



Love your neighbor ...”  
– Jesus

# loving MUSLIMS

A small group Bible study on  
connecting with our neighbors

# A CHALLENGE TO LOVE

**Biblical Truth:** *Jesus commands His followers to share God’s love with all people. The Great Commission does not exclude anyone.*

## Background Passage:

**Luke 10:25-28 (NIV)** – *On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?” He answered, ““Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and “Love your neighbor as yourself.” “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”*

What seems like a simple commandment has been one of the hardest for Christ’s followers to obey.

## “Love your neighbor ...”

What seems like a simple commandment has been one of the hardest for Christ’s followers to obey. If Jesus had followed the command with “and your neighbors are your family, or your close friends, or even people like you,” the commandment would have been an easier one to follow. Instead Jesus told the teacher of the law that his neighbor could be a person of a different race or class or nationality. His neighbor might come from a people whom the Jews did not like. His neighbor could be a person who is hard to love. Still Jesus’ command was and is the same — “Love your neighbor.”



The command to “love your neighbor” is one of the most important that Jesus gives. It is integral to being a part of the Kingdom of God. There is no room for hatred in His Kingdom. Being a follower of Christ means loving God and loving the people he created.



## There is no room for hatred in His Kingdom.

As Islam grows — and in light of terrorist attacks done under the veil of Islam — Christians in America find themselves dealing with what it means to obey Christ's greatest commandment. Misconceptions and misunderstandings often stand in the way of Christians acting out this love and can hinder the gospel of Jesus Christ being received by Muslim people.

### Muslim Beliefs

A good place to begin any encounter with Muslims is developing an understanding of what they believe. Muslims approach Islam with immense reverence, so showing respect for their religion and having even the most basic knowledge of Islam will go a long way in opening doors to relationships with Muslims. With over 1.8 billion Muslims in the world and nearly 3.5 million in the United States, you are likely to be around Muslims at work, school or in your community. Your attitude toward them could be a determining factor in their openness to the Gospel.

\* The central message of Islam is that there is only one god — Allah — and Muhammad is his prophet. Islam teaches that Man is Allah's slave, and it is Man's duty to submit to Allah and obey his will. The rest of Islam's teachings are centered on these beliefs.

\* The prophet Muhammad was born in Arabia around 570 A.D. Muslims believe that the angel Gabriel appeared to Muhammad and told him to recite the words that Allah would give him. Over the course of his lifetime, Muhammad is said to have received several messages from Allah. The words he spoke — or rather Allah spoke through him — were collected to form what is now the Islamic holy book, the Qur'an (or Qur'an).

\* Muhammad spread the message of Islam throughout Arabia, challenging the polytheistic Arabian people to worship only one god — Allah. Islam rapidly spread throughout the area of the Middle East and North Africa.

\* Muslims believe that Allah is a holy and merciful god who will judge all people on the Day of Judgment to determine whether their good deeds outweigh their bad. Allah will then send them either to eternal paradise or to hell. Therefore, the manner in which they live their lives is very important as it determines their favor with Allah and their eternal destination.

Misconceptions and misunderstandings often stand in the way of Christians acting out His love and can hinder the Gospel of Jesus Christ being received by Muslim people.



Muslims treat the Qur'an, prayer and all aspects of their religion with the utmost respect ...

The basic guidelines that help a Muslim live a life that pleases Allah are called the Five Pillars of Islam.

# 5

**The Five Pillars are:**

- 1. Professing belief in only one god — Allah — and his prophet Muhammad (Shahada).** *There are many prophets in Islam — including Jesus — but Muhammad is the final prophet through whom the Qur'an was delivered.*
- 2. Praying five times a day (Salat).** *In many Muslim countries when the call to prayer sounds from the minarets, all must stop what they are doing and pray facing the direction of Mecca. Laws often force businesses and shops to close during these times.*
- 3. Fasting during the month of Ramadan (Sawm).** *Ramadan is the holiest month of Islam. Practices vary among Muslims as to how they observe it. The traditional observance is to fast during the day and celebrate after sundown. Some Muslims will drink water during the day, however others will spit so they do not even swallow their own saliva.*
- 4. Giving alms or money to the poor (Zakat).** *Many teachings of the Qur'an are admirable, and some such as this are even in line with Christian teachings.*
- 5. Making a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca (Hajj).** *If a Muslim is crippled or too old to make the journey to Mecca, they may send another person to go in their place. Non-Muslims are forbidden from entering the city of Mecca.*

The majority of Muslims strive to live a life pleasing to Allah. Their approach to Islam is one of reverence and, at times, fear. They treat the Qur'an, prayer and all aspects of their religion with the utmost respect and are often appalled by the nonchalance with which Westerners regard God.

Islam teaches that favor with Allah is based on a person's works. Many Muslims even claim they can't know the outcome of their life until Judgment Day — they can only hope they did enough to please Allah and enter paradise.



**For discussion:** "Allah" is the Arabic word for "god." Is Islam's Allah the same god as the God of the Bible? What are some differences in the ways Muslims view salvation compared to the Christian's view? Are Muslims more respectful of Islam than Christians are of Christianity?

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## What about jihad?

Jihad means “struggle”, and the belief manifests itself in different ways in Islam. The Greater Jihad is the individual Muslim’s personal struggle to submit his life to Allah - i.e. practicing beliefs, fasting, prayer, etc. (Qur’an — Sura 49:15). Greater Jihad encompasses not only this personal struggle but also the struggle to promote a society that honors Allah and follows Islamic law. The Lesser Jihad refers to the armed struggle to defend Islam — holy war (Qur’an — Suras 2:190, 9:1-15 ). While both the Greater and Lesser jihads are found in Islam, the vast majority of Muslims do not practice the Lesser Jihad.

## Perspective on growing up Muslim

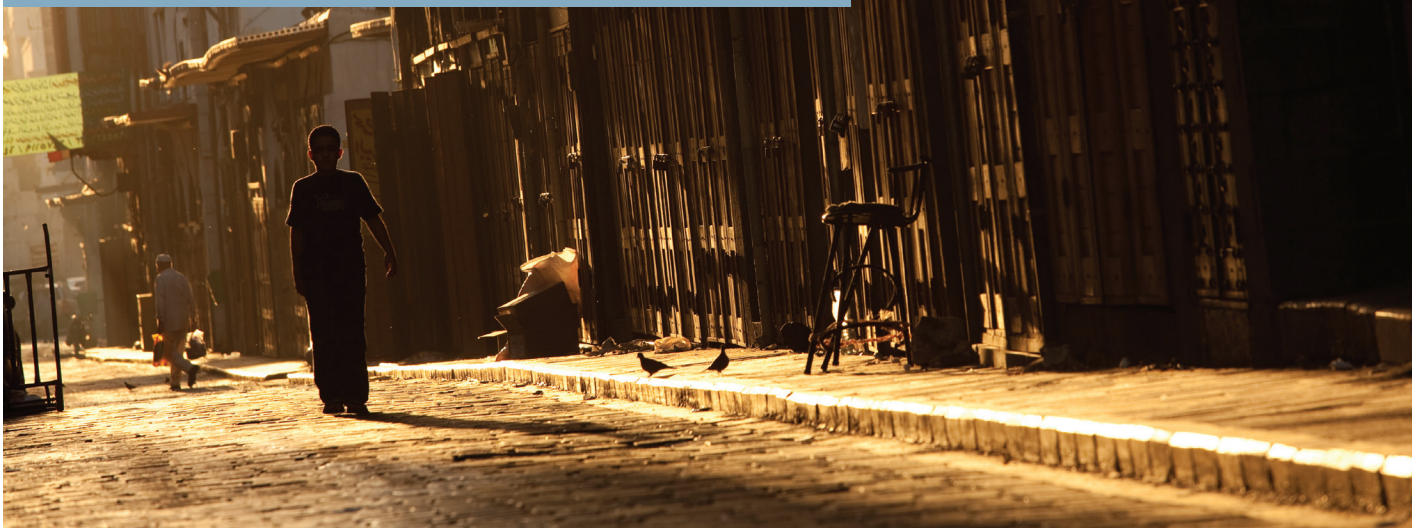
Mehmet, a Christian of Muslim background in Turkey shares, “I remember never wanting to upset Allah. As a child, I would go to mosque and was learning to pray in Arabic. I wanted to please Allah, but I was always afraid I was doing something wrong. One day I was walking home from school and stepped on a piece of paper. I looked down and saw it had Arabic writing on it. I had stepped on a piece of the Qur’an! Horrified I ran home to tell my father through my tears what I had done. My father looked at the paper and began to laugh. The paper was only Arabic cigarette paper.”

**\* Muslims believe that while Muhammad was Allah’s most important prophet, there were other prophets who taught Muslims how to live.** *They believe that Jesus and many Old Testament figures were also prophets and hold them in high regard. Islam, Judaism and Christianity are said to have all stemmed from Abraham.*

**\* The word “Muslim” means “submitted one.”** *Muslims believe they must submit themselves to the will of Allah.*

**\* There are many different branches of Islam — Sunni, Shiite and Sufi are among the major ones.** *While they have varying beliefs, they all hold to Islam’s basic creed — Allah is the only god, and Muhammad is his prophet.*

**\* Only 20 percent of Muslims across the world are of Arab descent.**



## Attitudes Toward Muslims

Sadly, after the events of 9/11, anti-Islamic sentiment has become a socially acceptable form of bigotry. A recent Gallup poll says that almost half of all Americans admit to feeling some prejudice toward Muslims. And although only a small minority of the U.S. population is Muslim, claims of discrimination against Muslims made up a quarter of all discrimination claims filed last year.

Leviticus 19:33-34 (NLT) says, *“Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.”*

Terrorist attacks are often committed in the name of Islam. In places like London, England and even parts of America, debates arise about the validity of Sharia law (religious laws governing the lives of Muslims) in the judicial system. Minarets dot skylines in American towns and cities as the construction of mosques increases. Women wearing headscarves and burkas are public reminders of the growing presence of Islam.

*As Islam grows in America, what should our response as Christians be to Muslims?*

## Illuminating Our Misconceptions

Imagine you are a young African-American child living in the Deep South in the early 20th century. One night you are awakened by shouts and see your father being dragged away by men in white robes by the light of a cross burning in your front yard. You know those men are in the Ku Klux Klan, and you have heard the Klan claims to be a Christian group. From that day onward, you are wary of all Christians because you believe they are the ones who terrorized your family.

We know the Ku Klux Klan does not represent Christianity, nor do their teachings in any way fit with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However, the deplorable actions of a few men can inflict lifelong emotional and spiritual scars on their victims. It is understandable that someone whose only experience with such “Christians” could believe that all Christians behave this way.

In the same way, the vast majority of Muslims would not agree with the actions of terrorists and would find it offensive to be lumped into the same category as groups like Al Qaeda or the Taliban. Just like you and I, they are sick of bloodshed and want nothing more than to work, support their families and live in peace.

A recent Gallup poll says that almost half of all Americans admit to feeling some prejudice towards Muslims.



**For discussion:** In what ways have Christians been poorly portrayed throughout history? Compare those to the way Muslims are often portrayed in news reports today.

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We should not view Muslims as our enemies; however, even if they were, would our call to love them – as followers of Jesus Christ – be any different?

– Tim, a worker among Muslim people in Central Asia



## Conclusion

The teacher of the law pressed Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” He knew the familiar commands to love God and love your neighbor — those were commandments the Israelites had heard for centuries (Deut. 6:5, Lev. 19:18). However, that day Jesus challenged the teacher’s idea of the kind of person his neighbor could be. Today we are perhaps challenged even more than ever by Jesus’ concept of “neighbor.” The global community is expanding, and we are discovering that our neighbors may be people who are very different from us. As we encounter Muslims in our daily lives, may Jesus’ words resound in our hearts —

“ Love your neighbor ...

– Jesus

**Matthew 5:43-48 (NIV)** — “You have heard it said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, ‘Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even the pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Muslims must feel that we really care for them as persons ...

# REACHING MUSLIMS

**Biblical Truth:** *How can Muslims believe in the One of whom they have not heard?*

**Background Passages:**

**Romans 10:12-15 (NIV)**

*“For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ How then can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news!’”*

**1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)**

*“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”*

**The First Step**

“Muslims must feel that we really care for them as persons, that we love them and have a genuine concern for them (not merely for their souls). In nearly every case of the conversion of a Muslim, that man or woman was first influenced by Christian love.”

–Charles R. Marsh, *Encountering the World of Islam* p. 305.

The call to love Muslims is clear. Jesus commands His followers to share His Good News with all people. The challenge is to know how best to communicate God’s love and message. We must first understand what separates Muslim individuals from Jesus Christ. Some Muslims may struggle with particular beliefs and others may confuse Western culture and morals with Christianity, while some may not have ever heard the Gospel message. Whatever the case may be, sharing the message of Jesus Christ with a Muslim requires love, relationships and prayer.

**What’s the Difference?**

There is a surprising amount of theological common ground between a follower of Christ and a Muslim. However, there are some major differences between the two religions. These differences may initially appear straightforward, but a deeper understanding of them provides insight into the Muslim mindset on the Christian faith.





## The Nature of God's Love

Followers of Islam and Christianity both claim to worship a loving God, but the nature of that love and the manner in which it is revealed is vastly different in the two religions. For Christians the ultimate revelation of God's love is seen in Jesus Christ — his life, death and resurrection. For Muslims that revelation is not a person but their holy book, the Qur'an. The Qur'an provides Muslims with Allah's perfect law. Islam teaches that Allah graciously spoke the words of the Qur'an through the prophet Muhammad and thus provided mankind with a means to please Allah — following his perfect law.

This is significant because, in the Christian faith, man's sinfulness is so great and God is so holy that only by the saving work of Jesus Christ can we find salvation. In Islam sin exists, but it does not demand the need for a Savior. Instead man can gain salvation through good works and following the law presented in the Qur'an. Muslims accept they have sin in their lives; however, they do not realize the weight of that sin.



A CHALLENGE TO REACH OUT



## Jesus and Muhammad

Jesus is the central figure of our faith. He is God incarnate who came to live a perfect life on earth as a man, suffered a physical death on the cross and was raised from the dead. By his death and resurrection, Christians are able to enter into relationship with a holy God.

Muhammad does not serve the same role in Islam as Jesus does in Christianity. Muhammad is not the savior of Muslims. He is Allah's final prophet and through him Allah gave his final and supreme revelation — the Qur'an.

## Deity of Christ

Muhammad was not the only prophet in Islam. Other prophets include biblical figures such as Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus. Jesus is held in high regard in the Muslim faith. Muslims even accept the virgin birth (Qur'an — Suras 3:47; 19:20-22; 21:19; 66:12), His miracles (Sura 2:253), His sinless nature (Sura 19:19) and His ascension into heaven (Sura 3:55). However, they do not believe that he is God.

The deity of Christ is a major stumbling block to Muslims. A common misconception among Muslims is that Christians believe Jesus Christ's being the Son of God means God came down and had physical relations with Mary. For Muslims, this is an affront to the holiness of God.

A simple explanation of what Christians actually believe about Jesus can help clear up misunderstandings Muslims may have. When shared in a respectful way in the context of a relationship, these truths can help to move a Muslim one step closer to faith in Christ.

## Trinity

A central teaching of Islam is the belief in only one god. When Muhammad first spread the message of Islam across Arabia he encountered people who worshipped many gods.

Many Muslims assume that the Christian doctrine of the Trinity means that Christians are polytheists – believing in three gods. It is important whenever speaking with a Muslim to stress the unity of God. He is one God revealing Himself in three different persons. The Trinity is a difficult doctrine even for Christian theologians to understand, but the key is to help Muslims comprehend that the God of Christianity is one God.

A useful tool in helping Muslims better understand the Trinity is to present them with their own belief about the nature of the Qur'an. Muslims believe the Qur'an was uncreated and has existed in the mind of Allah for all eternity. The concept that both Allah and the Qur'an are two separate, eternal and uncreated things is just as difficult to understand as God presenting Himself in three distinct persons. Remember that a conversation such as this must be based in love and most likely in the context of an already strong friendship.

## The Bible in Islam

Muslims believe that the Qur'an is Allah's supreme and final revelation. They will often argue that the Bible has been corrupted or changed and will not read it because they think it has been altered from the original text, making it invalid.

In order to reveal the truth of the Bible to Muslims, a useful (though seemingly unlikely) starting point is the Qur'an itself. Muhammad believed that the Torah and the New Testament were trustworthy sources of spiritual truth. The Qur'an makes this clear in Sura 5:68. A Muslim friend may argue that while the Bible may have once been trustworthy, it is now corrupted. Asking when exactly the Bible was corrupted forces them to think about the nature of Muhammad and the Qur'an. If the Bible were corrupted before the Qur'an was written around the seventh century A.D., then Muhammad and the Qur'an are wrong. Conversely, there are many existing texts of the Bible that were around before Muhammad ever lived.

While the Qur'an can be used to point Muslims toward the Gospel, it is not a substitute for the Bible. Encouraging Muslim friends to read and engage the Scriptures themselves will open the door for the Holy Spirit to speak to them through God's word. *For the Gospel in Arabic, visit: [injl.net](http://injl.net)*


**For discussion:** How would you explain the doctrine of the Trinity to a Muslim? How can you deal with the Bible having different translations and authors in conversation with a Muslim? Why is it important that Jesus actually is the Son of God?

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Muslims will often argue that the Bible has been corrupted or changed. They will not read it because they think it has been altered from the original text, making it invalid.



1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (NIV) says,  
"If I speak in tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing."

## Reaching Muslims

Love is essential to any effective ministry. When working with Muslims, it is very important to build relationships on this foundation. Showing Muslims they are loved — not merely "courted" in order to be converted, but truly loved — will allow for deep, Gospel-driven conversations to occur. It may involve stepping out of our comfort zones, but as followers of Jesus Christ we are commanded to share His love with the world. And it can be a great way to make a lifelong friend!

Getting to know people from other cultural and faith backgrounds helps us understand not just how we are different but also how we are the same – sharing the challenges, fears and joys that are common in life. By engaging with Muslims in genuine love and respect, we acknowledge to them and to ourselves that God does not play favorites. His grace is truly amazing, intended for us all.

**"The biggest obstacle between Muslims and Jesus is Christianity."**

– Diane, a worker in Central Asia

## Working Through Their Misconceptions

While the life of a true Christian is not an obstacle to Muslims seeking Jesus, the manner in which "Christian" culture is often perceived is a major deterrent. These misconceptions must be worked through before a Muslim will be open to the idea of faith in Christ.

American and Western culture are sadly mistaken for Christianity throughout most of the Muslim world. Some Muslims assume all Americans are Christians and, therefore, that everything American culture produces reflects Christian principles. We know that our faith teaches humility, modesty and integrity, but our culture does little to support these values. Many Muslims have never met a true follower of Christ and what they know about "Christianity" comes more from American movies and television than from Christians themselves.

*"Many Muslims [around the world] lump Christianity and Western culture together. Many of them have satellites and can watch American movies, listen to American music and are often exposed to pornography. So it is no surprise they often think Christians are sex maniacs."*

– Tim, a worker in a Muslim country

The best way to overcome these misconceptions is by showing Muslims the life of a true follower of Christ within the context of a loving friendship.



## Common Misconceptions

### All Americans are Christians.

*This is a dangerous notion not only because American culture is obviously a poor representative of Jesus Christ but also because it can lead to Muslims thinking they cannot become Christians because they are not Americans.*

### Christians have loose morals and live a very immodest lifestyle.

*The way many Christians in America often dress — especially women — can be very offensive to Muslims. It is essential for the sensuality of American culture to be separated from those who follow Christ.*

### Christians are polytheists who believe in three gods.

*The doctrine of the Trinity is a very confusing one and must be patiently worked through with Muslims.*

### Christians are not reverent toward their faith or the Bible.

*Muslims approach Islam with a deep sense of reverence, especially in regard to the Qur'an. They would never set it on the floor or place other books on top of it. They are appalled at the nonchalance with which some Christians treat the Bible, as if it were just another book.*

### Because Christians are not seen praying five times a day (like Muslims do), they must not pray at all.

*Prayer is an important part of the Christian faith not only as a means of spiritual formation and communing with God but also as a witness to others.*

The best way to overcome these misconceptions is by showing Muslims the life of a true follower of Christ within the context of a loving friendship. Many have never met a Christian and will be surprised at the lifestyle of a person who is seeking fervently after God.

## Cultural Insights

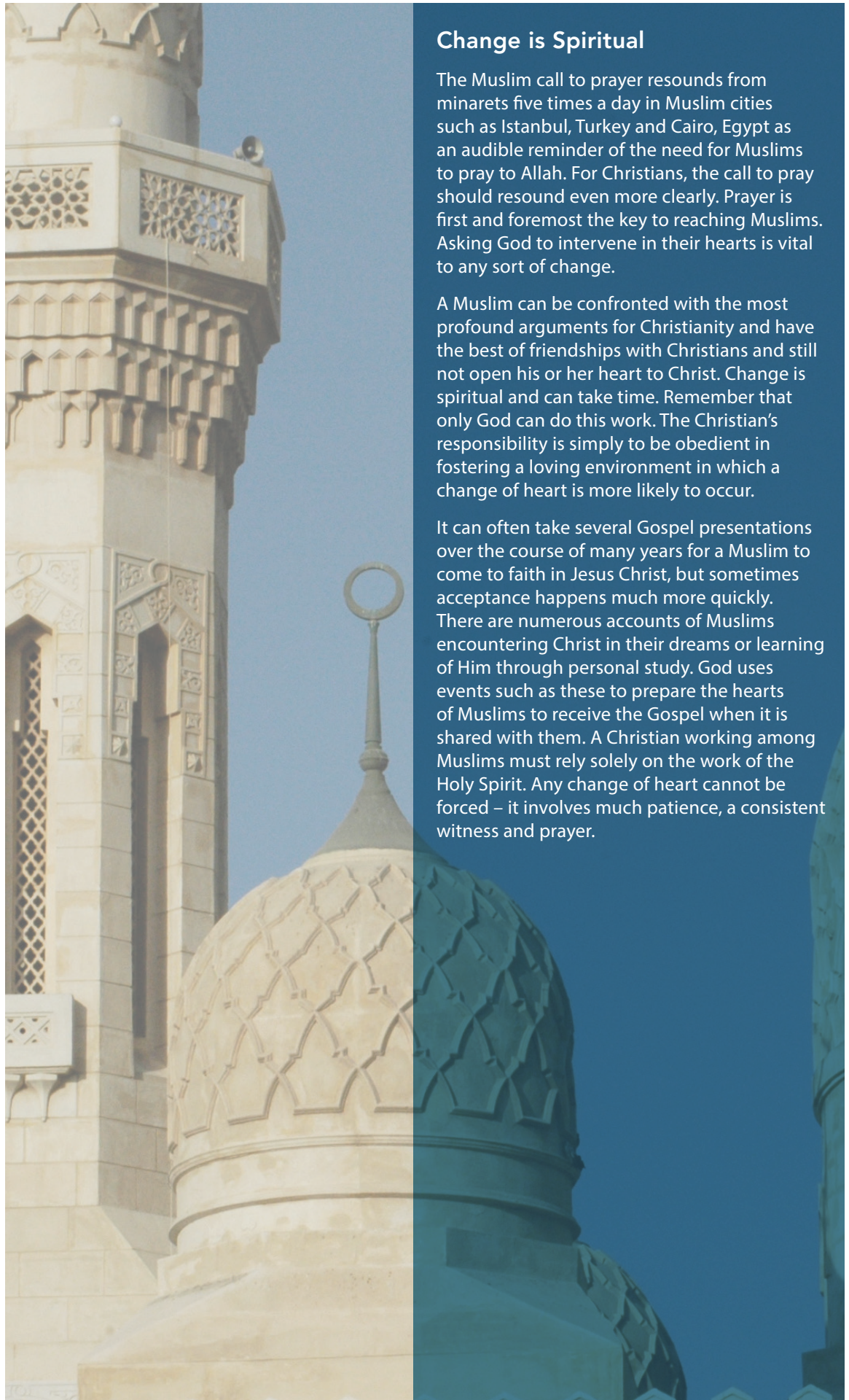
- \* Hospitality is an important part of Muslim culture. Make hospitality a priority with Muslim friends by inviting them into your home.
- \* For Muslims, the cleanliness of a home reflects the condition of their heart. A clean kitchen goes a long way with a Muslim guest.
- \* Indoor pets are not common in most Muslim countries, so it is best to leave them outside when a Muslim guest is visiting.
- \* Pork is forbidden in Islam. Out of respect, do not serve or eat bacon or any other pork products around your Muslim friends.
- \* Serve tea or coffee before and after the meal, and make a point to not rush conversation. The conversation should be the central focus of their visit, not the meal.

Make hospitality a priority with Muslim friends by inviting them into your home.



A CHALLENGE TO REACH OUT

**A Christian working among Muslims must rely solely on the work of the Holy Spirit.**



## Change is Spiritual

The Muslim call to prayer resounds from minarets five times a day in Muslim cities such as Istanbul, Turkey and Cairo, Egypt as an audible reminder of the need for Muslims to pray to Allah. For Christians, the call to pray should resound even more clearly. Prayer is first and foremost the key to reaching Muslims. Asking God to intervene in their hearts is vital to any sort of change.

A Muslim can be confronted with the most profound arguments for Christianity and have the best of friendships with Christians and still not open his or her heart to Christ. Change is spiritual and can take time. Remember that only God can do this work. The Christian's responsibility is simply to be obedient in fostering a loving environment in which a change of heart is more likely to occur.

It can often take several Gospel presentations over the course of many years for a Muslim to come to faith in Jesus Christ, but sometimes acceptance happens much more quickly. There are numerous accounts of Muslims encountering Christ in their dreams or learning of Him through personal study. God uses events such as these to prepare the hearts of Muslims to receive the Gospel when it is shared with them. A Christian working among Muslims must rely solely on the work of the Holy Spirit. Any change of heart cannot be forced – it involves much patience, a consistent witness and prayer.





A CHALLENGE TO REACH OUT

Christ taught that loving God and loving our neighbors are the greatest commandments — all others hang on those two.

### **Conclusion**

Paul's teaching to the Corinthians is a poignant reminder of the importance of love. Knowledge of Christian and Islamic doctrines, a clear Gospel presentation and stellar arguments are no better than clanging cymbals if they are done without love. Christ taught that loving God and loving our neighbors are the greatest commandments — all others hang on those two. When it comes to sharing with Muslim friends, relationships filled with God's love are the foundations upon which all other work is built.

## For Reference

*Today, more than 1.8 billion people are Muslim. Nearly 3.5 million live in the United States. Only 20 percent of Muslims across the world are of Arab descent.*

### Five Pillars of Islam

*Shahada* – Professing the belief in only one god – Allah – and his prophet Muhammad

*Salat* – Praying five times a day

*Sawm* – Fasting during the month of Ramadan

*Zakat* – Giving alms or money to the poor

*Hajj* – Making a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca

### Allah

Allah is the sole god of Islam. Allah is the Arabic word for “god”.

### Muslims

Followers of Islam are called Muslims. The word Muslim literally means “submitted one.”

### Muhammad

Muhammad is the founder of Islam. Muhammad is believed to be Allah’s final and most important prophet. Muhammad was born in what is today Saudi Arabia in 570 A.D.

### The Qur’an

The Qur’an is Islam’s holy book. Allah spoke the words of the Qur’an through the prophet Muhammad. The words of the Qur’an are seen to be uncreated in the mind of Allah for eternity past.

### Jihad

Jihad means “struggle” and refers to the difficulty of living a life that pleases Allah according to the teachings of the Qur’an. Holy war is the lesser side of this struggle. The greater war is against the evil in one’s own heart.

### Mecca

Mecca is the holiest site in Islam. Muhammad was born in Mecca, and it was here that he received the revelation that became the Qur’an. Muslims must travel to Mecca once in their lifetimes (hajj). Muslims face towards Mecca when they pray. Today Mecca is a city in Saudi Arabia.

### Prophets

Muslims believe that while Muhammad was Allah’s most important prophet, there were other prophets who taught Muslims how to live. They believe that Jesus and many Old Testament figures were also prophets and are held in high regard. Islam, Judaism and Christianity are said to have all stemmed from Abraham.

### Branches

There are many different branches of Islam — *Sunni*, *Shiite* and *Sufi* are among the major ones. While they have varying beliefs, they all hold to Islam’s basic creed — Allah is the only god, and Muhammad is his prophet.



## Discussion Notes

**“Allah” is the Arabic word for “god”. Is Islam’s Allah the same god as the God of the Bible? What are some differences in the ways Muslims view salvation compared to the Christian’s view? Are Muslims more respectful of Islam than Christians are of Christianity?**

*Allowing for discussion, consider:*

–The God of the Bible and the god of Islam are not the same. It is true that Muslims accept much of the Old Testament and claim to worship the same God. However, as Christians we must remember that Jesus Christ is the ultimate revelation of God, so while there is much Muslims and Christians can agree on, without the biblical understanding of Christ any similarities between Allah and God ultimately fail.

–Muslims view salvation coming through a life that is based on the law given to them through the Qur’an. There is no assurance of salvation until Allah’s day of judgment. For Christians, salvation is assured only through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

–Generate open discussion about the degree of reverence between Christians and Muslims. While deep respect for God should be integral to Christianity, Christians have a relational aspect with God which Muslims lack.

**In what ways have Christians been poorly portrayed throughout history? Compare those to the way Muslims are often portrayed in news reports today.**

*Allowing for discussion, consider:*

–Some obvious examples include The Crusades, the Inquisition, the selling of Indulgences, persecution or forced conversions by Christian authorities throughout the Middle Ages, terrorist acts by the Irish Republican Army, the Salem Witch Trials, the bombing of abortion clinics in the U.S., anti-gay violence and other hate crimes, etc.

–It is clear that the above examples of terrorism committed in the name of Christianity bear no resemblance to the Biblical person or teachings of Jesus Christ and do *not* reflect the beliefs of most Christians. Similarly, it is important to guard against assuming that modern terrorist acts committed in the name of Islam represent all Muslims.

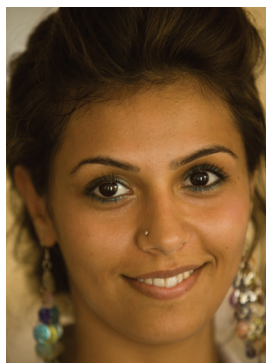
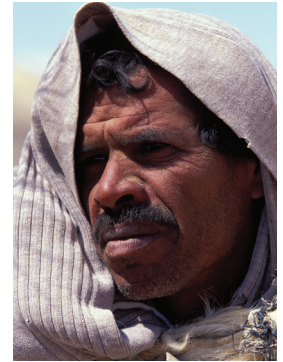
**How would you explain the doctrine of the Trinity to a Muslim? How can you deal with the Bible having different translations and authors in conversation with a Muslim? Why is it important that Jesus actually was the Son of God?**

*Allowing for discussion, consider:*

–The doctrine of the Trinity is a complex one. When conversing with a Muslim it is important to clearly state the Trinity is *not* three separate gods, neither is it simply God revealing Himself in different ways at different times. The Trinity is one God in three distinct persons.

–The Bible is the inspired Word of God. God is the author, but he commissioned humans to write it. The Bible has different translations but was originally written in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic. Jesus Christ is the focus of God’s divine revelation we know as the Scriptures.

–Jesus Christ as the Son of God is essential to the Christian faith and is the belief upon which all others are based. Jesus Christ was both fully man and fully God.



For more resources on reaching Muslims with the love of Christ see:

[imb.org](http://imb.org)

*Encountering the World of Islam: A Ministry of the Caleb Project*, ed. Keith E. Swartley

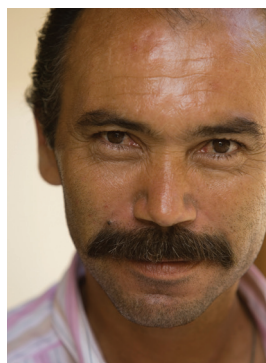
*Breaking the Islam Code*: J.D. Greear

*Muslims Next Door: Uncovering Myths and Creating Friendships*: Shirin Taber

*The Unseen Face of Islam*: Bill Musk

*The Gospel for Muslims*: Thabiti Anyabwile

*Voices Behind the Veil*, ed. Ergun Mehmet Caner



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