

HOW TO WITNESS TO MUSLIMS

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1. INTRODUCTION

2. HOW DO WE DO IT?

2.1. Goals

- 1) Share the Gospel clearly
- 2) Support the Gospel with relevant explanation and a godly life

2.2 Danger of an unbalanced approach: Apologetics debate vs. Friendship

2.3 Confidence: You have the Holy Spirit in you, your knowledge of the Bible, your knowledge of how God has worked in your life. Your job is to present the Gospel, explain it, and invite them to receive Christ. It is their responsibility to accept or refuse. There are good answers to every challenge they will raise, even if you don't know it at the moment. God is preparing some of them to respond and many are disillusioned with Islam.

3. PRACTICAL POINTS

- 3.1 Evaluating the Situation: Public or Private? Debate or Discussion/Dialogue?
- 3.2 Evaluating the Person: Defensive? Hostile? Friendly but on guard? Interested?
- 3.3 Finding the Way in: Apologetics issues, Political issues, Storytelling, Personal Testimony, Prayer.
- 3.4 Basic Evangelistic Presentations

Think of having a basic Gospel outline to which you can add stories as needed. You will be acting in two roles: friend and teacher, though they may not treat you with the respect due a formal teacher. You are seeking to win their heart and inform their mind.

A basic principle to have well in mind is the Bible's teaching that a substitute is needed for the forgiveness of sin.

The Torah- the entire middle book, Leviticus, is dedicated to this principle, as well as large parts of Exodus (Passover, giving of the Law, tabernacle), and Deuteronomy (Law restated). The heart and soul of Moses' law and Israel's life and identity as a nation was the sacrificial system centered on the priesthood and the tabernacle/temple. Moses ordained the priesthood and Aaron was the first high priest (Exodus 29, 40; Lev. 8). Moses consecrated the Tabernacle (Lev. 9). All OT prophets called the Israelites back to the sincere observance of this law. All forgiveness of sin was done through its means. ***The Qur'an completely omits these emphases.***

Key verses:

On the necessity of blood sacrifice to cover sin- Lev.17:11, 14

On the universality of sin: Genesis 6:5; Psalm 51:5; Eccl. 7:20;
Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:23

On the Messiah being the guilt offering for mankind: Isaiah 53, the
Gospels- this is the whole point of all four of them.

Here are some starting points that many have found useful. All of them use a
basic story common to the Bible and the Qur'an from which the conversation
is directed to show the Islamic view's inadequacy and the need for a Saviour
from sin.

1. Using Genesis 1-3:

A. Man's greatest enemy- Death

Can I ask you a question, Who is man's greatest enemy? (*After
they say America, or such like, guide them first to say,
Satan*)

Satan is one of the most powerful enemies of mankind- you are
right about that- he tempts all of us to sin. But there is
something even more powerful- that no one escapes
from, that none of us have power over. Can you guess?
(*Death*)

When did death start? (*after Adam's sin*)

What did Adam do? (*Ate forbidden fruit, S. 2:35-37*)

What happened then? (*Sent down to earth from Paradise*)

So Adam disobeyed God's command and was punished by
being sent to earth? (*Yes*)

Did Adam die immediately after disobeying God? (*No*)

But he was subject to death after being sent to earth, and all
mankind has experienced death since, right? (*yes*)

Also, was Adam sent away from God's presence in Paradise?
(*Yes*)

In addition to calling it death when a person physically dies, the
Bible calls it death when a person is separated from
God- this is spiritual death (Prodigal Son- Luke 15:24,
32; Rom. 6:21, 8:6; Eph. 2:1). And the ultimate spiritual
death is being sent to hell (The second death- Rev. 20:6)

The Bible presents both of these kinds of death being the result
of sin, both Adam's and ours (Rom. 5:12)

Which is the greater enemy of these two- physical death, or
spiritual death? (*Spiritual death, because it lasts
forever*)

How can we then be healed of this death that our sins bring on
us? (*The Bible's plan of a substitute sacrifice*)

B. Sin's Consequences:

Where was Adam when he sinned? *Paradise* (in heaven in Muslim view)

Where did he have to go? *Earth*

Would he have died if he had not sinned and stayed in Paradise? *No*

Did he die after coming to the earth? *Yes*

Then we can say that death was a consequence of his sin. *Yes. (This is what the Bible says- The wages of sin is death. Rom 6:23; 'The person who sins will die' Ezekiel 18:20)*

This means that Adam's sin was more than just a mistake, it had big consequences. In fact, doesn't the Qur'an even say "If Allah were to seize mankind for their wrongdoing, he would not leave on it a single moving creature..." (S. 16:61)

Also, this shows us that God does not allow sin in Paradise, does He? *No*

Then how can we be sure that our sins will not keep us from entering Paradise, if even Adam was thrown out for his sin? Are we better than Adam? *(Even Muhammad was not sure of his ultimate fate: S. 46:9 "nor do I know what will be done with me or with you")*

Follow this up with traditional presentations and verses to present the Bible's answer.

2. Using Gen 22: the offering of Isaac (uses Abraham offering his son)

God's Sacrifice for Sin/ The Lamb of God

Relate the story of Abraham taking his son at God's command (don't mention the name of the son- Muslims think it was Ishmael) to offer him up as a sacrifice. Emphasize that God provided the substitute, that the substitute was a perfect ram (an adult male sheep), one with no defects.

At this point the Muslim may object that the ram was not dying for Abraham's sins, and that in Islam, this sacrifice has no such meaning. Agree that you understand Islam teaches this, but then go on to mention that-

In the Bible, God often had Prophets do strange actions that had deeper spiritual meaning, for instance, that God had Moses
-use spotless lambs for the Passover before fleeing Egypt (Ex. 12:5),
-institute a system of sacrifice at the heart of the law he was given- one that called for spotless lambs to be sacrificed daily (Ex. 29:39), for occasional sins (Lev. 5:1-6) and once a year to bear the sins of the nation (Lev. 23)

Also, that God had John the Baptist call Jesus, 'the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world' John 1:31

Could this all be coincidence? Or is God telling us something deep about how

He forgives sin?

3. Using Isaiah 53: The Messiah's death as a guilt offering (Uses the concept of the Messiah)

Do you believe that Jesus is the Messiah? (*Yes*)

Do you know what that title means? (*They may say anoints In relation to anointing the sick*)

It means the one who is most anointed. Do you know who was anointed in the Old Testament? *Kings, Priests, and Prophets. They were anointed with oil as a symbol that God was empowering them with His Spirit to fulfil their special role. As the **most** anointed, the Bible presents Jesus as the ultimate King, Priest, and Prophet.*

Messiah in the Bible also means 'the one who anoints with the Holy Spirit' (John 1:33). *Not only is He anointed in some holy way with God's Spirit, He also has the authority to anoint others with that Spirit. (Clarify that the angel Gabriel is not called Holy Spirit in the Bible. HS refers to God's Himself. Also, Jesus used other titles to describe His identity as the Messiah: Christ, Son of Man, Son of God, Servant. Muslims will also know that in the Qur'an Jesus is also called a Word from God and the Spirit of God- S. 4:171.*

Do you know what the Bible says the Messiah's most important job was? *700 years before Jesus was born in the flesh, God told a prophet these words: Isaiah 53:1-12. The Messiah would die for the sins of mankind (53:6,10-12).*

All of these will be met at some point with the Muslim claim that repentance is enough, that Allah just forgives. You need to show them that the Bible says repentance is not enough. Something deeper and more lasting/permanent needs to happen.

A new birth: John 3 Tell the story of Nicodemus

A substitute: Mark 10:45 Jesus' words, "The Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

To drive it home:

How can a person be sure, if even Muhammad was not sure (S. 46:9)?

Both the OT and NT teach that a perfect substitute is needed (Is. 53; Hebrews 7:26-28).

None of us live up to the standards we know are right.

Jesus pointed out that even our motives condemn us (Mt. 5:28- lust is adultery in God's eyes)

There is a universal principle, *in order to help another, you must burden yourself.* Any of us can help another with weakness, sickness, ignorance, or learning a new skill, but we can't bear another person's sin- its guilt or shame. Our books agree that no ordinary person can relieve another person of their burden of sin (S. 35:18; Gal. 6:5) If God did not provide a substitute to do this, then you are saying that He must take on the guilt and shame that your sins cause. You are casting your

shame on Allah. Does the Qur'an say that he wants to carry your dishonour? No, but the Bible says that God's eternal Son volunteered to do just that. (Heb. 12:12; John 3:16). Only Jesus can bear your sins as a human because He was fully human; all of the sins of mankind, because He was also fully God in human flesh.

Here are some other points to emphasize of what God promises in the Gospel:¹

From dying to being raised
From a place that is far from God to being indwelt by God's Spirit
From imprisoned in the flesh (which defiles us with its liquids) to being gifted in the Spirit
From spiritually poor to having riches in God
From failure and falling short to being made complete in Christ
From being illegitimate children to being a child of God
From ignorant to being taught of God
From blind to seeing
From darkness to being enlightened by God
From stumbling to being strengthened and encouraged
From accused to being exonerated/represented
From cursed to being blessed
From tiredness to being renewed
From guilty to being redeemed

4. CONCLUSIONS

Flexibility in conversation is the key. There are many ways of making the central facts of the Gospel relevant and understandable to your. Try to develop a store of stories, memorized Bible verses, and illustrations that you can use as the occasion demands. Seek to be as engaging, winsome, entertaining, and sincere in your conversation as possible. Remember that the way you speak about Christ is as important as what you get to say.

5. USEFUL BOOKS AND RESOURCES

Colin Chapman 1995
Norman Geisler and Abdul Saleeb 2002
Roland Muller *Honor* 2000
Roland Muller *Tools for Muslim Evangelism* 2000
Bill Musk 1995
Raphael Patai 1973

RESOURCES FOR OUTREACH TO MUSLIMS

Suppliers of Scriptures in foreign languages:

Bible Society
Stonehill Green, Westlea

International Bible Society
PO Box 45, Borden

¹ Muller, Roland, *Honor & Shame: Unlocking the Door*, Xlibris Corporation, 2000.66.

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Suppliers of books and tracts for outreach to Muslims, including ones in foreign languages, and books for information on Islam and missions to Muslims:

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WEBSITES

<http://www.debate.org.uk> Website dedicated to issues of debate between Muslims and Christians. This has the latest apologetics arguments being used to defend and promote Christianity. Jay Smith's articles are featured but there are contributions from many others.

<http://www.domini.org/malaga/home.htm> Malaga Media Center's Website (email: malaga@domini.org)

<http://www.spotlights.org> Keith Small's outreach website to Muslims. Articles on the Bible, the Trinity, the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ, Mutual misunderstandings between Muslims and Christians

<http://www.the-good-way.com> Call of Hope's website. Has many articles and materials for outreach to Muslims

<http://www.answering-islam.org> The most comprehensive site for answering Muslims' questions and challenges to Christianity.

<http://www.arabicbible.com> Excellent Arabic/English site

For general inquiries concerning Islam, outreach to Muslims in Britain, advice concerning literature, issues in outreach, hard questions from Muslims, or church based ministries to Muslims, please feel free to contact:

Chapman, Colin, *Cross & Crescent*, Leicester, UK: InterVarsity Press, 1995.

Geisler, Norman and Saleeb, Abdul, *Answering Islam*, Revised edition edn., Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 2002.

Muller, Roland, *Honor & Shame: Unlocking the Door*, Xlibris Corporation, 2000.

---, *Honor & Shame: Unlocking the Door*, Xlibris Corporation, 2000.

---, *Tools for Muslim Evangelism*, Belleville, Ontario, Canada: Essence Publishing, 2000.

Musk, Bill, *Touching the Soul of Islam*, Crowborough, UK: MARC, 1995.

Patai, Raphael, *The Arab Mind*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973.