

To evangelise a Muslim

The testimony of the gospels in the Bible provides the most reliable witness to Christ. Preach the gospel as it is! Do not soft-pedal around biblical terminology to please Muslim hearers. Be clear about what you believe and why you believe it. Know the Scriptures well, and know the confessions and what exactly you believe (catechisms). The more you know about your faith, the easier it is to talk with Muslims.

There is no gospel in Islam. The Quran clearly contradicts the essence of biblical Christianity and rejects the triune nature of God, disfigures the biblical doctrines of the person of Christ and denies justification through faith on account of the work of Christ on the cross. While claiming to be the perpetual religion of nature and history, following in the footsteps of Christianity, it attempts to justify its claims by asserting that the Word of God, revealed in the New and Old Testament, is corrupted.

Our apologetic discussion with Muslims should be to defend the Scriptures and prove that the Scriptures aren't corrupt as Muslims claim. Our goal is to open up their minds a bit so that they can start reading the gospels for an eyewitness or a companion of an eyewitness to the real Jesus.

Always ask them the classic evangelistic questions. "What about your salvation?" "Can you be certain of this?" "If you were to die, can you be certain you'd enter heaven at some point?" Their response is always, "No, I couldn't be certain, nor do I care."

Most Western missionaries are result-oriented; instead you should be concerned about preaching the gospel correctly (as it is). The essence of Muslim evangelism is accurate communication about sin and grace – simply and clearly. Talk about the law and the gospel. Don't compare the Bible with the Quran. That comes later!

Always remember that you are talking to Muslims. Avoid the use of Christian jargon. Speak about real sin, real guilt, real shed blood! Do not be ashamed to use Jesus' direct and indirect titles clearly such as "Son of God," "Lamb of God," "New Adam," "I AM – YAHWEH," "Savior," "Almighty God."

Use tact and be charitable. Don't talk about reprobation with a Muslim or a new convert who has just lost an unbelieving family member. Be kind and courteous. Many Muslims act and speak out of ignorance, not malice.

Be sensitive to their past – if they've had a bad experience with Christians, missionaries, churches, or struggled with a particular sin, etc. Be understanding and compassionate.

Muslims hate self-righteousness, and rightly so. Do not soft-pedal the law and the guilt of sin, but make sure they understand that you are a justified sinner, not a self-righteous “know it all” who is here to correct them.

Muslims will ask you many questions about your faith. Don't feel like you have to answer all of their questions in one day. However, make sure they hear your answers to one or two questions clearly. Stick with the subject – don't get sidetracked. When the conversation wanders, pull it back to center stage – the law and the gospel.

Muslims will ask you to comment on their faith. Don't go there; they will not benefit from your criticism (or feigned approval) of other religions. Your job isn't to debunk Islam but to give a clear witness to the truth of the gospel. Instead of letting them drag you into the topic, turn the tables and ask them questions. Let them articulate their own understandings of the religious themes you are discussing; let what you communicate be the plain truth of Christian doctrines without enumerating how Islam is wrong.

The message of the gospel offends Muslims. That is to be expected. Don't worry! God will take care of the hearer. It is His message. Muslims will not convert to Christ if they are not offended by the message of the gospel. Offend them by being very clear about the teachings of Christ!

Do not use any “Muslim-friendly” Bible translations. “Muslim-friendly” Bible translations are very deceptive. They are not true to the original Scriptures. Muslims see it as a form of deception by missionaries.

Muslim evangelism is not about winning an argument, but leading Muslims to Christ with the gospel. Discussions may get heated and intense at times – that's okay. But the purpose of Muslim evangelism is not to show why you are right and Islam is wrong. It is to communicate the truth of the gospel. The message is to be the offence. Not you!

When Muslims are apathetic about sin – use the law. When Muslims have doubts or are skeptical – use basic apologetic arguments. When Muslims express guilt for sin, present the gospel.

Evangelism is about leading Muslims to Christ. Convincing non-Christians or Evangelicals that Reformed theology is true, falls under the heading of polemics. Don't confuse the two. When talking to Muslims stick with what all Christians hold in common wherever possible. Leave the internecine fighting among Christians aside when talking to Muslims. A Muslim will not care so much about differences between the Catholics and the Protestants or Lutherans and Baptists. Issues such as the exact meaning of the Lord's Supper or methods of baptism should be addressed later, during discipleship.

Wherever possible, when talking to Muslims speak about Christianity as factually true – “Jesus did this,” “Jesus said this,” “people heard and saw him,” etc. Keep away from the subjective line of approach – “it works for me,” “this is how I feel about it,” “this is my testimony.”

Before meeting with your Muslim friends, pray for wisdom.

Muslims will respect the text you quote, but not your personal opinion. Trust in the power of God the Holy Spirit working through the Word. Cite texts directly from the Scriptures with attribution: “Jesus says, Paul says...” It will not help Muslims to hear your personal opinion on biblical issues. So, don't say “I think,” or “it seems to me” or “I feel like...” Muslims interpret your thoughts, your take on things, or your feelings as part of the corruption of the Bible.

Don't rush thing. Just because a Muslim is not ready to trust in Christ after one encounter does not mean that effective evangelism has not taken place. Pre-evangelism is equally vital. You may plant, but someone else may have to water. Always remember that it is not us who convert the Muslims to Christ but God Himself (in His time).

Remember that evangelism isn't complete after you first present the gospel message to a Muslim. Evangelism has to continue even after they repent and give their lives to Christ. They have to sit under the ministry of the Word. Evangelism of Muslims is complete only after they are baptized, brought to the Lord's Supper and continue to sit under the preaching of the Word at church. In other words, evangelism never ends. Discipleship is evangelism.

Treat Muslims as objects of concern, not notches in your belt. Establish relationships and friendships with Muslims whenever and wherever possible.

Don't forget that a prophet is without honour in his own home. The chances of Muslim converts leading their own unbelieving family members (or someone close

to them) to Christ by themselves is remote. Encourage them as they give witness to what they have learned, but also pray for God to bring other people into the picture to help evangelize their families.

Don't force things. If your Muslim friends balk, ridicule, and otherwise are not interested, back off. Find another time and place. If after repeated attempts to communicate the gospel, and someone still shows an unwillingness to hear what you have to say, "shake the dust off your feet and move on to a new town." (Matthew 10:14)

Be willing to get your Muslim friends the resources they need: be willing to provide them with a Bible (not just a New Testament), the right book to read, and certainly an invitation to your home and later an invitation to attend your church or to a Bible study, etc.

Pray for opportunities to evangelise Muslims. Make sure to let your Muslim friends know that you regularly attend a church. Do not disconnect your evangelism effort from the church. Pray for your church – that God would bless the preaching of His Word, that He would bring Muslims into your midst, and that He would bless the church with growth.

You must not become a practical Arminian (saved because of your good works) to be a faithful evangelist. One is saved through God's grace. A Christian approach to Muslim evangelism simply means telling Muslims the truth in love without changing it. Trust that God the Holy Spirit will penetrate hearts and minds of Muslims with "the gospel."

Muslims love to sing Islamic hymns that tell the stories of the Quran. Islamic hymn singing is singing the words of the Quran. Show your Muslim friends some samples of Christian biblical songs with verses directly taken from Scriptures. In other words, *sing the Bible to them!* The role of music in human culture is to join people together. Biblically we are commanded to sing the praises of Christ. There are 694 references to singing or music-making in Holy Scriptures. Participatory singing is a very significant matter biblically. There will be no singing in hell, but the saints in heaven will sing everlastingly. That is really amazing and remarkable! Let us show Muslims what we will be doing in heaven.

"Fear God, and give Him glory; because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship Him that made heaven and earth, the sea, and the springs of waters"(Revelation 14:7)

If you are interested, contact: