171

“Christ Jesus the Son of Mary was an apostle of God, and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him.”

Surah 2:87

“We gave Jesus the son of Mary clear (signs) and strengthened him with the Holy Spirit.”

Surah 19:17

“Then we sent unto her (Mary) our Spirit.”

Surah 66:12

“We breathed into her some of our Spirit.”

BIBLE REFERENCES:

Romans 8:9-10

“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.” NKJV

John 14:26-27

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. Peace I leave with

you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”
NKJV

Acts 1:2

“until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,” NKJV

Luke 3:22

“And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.” NKJV

“My dear brother, you cannot be a true Muslim unless you love, respect and honor Jesus.” Shaikh Ahmad Kuftaro, Spiritual Leader of the Muslims of Syria

In conclusion, let us keep the focus of our witnessing to the name of Jesus Christ, realizing that it is the Holy Spirit’s work to convict and enlighten their heart to the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I remember a comment that a Muslim made to me as I spoke with him regarding what the Qu’ran says about Jesus. He said that “if Christians have the truth, why is it that none of them will discuss with me what they believe?” He then thanked me for spending the time to talk with him.

Again, it is our job to speak the Gospel, letting the Holy Spirit work in the hearts of those that hear. We only further ourselves from those that are lost when we attack their religion or become defensive.

In witnessing to Muslims, let the focus be Jesus. People are in need of the truth, they want it! Let's make sure that the fragrance of Christ we leave leads to a hunger for more knowledge; knowledge about the Jesus Christ that came living a sinless life. The Jesus Christ that chose to die upon that cross for anyone who calls upon Him as Savior!

2 Corinthians 2:14-16

“Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life.” NKJV

This chapter was meant to equip a person with basic strategies for witnessing to Muslims, should you desire a more in depth analysis of Understanding Muslims we recommend that you contact:

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