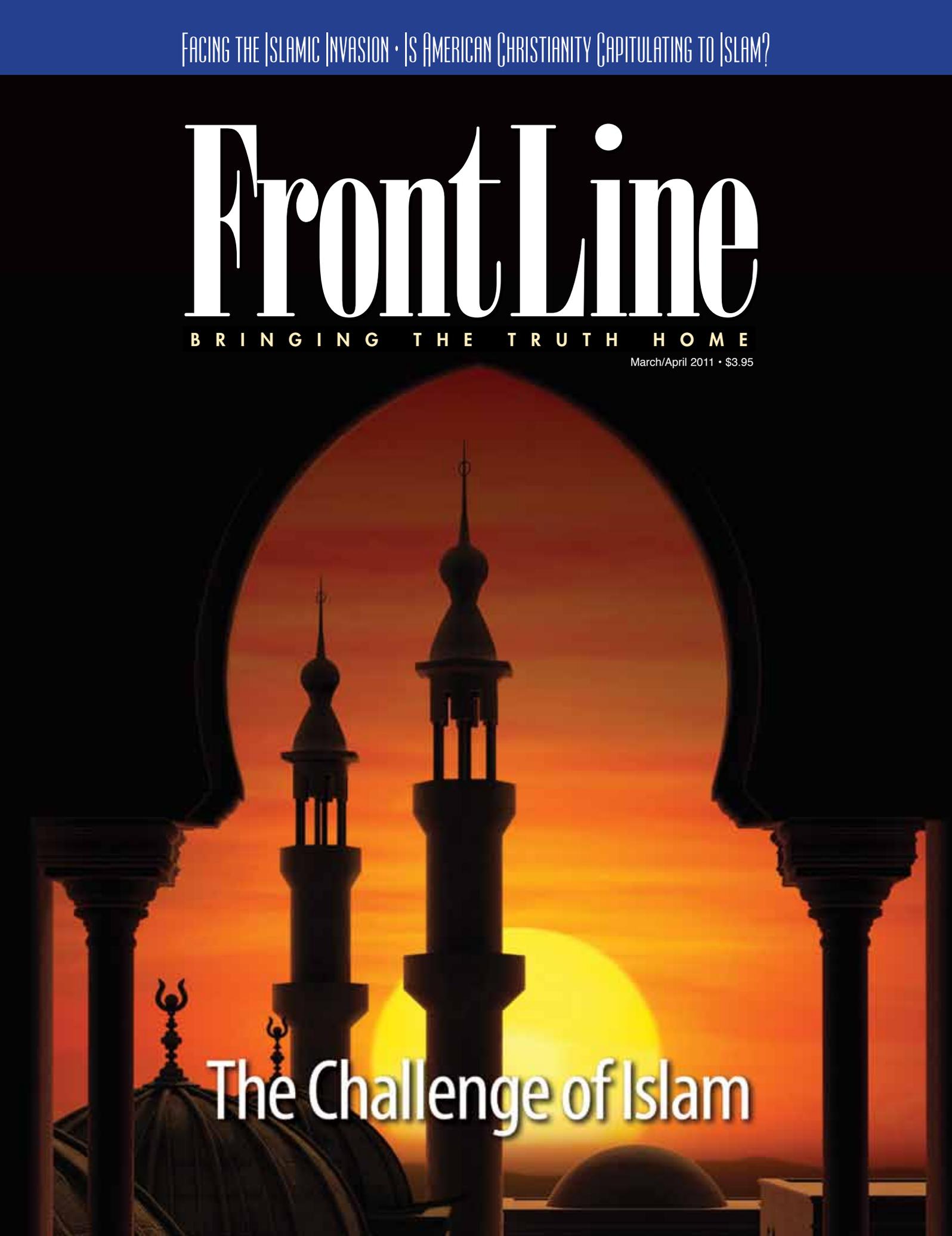


FACING THE ISLAMIC INVASION • IS AMERICAN CHRISTIANITY CAPITULATING TO ISLAM?

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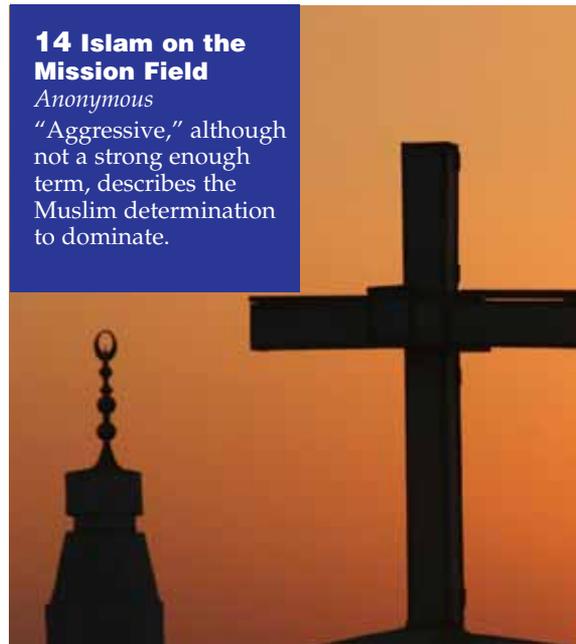
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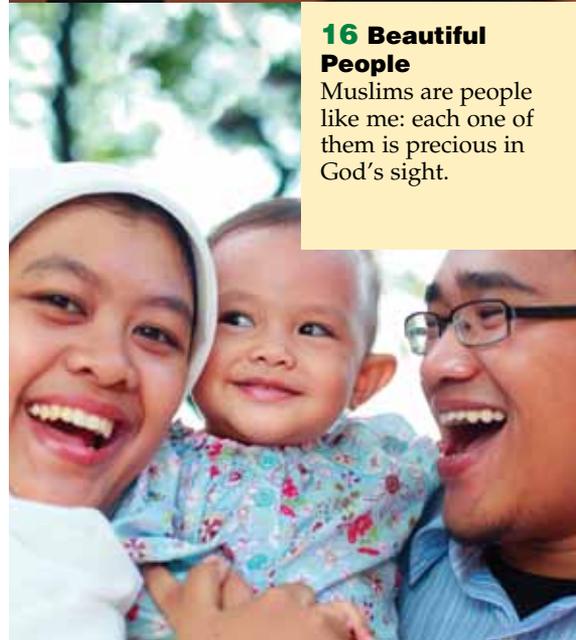
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We want to hear from you!

Let us know what you like or don't like about *FrontLine*. Address your comments to **Managing Editor, *FrontLine*** 2801 Wade Hampton Blvd, Suite 115-165, Taylors, SC 29687 or send them by e-mail to info@fbfi.org.

You may request that your letter not be published or that your name be withheld, but anonymous letters will not be accepted.



I would like to point out a minor but significant error in . . . Dr. Warren Vanhetloo's otherwise excellent [Cogitations] article from *FrontLine* May/June 2010. Pardon my late response, but our magazines are delayed a long time coming to Suriname, South America!

He states, . . . "Muslims, of course, strongly deny the deity and virgin birth of the Son of God." It is absolutely true that the idea of the deity of Jesus Christ (the prophet Isa) is an anathema to the Muslim. It is *not* true that they deny the virgin birth. There is reference to the virgin Mary (Maryam) and the virgin birth in the Qur'an, Sura 3:45-47 and Sura 19:18-22. Just search the internet under "virgin birth and Qur'an" and you can find more information and explanation from various Muslim sources.

It really makes no difference to the point of the article. I mention this fact because those who oppose the gospel will focus on any minor misinformation to discard the whole article.

*Bob Patton
Missionary to Suriname*

We do wish to express our sincere appreciation for the *FrontLine* magazine that is regularly delivered to us as a gift from Faith Baptist Church, Taylors, SC. We read that magazine from cover to cover and keep each one on file for future reference. We have often gone back to certain articles for help in helping others. It is a great tool in the ministry and one that is also a personal blessing to us!

*Linda Craven
Missionary with GFA to
Taupo, New Zealand*

Indeed, it is amazing to read *FrontLine* magazine time again and observe the great work of God through His appointed servants who are well grounded and committed to this noble task of carrying out the great commission, beginning with children's ministry.

I value so much the initiative and burden God has [laid] upon you and everyone involved. . . .

Also, please tell the folks at *FrontLine* Clubs that I would like very much to start a *FrontLine* Club or join as an extension in Zambia.

*Pastor Pius Musonda Chanda
Faith Baptist Church Kwacha
Zambia, Central Africa*

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The Christian and the Coming Caliphate

Craig Hartman

Recent events in the Middle East have brought to our attention once again the central role that events in that region play on the world stage. In addition, we were given a crash course in just how quickly things can change there and how precious the freedoms we have in the United States are.

However, we were also reminded of the rising concerns over radical Islamic control of the region and the unique relationship our country has had with Egypt. Much may change between the time of this writing and when readers will get this issue of the magazine, but there are certain historical and geographical truths that attach to these events that are pertinent in considering the potential results as well as the proper response for Christians.

The place to begin is to point out that Egypt as we know it today is far different toward Israel

and the West than it was for centuries, including the first eighty years of the twentieth century. Though it is now considered moderate, it was, for most of its history, not so. To most Americans, Egypt is the country of Mubarak and Sadat (the previous president), but prior to that it was the country of Gamal Abdel Nasser, and even Sadat was not necessarily as passive as some think.

Nasser began his leadership of Egypt shortly after its revolution in the early 1950s and was the leader of that country through years of its aggression toward Israel, including the Six-Day War of 1967. Many believe it was Nasser who originally energized the idea of a Palestinian state comprising the West Bank and Gaza. Nasser

“unofficially” let Yasser Arafat take charge of the Palestinian movement.

Anwar Sadat took over as president of Egypt after Nasser’s death in 1970, and, though he probably was not as aggressive as Nasser, he was in fact president of Egypt when it joined in the attack on Israel in the Yom Kippur War of 1973. Subsequent to the war, he moved in a different direction and, ultimately, signed the Camp David Accords in 1979, becoming the first Arab leader to officially recognize Israel as a sovereign nation. However, he gave his life for this action when he was assassinated on October 7, 1981 (while attending a commemoration of the 1973 attack on Israel).

Sitting next to Anwar Sadat when he was killed was Hosni Mubarak, the recently ousted president of Egypt, who was Sadat’s vice president. Mubarak took the reigns of leadership upon Sadat’s death and led Egypt until February of this year.

Mubarak was not without fault, and he did stand in the way of expanding personal freedoms in Egypt for quite some time. But in a world of sin and a region rife with the constant tension that sadly in some ways defines the Middle East, he was a surprisingly reliable ally to the United States, even in the War on Terror, and he was a dependable peace partner to Israel. This does not excuse his wrongful acts but, from a political perspective, the situation with Egypt could have been far worse over the past thirty years.

It is generally believed that the group responsible for the assassination of Sadat was an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood, a group getting a great deal of attention in the news recently,

is an organization that is approximately eighty years old and whose primary purpose and desire is to see Islam established worldwide under a caliphate or universal Islamic kingdom-state with centralized religious leadership. While it is not technically considered a terrorist organization by the US government, this group has launched Hamas and al-Qaeda and is responsible for many of the terrorist activities worldwide, though they have been careful to distance themselves from direct connection to these events. Sadat had become an enemy to the Brotherhood because of his secular views and his agreement with Israel. Both of these elements have an impact on what is occurring in Egypt now.

The Brotherhood is hoping to achieve its desires in a two-step process. First, they must regain control of the governments of all lands that were under Muslim control in the past. Next, they seek to expand Islam worldwide, removing all national boundaries so that the caliphate becomes a united theocracy. They long again for the early days of Islam as it was under Muhammad and will use any means to get there and, of course, they seek the destruction of Israel as an important part of the plan.

Key among the lands that were once under Islamic rule are the countries in the Middle East that are currently experiencing upheaval. Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, and Jordan all sit near the center of the Islamic universe and have all seen demonstrations and sudden changes in their governments before the eyes of the world. Iran has already had its revolution, and Libya and Sudan would be easily swept up into a new caliphate. Syria is a partner to Iran, and Saudi Arabia would fall quickly if things escalated

So what is the responsibility of the believer in the midst of these events?

Continued on page 39



Twentieth Anniversary

Facing the Islamic Invasion by Monthir Abdullatif

(Originally published in *FrontLine* September/October 1999.)

“MY DREAM is that the USA will become an Islamic nation by the year 2000.” These words, spoken just a few years ago by the vice president of the Islamic College in Chicago, express the feeling of the majority of Muslims around the world. Islamic publications worldwide are full of excitement over the achievements of Islamic organizations in the West. The New Testament church must take heed to Islam’s advances, regain lost territory (souls), and bring Muslims to Jesus. The church of Jesus Christ needs to awaken to Islam’s growth in America and the reasons for that growth. At the dedication ceremony of the Islamic Center in Stockholm in 1983, the speaker said, “In the next fifty years we will capture the western world for Islam. We have the men to do it, we have the money to do it, and, above all, we are already doing it.” These are not just empty words. Muslims are taking an aggressive role in propagating their religion in America. With almost unlimited funding from Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries, Muslims are actively engaged in organized programs aimed at improving their image and at converting both black and white Americans.

In the last decade or so, the USA has experienced an explosion of Muslim immigrants, students, and visitors. With the increase in numbers we see an increase in Islamic activities and programs. There is hardly a major city in North America that does not have Islamic centers, supermarkets, restaurants, and mosques. Muslims are also getting into the media. There are many Muslim publications—books, magazines, and newspapers. Muslim TV and radio programs air in major cities from coast to coast. It is estimated that there are six to ten million Muslims in America. And it is estimated that hundreds of Americans are converting to Islam every year, with many coming from Christian and Jewish backgrounds. Why is this happening? Where has the church failed?

What Are the Muslims Doing?

For the past several years Muslim leaders have gathered together to strategize on the Islamization of America. They have formed nationwide networks to connect the scattered mosques and give Islam a stronger voice in America. They have accessed American colleges through Muslim student associations. These associations not only provide a strong sense of community for Muslim students but also seek to convert Westerners and teach them the ways of Islam. There are at least three hundred of these groups, and the number is growing every year.

The governments of Islamic countries are also offering millions of

dollars’ worth of grants to universities to help improve the image of Islam in the US. One such grant was given by Saudi Arabia to Harvard Law School to develop a Center for Islamic Law. Hiring Muslim professors is a part of that contract.

Every year new mosques are being built. In America there are now approximately 1500 mosques, with several hundred Islamic training centers attached to them for education, community support, legal representation, political involvement, and training in the propagation of Islam.

An entire Muslim community has been built in New Mexico. Dar Al-Islam advertises its boarding school as a place to protect children from the immorality, violence, and drugs rampant in public schools.

Islam is spreading far more quickly in American prisons than most Americans can even imagine. In one prison three Protestant chaplains were replaced by one Muslim chaplain.

Many Muslim men are deliberately marrying non-Muslim American women. Not a few of these women are churchgoers. After the wedding, the young wife is often pressured to adopt Muslim practices. It is not unusual for her to be coerced to cut her ties with Christian friends. When children are born, the husband usually insists that they be raised as Muslims, in compliance with Islamic law.

Recently the United States Army selected and commissioned Captain Abdur Rashid Muhammad as its first Muslim chaplain. The reason? There are approximately 10,000 Muslims in the US Armed Forces. Muslim representatives have also expressed a desire to provide Islamic awareness seminars to non-Muslim soldiers and to military organizations. These seminars actually are opportunities for Muslims to spread their religion, a practice consistent with the stated goals of Muslims.

The political arena is another major focus for Muslims. In many communities, leading Muslims seek to be on first-name basis with city officials. Some join commissions and community programs, attempting to influence and to convince their communities that their presence is an asset. Nationwide organizations, such as the American Muslim Council, have placed the infiltration and influencing of Washington, DC, at the top of their list of priorities.

Perhaps unknowingly, non-Muslim Americans seem to be aiding the Muslim cause. Increasingly the American media are painting a positive picture of Islam. Communities that welcome the building of mosques receive glowing headlines in local papers. In such articles, Islam is often openly praised while Christianity is criticized.



Remembrances

Muslims are using their American freedom to advance their cause, which they have the right to do. But such freedom is completely unavailable to Christians in Muslim countries. While recognizing that Muslims, like followers of other religions, must be allowed to exercise this freedom, we must actively inform our political leaders about human-rights abuses in Muslim countries. We must demand that Muslim countries give the same freedoms to non-Muslims that Americans show toward Muslims.

Christian Attitudes

Jesus understood His times. He was not ignorant of the corruption, hypocrisy, and deception of the Pharisees and other Jewish leaders. He also knew the sin and darkness of the people He met every day. Yet His attitude was that of compassion because they "fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matt. 9:36).

Following Jesus' example, we must first realize, of course, that Muslims are lost. We need to understand the deception of Islam, the incorrectness of the Muslim view of God, and the dangers of the Muslim political agenda. Yet we need to have the compassion of Jesus toward these people as we recognize their need to know the good news of God's love and salvation. We must learn to love and accept them without accepting their beliefs.

On the Day of Pentecost people from many lands, including Libya, Turkey, Egypt, and other Middle Eastern nations, were present. They were in Jerusalem by God's providence to hear the gospel and carry the good news back to their nations. Today each American city is a modern Jerusalem. We must see the influx of Muslims to America as both a challenge and an opportunity to proclaim the gospel to them and through them to the entire Muslim world.

After I arrived in the US and settled in Detroit, the Lord put a great zeal and burden in my heart to reach the Muslims. I found that there was no Fundamental Baptist work among American Muslims. These people needed somebody to teach them; the Bible says, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14). The Lord called me to this ministry to reach my native people because I know their culture, religion, and language. I decided to put all my efforts toward winning Muslims to Christ.

Now many Muslims from different Islamic countries have come to faith in Jesus Christ through the Light of Life Ministry. This ministry captures every opportunity to bring God's love to the Muslims in America. We reach the Muslim in many ways: through a radio program, door-to-door

evangelism, Bible distribution, correspondence courses, home Bible study, hospitality, and a cassette ministry.

The Light of Life Ministry is the only Fundamental Baptist ministry work among the Muslims in the US. We need the Baptist churches to open their doors so that we may present our ministry to their people. We need to raise our support as soon as possible because the time is very short. We need to establish a radio program in many large cities in America. We need to have a TV program to reach the Muslims. We need to spread the Word of God to every Muslim in America, and we need to purchase a large quantity of Bibles every month. These things will not happen without the help of Fundamental Baptist churches standing behind us.

At the First Fundamental Bible Baptist church among the Muslims in Detroit, we have begun to make new disciples so that they will be able to reach their people. The Lord has also given us the opportunity to conduct seminars in many Fundamental Baptist churches in America. We are able to provide your church with different tools in the Arabic and English languages for the ministry to Muslims.

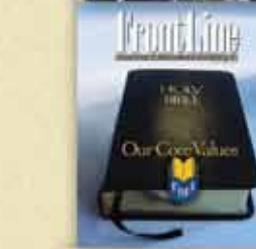
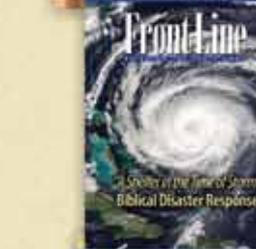
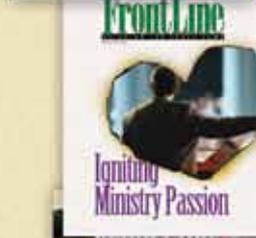
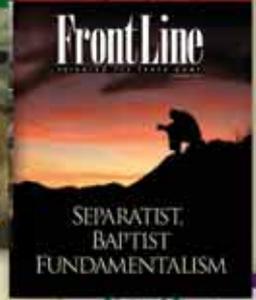
What Should Christians Do?

Islam's challenge to Christianity is becoming urgent, but we must remember that "the LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Ps. 110:1). Thus we are confident with John that "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4).

Each individual must ask himself, "Can God use me in missionary work?" If you cannot enter a foreign mission field because God has not prepared you or called you for such work, then please think of how you can feed those here at home who hunger to hear the Word of God. Muslims need to know that Jesus is the Light of this world. They need to know Him as their Savior.

Four thousand years ago, Abraham cried out to God, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" (Gen. 17:18). Today the four million Muslims in our country still wait for Abraham's heir, Jesus Christ. Ask the Lord to give you a burden to care for the lost souls of Islam. Four thousand years of waiting is long enough.

Evangelist Monthir Abdullatif is a home missionary to Muslims with Light of Life Ministry, PO Box 283, Hazel Park, MI 48030 (www.lightoflifeonline.org).



Is American Christianity Capitulating to Islam?



Since 9/11 there have been over 20,000 terrorist attacks around the world.¹ In addition, many hundreds of attacks have been interdicted in the planning phase or were found and cleared after being emplaced but before they could be activated. The number of Christians in Iraq has decreased from over 1.5 million before the 1991 Iraq war to less than 400,000 today, and the number is rapidly decreasing.² Why? Is there a common denominator? Yes, Islam itself and Shari'ah Law.

What Is Islam?

Contrary to what we hear in the news and most of what is defended by politicians and religious leaders, Islam is not primarily a religion. Yes, there is a part of Islam that should be defined as a religion. However, it is estimated that only fifteen percent of Islam's principle writings relate to the religious aspects of Islam or man's relationship to Allah, while eighty-five percent relate to man's political and interpersonal relations with other men (Muslims and non-Muslims). Those writings include the following:

- *Qur'an*—direct uncreated revelation
- *Tafsir*—commentary on the Qur'an
- *Sirah Rasiil Allah*—usual habits and practices of Muhammad or the biography of the Messenger
- *Hadith*—narration on the words and deeds of Muhammad
- *Shari'ah jurisprudence*—law of all Islamic lands
- *Shari'ah policy*—government policy in accordance

with the goals and objectives of Shari'ah that in its widest sense applies to all government policies

A common proverb among the many ethnic communities of the Middle East, Asia, North Africa, and the entire world of Islam provides insight into this phenomenon:

- Me against my brother.
- Me and my brother against my family.
- Me and my family against the clan.
- Me and my clan against the tribe.
- Me and my tribe against the nation.
- Me and my sect against the hypocrite and the apostate.
- Me and the *Ummah* against America, the West, and all the infidels.

The *Ummah* is the global community of Muslims, regardless of where they live. For a Muslim, the concept of community first relates to Islam. That is, a Muslim's first allegiance is to Islam and the *Ummah*. This means that for a Muslim, allegiance to Islam comes before allegiance to the country in which he lives, unless the country is an Islamic country governed by Shari'ah Law. Thus as a matter of definition, we must understand that:

- Islam is not just a religion, but a "complete way of life governed by Islamic Law (Shari'ah)" and
- Islam is a political, economic, military, social, cultural, family, and religious system where theology is subordinate to the requirement to adhere to the Shari'ah.

The significance of this is captured in the constitutions of many of the Muslim majority countries. Within the first few phrases of these constitutions (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Yemen, Iraq, and Afghanistan) there are phrases such as, “Islam is the official religion of the State, and it is a basic source of legislation,” and, “No law can be passed that contradicts the undisputed rules of Islam,”³ or “Islamic Shari’ah is the source of all legislation.”⁴ From the perspective of Islamic constitutional law, the inclusion of these statements at the very beginning of these documents cements the primacy of settled Islamic Shari’ah Law over all other articles of the constitution. Thus, when we read these documents it is prudent to add the phrase “as defined in and not in contradiction to Shari’ah Law” to the end of each subsequent sentence. What is of great significance in this discussion is that the US government led in the writing and approved the constitutions of Iraq and Afghanistan.⁵

During the writing and subsequent approval process of the constitutions for Iraq and Afghanistan, the US established Shari’ah as the law of the land for these countries. This legal structure includes a unique and very different set of definitions for human rights. The US Bill of Rights is entirely unacceptable for a Muslim as a matter of legal and doctrinal precept within Islam. At the core, the US Bill of Rights and the UN Declaration of Human Rights are fundamentally incompatible with Muslim philosophy. In 1985 this conclusion was formally presented to the UN by Sa’id Raja’i-Khorassani, the permanent delegate to the United Nations from the Islamic Republic of Iran. He declared that, according to Amir Taheri, “The very concept of human rights was ‘a Judeo-Christian invention’ and inadmissible in Islam.”⁶ The reason? The Bible is the source text for the 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights, and, according to Islam, the Bible is a corrupted text that has been completely abrogated by the Qur’an.

Who Is Muhammad?

Another common theme we hear is that Muhammad was primarily a religious leader. However, a brief look at his biography reveals a more significant responsibility. Muhammad’s life was divided into two distinct periods and sets of activities: the pre-*hijra* (emigration) years in Mecca (from AD 570 to 622) and the post-*hijra* years in Medina (from 622 until 632). The capstone event in Muhammad’s life was the *hajj*, or his pilgrimage to Mecca (AD 631). During the Meccan period Muhammad struggled for acceptance. During the Medinan period, Muhammad personally led twenty-seven raids and authorized thirty-eight other major battles, many lesser raids, assassinations, and executions.

Why is this bit of ancient history of importance today? For a Muslim, the perfect example is Muhammad in all of his words, actions, and deeds. While Muhammad is not worshiped, he is to be obeyed:

O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger,

and those charged with authority among you. If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if ye do believe in Allah and the Last Day: That is best, and most suitable for final determination.⁷

For a Muslim, strict obedience to the Qur’an, the *Tafsir*, the *Sirah Rasūl Allāh*, and the *Hadith* means to, as literally as possible, live after the example of Muhammad, down to the smallest details, and this dictates the Conventions of War⁸ in Islam, which are vastly different from what we know as the Geneva Conventions.⁹ An understanding of this reality casts a different light on the current events in the Islamic world. Those actions, which seem so foreign to twenty-first-century Westerners, are normal for a Muslim who follows Muhammad faithfully.

What Is the Islamic Strategy? How Is Islam Organized?

Fundamental to understanding Islam is the concept of the *Ummah*. From a Muslim perspective every human being is a Muslim at birth and thus a member of the *Ummah*, even though the person may not realize this. Thus, in Islamic terms, the unaware “reverts” to Islam when he converts to Islam.

In the United States there are hundreds of Muslim organizations focused on permanently changing America into a country ruled by Islamic Shari’ah. One example of this stated objective is outlined in the Islamic Circle of North America’s (ICNA)¹⁰ “member handbook,”¹¹ published in April 2010. ICNA is now openly calling for a Worldwide Caliphate—the imposition of Shari’ah Law on not only America but the entire world. The handbook clearly spells out the association’s ultimate goal—establishment of Islam as the sole basis of global society and governance. The group has specifically set its sights on America. In conjunction with ICNA, the Pakistani Minister of State Ayatullah Durrani has stated the desire to see the Caliph (Islam’s ultimate ruler who will oversee worldwide political, military, and spiritual affairs leading to the forceful world conversion to Islamic Law) to be consecrated at none other than Ground Zero. The Ground Zero mosque, if built, will be the headquarters for the Cordoba Initiative.¹²

Why the *Cordoba* Initiative? Because for Muslims, Cordoba, Spain, represents a high point and a low point in Islamic history. In AD 712 Muslims conquered Cordoba and built what would become the third largest mosque in the world where there had been a church. In 1236 King Ferdinand III reconquered Cordoba, and the mosque was then converted into a cathedral. For Muslims Cordoba is a rallying point in their process of retaking the world for Islam and Muhammad. Placing a mosque at Ground Zero is a means to affirm their triumph over America, the infidel.

The mosque is the focal point of all things Islamic. Based on Islamic doctrine and history, the mosque may be the diplomatic center, political center, financial center, military center and armory, community center, and educational or propagation center for each community of Muslims. Each Muslim community has responsibility to engage in *Dawa*,¹³ the propagation of Islam in order to

bring the whole world under the authority and governance of Islam. This objective is captured in the following Muslim Brotherhood statements.

- “It is the nature of Islam to dominate, not to be dominated, to impose its law on all nations and to extend its power to the entire planet.”¹⁴
- The Creed of the Muslim Brotherhood: “Allah is our goal; the Messenger is our guide: the Qur’an is our law; Jihad is our means; and martyrdom in the way of Allah is our inspiration.”
- The Key Pillars of the Muslim Brotherhood are, “1) The introduction of the Islamic Shari’ah as the basis controlling the affairs of state and society. 2) Work to achieve unification among the Islamic countries and states, mainly among the Arab states, and liberating them from foreign imperialism.”
- The Objective of the Muslim Brotherhood in the US is, “The *Ikhwan* [Muslim brotherhood] must understand that their work in America is a kind of grand jihad in eliminating and destroying the Western Civilization from within and ‘sabotaging’ its miserable house by their hands and the hands of the believers so that it is eliminated and God’s religion is made victorious over all other religions.”¹⁵

*The Project*¹⁶ and the *Explanatory Memorandum on the General Strategic Goal for the Group in North America*¹⁷ provide a clear picture of the extensive nature of the Islamic network in the United States and the finer points of their strategy.

Globally, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC)¹⁸ acts as Islamic equivalent of the United Nations. The fifty-seven states that belong to the OIC along with the members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)¹⁹ (with over 120 members, of which fifty-six are also members of the OIC) act as a bloc in the UN and its Commissions to enforce Muslim sensitivities. An example of the power of this bloc was demonstrated in September 2010 when Canada’s quest for a rotating seat on the UN Security Council was denied in the UN General Assembly because of Canada’s continued support of Israel.²⁰ The OIC led the charge with many members of the NAM providing the needed margin. The OIC and the Muslim Brotherhood are inseparable.

One of the more significant purposes of the OIC is to function as “the collective voice of the Muslim world and . . . to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world.”²¹ In additional OIC postings it becomes clear that this includes Muslims who live in non-Muslim majority nations, such as the United States. Americans are thus faced with a conflict as it relates to our willingness to determine whether we really believe Article VI of the Constitution:

This Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof; and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every state shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.

The question we must ask relates to which law is to be the law of this land? Is it the US Constitution or Shari’ah Law? You may have heard the term “Creeping Shari’ah.” Among the more recent examples of this process is the example of the employees of the Payne County Bank in Oklahoma being required by the Federal Reserve to remove buttons that say “Merry Christmas, God with Us” and the bank being required to remove the daily Bible verse because of Islamic sensitivities.²² Creeping Shari’ah is the means to accomplish the objectives identified previously.

What Should Our Response Be?

Muslims are busily at work to bring the US under the authority of Islam to include the imposition of Shari’ah Law as the Law of the Land. The Muslim community has a creed, a defined set of principles, a plan of action, and a methodology; more importantly, they are energized and are being successful.

What about the Christian community and, in particular, Fundamental Baptists? What are the consequences for individual Christians, local church pastors, and local churches? Is there reason to be fearful? Yes, if we do not take to heart the principles of Acts 1:8. Additionally, to infuse this argument with a bit of strategic wisdom, we must decide where we stand in this spiritual and cultural battle:

If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.²³

There are two principle reasons as to why Christianity, individual Christians, pastors, and local churches are capitulating to Islam. First, there is a refusal to get to know the tenets of the enemy at the original source level and, second, there is a practical lack of confidence in the power the Lord has given us to be successful in this spiritual battle.

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¹ <http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/Pages/TheList.htm>; <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>; <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/news/1993321/posts>; <https://wits.nctc.gov/FederalDiscoverWITS/index.do?N=0>

² <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christians.on.verge.of.extinction.in.iraq.muslim.leader.warns/27025.htm>; <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/dec/23/iraq-christian-exodus-christmas>; <http://barnabasfund.org/US/Our-work/Our-current-projects/BF-Project-Countries/Iraq.html>

³ http://www.uniraq.org/documents/iraqi_constitution.pdf

⁴ <http://www.al-bab.com/yemen/gov/con94.htm>

⁵ <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=27115>, et. al.

⁶ Robert Spenser, "Khomeini in Dearborn," *FrontPageMagazine.com*, 17 November 2004, at URL: <http://97.74.65.51/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=10538>.

⁷ Qur'an 4:59.

⁸ <http://www.mail-archive.com/osint@yahoogroups.com/msg35859.html>

⁹ <http://www.brooksidepress.org/Products/OperationalMedicine/DATA/operationalmed/Manuals/SeaBee/Fieldcombatopssection/LOACGenevaConventions.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www.icna.org/>

¹¹ <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/475.pdf>

¹² <http://www.cordobainitiative.org/>

¹³ See *Methodology of Dawa* by Shammim A. Siddiqi for additional details (<http://www.dawahinamericas.com/bookspdf/MethodologyofDawah.pdf>).

¹⁴ Hasan al-Banna, founder of the Muslim Brotherhood.

¹⁵ <http://www.ikhwanweb.com/>

¹⁶ <http://archive.frontpagemag.com/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=4475>

¹⁷ <http://crimeblog.dallasnews.com/government%20exhibit%203-85.pdf> and <http://crimeblog.dallasnews.com/Elbarasse%20Search%203.pdf>

¹⁸ <http://www.oic-oci.org/home.asp>

¹⁹ <http://www.nam.gov.za/index.html>

²⁰ <http://www.montrealgazette.com/news/Canada+quits+race+Security+Council+seat/3658523/story.html>

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Islam and Christianity

Compared and Contrasted

Basics

	ISLAM	CHRISTIANITY
Meaning of the name	Submission to the will of Allah	The practice of faith of believers in Jesus Christ
Name of a believer	Muslim	Christian
Date of founding	AD 622*	Circa AD 30
Name of founder	Muhammad	Jesus of Nazareth
Major holy book	Qur'an or Koran	Bible: Old and New Testaments
Status of the holy book	Allah's literal word and final revelation, dictated by the angel Gabriel to Muhammad. Muhammad passed it on in oral form. A slightly imperfect copy of a perfect copy in Paradise	The inspired, inerrant Word of God, but Christ Himself is the Eternal Word
Purpose of the holy book	The Qur'an reveals Allah's guidance for living in this world in the political, judicial, and economic realms.	The Bible reveals the nature of God (attributes, characteristics, and works), the nature of man, God's means of redemption, and the relationship between man and God.
Name of worship center	Mosque	Church
Relation of mosque/church and state	Integrated	Separated
Religious leader	Imam or Mullah	Pastor
Practice of the religion	Muslims should mimic the teachings of the Qur'an and Muhammad, should practice the Five Pillars of Islam (belief in one God, prayer, pilgrimage, fasting, and alms) and engage in jihad.	Christians must obey God's words; should love the Lord their God with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength; and love their neighbors as themselves.

Doctrine

	ISLAM	CHRISTIANITY
Concept of deity	Strict monotheism (<i>tawhid</i>): One God in One person. Allah is absolutely sovereign, unknowable and thus legitimately arbitrary in the exercise of mercy.	Trinitarian monotheism: One God in three Persons: The Trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is knowable and approachable.
Son	Jesus was a prophet and did not die on the cross. Allah secretly substituted another. Jesus was virgin born but did not pre-exist.	Jesus was the Son of God, God incarnate, and died as the necessary sacrifice for sins. Jesus was virgin born and pre-existed.
Holy Spirit	No concept of the Holy Spirit	The Holy Spirit is the Comforter and dwells in every believer.
Birth status of a child	All babies are born in a pure state of submission to Allah. However, as they mature they are often taught other beliefs. Islam rejects original sin.	A baby is born with a sin nature, separated from God. Christianity believes in original sin.
Basis of determining who goes to Heaven or Hell	Once a person reaches puberty, his/her account of deeds is opened in Paradise. To attain Paradise, at death the good deeds (helping others, testifying to the truth of God, leading a virtuous life, etc.,) must outweigh one's evil deeds.	Believing in the finished work of Jesus Christ, His life, death, and resurrection
Definition of apostasy	Conversion to another religion	Defection from God's truth
Basis of forgiveness of sin	People receive forgiveness of sins by praying at the right time, cursing Jews and Christians with the angels, and fighting for Islam.	People receive forgiveness by confessing and repenting of sin, believing that the sacrificial work of Jesus was sufficient.
Means of salvation	Works, without any certainty that Allah will be satisfied unless one dies as a Shahid (martyr), which guarantees eternity in Paradise	By faith through grace alone
Reaction to apostasy	Other believers are obligated to murder apostates	Separation from apostasy.
Relationship to unbelievers and their actions	You should kill pagans, apostates, and those of the house of war.	You should love all, even your enemies.
Creation	Allah created the universe by means of a Big Bang and the principles of evolution. The universe is many millions of years old. Man is a later creation by Allah.	Literal seven-day creation/young earth spoken into existence by God and sustained by Christ
End times	Jesus (Isa) will return to overthrow al-Dajjal in the battle of 'Aqabat Afiq' in Syria—or at the Lud Gate in Jerusalem, according to another account. Jesus will "kill all pigs and break all crosses," confirming Islam as the only true religion. After forty years Jesus will die and be buried next to Muhammad in Medina.	Jesus will come to rescue Israel, defeat the Antichrist, judge the nations and the wicked in Israel, and rule over the messianic kingdom.
Future of Israel	Eternally destroyed	Eternally restored
Events at death	For a Shahid (martyr), no washing of the body, no shroud, immediate burial in the clothes he/she was wearing, and immediate entrance into Paradise. For all other Muslims, washing, shrouding, burial on their right side facing Mecca. With death comes the Torment of the Grave, which is the beginning of the assessment of their works, which will ultimately determine whether they enter Paradise on the Day of Judgment.	Burial practices are more a matter of tradition than prescribed in the Bible. However, at death each person is judged, and the body remains in the grave. The soul of a believer begins an eternal relationship with God, while the soul of an unbeliever begins an eternal separation from God and torment. At the end of time all bodies are resurrected and are reunited with the soul and continue either in eternal bliss in Heaven or eternal torment and judgment in Hell.

Characters

	ISLAM	CHRISTIANITY
Adam	Adam was created from clay, free from all major sins and faults but was expelled from Heaven after the Fall in the spiritual garden of innocence, also in Heaven. Adam was not created in the image and likeness of Allah. Adam is considered to be a prophet.	Created on earth from the dust of the earth, Adam disobeyed God in the temporal Garden of Eden and is responsible for original sin. Mankind was created in the image and likeness of God.
Eve	Created uniquely for Adam while in Heaven	Created from the rib of Adam in the Garden of Eden after Adam named the creatures and none was found compatible with him
Abraham	The Qur'an records the account of Abraham's struggle with his father over idol worship. Abraham tries to convince his father not to worship idols and only manages to get himself rejected. Abraham leaves his father to become a true worshiper of Allah, and in return for his faithfulness Allah gives Abraham two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. Abraham is revered as a prophet and described as a "Friend of Allah."	The Bible records God's command to Abram to leave Ur and to proceed to a new land. In this context, God establishes a covenant with him which is reaffirmed (Gen. 12, 15, 17, and 22).
Sarah	Named as the first wife of Abraham and mother of Isaac	Named as the first wife of Abraham and mother of Isaac
Hagar	Not mentioned in the Qur'an	Named as the second wife of Abraham and the mother of Ishmael
Isaac	Isaac is viewed as a righteous man and as an additional gift from Allah.	Abraham was tested by God when he took Isaac his second-born to sacrifice him on Mount Moriah.
Ishmael	Abraham was tested by Allah when he took Ishmael, his firstborn, to sacrifice him on Mount Horeb. Abraham took Ishmael to Mecca where they built the first house of worship, the Kaaba, per Allah's command.	Ishmael was the eldest son of Abraham by his Egyptian concubine, Hagar. Hagar and Ishmael were sent away by Abraham. While in the wilderness Hagar received a promise from the Lord that "I will make him a great nation." It was also prophesied that Ishmael would be "a wild man."

* Most religious historians view Islam as having been founded in 622 CE. However, many if not most of the followers of Islam believe that Islam existed before Muhammad was born and that the origins of Islam date back to the creation of the world.

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Islam on the Mission Field

What effects do missionaries feel as the result of Islam on the foreign field? There are varying responses, depending on the field in question. The answer will be influenced by how large a percentage of the local population belongs to Islam and, more importantly, how much of the government is in the hands of Muslim hardliners. Where Muslims are predominant, they will seek to impose Shari'ah Law. Their religion is all-encompassing by its nature. Islam will seek to dictate all areas of the lives of its adherents if allowed to do so—whether religiously, politically or socially. Where Islam has already gained control, those outside of the Islamic faith will have sanctions imposed upon them. Where Islam is not yet predominant, the Muslim population will be working toward that goal.

Much of our ministry has been in African countries where Islam has not yet gained control but has been on the rise, edging toward the day when Muslims hope to take complete control. In the country where we first served, we learned how competitive Muslims can be. We began doing open-air evangelism on Saturday evenings on busy street corners near our newly planted church. We used a small handheld amplifier. Some passing by would stop to listen to testimonies from new believers and to the singing and preaching. A couple of weeks later, the Muslims began doing open-air evangelism in that area for the first time. They had a huge amplifier with powerful speakers, microphones, and enough lighting to illuminate the entire area.

They blocked off the entire street, as many gathered around to listen. Later, when we had enough money, we painted our new cement block church building tan with brown trim. Just a few days after that, the mosque three blocks from us was painted tan with brown trim after having sat unpainted since its construction a number of years earlier.

"Aggressive," although still not a strong enough term, more accurately describes the Muslim determination to dominate. Their aggression, as history bears out, seems to know no limits. Our first church grew under national leadership to an average attendance of around three hundred. Evidently the Muslims considered this a threat to their dominance in that area. In the year 2000, during a time of political unrest and rioting, a Muslim mob from that community encircled the church building, broke down the wooden doors, threw in gasoline and bottles of propane gas, and burned the building. They came at 9 AM when there were twelve believers, including the pastor's wife and three-month-old baby, gathered to pray in the pastor's home attached to the church. When these believers attempted to flee from the fire, they found that they too were encircled by the mob and were told that they would be killed if they attempted to escape. They were trapped for two hours under the same roof as the church, separated from the raging fire only by a block wall, not knowing if the wall might soon collapse or if the roof above them might also soon catch fire. Only by the grace of God were they

allowed to escape as one influential Muslim neighbor, who knew the good testimony of these Christians, interceded on their behalf.

The political unrest that provoked this incident was the fact that a Muslim man had been denied candidacy for political office because he was not qualified according to the constitution of the country at that time. The cry of the mob as they had attacked the church was that the prayers of the Christians were preventing the Muslim community from taking power. This cry was a blatant admission of their overarching purpose as well as a tacit acknowledgement of the power of prayer when serious Christians gather to pray in Christ's name. Of course, the authorities never prosecuted anyone for this mob violence despite the fact that the leaders of the mob were known by our brethren as the professors in the Qur'anic school in the neighborhood. Evidently the authorities feared that prosecution of the mob's leaders would provoke further violence. The church was told that it was for them a time to pardon their attackers. Other Islamic nations had willingly armed and financed the rebels.

This political unrest was a forerunner to the bloody civil war that broke out in that country a couple of years later when rebels in the northern half of the country, predominantly Muslim, made an armed grab for power. Even as I write this article, that country is again on the verge of civil war. A part of the problem that has so destabilized this country goes back to the insistence of Muslims upon having authority and predominance. When they have enough of the population, they will either have a Muslim leader or they will wage war.

When serving in another African nation, we lived two blocks from a mosque built with funds coming from Saudi Arabia. It was huge, lavish, and beautiful due to Western petro dollars being pumped into oil-rich Islamic countries. This same scenario is being carried out across much of sub-Saharan Africa. Indirectly, the West is funding the exporting of Islam around the world. Because this is true, the Islamic faith is advancing more quickly than are other religions.

A man in one of our African churches told us he had become a Muslim partially because of their social programs. They were providing Muslim-style clothing, shoes, and food to all who joined them. That was an enticing offer, especially in light of the low level of commitment required to convert to Islam. His main reason for converting to Islam, however, was to find a solution to the problem of sin in his life. However, for the Muslims, externals are the key, and the heart is not an issue. Our brother soon realized there was no change in his sinful heart and that he was still guilty before God. Praise the Lord that a heart knowing only the externals of a cold, hard, dead religion can still be reached with the message of the love of God and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Our brother left their midst still searching for the truth, and three months later a zealous believer from our church helped him find life-changing truth in the

person of Jesus Christ.

A dear brother who has been serving faithfully as a pastor for years told us how he came to the Lord despite being born into a Muslim family. Before his salvation, our brother was asked to interpret a conversation between a Muslim leader and an unknown hit man. The leader was offering the unknown man forty dollars to kill another man suspected of committing adultery with the leader's wife. Our brother, still a Muslim, protested that murder is not right. The Muslim leader told him the teaching of the Qur'an is not against such an action when there is a good reason. The deal was carried out, and the interloper was killed. Because of that experience, serious doubts about a religion that would sanction such actions began to haunt our brother, who later came to know the Lord.

One of our sisters likewise gives testimony of being reared in a Muslim family. She attended a Qur'anic school and later married a Muslim man. She had practiced the Muslim religion but was troubled with the question "Who is Jesus?" She knew that the Muslims spoke evil of Him even though He is one of their prophets, and she had always been warned not to talk with Christians about their Jesus. As she wondered about the person of Christ, she noticed other elements within Islam that also troubled her. She saw numerous satanic practices, divinations, and invocations with candles. She saw great division and rivalry among the different branches of Islam. Against this backdrop she began her search to know Christ. Her search took her down a winding path, but one day she saw a child she knew walking in the street with a tract in her hand. She asked to see the tract. It was one we had just given the child as we stood on a busy street corner. The tract led our sister to our home that Wednesday afternoon. We had the opportunity to answer her questions as to who Christ is. She came back to prayer meeting that evening and within a short time had put her faith in Christ. Knowing Him per-

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sonally, she has become a faithful servant of the Lord and a diligent student of the Word of God.

Islam has no valid solution for the problem of sin. Muslims cannot know that they have been forgiven because they have not received the Christ who paid the price for their sin. They have not trusted the risen Lord who has already demonstrated His power over death and the grave. The challenge for us is to live a life of purity and holiness before the Muslim world, manifesting the love of God, faithfully announcing the reality of the wages of sin, and presenting Christ as the only answer. We must not forget that the Holy Spirit of God is still convicting guilty hearts as we live and announce the message of Christ.

The author is a Fundamental Baptist missionary who has been in ministry for thirty-two years, twenty-five of which have been in missions.



Beautiful People

When I arrived in Birmingham, England, for my missionary internship a couple of summers ago, my intention was to find Muslims. But I did not expect to find so many. As my missionary host drove me through the crowded streets, I saw beards and burqas all around me. When we stopped at a store, I passed large black Somali women, wrinkled and bent Afghani men, small ladies covered completely except for their eyes in black folds of cloth, and young brown Pakistanis everywhere. Subconsciously, my prejudices told me that these people were not like me.

But then my mind went back to a long-dormant memory of a Middle Eastern man who spoke at my school. He looked at our large student body and told us, "You are all such beautiful people!" At the time we all laughed. Now, however, that particular phrase came back to me with a slight twist on the meaning. To me, the Muslim people around me were different—certainly not what I was used to. But it occurred to me then that God thought of them as "beautiful people." He knew each one individually and valued all of them enough to give His Son for them.

My eyes fell on a robed Somali man. "Beautiful people," I said to myself. I thought how he must have hopes, fears, and surely a desire like mine to love and to be loved. Further on, a couple of Pakistani girls in bright headscarves waited to check out. A mother also stood there trying to manage several children. "Beautiful people." It occurred to me that they, like me, must want to please God and go to Heaven, only to struggle with temptations and failure, and not have the hope I did. As I thought of each person from that perspective—God's perspective—my attitude changed. I saw that Muslims are people like me. Each one of them is precious in God's sight.

Muslims Are Mirrors

Our God has stated in Proverbs 27:19, "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." In other words, just as when I look in water and see a reflection of my own face, so when I look at other people, I see in them a reflection of my own heart. One time I offered a tract to a Hispanic man in my town. He tried to tell me how he had once been a faithful Christian, but he had begun drinking and had ruined his life and family. His friend told him to get away from me, but he asked me to pray for him. As the two men drove away, the Holy Spirit showed me that I too struggle with temptations and fail my Lord. Something deep inside was able to relate to that poor man. I saw indeed a reflection of myself.

Consider that the Muslims are mirrors of your heart. They are people like you. Often they are kind. I remember one young man, much like me, who gladly stopped to talk and even gave me an orange. Other times I met Muslims who were bitter or depressed. But surely we can relate in some measure to those feelings as well. Muslims are just people, like you and me.

So What Is the Problem?

The problem is that the majority of Muslims in the world lack something you and I have. They lack the truth. In fact, countless Muslims throughout Northern Africa, the Middle East, and Southern Asia have never seen a Bible. Many cannot even read. From the time they are born they are indoctrinated with lies. Over and over again, young Muslims told me that the Bible has been changed. They all "knew" that Jesus was merely a man. But what else were they to think? All the people that they loved and trusted had told them the same thing. Almost by default, Muslims

live in rejection of the only One who can save them: the Lord Jesus Christ.

But whose fault is it? The Muslims' fault? To a certain degree, yes. They could be saved if they would call upon the name of the Lord Jesus. But "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? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. 10:14, 15). The answer to each question is obvious. They cannot. So who is responsible to resolve the problem? Not the Muslims. The Lord Jesus' plan has ever been to send Christians—people like you and me—to speak for Him. "As my Father hath sent me," He told His followers, "even so send I you" (John 20:21).

Carry the Water

Having grown up in a godly home, church, and school in South Carolina, I feel sometimes like a person living by a spiritual water reservoir while much of the rest of the world is burning down. Somehow, I think God must have filled this reservoir not just for me to enjoy it, but for me to carry what I have received to the burning places. We who know God the most ought to be the first ones to go out and share what we know.

God has been burdening my heart during my college years to go to the "creative access nations"—the places that are "closed" to traditional missionaries. Particularly, at this point, I would like to go to the Middle East. I am not aware of many people in Fundamentalist circles who are going to places like the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, Afghanistan, or northern Africa, but the number is growing. In the past few years I have been excited to meet more and more who are

going before me into these difficult fields. After all, if our Lord Jesus said to teach "all nations," how can we avoid any? Maybe He is calling you to go as well.

Modern Corneliuses

The last night of my internship in England my next-door neighbor, a tall muscular man I will call Omer, came over. He drove me through Birmingham in his Jeep and bought me one of the best (and spiciest) dinners I had ever eaten. As we sat in the Jeep afterwards, he told me how he had been shot in the chest many years ago. I could see a large scar in his arm as well. He told me how as he lay dying in the hospital, he cried out to God to have mercy on him and committed himself to be a faithful Muslim. To his amazement, God healed him.

The story of Cornelius came to my mind. I opened the Bible and shared the story with Omer. "Just as God responded to Cornelius's prayers by sending Peter to tell him the way of salvation," I explained, "God has sent me to tell *you* the way of salvation—His Son Jesus Christ." Omer was not ready to receive Christ then, but perhaps he will be later. I wonder, though, how many other Corneliuses are out there. Many no doubt are waiting in "closed" countries for one of God's messengers.

Muslims are people like you and me, but they need another person—like you or me—to tell them the gospel. Might God want you to get involved in His work among these beautiful people?

"Lord, here am I; send me."

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Islam and the End Times

What is the most world-changing event of the past fifty years? Without a doubt it is the rise and ascendancy of Islam. The resurgence of Islam has taken the world by surprise. Our prophecy teachers told us thirty-five years ago that Islam was a nonplayer in the end-times scenario. How wrong they were! For years they fixated on Rome, the Catholic Church, and the European Union. When Rome lost its power, godless, God-denying, Christ-hating Communism became the new threat.

I have been a Christian for sixty-one years; a gospel preacher for sixty years; a missionary to Muslims for fifty-three years; and a lifelong student of the Bible, prophecy, and current events. People began to question me as to how Islam would figure in the end times. For a long time I could not give a good answer but could only respond in vague generalities. Over a year ago I dedicated myself to finding answers to this question. Walid Shoebat's *God's War on Terror: The Bible, Prophecy, and Islam* helped me to better understand Islam's place in the end-times scenario. I published my research in *Islam and the End Times*, published by Truth Publishers.

For many years I have been taught that the fourth kingdom represented by Nebuchadnezzar's vision was Rome, that the Antichrist would be a Jew, that Russia would lead a northern confederation against Israel, and that Mystery Babylon was Rome or New York. My research has led me to believe that each of these presuppositions is false. It does not give me pleasure to contradict honored prophecy teachers of the past and present, but my first and final commitment is to truth.

Truth is important. Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). But how can we know what is true? Any premise or presupposition must pass two truth tests. First, the *correspondence* test demands that whatever is true must correspond to fact. Second, the *coherence* test demands that what is true must be coherent or reasonable. In examining the abovementioned premises we will adhere to the truth tests.

Islam, Not Rome, Is the Fourth Beast

In Daniel 2, Nebuchadnezzar sees a vision of an image or statue representing four empires. The head of gold is

identified as Babylon; the breast and arms of silver are Media-Persia, which conquered Babylon; the belly of brass is Greece, which conquered Media-Persia. The fourth section of the image is made up of legs of iron and feet that are part iron and part clay; it is described as being as hard as iron and breaking in pieces all it subdues. It will be an empire succeeding the Grecian Empire. Our prophecy teachers have assumed it was Rome.

Daniel 7 records Daniel's vision of four beasts coming out of the sea. The first is a lion, i.e., Babylon; the second, a bear, i.e., Media-Persia; the third, a leopard, i.e., Greece. Please note that the fourth beast is not likened to an animal and is described as "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it" (Dan. 7:7).

Let us put the assumption that the fourth part of Nebuchadnezzar's statue and the fourth beast of Daniel's vision is the Roman Empire to the truth tests. First, according to the famous Roman historian, Justin, in his *History of the World*, Rome never conquered Babylon or Media-Persia. Trajan was one of the greatest Roman generals at Rome's zenith. He made two incursions across the Euphrates River and was beaten back both times. It is a fact that Media-Persia, Greece, and the Islamic empire all conquered Babylon. Rome did not.¹ Therefore, it is not logical that the fourth beast is Rome.

Second, the description of the fourth beast does not match the Roman Empire. Rome was famous for its *pax* (peace) and *lux* (law). Rome was known as a builder of nations, not a destroyer of them. Islam, on the other hand, has devastated all the nations it has conquered.

Third, demographics show that Europe is descending. Demographic experts say in 2050 Europe will no longer exist as it is today, but will be Eurabia, overrun with Muslim immigrants.² Is it reasonable to believe that liberal Europe, which does not practice capital punishment, does not have a strong military, and is morally, spiritually, and financially weak could possibly be the fourth beast described in Daniel 2 and 7? I think not.

The last empire will be fierce, bloodthirsty, beholders of all who resist, with a military capable of conquering the

world. Turkey, which will be a big player in the last days according to Ezekiel 38, 39, has the third largest army in the world. The European Union has no dreams of world conquest. The same cannot be said about the Islamic Empire.

Antichrist Will Not Be a Jew But the Mahdi

Logically, if the fourth beast is the Islamic Empire, it stands to reason the head of that empire will be the Antichrist. Today Islam is fragmented without a leader. Muslims around the world are praying for and looking for the Mahdi, the perfectly guided one, who will lead Islam to victory over the West: Christians and Jews. The numerous similarities between the Muslim Mahdi and the Biblical Antichrist stagger the mind. Let me mention just a few of many.

First, 1 John 2:22 tells us that Antichrist denies the Father and the Son. Antichrist denies the Trinity. Also, 2 John 7 says that Antichrist denies the incarnation—Jesus Christ come in the flesh. The Muslim Mahdi will be a true Muslim and will deny the Trinity and the incarnation.

Second, most Bible scholars agree that the rider on the white horse in Revelation 6:2 is the Antichrist. The *Hadith*, Islam's sacred traditions, affirms that the rider on the white horse is the Mahdi.

Third, references in Daniel, 2 Thessalonians, and Matthew all speak of Antichrist signing a seven-year peace treaty with Israel during the Tribulation Period. Likewise, the Muslim traditions also record that the Mahdi will sign a seven-year agreement that will also be signed by a descendant of Aaron.

Fourth, the Antichrist, the Gog of Ezekiel 38 and 39, will lead Magog, i.e., Turkey, and a coalition of surrounding nations against Jerusalem. Likewise, the Mahdi will lead a Muslim army from Khurasan (Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, etc.) against Jerusalem.

Fifth, both the Muslim Mahdi and the Biblical Antichrist attack Jerusalem, looting houses and raping women.

Sixth, both the Bible and the *Hadith* speak of a final battle, the battle of Armageddon. And both the Muslim Mahdi and the Biblical Antichrist practice beheading of those who refuse to yield.

The Islamic Coalition Is Not the Northern Confederation

According to the majority of prophecy teachers, the army attacking Jerusalem in Ezekiel 38 is led by the modern country of Russia. I believe this is a false premise, upon which the majority of prophecy teachers have built their case. In his reference Bible Dr. C. I. Scofield popularized this view in his notes on Ezekiel 38:2, 3: "That the primary reference is to the northern (European) powers, headed up by Russia, *all agree*. The reference to Meschech and Tubal (Moscow and Tobolsk) is a clear mark of identification" (emphasis mine).

I love Dr. Scofield, but all do not agree with his assumptions. If we refer to some of the greatest Biblical references, such as the *Oxford Bible Atlas* and the *Moody Atlas of Bible Lands*, they all locate Magog, Meshech, Tubal, Gomer, and Beth Togarmah in Turkey, not Russia. Let us apply the *correspondence* test: does the premise adhere to

fact? By presupposing that the land of Magog is modern-day Russia and the cities of Meschech and Tubal are the Russian cities of Moscow and Tubolsk, the presupposition is not true because it does not adhere to facts.

Mystery Babylon Is Mecca, Not Rome or New York

Only Revelation 17:5 mentions "MYSTERY BABYLON." Logically, if the last empire is an Islamic Empire, it will follow that "MYSTERY BABYLON" will be in a Muslim country. What does the Bible say?

First, according to Revelation 17:3, this city is located in a wilderness (desert). Is Rome in a desert? Is New York in a desert? Mecca is in the midst of a desert.

Second, the city sits upon many waters. Verse 15 explains that the waters are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. What nation and city have had more influence than Saudi Arabia and Mecca?

Third, the harlot city (wicked city) is said to be clothed in scarlet and purple, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls (v. 4). Scarlet speaks of sinfulness; purple of royalty; and gold, precious stones, and pearls of wealth. What description could better describe Mecca? It is a wicked, wealthy city, ruled by a corrupt royal family.

Fourth, the nations are addicted to her wine (v. 2)! What wine of the desert intoxicates the nations of the world? The only wine in the desert is black wine: oil. The wine is not the chalice of the Roman Catholic Church, but the oil of Saudi Arabia.

In closing, there is a clash of civilizations. The clash is not between Christianity and Catholicism or Hinduism or Buddhism. The clash is between Christianity and Islam. Just as God raised up ungodly Babylon to punish ungrateful and rebellious Israel, I believe God is raising up this cruel, intolerant religion of Islam to punish America and the West for rejecting Him and His Word.

Are we to throw up our hands in surrender? Absolutely not! Jonah's message to Nineveh was "forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Nineveh repented, and the destruction was postponed for one hundred years. The church of Jesus Christ could repent and experience genuine revival, which could delay the Islamization of America. The two-and-one-half million Muslims living among us need a clear gospel witness and Christians who are willing to befriend them and win them to Christ.

God is working all things after the counsel of His own will. According to His prophetic Word, He will use Islam to accomplish His purposes and in the end will judge this cruel, heartless religion and its wicked adherents for their sins.

Gene Gurganus, former missionary to Bangladesh, is president of Truth Publishers, director of Islam Awareness Ministries, and serves as North American representative of Vision 20/20 Asia. The content of this article comes mainly from his latest book, *Islam and the End Times*.

¹ *Justin's Epitome of the History of Pompeius Trogus*, John Selby Watson, tr. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1876), pp. 272–83.

² Mark Steyn, *America Alone* (Regency Publishing, 2008), p. 7.

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SOUND WORDS

HOLD FAST THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS—2 TIMOTHY 1:13

First Partaker

Making the Scriptures Lucid

“It is not sufficient that divine Truth be made explicit enough that the saints can understand; Scripture must be presented so lucidly that they cannot misunderstand.”

Ward Andersen, *Biblical Viewpoint*, November 1986

In the heart of every God-called preacher should be the desire to present the Scriptures so clearly that the saints come face-to-face with God every time His Word is preached. However, the chasm between desire and reality is not always easily crossed. While a preacher may desire to preach so that the Scriptures are well defined, actually doing it can at times be quite frustrating if not downright confusing. Even though he desires to give the Bible a voice, many a Sunday evening finds a pastor distraught over another failed attempt.

While most of us have fallen into this chasm at one time or another, and maybe even on several occasions, it is not necessary that we repeatedly injure ourselves week after week. The present day offers not only a wealth of material and books on preaching—books which will enlighten and greatly aid any studious preacher willing to heed their advice and counsel—but in addition there are the Scriptures themselves. The very Word the preacher is attempting to make lucid for others also contains clear instruction on preaching.

The numerous inspired sermons in Scripture not only contain truth and messages from God but are also examples of what good preaching looks like—especially the sermons of Christ and the apostles. A careful study of these can greatly aid a pastor in knowing what and how to preach. But beyond these Biblical sermons, there are also some relevant verses in which God gives inspired

instructions on preaching. Consider Nehemiah 8:8—*So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.*

“The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits” (2 Tim. 2:6)

The context of this verse is the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem under Nehemiah. At the completion of the project the people persuaded Ezra and several of the Levites to preach to them. After constructing a preaching platform and gathering the people to listen Ezra and the Levites preached God’s Word so clearly that the people began to weep and to make appropriate life-changing decisions. The preaching was so lucid that no one left confused about what Ezra had said. So what did Ezra and the Levites do in their preaching to aid the saints’ understanding of the Scriptures? That’s what Nehemiah 8:8 records.

Even a casual reading of this verse reveals three things about the preachers under Ezra’s supervision. First, they *read in the book in the law distinctly*. Second, they *gave the sense* of what they had just read distinctly. Third, they caused the people to *understand* what they had just read and interpreted.

Presenting the Scriptures “Distinctly”

The word “distinctly” means “to make/be made clear (by revelation, explication, or translation)” (*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2:740). It has the idea of making words clear by a careful explanation of their meaning, even involving a precise translation of them into another language. As Ezra and the Levites read the law, they provided the meaning of obscure words by defining them and possibly by even translating those words into a language the people could understand.

Many of those Ezra ministered to had lived or were even born in Babylon/Persia. While some might have still known Hebrew, the language the law was written in, there was a very real possibility that many were only

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familiar with Aramaic, the language of Persia. Thus Ezra would have had to translate the Hebrew law into Aramaic so that the people could understand it.

Although Ezra and the Levites did this, is it acceptable for preachers today to follow their practice? Is it acceptable to take the Word of God and relate it to the thinking of people by defining its words or even translating it into another language? Or is it tampering with God's Word to do that? I ask these questions because, although all preachers realize the need for the hearer to be able to understand what is read, there is another possibility. That possibility is to "adjust" the hearer to the Word—to leave the Word intact and untouched and to teach every reader and bearer of the Bible the language in which it was written. That is, to give them an education in the terms and words of the Bible, even teaching them to read the Bible in the original languages.

I find it interesting to note that when God inspired the New Testament, He did so in the Greek language.

In all honesty, I think we would have to agree that this approach is not only unreasonable, but it is nearly impossible. In addition, and more importantly, it is not Scriptural. Why do I say that? Well, return to my original question and then consider the Bible answer I will give to it. Is it acceptable to translate the Bible into the language of the reader/hearer, or is that tampering with God's Word? Answer: Consider God's own example in Scripture. In the Bible, when God communicated with people, how did He do that? The following three examples will show that when God communicated with people, He did so in the language of the one to whom He was speaking.

The first example is when God communicated to people personally. At times God spoke to people through an angel, theophany, or Christophany, but He always spoke to them in their native language. For instance, God used an angel to speak to Abraham (Gen. 18), Daniel (Dan. 9:21ff.), and Peter (Acts 12). The angel of the Lord spoke to Moses (Exod. 3:2), Gideon (Judges 6:12), and Samson's parents (Judges 13:3–5). God spoke at the baptism of His Son (Matt. 3:17). On the road to Damascus, Christ spoke to Saul (Acts 9:5). These scattered examples indicate that whenever God spoke to an individual, He always did so in the language of the person to whom He was speaking.

A second example of God's communicating to people in their language was when He inspired the Scriptures. Because ancient Israel spoke Hebrew, He gave the majority of the Old Testament in that language. However, at times He departed from this practice because of the individual to whom He was communicating. In Ezra 4:7 several Jews in Canaan wrote to the king of Persia, but they did so in the *Syrian tongue* ("Syrian"

is the word for Aramaic). Five letters of correspondence are then given in Ezra 4:8–6:18—all in Aramaic, the language of the king of Persia. Here is inspired Scripture being given in the language of the person involved. Another illustration is in Daniel 2:4–7:28. These verses give a revelation concerning Gentile nations. What is given is a revelation from God to them, and so the language God uses is Aramaic, their mother tongue. A similar situation is found in Jeremiah 10:10, 11.

I find it interesting to note that when God inspired the New Testament, He did so in the Greek language. After Alexander the Great conquered the world (330 BC), not only was Hebrew not the native language of the Jews, but Greek became the common language of the world. However, what is fascinating is which type of Greek God used. He could have used Homeric Greek or Ionic Greek, both literary types of the Greek language of that day. He could have also used Attic, the Greek of Athens. All three of these were very highly developed and polished "styles" of the Greek language. To record His inspired Word, God could have used the literary and linguistic best—the most noble, polished and beautiful—but He didn't. He used *koine* Greek, the common Greek of the day and that which was spoken by the common man. God used this form of Greek because out of the four possibilities it was the best one in His eyes. This reveals that, to God, what is best is what communicates most clearly.

The third example of God's communicating to people in their language is drawn from the Old Testament quotations found in the New Testament. When the Holy Spirit inspired those Old Testament quotations in the New Testament, He did not record them in Hebrew—the language they were originally given in. Instead they are recorded in the New Testament in Greek—the language the people of the first century understood. In addition, the wording for some of these quotations is not taken directly from the Hebrew text but from the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament. For instance, in Hebrews 1:6 the quotation given is from Deuteronomy 32:43—but the wording is that of the LXX, not the Hebrew text. The translation of Deuteronomy 32:43 based on the Hebrew text reads, *Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants.* The LXX reads *Rejoice, O nations, with his people, and let all the angels worship him, for he will avenge the blood of his servants.* Now what is interesting is that the quotation as given in Heb. 1:6 and based on the LXX is attributed to God! The verse reveals this when it uses the words *he saith* and then states what God said—Deuteronomy 32:43, but from the LXX and not the Hebrew text. When a translation accurately reflects the original, it too can be called the Word of God.

Now these three examples—God communicating personally, through the inspired Word, and in Old Testament quotations in the New Testament—indicate that when God communicated to people, He did so in the language of the people to whom He was speaking.

So when Ezra and the Levites or any modern preacher preaches the Word *distinctly* by defining terms and translating it into the language of the hearer, he does so on solid Biblical grounds. God wants people to understand His Word!

At the time of this writing, our family has a single lady missionary staying in our home who has spent the last thirty years ministering to the jungle people in Suriname, South America. Although “her people” are two hours upriver (by speedboat) from the capital city, her mission agency wanted those jungle people to know God. So they not only sent a missionary but also translated the Bible into the language of those Bush Negroes. Without that, those tribal folk would never know or grow in God.

However, because languages change over time, it is just as acceptable to translate the Bible within the parameters of a language. For instance, one source I read indicated that “the current supplement to the *Oxford English Dictionary* includes over 85,000 word entries not to be found in the dictionary as recently as 1924.” Using Matthew 11:28–30, the following comparison will also indicate the need to read distinctly/translate the Bible within a language group—in this case the English language.

John Wycliffe’s 1382 Version

Alle ye that traueilen, and ben chargid, come to me, and Y schal fulfille you. Take ye my yok on you, and lerne ye of me, for Y am mylde and meke in herte; and ye schulen fynde reste to youre soulis. For my yok is softe, and my charge liyt. (http://wesley.nnu.edu/fileadmin/imported_site/biblical_studies/wycliffe/Mat.txt)

King James Version, 1611

Come vnto me all yee that labour, and are heauy laden, and I will giue you rest. Take my yoke vpon you, and learne of me, for I am meeke and lowly in heart: and yee shall find rest ynto your soules. For my yoke is easie and my burden is light.

Modern Cambridge King James Version

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

For people to come to know God and submit to Him, they will have to understand the Bible. Like Ezra, preachers and linguists will have to carefully and accurately put the Bible into terms and language translations which people can understand. Trained linguists may not have difficulty doing this, but some preachers have not had the opportunity to learn the original languages. Two suggestions may help here. First, Walter Kaiser suggests purchasing a textbook and reviewing the grammar, grammatical terms, and syntactical forms of your own language (*Toward an Exegetical Theology*). This will certainly help you

better understand other languages and your English Bible, especially when combined with this second suggestion by C. H. Spurgeon. Spurgeon suggests the continual and regular use of tools (*Commenting & Commentaries*). He advises using good commentaries which offer “a sound comment” and have “great stores of holy thought.” A good expository commentary will offer helpful explanations on the grammar of the text as well as defining key Biblical words.

I understand that all of this sounds technical, laborious, and time consuming. However, as Walter Kaiser said, “The lives of men and women depend on it.” If people do not understand the Bible, they cannot draw accurate life-changing conclusions. The six hours of preaching by Ezra and the Levites (Neh. 8:3) meant a lot of time-consuming preparation (Ezra 7:10). It also meant that the people came for a “feed.” No preacher should send them away disappointed.

But *reading distinctly* is not all there is to making the Bible lucid. The actions of Ezra and the Levites indicate a second element that must be present in preaching. Ezra and the Levites also *gave the sense* of what they had just defined and translated.

Giving the “Sense”

To give the sense means “to understand, to act with insight” (*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2:877; *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 3:1243). It refers to “the process of thinking through a complex arrangement of thoughts resulting in a wise dealing” or wise conclusion. This word is used of Abigail (1 Sam. 25:3) and then exhibited as she thought through the crisis between her husband and David and acted wisely. It is also used by David when he prayed that the Lord would give his son Solomon this sense/wisdom so that he could lead the complex affairs of Israel. The English word that seems to capture the meaning of this term is “interpret”—the idea of thinking through or interpreting a complex situation (or as in Neh. 8, an arrangement of words, the law) and then drawing a right conclusion. After putting the law into a language the people could understand, Ezra and the Levites then interpreted the law for them. They explained to the people what the passage of the law they were reading meant—what God was saying in that passage. Ezra was thinking through the arrangement of the words, context, grammar, historical setting, etc., of the portion of the law he was reading. Then, coming to a wise conclusion about what God was saying (interpreting all of that), he explained to the people that conclusion.

Unfortunately the state of much contemporary preaching reveals that this element in preaching has been missed or even avoided. Not only have people become accustomed to the misinterpretation of texts, but they have also become used to having very little interpretation at all. In many cases a passage is read, a few obvious words are defined, and then from those words applications are made—applications drawn from

the appearance of that one word in the text and not from the meaning of the passage or context. The missing link between the reading “distinctly” and making application is this idea of giving the “sense” or interpreting and explaining what God has actually said in the passage.

The result is that people do not understand their Bibles. They read the Bible in a service and are presented with an application and some needed change in their behavior, but because there is no interpretation of the passage, they do not know where that application came from. They would be hard pressed to point to specific words in the Biblical text and explain which words have warranted the change in lifestyle they are being asked to make.

In *Christ-Centered Preaching* Bryan Chappel addresses this issue and explains that true Biblical exposition involves explaining what God says in the text before making applications to life.

Biblical exposition binds the preacher and the people to the only source of true spiritual change. Because hearts are transformed when people are confronted with the Word of God, expository preachers are committed to saying what God says. We are not concerned to convey our opinions, others’ philosophies, or speculative meditations. Truths of God proclaimed in such a way that people can see that the concepts derive from Scripture and apply to their lives preoccupy the expository preacher’s efforts. . . . When preachers approach the Bible as God’s very Word, questions about what we have a right to say vanish. God can tell his people what they should believe and do, and he has. Scripture obligates preachers to make sure others understand what God says. Thus, expository preaching endeavours to discover and convey the precise meaning of the Word.

When this happens people will respond as C. H. Spurgeon indicated. In commenting on Nehemiah 8:8 and this point of “giving the sense” he said, “You will then, by God’s blessing, be the pastor of an intelligent, Bible-loving people. You will hear in your meeting-house that delightful rustle of Bible leaves which is so dear to the lover of the Word; your people will open their Bibles, looking for a feast” (*Commenting & Commentaries*).

But making the Scriptures lucid also involves the last element of preaching which Ezra and the Levites exhibited—causing the people to *understand* the reading.

Causing the People to “Understand”

The word “understand” means to have “insight” or to “discern” (*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 1:103). It has the idea of “distinguishment that leads to

understanding” or “to separate mentally for use.” TWOT further explains that “the verb refers to knowledge which is superior to the mere gathering of data. It is necessary to know how to use knowledge one possesses.”

When Ezra *read the law distinctly and gave the sense*, the people gained knowledge—they came to know what God was saying in that passage of the law. Now in this third element they are being told how to use that knowledge in life—how to take that knowledge and from it draw appropriate applications for life. The people could now *understand* the law.

While there is a place for the occasional Bible study or sermon that simply provides information, it is the area of application that gives the Bible a voice. As Bryan Chappel explains, “Expository preaching does not merely obligate preachers to explain what the Bible says, it obligates them to explain what the Bible means in the lives of people today. Application is as necessary for sound exposition as is explication. In fact, *the real meaning of a text remains hidden until we discern how its truths should govern our lives*” (emphasis added).

Although some may define it with slight variations, making application generally entails three things—the application itself, suggestions on carrying it out, and exhortation or encouragement to do it. John Broadus, in his excellent book *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, states it this way: “The application includes three distinct things: (1) application proper, in which one shows the hearer how the truths of the sermon apply to him; (2) practical suggestions concerning the best mode and means of performing the duty urged; and (3) persuasion in the sense of moral and spiritual appeal for right response.”

In the last few centuries God has blessed the church with godly hymn writers who have set to music many of the truths of Scripture. The following hymn perfectly sums up the point of this article and the hearts of the Jews when they called upon Ezra to preach to them. May it characterize the attitude of the saints today when they sit before the preacher, and may it thus help guide us as preachers in our presentation of the Bible.

Break Thou the bread of life, dear Lord to me,
As Thou didst break the loaves beside the sea:
Beyond the sacred page I seek Thee, Lord;
My spirit pants for Thee, O living Word.

Bless Thou the truth, dear Lord, to me to me,
As Thou didst bless the bread by Galilee:
Then shall all bondage cease, all fetters fall,
And I shall find my peace, my All in all.

O send Thy spirit, Lord, now unto me,
That He may touch my eyes and make me see:
Show me the truth concealed within Thy Word,
And in Thy book revealed I see the Lord.

Bring . . . the Books

Confidence in God—The Life and Ministry
of George Muller of Bristol

Like many Christians I was somewhat familiar with the ministry of George Muller to the orphans of Bristol, England. I knew of his commitment to living by faith and had heard illustrations from his life from time to time as I sat under good preaching.

This summer I finally read my copy of the classic biography on his life written by his son-in-law, A. T. Pierson: *George Muller of Bristol: His Life of Prayer and Faith*. I gained a new appreciation for Muller's passionate faith and simple, total trust in God. In his own words, "There was a day when I died, utterly died; died to George Muller . . . died to the world . . . and since then I have studied to show myself approved unto God." This expresses the confidence in God that was the secret to Muller's amazing ministry. Pierson noted that Muller's life was "living proof that a life of faith is possible; that God may be known, communed with, found, and may become a conscious companion in the daily life . . . that the days of divine intervention and deliverance are past only to those with whom the days of faith and obedience are past—in a word, that believing prayer still works the wonders which our fathers told of in the days of old."

George was born on September 27, 1805, in what was then called Prussia. He was raised in a wealthy family who had little or no time for God. He was the favorite son of his father, who spoiled him and excused or overlooked all manner of evil behavior in young George. Pierson notes, "Before he was ten years old he was a habitual thief and an expert at cheating; even government funds entrusted to his father, were not safe from his hands." He continued down this wayward path to the point that he spent the evening of his mother's death in drunken carousing through the city streets. However, God had other plans for this wayward worldling, and in his twenty-first year George Muller came to know the saving power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Somehow he found himself at a worship service where a simple servant of God knelt in prayer to ask God's blessing on the meeting. It was the first time George had ever seen anyone kneel to pray, and it had a profound impact. He recorded these thoughts in his journal: "I am much more learned than this illiterate man, but I could not pray as well as he." This would not be true for long; in the years ahead, he would excel in the discipline of prayer, and it would become the cornerstone of all his life-work!

Two years later, in 1827, Muller applied to the London Missionary Society to serve as a missionary to the Jews and traveled to London to prepare. He remained in preparation for the better part of eighteen months. In 1829 he wrote to the society and declared his intentions to serve only on the condition that he serve without salary and that he labor only where and when the Lord should direct.

This was unacceptable to the society, and so his missionary endeavor was cut short before it officially began. In 1830 Muller became the pastor of a small church at Teignmouth, England. He insisted in taking no salary, trusting only on Jehovah-Jireh for his daily provision. It was here that Muller set down as a firm life principle that he would never receive a fixed salary for any service rendered to God's people. At the end of his life he summarized this decision: "I have joyfully dedicated my whole life to the object of exemplifying how much may be accomplished by prayer and faith."

Accordingly, Muller kept meticulous daily records of all that God did for him and the orphanages. In 1865 after thirty-one years of serving over ten thousand orphans and meeting their daily needs, he recorded that he had been able during the entire time to remain true to the original principles upon which the work had been established. He had never gone into debt, he had never made others aware of his needs or those of the orphanages, and he had never accepted help or resources from unbelievers. When asked what would happen to all of his work and the orphan houses after his death, he replied, "My business is, with all my might, to serve my own generation by the will of God: in so doing I shall best serve the next generation, should the Lord tarry." Pierson noted, "This man of God had staked everything upon one great experiment—he had set himself to prove that the prayer which resorts to God only will bring help in every crisis, even when the crisis is unknown to His people whom He uses as the means of relief and help."

For over sixty years he saw God provide for five large orphan houses and for the daily needs of over ten thousand orphans. During that time he personally gave over 110,000 British pounds to Sunday schools and day schools where over 150,000 children were instructed. He gave an additional 90,000 pounds for the purchase and circulation of over two million Bibles and three million books and tracts. Besides all this, he gave over 260,000 pounds to missionaries in foreign fields. When you add all the money that was given to him for the orphanages to this amount, he gave away almost 1.5 million pounds to the Lord's work! No wonder A. T. Pierson said, "Such a life and such a work are the result of one habit more than all else,—daily and frequent communion with God." May the Lord raise up in our day men of like faith and prayer. ☞

“. . . when
thou comest,
bring with thee
. . . the books”
(2 Tim. 4:13)

Dr. Sam Horn is vice president of Ministerial Training at Northland International University in Dunbar, Wisconsin, where he and his wife, Beth, have served since 1996. He also serves as senior pastor of Brookside Baptist Church in Brookfield.

Ephesians 6:24 reads, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen." In this verse, Bible expositors interpret differently the phrase "in sincerity."

William Hendriksen translates the verse as follows: "Grace (be) with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with (a love) imperishable" (*Exposition of Ephesians*, 285). A. Skevington Wood suggests various interpretations: (1) tying the phrase to "our Lord Jesus Christ," revealing the immortality or glorification of our Lord; (2) paralleling the phrase to the word "grace" to create a double benediction, translating it "grace and immortality" be to those who love the Lord; and (3) tying it to the entire participial phrase "all who love our Lord Jesus Christ," revealing that those who love the Lord will enjoy in this present life a guaranteed and eternal aspect of God's love ("Ephesians" in *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Volume 11, 92). R.C.H. Lenski accurately writes, "There is some difficulty regarding the final phrase both as to its construction and as to its meaning" (*St. Paul's Epistles to the Ephesians and Philippians*, 687).

First, what does the word "sincerity" mean? It appears eight times in the New Testament. The KJV translates the word in three ways: "immortality" (Rom. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:10), "incorruption" (1 Cor. 15:42, 50, 53, 54), and "sincerity" (Eph. 6:24; Titus 2:7).

According to Thayer, the Greek word means "incorruption or perpetuity" (*English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 88). Richard Trench provides some insight in his treatment of a parallel root word. He reveals how writers often define a word by negating it. Trench writes, "It is a remarkable testimony to the reign of sin, and therefore of imperfection, of decay, of death, throughout this whole fallen world, that as often as we desire to set forth the glory, purity, and perfection of that other higher world toward which we strive, we are almost inevitably compelled to do this by the aid of negatives, by the denying to that higher order of things the leading features and characteristics of this" (*Synonyms of the New Testament*, 253–54). Using Trench's line of reasoning, the word translated "sincerity" in Ephesians 6:24 is a negation of the Greek word meaning "to corrupt" or "to destroy." Hence, the translation legitimately reads "incorrupt."

In Romans 2:7 Paul uses the word to clarify the nature of eternal life. John MacArthur writes, "Paul is not discussing how a person comes to salvation or *how* God produces Christlikeness in him. He is describing what the life of a true believer is like, pointing out that those divinely-bestowed qualities will eventuate in the final glory of the divinely-bestowed **eternal life**" (*Romans 1–8*, 131).

Paul uses this word in 2 Timothy 1:10 in an eternal context. It refers to abolishing death and bringing "life and immortality to light through the gospel." By "immortality" Paul means that which does not decay or die. It parallels the way in which translators render the word in 1 Corinthians 15, where Paul refers to the "incorruption" of the resurrected saints.

**"Rightly
dividing
the Word
of Truth"
(2 Tim. 2:15)**

In Titus 2:7 the apostle Paul directs younger men to provide "incorrupt" instruction. They are to provide a pattern of good works that evidences untainted instruction or doctrine.

In general, translating the word "incorrupt" or "incorruption" aptly fits the occurrences found in the New Testament. What produces greater difficulty with Ephesians 6:24 is the brevity of its context.

Surprisingly, a brief etymological search of an English dictionary provides some unexpected help. Such a search reveals that the etymological idea behind the English word "sincerity" is "unadulterated" or that which is "not falsified." In other words, the word "sincerity" refers to that which does not contain corruption. Thus, the KJV translators likely used the word "sincerity" in Ephesians 6:24 to mean untainted or incorrupt.

The grammatical construction is the second challenge. How does this word relate to the sentence in which it occurs? Again, Ephesians 6:24 reads as follows: "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen." This verse contains a benedictory prayer that the apostle offers for those in Ephesus. Its main verb is implied or understood. He qualifies the object of his prayer by the participial phrase "all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ."

The phrase "in sincerity" is a prepositional phrase occurring at the end of sentence. Since the participle translated "love" is the closest verbal to this prepositional phrase, the most natural way to interpret the phrase is to assume that it qualifies or describes the type of love that these folks have for the Lord Jesus. A different translation would require translators to rearrange completely the grammatical structure of the sentence. Charles Hodge concurs that this is "the only natural construction" (*A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians*, 397). John Eadie writes, "Whatever difficulty may be involved in the exegesis, we are obliged to take [the phrase] . . . as qualifying" the loving ones (*A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*, 484). Eadie continues, "In this love there is no source of decay or change. . . . It does not contain within itself the seeds of dissolution."

Thus, in Ephesians 6:24 the apostle Paul offers a benedictory prayer desiring that those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an incorrupt or unadulterated love would experience God's grace in their lives. 

It was May of 1940, early in World War II. The German invasion of Poland led to an intensified assault on France. Allied troops were driven back by the German advance. A series of counterattacks failed to stop the German Army.

When the Germans reached the coast on May 20, hundreds of thousands of soldiers were pinned down on a narrow strip only five kilometers wide. While men from five nations were ensnared, most of those trapped were soldiers from France and Britain. The prospects were dim. They were cut off by land and being pressed by German panzer divisions. Overhead the German Air Force—the *Luftwaffe*—attacked. From the sea, the waters were too shallow to bring in large boats for evacuation.

Winston Churchill called it the greatest military defeat in many centuries, warning that “the whole root, the core, and brain of the British Army” was stranded. It appeared that the situation would cost Britain the war as their troops were trapped on the beaches of Dunkirk.

Their only hope was to evacuate. It was thought that they would have about two days to withdraw before the Germans cut off the sea route. The hope was to remove 45,000 soldiers from the British Expeditionary Force in that time. On May 27 the evacuations began, but that first day only 7000 men departed. The shallow waters made the process painfully slow.

The call went out to shipbuilders along the British coast to gather all the low-level draft boats that could navigate in the shallow waters. Fishing boats, pleasure boats, private yachts, sloops, ferries, and launches—almost anything that could float and cross the English Channel was enlisted for what was called “Operation Dynamo.” Many owners insisted on sailing their own vessels. It was an unlikely navy as boats not made for war poured out of the Thames River and the ports along the English Channel heading for Dunkirk.

Seven hundred private boats joined about two hundred and twenty warships to make up an improbable armada. When they reached the French coast they began ferrying soldiers to the larger ships. Others, with men crammed in like sardines, made their way across the English Channel to safety.

Nine days later 338,226 men had been evacuated from the beaches of Dunkirk. Churchill referred to the outcome as a “miracle,” and the British press so successfully presented the evacuation as a “Disaster Turned to Triumph” that Churchill had to remind people that wars are not won by retreat.

Yet what looked like a horrible military defeat turned out to be a rallying cry and great moral victory. When Churchill addressed the British House of Commons on June 4, 1940, he said,

We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength

in the air, we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.

The “Dunkirk Spirit” spoke of unity—of pulling together to overcome adversity.

Imagine what it would have been like to own a small pleasure boat in England in 1940 and hear that call for help. Your craft could not compare to the mighty naval warships for size, speed, and ability to attack and defend against hostile forces. In fact, when using your boat, you would be forced to keep an eye on the weather and plan accordingly. Yet, your country needed you.

Think of the possible excuses for not serving . . .

- There are bigger and better boats.
- There are professional sailors.
- You have other responsibilities.
- What if the weather is bad?
- What difference could your boat make?

The greatness of the operation did not come by focusing on the grandeur of individual boats. Instead, from a militarily vantage point, this impressive feat was accomplished by seemingly unimportant vessels.

The flag of St. George is the rank flag of the British Royal Navy. Civilian ships are forbidden to fly it, except for those ships that took part in the rescue operation at Dunkirk. Those ships, regardless of their shape or size, are proudly permitted to fly that flag.

In a similar fashion, God’s greatness is revealed in taking insignificant vessels and creating a new humanity against which the forces of Hell shall not prevail. He rescues condemned sinners, cleanses them, places them into a family, and then equips them to serve—not in an evacuation operation, but to be more than conquerors and thus display His manifold wisdom and glory.

Unlike the Dunkirk evacuation, God’s plan was not hastily pulled together because the previous plan had failed. No, Ephesians 3 declares that the revealed mystery of the church was “according to the eternal purpose” of God. Through the church, God demonstrates His wisdom to the world and to principalities and powers in heavenly places.

The Giving of Gifts

In early March of 2009 British Prime Minister Gordon Brown met with President Obama. Mr. Brown presented Mr. Obama with an ornamental pen holder carved from the wood of a Victorian antislavery ship, the *HMS Gannet*. The wood from a sister ship of the *HMS*

“To every preacher of righteousness as well as to Noah, wisdom gives the command, ‘A window shalt thou make in the ark.’”

Charles Spurgeon

Resolute had been carved to make the desk that has been in the White House Oval Office since 1880. Mr. Brown also provided a framed commission for the *HMS Resolute* and a first edition of a seven-volume biography of Winston Churchill.

The British press emphasized the thought and planning that went into the gift selection, the preparation of that gift, and the presentation. So it is no surprise that the British press was appalled at what they considered a snub when, in return, President Obama gave Prime Minister Brown a set of 25 DVDs put together for the White House by the American Film Institute. Supposedly, Mr. Brown doesn't even enjoy movies, he likes books—particularly historical books.¹

Even when gifts are given for political purposes, they communicate something about the attitude of the giver. Supposing the facts presented by the news media are accurate, what might be surmised from the situation?

- Lack of forethought or planning
- Couldn't find the desired gift, and had to come up with an alternative
- Unaware of the individual's interests or needs
- Indifference toward the person receiving the gift
- Ingratitude on the part of the recipient

Christ gives every believer a gift for the purpose of bringing glory to God by building and bringing unity to His Body, the Church. Ephesians 4:7–10 reveals that Christ won the right to bestow these gifts through the victory He accomplished by coming to earth.

When Christ gives gifts to individual believers, do you think thought or planning goes into the giving of those gifts? Is there an expectation that those gifts be used for the intended purpose? What is communicated about the recipient, if he conceals the gift in a closet?

Stepping Out

Joseph Kittinger was a pioneer. He was a fighter and test pilot for the United States Air Force. In 1953 he was the only pilot to sign on to help with experiments in zero gravity.

Following this contribution, he participated in an experiment to determine how a person would handle being in the stratosphere, above ninety-nine percent of the earth's atmosphere. Kittinger was sent in a capsule on a manned balloon to record heights—24,000 feet higher than any balloon had ever gone.

The flight faced problems—communications failed. Kittinger could hear mission control, but they couldn't hear him. So Joe communicated by Morse code. Then it was discovered that there were problems with his oxygen feed. But he refused to abort the mission, determining that if he were careful to conserve the oxygen that he had, he could just make it. When the balloon reached 96,000 feet and there was just enough oxygen to return safely, the ground command ordered Kittinger to begin his descent. He tapped out his response: "Come up and get me."

Other death-defying experiments were to follow.

On August 16, 1960, wearing 320 pounds of gear, Joe took off from New Mexico in an open-air gondola attached to a balloon, rising into space at twelve hundred feet per minute. The temperature dropped to minus one hundred degrees Fahrenheit. A suit began to inflate to compensate for the reduced atmospheric pressure, but his right glove malfunctioned. Rather than being dissuaded, he determined he could do the procedures without his right hand. From the edge of that balloon, he looked at the earth 103,000 feet below and described his surroundings:

The spectacle was breathtaking. I could see a thunderhead boiling up above Flagstaff, Arizona, 350 miles to the west. I could make out Guadalupe Pass in Texas to the east. It was almost like a painting. I can't really describe the feeling I had hanging there in that tiny gondola and seeing this magnificent planet set against the utter backdrop of outer space. I suddenly had a powerful and unfamiliar sense of my own remoteness from everything I cherished in life.

He floated there for eleven minutes, and then, from almost twenty miles above the earth, he stepped from the edge of the gondola into the stratosphere. With no atmosphere and no wind, there was no sensation of speed, but Kittinger was gaining twenty-two miles per hour every second, hurtling through space and sky, reaching a speed over six hundred miles per hour.

The freefall took over four minutes; then his parachutes deployed. It took almost fourteen minutes to reach the ground. He had accomplished an impressive set of records: highest manned balloon flight, highest parachute jump, highest freefall, and longest freefall. Despite strides in technology, these records have stood for fifty years. This wasn't a thrill ride, and Joe wasn't an adrenaline junkie seeking the next high. He was conducting tests on the viability of emergency escapes at high altitudes—paving the way for sending pilots and astronauts to such heights.

Kittinger demonstrated an explorer's courage and pioneering spirit by volunteering for each mission. He said, "Everything good that had happened during my life had come from volunteering." Regardless of how little information he had concerning a potential opportunity, he was ready to try whatever assignment became available.²

His spirit seems opposite of what is so often the thinking of today—an unwillingness to step out unless everything is known and safe; a hesitancy to commit until security and safety are guaranteed. Kittinger accomplished great things because he was willing to step out, to be committed to be used, and to serve even when he didn't know all that it would entail.

¹<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1159627/To-special-friend-Gordon-25-DVDs-Obama-gives-Brown-set-classic-movies-Lets-hope-likes-Wizard-Oz.html>

²<http://artofmanliness.com/2010/09/29/skydiving-from-space-part-i-joseph-w-kittingers-long-lonely-leap> 

Muslims in America

According to *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Ron Rhodes, Harvest House Publishers, 2002), in 1990 only thirty mosques were located in the United States; now there are over three thousand, with roughly one new mosque opening every week. As you can see, the Muslim population in the United States and Canada is growing at an alarming rate. There are also nearly two hundred Islamic schools, over four hundred Islamic associations, and around one hundred Islamic publications. Most American cities have sizable Muslim communities. I have visited Muslims in Brooklyn, New York; Dearborn, Michigan; Schaumburg, Illinois; Houston, Texas; and Atlanta, Georgia. Several hundred thousand Muslims live in each of these cities. Because the number in Dearborn is so great, I put away my visitation list and just went from door to door.

Muslims come to America for a variety of reasons: jobs, education, a better way of life, and, of course, the freedom they find here. Their presence gives Christians a wonderful opportunity to reach Muslims from countries where it is difficult to go as a missionary. Here we can openly reach them. Some churches are doing well in this area, but overall the response of the Fundamental church has been weak. Here are some common responses from Christians when they see Muslims.

The Fear Response: "These People Scare Me."

After seeing a Muslim lady walking past her home, one lady said, "From then on I made sure all my windows and doors were locked in the day and the night." Many Christians are afraid they might be attacked if they approach Muslims. However, most Muslims I have met are peaceful and law abiding. When we witnessed to Muslims in England for twenty-six years, we found they were more likely to be respectful and invite us into their homes than were non-Muslims. Risks are involved in any type of visitation, but our Lord said, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). However, if you approach a Muslim in a respectful and kind way, he will respond similarly. Let us boldly proclaim the gospel to them.

The Angry Response: "I Hate Muslims."

On a plane I met a professing Christian who had served with the Army during Desert Storm. He had no love for the Muslim people. Some Christians have an almost Jonah-like spirit, wishing the destruction of Muslims more than their

salvation. If we try to witness with anger, they will reject our witness. When a Christian approaches them with love and understanding, they will listen and sometimes even accept the Lord as Savior.

The Why Me Response: "Let Someone Else Do This."

Many Christians feel that the Muslims' beliefs and culture are so different that they say, "I will let other Christians who know more about them witness to them. I'll witness to people I know." That response is a clear disobedience of Christ's command. In Mark 16:15 Christ commands every Christian to give the gospel to everyone wherever we are. First Peter 3:15 tells us to be ready to give an answer to every man who asks the reason for our hope. According to John 3:36 those who are not saved will have the wrath of God on them forever.

The Defeated Response: "They Will Not Get Saved Anyway."

This response shows a lack of faith and knowledge. Romans 1:16 declares that the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." The gospel of forgiveness and eternal life made possible by the shed blood of Christ is a message which has God's power to work in the hearts of all, even Muslims. And Muslims are being saved in large numbers. A booklet entitled *Inside the Revival* by Joel C. Rosenberg gives examples of Muslims who came to Christ. Although we cannot verify the statistics given, they present a trend.

Iran: In 1979 at the time of the Islamic Revolution, only about five hundred converts to Christianity were known. By 2000 Christians numbered 220,000. One Christian said, "You don't have to run after people to share the gospel—they come up to you to ask about the Lord."

Egypt: Senior pastors estimate there are more than 2.5 million Christians in their country, and many of these are converts.

Sudan: Since the year 2000 more than a million and a quarter have given their lives to Christ in Sudan.

Morocco: The Morocco news media is up in arms about the number of Moroccans who have converted to Christ. Reports suggest the number of believers is between 20,000 and 40,000.

Iraq: Christian leaders profess that the hunger for Christ inside Iraq is at an all-time high. By the end of 2008 Iraqi Christians numbered more than 70,000.

West Bank (Holy Land): Nearly 1000 Muslims have come to Christ in the West Bank alone.

Syria: In 1967 there were almost no known born-again believers in Syria. Today around five thousand believers live there.

Uzbekistan: In Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, believers in Christ have grown from a handful to over 30,000.

Pakistan: Pakistan is seeing an increase of converts to Christ. Nearly 3 million people profess Christ.

The Lord is working among the Muslim people. The great need is for Christians who will respond not in fear, anger, or unbelief but with Christlike love, understanding, and boldness to proclaim the Word of God to them. "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them" (Matt. 9:36). Let us be moved with compassion for the Muslim people.

Effective Ways to Impact Muslims

Begin by praying regularly for the Muslim people—for their salvation and for the Holy Spirit's working to draw them to Christ. Pray for missionaries and other believers seeking to lead them to salvation. Ask the Lord to give you a love for them and an open door to witness to them. You might gather others to pray with you. Only the Lord can open the eyes of those blinded by the false teachings of Islam. So pray! Souls depend on it.

Start a visitation program aimed at reaching Muslims. Find Muslim names in the local phone book and visit those addresses. Examples of such names are Ahmed, Ahmad, Abdullah, Ali, Azeem, Fazal, Hamid, Haque, Ibrahim, Islam, Khan, Mohammed, Muhammad, Nasir, Noor, Omar, Rashed, Sheikh, Sharif, Uddin, and Yusuf. When you visit, simply go to the door and see whether the person would be open to hearing a gospel witness. Most of the time they will be receptive.

When you find those who seem open to listening, seek to start a Bible study with them, invite them to a special service (such as "Friend Sunday") at your church, and keep up regular

visits as long as the door is open.

With your pastor's permission, put into the church tract rack good gospel tracts written with Muslims in mind. Some of these include

For My Muslim Friend, American Tract Society, 800.548.7228

Jesus and the Qur'an, Good News Publishers, 630.682.4300

World Religions, American Tract Society, 800.548.7228

Listen to What the Prophets Say, Gospel Fellowship Association, 864.609.5500

Can a Muslim Know for Sure? Gospel Fellowship Association, 864.609.5500

God's Bridge to Eternal Life (in Arabic and in Persian), 586.725.5800

If there is a mosque or Islamic center in your area, visit there on a Friday (the Muslims' holy day) and give out tracts as the Muslims go home. This distribution might open good contacts to follow up.

Consider special services at your church. Arrange for a special speaker to come to your church on a Wednesday or Sunday evening to teach and challenge Christians to evangelize Muslims. (Feel free to contact me; see my contact information at the end of this article.) Ask your pastor to consider having a special service for those from non-Christian backgrounds to see a Christian film or hear a gospel witness and enjoy refreshments.

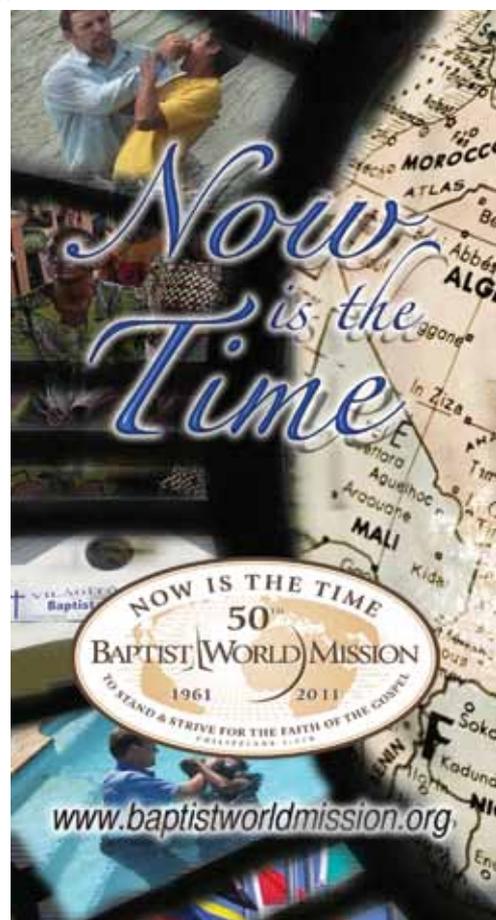
Look for creative ways to make contacts with Muslims. Many Muslim ladies want to improve their English, so a Christian lady could advertise free English classes as a way to meet and witness to Muslim women. Put an ad in the newspaper for free Bibles in Arabic, Urdu, Turkish, Persian, Punjabi, or Hindi. Provide an address or e-mail address for obtaining the books. Insert in the Bibles a leaflet offering a free Bible study and gospel tracts. Visits to local hospitals might put you in contact with Muslims wanting prayer and a conversation. Visits to prisons will often result in contact with Muslims open to a gospel witness. A message using

the Old Testament prophets may open Muslims' hearts. Give Muslims your business. Going to restaurants or shops owned by Muslims may lead to witnessing opportunities. I know Muslims who own and work at pizza, Greek/Italian, and Indian or Asian restaurants. Eating a meal at such a restaurant may begin a friendship that leads to an open door to witness.

Yes, Muslims are coming to America and making it their home. Instead of saying, "Oh, no!" let us say, "Praise the Lord!" and see this as a great open door to reach out to them. Let us show them the love that Christ has put in our hearts for all people.

"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me and there are many adversaries" (1 Cor. 16:9). Who will walk through the door? Will you?

Bob Rutledge is director of Islamic Outreach for Gospel Fellowship Association in Greenville, South Carolina. For twenty-six years he and his wife, Mary, served as missionaries in England, where they targeted Muslims in their outreach. If you are interested in discussing outreach to Muslims with Bob, call him at 864.905.3306 or send him an e-mail at rrutledge@gfamissions.org.



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And Also to the Muslim

In 1990 the Muslim population in America was less than a half million. In 2000 it was about 1.3 million. There are now well over 5 million Muslims living in the US. Though Islamic nations are closed to foreign missions, the Muslim mission field is coming to us. Muslim evangelism should be part of every church's local outreach.

Islam is the most formidable challenge to the gospel today. It gives every Muslim a responsibility to convert every person on earth. That puts Islam in direct opposition to the command issued by the Head of the Christian Church in Matthew 28:18-20.

The gospel of Christ is a powerful obstacle to Islam, the only force that can prevail against it. The gospel has proven to be a major headache and frustration to Islam, as persecution of Christians in Muslim countries indicates. As our brothers and sisters boldly preach the gospel in Muslim countries, so we can and must do our part to reach Muslims in America.

Sadly, Islam advances in America unchallenged by most Christians. Fear and lack of understanding cause many to be reluctant to even talk to a Muslim. However, the gospel is still the power of God to salvation. We must no longer act as if the Great Commission did not apply to Muslims.

An effective response will be based on an understanding of the nature of Islam, the opportunities in Islam, and an approach that will enable believers to overcome a Muslim's primary obstacle to listening to the gospel. We must then use our knowledge to open the door of witness.

Before engaging in witness to Muslims we must fervently pray. Jesus warned us that success against the powers of darkness "goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Matt. 17:21). Prayer is necessary in breaking the deep deception in which Muslims are trapped. In our conversations with Muslims, our faith will often come under direct attack. Prayer for compassion and humility will enable the believer to withstand the tests with calmness and confidence.

The Challenge: The Nature of Islam

The nature of Islam presents both difficulties and opportunities. Islam is not merely a religion but an all-encompassing system that penetrates every part of a Muslim's life. So leaving Islam is very costly, even in America. Experienced Muslim evangelists consistently caution that three to five years of gospel witness are required before many Muslims come to faith in Christ.

Muslims are taught that the Qur'an is God's final and only perfect revelation. They are told that Bible has been corrupted. Muslims profess to respect the Bible and eagerly point out to Christians that the Qur'an mentions many

Biblical characters as prophets, especially Jesus. But they refuse to accept the Bible at face value, particularly passages that teach the corruption of human nature and the deity and substitutionary death of Christ.

Although they revere the Qur'an, many Muslims are not well versed in it or the *Hadith*, the authoritative narratives of what Muhammad taught, did, or approved. The *khutbat*, or "Friday address" that Muslims typically hear each week at the mosque, is a repetitious speech commanding obedience to the requirements of Islam. Muslims are expected to submit to the Qur'an, not understand it.

Advantages and Opportunities

American Christians will be surprised to find that many Muslims will readily engage a Christian in a conversation about God. Imagine sitting next to a typical non-Christian in Starbucks and saying, "Hi, I'm a Christian. Would you like to talk about God, Jesus, and the Bible?" The usual response would be cold enough to freeze your coffee. But a Christian will likely get a warm reception and possibly a long conversation with most Muslims. Religious conversation is a natural part of their lives.

Their openness presents multiple opportunities to the believer. Because Muslim culture puts a high value on relationships, patient bridge-building can increase trust. Building personal friendship also gives Muslims opportunities to observe firsthand the glory of Christ's grace transforming every part of our lives. But they will not see "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27) unless we spend time befriending them.

With these advantages the believer could simply forge ahead and present the gospel to his Muslim friend. We know that no one can be saved apart from the preaching of the gospel. But Muslims usually will not listen to the gospel until we demonstrate the purity and reliability of the Bible.

Overcoming the Barriers

Here are some valuable facts from an unlikely source that can enable us to overcome this obstacle. First, over a dozen passages in the Qur'an clearly affirm the major portions of the Bible as the Word of God. Surah 5:47 says, "Let the people of the Gospel [Christians], judge by what Allah hath revealed therein. If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah hath revealed, they are no better than those who rebel." Here the Qur'an explicitly commands Christians to ascertain truth by the gospel. Verse 48 goes further: "To thee We sent the Scripture [the Qur'an] in truth, confirming the Scripture that came before it [the

Bible], and guarding it in safety; so judge between them by what Allah hath revealed. . . .”

There are several other Qur’anic passages that affirm the *Tawrat* (the law of Moses), the *Zabur* (the Psalms of David) and the *Injil*, (the gospel) as the Word of God. Surah 5:68 commands people to “stand upon the Law, the Gospel.” Surah 10:94 commands Muslims to consult Christians and Jews if in doubt about the Qur’an’s teachings.

Second, the Qur’an emphatically states that no one can alter God’s Word (Surah 6:34, 115; 10:64). A few passages claim that the Bible has been misunderstood by Jews or Christians. But there is not a single Qur’anic verse stating that the Biblical text itself has been corrupted. It is also noteworthy that the *Hadith* do not document a single statement by Muhammad that the Bible was corrupted. In fact, no Muslim leader made that claim for four centuries after Muhammad’s death.

None of this implies that the Bible needs the Qur’an to confirm it. Our purpose for using these facts is to gain a hearing for the gospel, much like Paul used Greek literature in his Mars Hill sermon (Acts 17:28). No Muslim will argue with the Qur’an. Bringing these facts to a Muslim’s attention will disarm his objections and gently confront him with the Bible and its authority in a way that is difficult for him to ignore.

When pressed, Muslim apologists will answer that the *Injil* (gospel) referenced by the Qur’an is not synonymous with the four Gospels of our Bible. Instead, they insist that the *Injil* is the original one given by Allah to Jesus, and is unavailable today.

The wisest response is to ask questions. This keeps the discussion civil. It also gives the believer information to intelligently direct his witness. While no tactic can substitute for the gospel, a wise use of tactics can clear obstacles. Asking questions also invites your Muslim friend to think for himself, a difficult but necessary task for someone in a system as authoritarian as Islam. Here are some good questions to ask your Muslim friend:

Since the Qur’an affirms the Bible as God’s Word and also states that God’s Word cannot be altered, how could the Bible have been corrupted?

If the Bible was corrupt in Muhammad’s time, then why does the Qur’an command Christians to judge by it?

If the Bible was corrupt in Muhammad’s time, then why did Muhammad affirm it as God’s Word?

Christians are commanded by the Qur’an to believe and stand on the gospel. If the true gospel is not available today, then how can the Qur’an be obeyed?

Most Muslims have no idea when the alleged corruption occurred or what parts remain reliable. Very few have read the Bible. Usually they only repeat what they have been told. Offer a copy of the Bible to your Muslim friend and invite him to read it for himself. Arabic copies of the New Testament and of individual Gospels are available. (See sidebar).

While it is not likely that a Muslim will immediately affirm the Bible as God’s Word, these questions can make it difficult for him to reject the Bible outright. The believer can then address the crucial Muslim objections to the gospel such as,

Jesus is not God, or the Son of God.

Human nature is weak, not corrupt. Sin is merely a mistaken choice.

Jesus did not die (and, by inference, did not come back from the dead).

The challenge of Islam is increasing. As with any bold gospel advance, there are risks in confronting it. But the risks of inaction are greater. Let us seek the filling of the Holy Spirit through prayer and obedience, asking Him to give boldness to preach the Word without fear. From the beginning, this is how the Church has advanced (Acts 4:29–31). So it is today.

Stephen Enjaian has taught world history, including Islamic history, for ten years on the high school level. He has held dozens of conversations with Muslims at the local mosque and elsewhere, has read and studied the Qur’an and *Hadith*, and has attended Islamic seminars and forums.

Ministries That Equip Christians for Muslim Evangelism

These organizations offer inexpensive Arabic New Testaments and Gospels, tracts, training pamphlets, and books. They can provide men who are experienced in Muslim evangelism to lead training seminars that equip believers with practical ways to meet, understand, and begin effective outreach to Muslims in your community.

Arabic Bible Outreach Ministry
PO Box 486
Dracut, MA 01826
<http://www.arabicbible.com>

Gospel Fellowship Association
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Director of Islamic Outreach
www.gfamissions.org

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Out of the Heart

Hannah R. Anderson

I should have seen it coming.

After all, I *was* the one who had introduced my two-and-a-half-year-old to red fingernail polish. It had been one afternoon only a few days before. I was hurriedly attempting to get ready for a long-awaited evening out with my husband and took a risk that including my young daughter in my manicure process would be a smart multitasking solution to the present busyness.

I shouldn't have risked it.

So I really shouldn't have been too surprised one morning a few days later when I walked in on her painting her nails, her arms and legs, and our light frieze carpet red. Correction, candy apple red. What I was completely unprepared for, however, was my own reaction.

"What in the world are you doing?! For goodness' sakes, what were you thinking? How am I ever going to clean this up? You are NOT supposed to play in mommy's makeup. You know that!"

How effortlessly, how naturally, how simply it all came spewing out. Gone were any pretensions of June Cleaver or Donna Reed. Here was a full-grown woman screaming and ranting at a two-year-old. Looking into her dark confused eyes, I continued, completely embracing my "righteous" anger.

"How am I ever going to get this out of the carpet? I can't believe you did this. Stop crying! Go to your room and stay there. Mommy needs some space. Just go away and let me clean this up!"

Her size-five feet fled down the hall toward her bedroom, and I couldn't help but hear her broken sobs. One thing a mother, even one whose carpet and walls are covered with red fingernail polish, cannot ignore is the crying of her child. Instantly, my tantrum subsided and was replaced by a flood of remorse. *What was I thinking? What in the world had I just done? I knew better; I couldn't believe I had said those things. How was I ever going to clean that up?*

I followed her to her bedroom and found her on her bed, her little body still shaking with surprise and sorrow. Sitting down on the edge of the bed, I lifted her onto my lap and pulled her close, my arms circling all of her barely twenty-six pounds. I held her securely until she calmed down. My lips, which only moments before had condemned her, now spoke words of forgiveness, acceptance, and reassurance. Within a few minutes, my daughter and I were reconciled. She forgot my tirade and remembered only a mommy who loved her.

My recovery was not quite so simple.

What haunted me even days later was not merely

that I had lost my temper—I had done that often enough—but the fact that with one wave of her chubby little hand, my toddler could undo years of spiritual maturing. How could such a little person push me so far and dismantle every bit of my self-control? After all this time, had I finally met my match only to discover that she was two years old?

Or was the reality worse than that? Maybe the anger that surfaced that morning revealed more about me than I wanted to remember. Maybe the truth was that I hadn't changed as much as I'd thought I had in all those years. Had I been hiding so long under a veneer of goodness and beauty, growing accustomed to the niceties of religion that I had forgotten who I really was?

When the "real me" appeared that morning, I once again had to face the truth about my sinful heart. My two-year-old wasn't primarily responsible for my outburst; I was. I couldn't escape the words of Christ that told me so: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:34). So what was really bothering me was facing the truth about the "real me." The real me screams and yells, the real me lashes out, the real me knowingly hurts others and uses their guilt against them.

This is the real me, a woman whose words reveal a heart of anger and self-righteousness, a woman whose same heart needs to be constantly changed by mercy and forgiveness.

The One whose condemning words pierced my heart that day is the very One who offers hope for the wounded heart. He is the One who promises to be "gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness" (Joel 2:13). He is the One Who "take[s] away [my] stony heart" (Ezek. 36:26) and replaces it with a new one. And most importantly to me at the moment, He is the One who promises that He has "begun a good work in [me]" and He "will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).

Suddenly I was comforted in the hope of God's mercy. A mercy that is so wise it uses the foolishness of a child to teach His wayward daughter. A mercy that is so full of patience and peace that it deals with my childish rage. A mercy that is so encompassing that it reaches down to the real, ugly me and refuses to let me remain as I am. A mercy that is so powerful that it heals and transforms.

A mercy that is so unlike my own heart.

Hannah R. Anderson spends her days in rural Pennsylvania loving her husband and three rambunctious children.

The cross (or death) of Jesus is mentioned in most of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. Its reality and meaning permeates all of them. Yet Muslims deny that Jesus ever suffered and died on the cross. There can be no Christianity without this event. There can be no Islam with it.

—Timothy George in *Is the Father of Jesus the God of Muhammad?*

Many Qur'anic verses . . . bring forth the idea that Muhammad's decisions . . . were subject to his own and his companions' unstable political trends rather than to an unchangeable God.

—Daniel Shayesteh

Americans could not fathom how the problems of others—for which they had no responsibility, moral or otherwise—required strangers to hate us or kill us.

—John Ankerberg
writing about September 11, 2001

The . . . contest between Isaac and Ishmael to gain the upper hand, this "jihad" of individual and national proportions, is the story of the Middle East.

—Ravi Zacharias

The biggest terrorist is Allah of the Quran, the god of the Quran, the god of Islam.

—Mosab Yousef, author, *Son of Hamas*

[Muhammad's] obscure doctrine of revelation . . . clouds the dynamic monotheism of the New Testament by displacing the revelation of the supremacy and deity of Jesus Christ.

—Carl F. H. Henry in *Revelation and Authority*

The names of God in Islam describe God's activity but not his essence. . . . God retains an untrammelled freedom over against any sort of moral or spiritual necessity. . . . God may relate as "loving"; he may not be said to be love.

—Kenneth Cragg in *Muhammad and the Christian*

So bitter was the animosity of Muslims towards Christians, as a result of the savage cruelty manifested during the Crusades, that even today the memory has not been erased, and evangelism remains most difficult among people of the Muslim faith.

—Ruth Tucker in *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya*

The formulation of the doctrine of the so-called corruption of the Bible is the first important example of what has become a

normal practice among Muslim scholars, namely, the exaltation of theological dogma above historical fact.

—W. Montgomery Watt in *Early Islam*

No Muslim would think of assigning divine status to Muhammad. It is not the Prophet but the Quran itself that holds a similar place in Islam to that of Jesus Christ in Christianity.

—Timothy George

How powerless are the best-directed arguments, till the Holy Spirit renders them effectual.

—Henry Martyn in *Journals and Letters of Henry Martyn*

Compiled by Dr. David Atkinson, pastor of Dyer Baptist Church, Dyer, Indiana.



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Being a Witness for Christ

In Acts 1:8 our Lord said, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Notice in the middle part of this verse that He stated, "And ye shall be witnesses of me." There are two things that concern me as I travel across the country. My first concern is that there seems to be a coldness and indifference among the Lord's people in telling others about Christ. It is prevalent from the pulpit to the pews. I love pastors and have spent my entire ministry working with them. There are a few pastors who have a zeal for souls and who are constantly trying to reach the unsaved with the gospel. However, I know many that are more consumed with their studying than they are with soul winning. Now, I am not casting stones at pastors to put them on a guilt trip. I know how busy the pastorate is because I started an independent Baptist church in Anderson, South Carolina, when I was a senior at Bob Jones University. I know the rigors of sermon preparation.

One Saturday morning I was in my study in serious preparation for Sunday. All of a sudden the Lord burdened me to go soul winning, and I told Him that I couldn't go because I had so much to do. However, the Lord would not leave me alone. I got very upset and jumped out of my chair and told my wife that I had to go to Anderson. I got in my car and began to pray out loud, "Okay, Lord, You want me to go soul winning? Then direct me where to go." Isn't that a wonderful attitude? Well, He directed me to a street that I had never been to before. There was a house on the left side of the street that the Lord prompted me to stop at and visit. When I knocked on the door, a lady answered. I introduced myself and told her I was the pastor of the Fellowship Baptist Church. She began to cry and said, "Did my neighbors call you?" I said no. Then she said, "I know . . . my two daughters called you, didn't they?" I said, "No one called me. Why are you asking me these questions?" She said, "Because I have been up all night praying for someone to come to my house and tell me how I can go to Heaven!" After I led this dear lady to the

Lord, I drove away from her house with tears flowing. I prayed aloud, "Dear Lord, help me never to lose sight of being a witness for You."

When I was in Preacher Boys Class at BJU, we always sang the song "Souls for Jesus Is Our Battle Cry." I believe many men of God have lost the message of this song and the song of their hearts is now, "Knowledge and intellectualism are our battle cry." We are to study and be diligent in preparation: however, we need to balance that with a burden of being a witness for our Lord.

My second concern is that after a person leads someone to Christ, so often there is no follow-up of discipling that convert. The Lord said in Matthew 28:19, "Teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." It is important that we consistently take the time to help those who have been newly saved understand and grow in the Word of God.

Many years ago, I led a man to Christ, and as we were studying the Scriptures together I asked him if he understood the phrase "the Word" in John 1:1. He said he didn't. So I told him that it is referring to the Lord Jesus Christ. So this man began to read John 1:1 aloud as follows: "In the beginning was the Jesus, and the Jesus was with God, and the Jesus was God." Then he turned to me and said, "That's what it means, doesn't it?" I told him he was right. It is wonderful to see the excitement in the life of a baby Christian as he begins to see the truth of God's Word and apply it to his life.

So we have to teach them, and we have to do it with patience. But we also must instruct them in being baptized. (Col. 2:12: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.") Baptism is the outward manifestation of the inward change wrought in a person's life through the shed blood of Christ for our sins and the bodily resurrection of our Lord from the grave.

In my next article I will address the subject of different ways to witness for the Lord.

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Written and Compiled by Dr. Layton Talbert

ANATOMY OF A MAGNIFICENT

Isaiah glistens with glorious texts, from stunning Messianic prophecies to breathtaking declarations of the divine character. But perhaps no passage in Isaiah is so well known nor often quoted as the chapter that marks the transition in Isaiah's prophecy from judgment to comfort. Isaiah 40 is a mountain peak of prophetic proclamation. The subject of the passage is "A Message of Comfort to Jerusalem: The Coming of Her God." The passage naturally breaks into four interlocking divisions. If you want to really understand this passage, see how it's put together, and hear what God is saying in it, then open your Bible and follow along.

The Call to Comfort Jerusalem: Her God Is Coming (40:1-11)

Note the appeal beginning in verse 1. The message comes from Yahweh, but Yahweh does not comfort Jerusalem directly, nor does He charge Isaiah alone to declare this message. The plural imperatives ("comfort ye") call for any and every spokesman for God to voice this message of comfort and encouragement.

See the verb "cry" (*qara'*) in verses 2, 3, and 6 and the noun "voice" (*qol*) in verses 3, 6, and 9? And the other verbs of declaration in verse 9 ("bringest good tidings," "lift up thy voice," "say")? Those are the verbal connectors that tie this segment together. The message which is the content of the verb (i.e., the message being *cried out*) extends all the way to verse 11. So verses 1 through 11 constitute a major unit: the cry of comfort to Jerusalem is that her God is coming! That the coming of her God is the essence of the message is clear from the announcement (a) to prepare for that revelation in verses 3 through 6, and (b) of the coming itself described in verses 9 and 10. The focus shifts to the uniqueness of the Coming One (demonstrated by a series of comparisons) beginning in verse 12, but the emphasis on the content of the message re-emerges at the end in the form of an encouragement to "wait" for Him who is coming (v. 31).

The words "that . . . that . . . for" in verse 2 represent three successive constructions with the same Hebrew word (*kiy*) and are best taken causally (in the sense of "because") to differentiate what is said in verse 2 from the major content of the message in verses 3 and following. The double-requiring in verse 2 initially sounds unjust; why should

God punish someone double what he deserves? The sense, however, is not that the payment has been twice what the sin deserves but, rather, a mirror-image of the sin—i.e., a precise retribution, exactly what it deserves (Motyer). So the reason for this message of comfort is threefold: *Because all of Jerusalem's warfare will have ended; because all her iniquity will have been removed; because all her sin will have been fully requited.* God is anticipating His arrival and the promised millennial kingdom under the terms of the promised new covenant. The message is one of comfort: after all their trouble and chastisement, God will come to them and be with them.

Part 1 of the message (vv. 3-6) focuses on the call to facilitate and prepare for God's arrival (v. 3). The parallelism of verse 3 is often overlooked. A slight rearrangement of the word order makes the intended parallelism unmistakable:

*A voice crying,
"In the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the LORD;
In the desert, make straight a highway for our God."*

Verses 4 and 5 describe the effects of God's arrival. Elevations will be equalized (valleys exalted, mountains lowered), obstacles will be removed (crooked places straightened, rough places smoothed), and the glory of Yahweh will be universally witnessed (all flesh will see it simultaneously). Why? Simple. *Because God has said so!*

Part 2 of the message (vv. 6-8) is a command to contrast the transience and unreliability of man (vv. 6, 7) with the eternality and reliability of God's words (v. 8).

Part 3 of the message (vv. 9-11) now enjoins the recipients of the message to share in proclaiming the message! "Zion" and "Jerusalem" are invited to fearlessly proclaim to all "the cities of Judah": "Behold your God!" The event itself is then described: their God is coming to rule, to reward, and to pastor (shepherd) His people (vv. 10, 11).

The Unique Character of Her Coming God (40:12-17)

Verse 12 begins a comparative section. Note the repetition of "Who?" (*miy*) beginning verses 12, 13, and "With whom?" (*eth-miy*) beginning verse 14. This repetition is designed to display not merely the power or wisdom or superiority of Yahweh, but His absolute uniqueness. There

MESSAGE: ISAIAH 40

is no one else in His league. This is demonstrated through a succession of comparative categories. The focus of each segment fastens on a different dimension of God.

Yahweh's Unique Immensity (v. 12). He “measured” the waters, “meted out” Heaven, “comprehended” (calculated) the dust of the earth “in a measure,” “weighed” the mountains in “scales,” and weighed the hills in a “balance.” God dwarfs the biggest things in our experience!

Yahweh's Unique Omniscience (vv. 13, 14). Who “directed” His Spirit? Who “taught” Him? With whom did He “take counsel”? Who “instructed” Him and “taught” Him justice? Who “taught” Him knowledge? Who “shewed” Him the way of understanding? He needed no one to teach Him anything!

Yahweh's Unique Infinitude and Humanity's Infinitesimalness (vv. 15–17). The big, powerful human entities—“the nations,” “the isles,” “Lebanon,” “all nations”—are puny and pathetic compared to Him, like “a drop in a bucket,” like “the small dust on the scale”; they are “a very little thing,” “not sufficient,” “nothing,” “less than nothing,” and “vanity.”

The next unit (vv. 18–24) and the final unit (vv. 25–31) both flow naturally out of verses 12 through 17. Both segments begin with “To whom?” (*‘el-miy*), echoing the “Who(m)?” (*miy*) in verses 12 through 14. Both segments draw the natural conclusions and applications that arise from the comparisons in verses 12 through 17.

The Sole Sovereignty of Her Coming God (40:18–24)

Verses 18 through 24 press a conclusion based on the presentation of Yahweh in 12 through 17: *Will you try to compare me to humanly devised and manmade idols? I rule over all the inhabitants of earth!*

Note in verses 18 through 20 the emphasis (in the actors) on *human devising* of idols: “The workman . . . the goldsmith . . . he that is impoverished chooseth a tree . . . he seeketh unto himself a cunning workman.” Note in the same verses the emphasis (in the actions) on the *manmade nature* of idols: “melteth . . . spreadeth it over . . . casteth chains . . . prepare . . . graven [carved] image.”

The point? *Yahweh alone (not idols) exercises universal dominion and will overthrow your enemies* (vv. 21–24). Note the emphasis on God’s *dominion* over the “inhabitants . . .

princes . . . [and] judges” of the earth. Note the emphasis on the *universality* of God’s dominion: “he sitteth upon the circle of the earth . . . the heavens are his tent . . . he maketh the judges of the earth vanity.” Finally, note the emphasis on human *impotence* in the face of God’s universal dominion, expressed in terms such as “grasshoppers . . . nothing . . . vanity . . . they shall not be planted, sown, or take root; he shall blow upon them . . . they shall wither [and be] taken away as stubble.”

The Unfailing Faithfulness of Her Coming God (40:25–31)

Verses 25 through 31 press a second conclusion based on all this: *Look to me alone and do not suppose that my silence means ignorance or abandonment.* Note the progression of God’s argument and assurance: (1) *Look at the immensity of what I maintain flawlessly and unfailingly* (v. 26)! (2) *So why would you think I have forgotten you or abandoned you* (v. 27; cf. 49:14–16)? This is followed by the contrast between human weakness and weariness and divine strength and power (vv. 28–31).

The concluding exhortation (*Wait on the Lord!*) is directly tied to the opening message (*I am coming!*). The remedy for despair and discouragement in the face of the apparent abandonment of God (v. 27)—expressed under the metaphor of weariness and weakness—is to *wait* (*qwh*) with confidence on the Lord. The verb signifies waiting with an implication of tenseness, eagerness, expectancy. It is an expression of *trust* based on *the message of comfort* that *God is coming* because *the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.*

A Message of Comfort to YHWH's People: I Am Coming—Wait for Me

Waiting in confident trust amid long delay and unlikely evidences magnifies faith in the reliability of God. The Church’s confidence in God is rooted in His faithfulness to Israel. The confidence of the Church in the trustworthiness of God’s promises to us is grounded in and nourished by the trustworthiness of God’s promises to Israel. If He can desert Israel for her sin, He can desert us for ours. But one is just as impossible as the other (cf. Jer. 31:35–37), because the mouth of the Lord has spoken it!



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New Sodom

On February 23 President Obama made a statement though Attorney General Eric Holder that his administration would no longer support the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). The rationale that was released to news media was that DOMA was too restrictive in defining marriage as legitimate only between a man and a woman. Further rationale offered was the administration's opposition to discrimination against homosexuals, the Supreme Court's recent ruling nullifying sodomy laws, and, ultimately, the Equal Protection Clause of the US Constitution.

President Obama still insists that he is "grappling" with the issue but believes that DOMA is unnecessary and unfair.

This article can be referenced at http://www.onlinejournal.com/artman/publish/article_6925.shtml.

Protestant-Muslim Cooperation

Two Protestant churches have gained national attention for opening their facilities to Muslim groups for prayer and worship. Heartsong Church near Memphis, Tennessee, allowed the Memphis Islamic Center to hold Ramadan prayers in its facilities last September. The Aldersgate United Methodist Church has opened its doors for the Islamic Circle of North

America to have regular Friday prayers until the construction of their mosque has been completed. The rationale in both cases has been to demonstrate the love of Christ to those outside the faith.

Followers of Christ must certainly minister to the needs of those without Christ, but supplying aid to a religious system that rejects the Christ of Scripture is not love; it is foolishness.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.onenewsnow.com/Church/Default.aspx?id=1299800>.

Honor Killing Here in the US

Faleh Hassan Almaleki was convicted of second-degree murder by a Phoenix jury for the October killing of his daughter, Noor.

Faleh had hoped that his daughter would assume the role of a traditional Iraqi woman. She disappointed him by refusing an arranged marriage, enrolling in college, and choosing her own boyfriend. Last October 20 Noor had taken her boyfriend's mother, Kahlaf, to translate at a meeting. Faleh turned up at the appointment. After he left, Noor's friend drove her around the parking lot to make sure that Noor's father was gone but accidentally locked her keys in the car. The two women proceeded on foot to a nearby restaurant when Faleh bore down on them in his vehicle.

After running over his daughter he fled to Mexico and from there to London. He was apprehended there and returned to the US to stand trial. His defense was that he only intended to spit on Kahlaf and was unable to keep from hitting his daughter when she jumped in front of the vehicle.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.onenewsnow.com/Legal/Default.aspx?id=1299734>.

Personal Integrity

A group of thirty-three retired United Methodist clergy are seeking to influence the denomination to change its position regarding homosexual clergy. One of the bishops, Sharon Rader, relayed "convicting" conversations that she had with seminary students who believed they were called and skilled for ministry but were hindered by their homosexuality. Rader is quoted as saying, "When the church has a position that many people do not hold, and those people are in leadership or desire to be in leadership, they have to make compromises with their own integrity."

Sadly, Rader and many like her have elevated human opinion over divine revelation. It is not so much an issue of personal integrity, as she asserts, but of blatant apostasy.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.onenewsnow.com/Church/Default.aspx?id=1290722>. The entire article can be read

at <http://www.umc.org/site/apps/nlnet/content3.aspx?c=IwL4KnN1LtH&b=2789393&ct=9103189>.

Will Not Separate

On February 22, 2011, the executive committee of the Southern Baptist Convention handed down its recommendation regarding affiliation with churches that affiliate with the Baptist Alliance. It reads, "Membership in a group that welcomes and affirms gays does not automatically disqualify a church from participation in the Southern Baptist Convention."

The Baptist Alliance was born in the 1980s as a response to the conservative retaking of the SBC. Today the Alliance boldly affirms homosexual marriages and the homosexual lifestyle. While the SBC has separated from particular churches that accommodate this perverse behavior, they have now gone on record that they will not separate from churches who affirm affiliation with those who embrace such perversion. While it is the hope of many Southern Baptists (such as Wes Kenney, whose motion sent the issue to the executive committee for a recommendation) that their denomination will stand for righteousness, the executive committee has signaled that there is not much reason for hope.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.abpnews.com/content/view/6148/53/>.

No Room at the Inn for Conscience

Peter and Hazelmary Bull are bed-and-breakfast owners in Cornwall, England. Since purchasing the b-and-b in 1986, it has been their operating policy to rent rooms to married heterosexual couples only. In August 2008 the Bulls received a letter of complaint indicating that their policy was in violation of the law (referring to the 2007 Equality Act). Within the month Steven Preddy made a reservation without indicating that he would be staying there with his homosexual partner, Martyn Hall. When the men arrived, they were refused the room together, but were offered separate rooms if they did desire to stay. Preddy and Hall sued the Bulls.

Legal expenses for Preddy and Hall are being covered by governmental programs, while the Bulls are being helped by a Christian organization with the goal of defending the personal rights of Christians.

This article can be referenced at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1336523/Hazelmary-Peter-Bull-sued-refusing-allow-gay-couple-share-double-bed.html>.

Christian Persecution in Iran

Morteza Tamaddon, the governor of Tehran, likened Christians to parasites who are "deviant" and "corrupt." He openly praised the arrest of seventy Christians, vowing to arrest more.

Such persecution is nothing new. Persecution intensified after the Islamic Revolution of the late 1970s. Islamists have persecuted both believers and other non-Muslims, but the effect has resulted in a strong church.

For a history of Iranian Christian persecution please

NOTABLE QUOTES

Give yourself to prayer, to prayer and meditation on divine truths: strive to penetrate to the bottom of them and never be content with superficial knowledge.—David Brainerd

It is characteristic of the unbeliever to see God with a clenched fist; it is characteristic of the believer to see Him with an open hand.—John Blanchard

Prayers and pains through faith in Christ Jesus will do anything.—John Eliot

No person can stand in the presence of the holy God and congratulate himself on how great he is.—Randy Jaeggli

Like water gushing from a large and copious spring, immense crowds of gods have issued from the human mind, every man giving himself full license, and devising some peculiar form of divinity, to meet his own views.—John Calvin

When we see those who have previously stood firm and secure so quaking with terror, that the fear of death takes hold of them, no, they are, in a manner, swallowed up and annihilated, the inference to be drawn is that men are never duly touched and impressed with a conviction of their insignificance, until they have contrasted themselves with the majesty of God.—John Calvin

The true Christian was intended by Christ to prove all things by the Word of God, all churches, all ministers, all teaching, all preaching, all doctrines, all sermons, all writings, all opinions, all practices. These are his marching orders. Prove all by the Word of God; measure all by the measure of the Bible; compare all with the standard of the Bible; weigh all in the balances of the Bible; examine all by the light of the Bible; test all in the crucible of the Bible. That which cannot abide the fire of the Bible, reject, refuse, repudiate, and cast away. This is the flag which he nailed to the mast. May it never be lowered!—John Wycliffe

A man's potential for God lies not in his ability, nor in his opportunity, but in his humility before God.—Jim Berg

view <http://frontpagemag.com/2011/02/04/irans-decades-of-christian-persecution/>. The press release from the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom can be viewed at <http://www.uscirf.gov/news-room/press-releases/3509-iran-uscirf-concerned-by-detentions-of-scores-of-christians-during-holiday-season.html>.

The Price of Conscience

A small Anglican congregation in Leesburg, Virginia, voted to settle its property dispute with the larger Episcopal denomination. The Church of Our Savior voted to pull away from the continually deepening apostasy of the Episcopalian Church, especially because of its acceptance of homosexuality.

This led to a battle over church property. The 133-year-old property was valued at \$314,000. After spending nearly \$400,000 to retain the property, the church settled with the denomination. The terms of the agreement are the surrender of the property while the diocese will render a low-rent situation to the church for the next five years. During that time, the church will "be prohibited from affiliating with breakaway parishes while still using the building."

This article can be referenced at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/02/21/AR2011022103085.html?hpid=sec-religion>.

Compiled by Robert Condict, FBFI Executive Board member and pastor of Upper Cross Roads Baptist Church, Baldwin, Maryland.

Newsworthy is presented to inform believers. The people or sources mentioned do not necessarily carry the endorsement of the FBFI.

Love Thy (Muslim) Neighbor As Thyself

One of the tremendous blessings of living in a large metropolitan area is the cultural and ethnic diversity that surrounds our church and home. This diversity is extending itself to almost every community nationwide—especially those with a university nearby. This diversity can be both interesting and intimidating, depending on one's own personal background, experience, and family environment. Children being reared in an insulated, homogenous group or adults who have grown accustomed to such often struggle greatly to reach out into unfamiliar territory—particularly when it comes to establishing interpersonal relationships. This struggle is readily evident in our independent Baptist churches, though not unique to them. Neighbors and acquaintances who are Muslim can sometimes seem all the more unfamiliar, and so we recoil from getting to know them in order to reach them with the gospel. Sure, we will produce or watch a video, read a book, attend a lecture, or listen to a missionary talk about Islam, but for us to get to know a follower of Islam personally seems almost impossible. In light of this issue's theme, I want to encourage you with some observations that will help the barriers to reaching out to your Muslim neighbor seem much less intimidating.

First, we must view Muslims in their full humanity. They are men and women, boys and girls, made in God's image and in need of God's grace just like we are. When Jesus said "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. 22:39), He did not mean only your white, upper-middle-class, nominally Christian, suburban neighbor. He meant all of the people God has placed in your circle of influence. We are often more politically than theologically oriented. We talk about a religious or sociopolitical group with current world events in mind so much that we can tend to dehumanize the individuals in that group. God does not view Muslims in this way, and we must not, particularly with the number of Muslims who are immigrating to our communities.

Second, we must understand that Islam is no worse nor better at its root than any other false religion that leads people away from God. Our atheist neighbor, our Buddhist neighbor, our Catholic neighbor, and our Muslim neighbor are all dead in their sins (Eph. 2:1), worshipping a god or gods of their own making (Rom. 1:25) instead of the God-Man Jesus Christ who is revealed in the Scriptures. They are all souls being led to a Christless eternity, yet the offer of salvation is available to them, just as it was to us (Rom. 10:12, 13). We need to graciously and boldly share the truth of the gospel with all of the individuals who have grown up in or chosen un-Biblical religious systems. We must believe in the power of the gospel to change lives (Rom. 1:16)!

Third, we must recognize that relationships with Muslims can seem more uncomfortable than they really are because of cultural issues. However, these issues can also provide an unexpected opportunity to display a genuine Christian testimony. The average Muslim's understanding of what it means to be a follower of Christ is probably just as jaded as our understanding of the average American Muslim's commitments. One helpful ministry said this: "Because [Muslims] believe America is a Christian nation, they tend to assume everything that comes out of America is Christian, including ungodly movies and television shows."* These misunderstandings can be clarified through genuine, friendly, loving interpersonal relationships. The testimony of Christ is at stake! Sure, there will be political disagreements (and discussions) and cultural differences, but these differences work both ways. We have the opportunity to show by word and deed the difference that Christ makes in our lives.

Fourth, we will realize that most American Muslims are very friendly and hospitable toward their Christian neighbors. I would venture to say, in my experience, that Muslims tend to be friendlier and more gracious toward us Christians than we are toward them. Immigrant families in our area tend to be very receptive to visitors. They are extremely friendly. They are kind, giving, and gracious. They are very family-oriented and much more personally conservative than most Christians (unfortunately). They are willing to talk on a personal level very openly, even though they are sometimes less receptive in larger groups. These are generalities based on my experience and that of others in our church, but they mirror the observations of many I have read on immigrant outreach. We need to set aside preconceived biases and misunderstandings and see the opportunities God has given us to reach the Muslims around us. You may be surprised with the doors God opens for witness.

Finally, our churches need to be familial communities of love ready to receive Muslims who come to Christ. If we have open relationships with them to begin with, there is a natural connection to the church, should a Muslim turn to Christ. The relationships we cultivate now with those God has placed around us can, Lord willing, lead to eternal relationships. What a tribute to God's glory that would be!

Pearson Johnson is the pastor of missions and evangelism at Inter-City Baptist Church in Allen Park, Michigan. You can e-mail him with questions or comments at pjohnson@intercity.org.

* Arabic Bible Outreach Ministry, www.arabicbible.com

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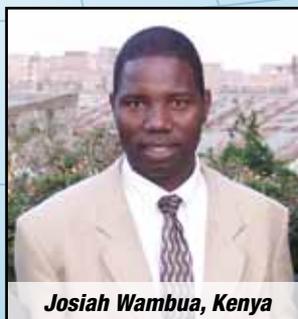


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Chaplain News

Bob Ellis

Public safety department chaplains are a vital part of the FBFI chaplaincy ministry. Six police/fire department chaplains are endorsed by the FBFI. Pastor Don Karnes is a chaplain with the Chesapeake, Virginia, Police Department, and Pastor Dan Cleghorn is a chaplain with the Chewelah, Washington, Police and Fire Departments.

The Public Safety Chaplain, by Don Karnes

The Holy Spirit, writing through the pen of James, tells us that the definition of pure religion is twofold: to *meet the needs of the afflicted* and to *remain unblemished from the lure of the world system*. Many believers who are determined to fulfill the latter are remiss in fulfilling the former. They may offer understandable reasons for reluctance to involve themselves in the social needs of the community in which they live. However, mainline denominational entities with doctrinal positions that Biblical literalists will question seem to excel at such community outreach.

An outstanding opportunity to involve oneself in this area is to volunteer as a public safety chaplain in your local police, sheriff, or fire department. Most departments have programs that allow religious leaders of local churches to be involved. If your community's public safety divisions do not have such a program, you may find a warm welcome to establish such an outreach. Those who help to establish such programs, many times, may be given broad leeway in instituting policy and procedure for these programs.

As much as we'd like to have everyone in our community attend our local congregations, we must come to grips with the fact that there are those who may never darken the doors of our church. This is the call of Luke 14:23—to go into the "highways and hedges and compel them to come in." A public safety chaplain gets to be part

of situations and to meet local families that he'd never otherwise have had an opportunity to be involved with.

Matthew 10:16 calls for believers to be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Chaplains have opportunities for topic-specific training that increase their knowledge outside of normal pastoral training. Training like this can have a great impact on the wisdom of a pastoral ministry. It is not uncommon to utilize information gained through public safety when a congregation's family may be dealing with a crisis issue. For example, I recall an incident from several years ago when a suicidal individual entered our church after a Wednesday evening service. While concerned for this man's spiritual standing, the first words out of my mouth were, "Sir, do you have any weapons on you at this time?" because I knew the threat a suicidal person can be to those around him. Because of my law enforcement perspective, I was able to secure much-needed help for this man.

Furthermore, the public safety chaplain will have opportunities to become acquainted with local, state, and federal leaders who will, in turn, become familiarized with the heart and nature of the chaplain's individual ministry and church. Consider the public safety chaplaincy as a great means through which to fulfill the commands of Matthew 28:19, 20 and James 1:27. There are many resources and current chaplains available to assist any men and women who may be interested in this area of great need. Will you consider the mission field of your local public safety departments today?

Dealing with the Unexpected, by Dan Cleghorn

Expect the unexpected. A chaplain never knows when the pager will go off or what he will find on the other side of the door.

It is Thanksgiving. You have friends over for dinner and you're

just finishing a wonderful meal when the pager goes off. You are called to the hospital to provide assistance to a man who has just found out that a boy who was playing at his house with his children had an accident and has been pronounced dead. The parents do not yet know, and he does not know how to tell them.

As a police chaplain, part of your ministry is to go to a home and give death notifications, telling a person that a family member or friend has died. So you get the needed information and depart to share some news that will change a family's life forever.

Upon arriving, you check in with the deputies at the scene and proceed to share with the family that their son has died due to the accident. Shock . . . disbelief . . . tears . . . questions . . . these all come, along with many opportunities to minister, provide comfort to those who are hurting, and even give guidance to a young pastor who had not yet had to face a death in his congregation.

While at a baby shower for a church family, the pager goes off. You call Dispatch and they inform you that a baby has died and the officer wants you on scene to help the family.

Part of the ministry of the police chaplain is to go to the scene of unattended deaths and assist the family, help them contact next of kin, carry out any needed death notifications, or, at times, try to find at least one family member to take care of the deceased.

At this call, a young father had found his newborn baby dead. Again, shock . . . disbelief . . . tears—shed not just by the father but by everyone on the scene, including the chaplain. The death of a baby is always difficult for everyone involved. Yet along with this loss comes opportunities to minister and to provide comfort and hope to a young father that his baby is in the presence of God.

Continued on page 39

Regional Report

Doug Wright

Faith Baptist Church of Longmont, Colorado, hosted the **Rocky Mountain Regional FBFI Meeting** on Friday, January 21, 2011. Dr. Tim Keesee, director of Frontline Missions International, and field representative John Hutcheson, among other speakers, spoke on “Tested and True: The Zeal of the Persecuted Church.” Frontline Missions is dedicated to being a voice to defend persecuted believers in other countries, along with participating in ongoing efforts to take the gospel into restricted access

countries. Another speaker, who had spent two years in China working with house churches, discussed his involvement in discipleship training in Muslim-dominated countries. He hopes to return to one of these countries to help church planters. The award-winning documentary series *Dispatches from the Front* was also shown as part of the conference. Testimonies from those in attendance reflected the effectiveness and benefit of the conference. The results were described as “impacting and life changing.”



Over fifty men gathered on February 15–17 for the **Winter Board Meeting of the Fundamental Baptist Fellowship International**. The FBFI board expanded several years ago to include new voices, especially younger men. All of the boards—Executive Board, Emeritus Board, Advisory Board, and Cooperating Board (state representatives)—participated in the Atlanta meeting. Attendees discussed finances, issues, and resolutions to be considered at the June meeting. The resolutions will be printed in *FrontLine* when they are approved.

The meeting allowed ample time for testimonies, prayer, and discussion of topics that affect the FBFI. The godly mindset of the FBFI board members was very much in evidence as the men strived to be well informed, gracious, and teachable while advancing the cause of Christ and Biblical truth.



The Christian and the Coming Caliphate

(continued from page 5)

to that point. Only Israel would stand alone in the midst of such a movement, except for possibly Iraq, but the response of Iraq might depend on the relationship with America and the level of American military presence at the time.

Of course, I am not making any predictions here but just highlighting the desires of the Brotherhood and what the region would look like if they had their way. Egypt, Syria and Jordan are particularly interesting in this regard because they were the primary aggressors in the wars with Israel and share borders with her; Egypt of course is also interesting Biblically because it is the "King of the South."

Of course, we cannot know at this time (or we may never know) precisely what role any particular group has had in the various demonstrations currently taking place. It is quite possible that they all legitimately began as the result of a basic human yearning for freedom. If that is the case, Americans can certainly sympathize with such a motivation, but the cause is rather irrelevant. The most important question is, what will be the result? If these countries, some of which have been relatively "quiet" for a very long time, have a leadership change, what will be the new direction? With the many anti-American and anti-Christian voices in the region it is a matter of concern. Already we have heard reports that some vying for power in Egypt would not honor the peace with Israel. A violation of that agreement would be a challenge for our country since we are a party to that agreement and have assisted in maintaining the peace. In such a case there no doubt would be calls within our country to distance ourselves from Israel. Even worse, perhaps, are the present calls insisting that the Muslim Brotherhood have a voice in the new Egyptian government as it is formed.

Regardless of how it all takes place, if any of the changes in government that will be occurring over the next year in the Middle East result in the

Brotherhood or their ilk gaining any level of power or moving them closer to having power, those would be giant steps drawing the world closer to Armageddon. Egypt has been strongly opposed in the past but it is a "prize" that radical Islam is determined to win. These truly are challenging times.

In the midst of all of this sits our friend Israel. She has been relatively silent through it all, but I can assure you that there is great concern among the people there. Her continued existence and the confidence that we have in the impossibility of her annihilation are encouragements for the believer regarding the reality and reliability of our great God. Yet we feel great concern as we see all of this satanic activity.

Egypt has been described as being the cradle of civilization. It certainly has a rich history, but it will also be very involved with the events on earth in the last days. One cannot help but wonder if we are seeing some of the preliminaries for the final act unfolding before our very eyes.

So what is the responsibility of the believer in the midst of these events? We can speculate about the timing of Biblical prophecy and the elements of its fulfillment, and it is certainly reasonable to anticipate a coming caliphate, but what about right now? In the first place we need to be mindful of the history of the region so we can be discerning as we listen to news reports and see all these things happening. In this we must, of course, remember that we are not getting nearly the full story, and in many cases we are not getting the correct story.

Further, and much more importantly, we must be praying regularly for the people affected and the souls of the lost. Of course we have the Biblical mandate to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, but we must also pray for Muslims the world over. It is only through trusting in the shed blood of Jesus that they will be saved from the lies of Islam, whether they are radical like the Brotherhood or not. It is probably a good idea that each of us learns about Islam and the best ways of reaching Muslims.

We must also pray for the efforts of those who are reaching out to the

Islamic people of the world. In many countries we are hearing reports of precious souls being saved who previously were in the grips of Satan and believed the lie of Islam. The ambassadors for God throughout the world are to be helped in any way possible because of the vital yet difficult work they are doing. May we see and hear of many Muslims turning to Messiah as we say, "Even so, come Lord Jesus!"

Dr. Craig Hartman, founder and director of Shalom Ministries, Inc., a New York City-based ministry to the Jewish people, is a frequent conference speaker and is an adjunct faculty member at Bob Jones University. His newly released book *Through Jewish Eyes* may be purchased through BJU Press. Craig may be contacted at info@shalomnyc.org. His website is www.shalomnyc.org.

Chaplain News

Continued from page 37

Fire chaplain calls generally consist of ministering to homeowners, keeping them safe, and ensuring that they do not reenter the house while the fire is being put out. At times, though, you can find the unexpected. Upon arriving at a fully engulfed structure fire, the Incident Commander directs you to a woman sitting by a tree, rocking back and forth. You discover that her young adult son has perished in the fire. This time though, no tears. Very little was said. Yet you stay by the mother, who is waiting for the recovery of her son's body, until she is ready to leave. In calls like this, you pray and do what you can to minister.

God knows what I am going to face on each call before I ever leave my house. On the way to the scene, I pray. While at the scene, I know my wife is praying for me, for the situation, and for God to guide, direct, and be glorified. As a chaplain you not only go out representing your department, but you go out as an ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is Him whom you are to represent and glorify in all you do. Even though you may face something totally unexpected, you can expect to have a God who will always be there with you, providing you with His wisdom and guidance as you serve.

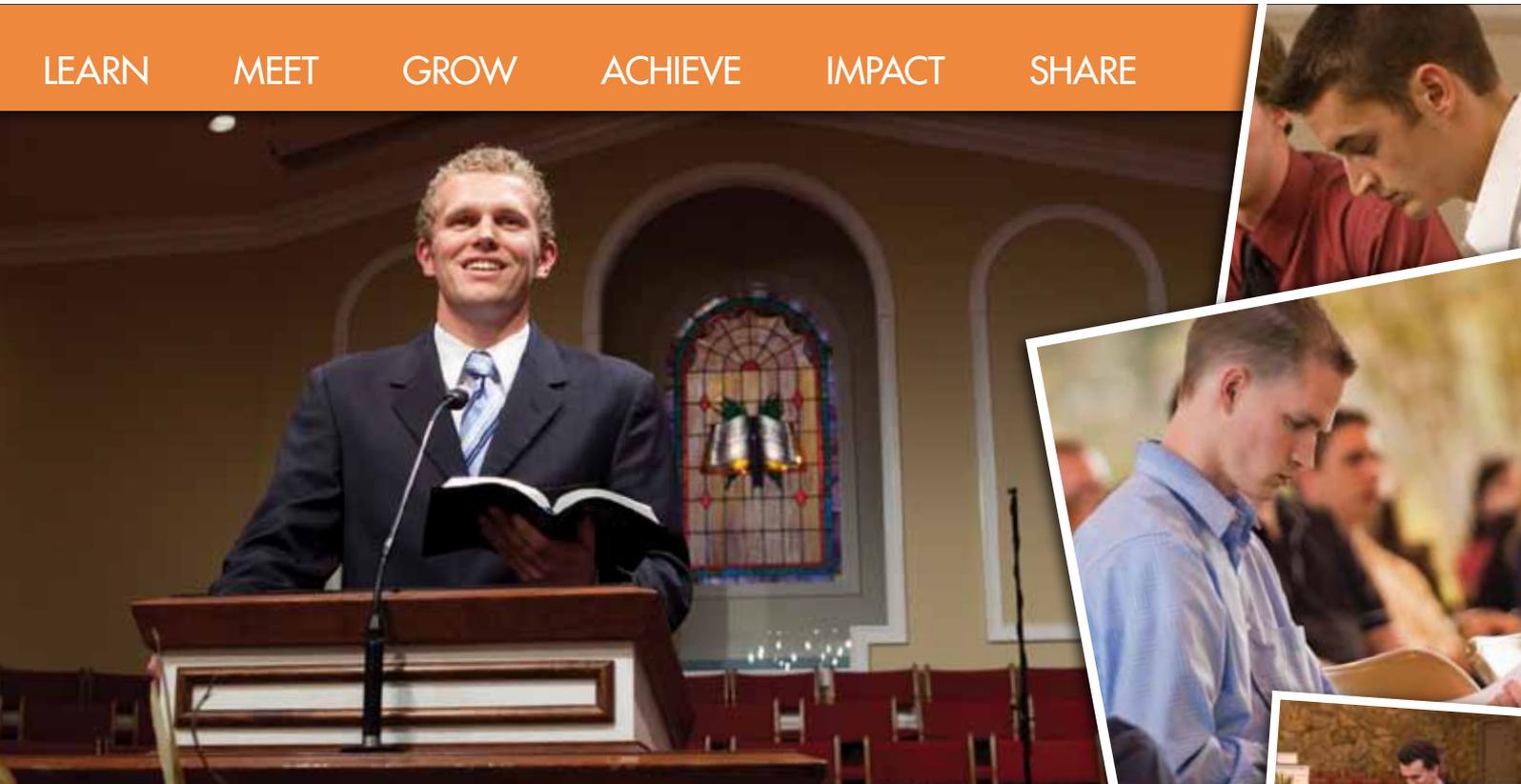
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