

ET Sunday School Class

November 11, 2018

The Bible:

We have the understand how Muslims perceive the Bible: See the PPT

The Bible is the only inspired book by God on the planet. Therefore, rather than merely discussing, even debating, about the Bible as the true Word of God the goal needs to be getting the Bible into the hands of Muslims to read for themselves ("Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God" Romans 10:17).

Example: Askar- "What Christian books would you recommend I begin to read?" C.S. Lewis? George McDonald? Lee Strobel? The Holy Spirit led to recommend the Bible (New Testament).

It has been my experience, in any global context, that through the initial establishing the relationship with a Muslim of our gender, that getting the Bible in the hands of a Muslim is vital to unscramble the Islamic egg. An equal or close third is the place of prayer with Muslims.

So the Bible in the hands of a Muslim is the beginning of their deprogramming of what they have been told and taught about the Bible being corrupted. Let me add that here is where our reading the Qur'an is helpful. It is leverage to encourage the Muslim to read the Bible. "I have read your holy book and made my judgements for myself. Should not you read my Holy Book and make such a decision?"

This is a good means of leading into an inductive Bible study with them. Beginning with the Gospel of John is suggested.

See last slide on 5 Reasons Muslims convert. Note reasons #2 and #4. These are the two foci of our teaching this morning.

Transitional Sentence:

The foundation of the Bible leads naturally to the correct understanding of who Allah really is in nature and character. WHY? Because the Allah of the Qur'an and the Allah of the Bible are NOT the same Allah (God). *The text of each holy book provides the context of defining who Allah is from each book's definition. They are not the same from the belief there is One God who is the creator. From this point there is dichotomy in who Allah is in person, nature and character.*

This naturally leads to the Godhead or Trinity in the Bible.

The Trinity (Godhead of Father, Son and Holy Spirit)

The first Sunday after Pentecost Sunday is “Trinity Sunday” on the Church calendar.

When was the last time you heard a sermon on the Trinity? When was the last time you heard a teaching on the Trinity in church? We have scholars here. I ask you a question, not rhetorical. How much time have you spent researching and teaching on the Trinity?

I dare say, the Church is ignorant of the most important theological concept in the Bible.

Because of the difficulty Muslims have with the Trinity, because Allah is “Tawheed,” or “One without partners, some Bible translators that have translated the Bible into the language of a Muslim people have changed Divine Familial Terms (DFTs) as “Father, Son and Son of God.”

I serve on the World Evangelical Alliance Oversight Committee for Bible Translations for Muslims. Our purpose is to reflect on Bible translations that do the very thing Muslims claim Jews and Christians did to the Bible, change the language of the inspired text.

AGWM took a stand on this. When I was Director of Global Initiative: Reaching Muslim Peoples I led our effort with selected theologians and missiologists to formulate a response.

See: <http://www.fatherson.ag.org/> “The Necessity of Retaining Father and Son Terminology in Scripture Translations for Muslims.”

Why has God revealed Himself as “Father, Son and Holy Spirit?” **Intimacy... Familial terms are the most intimate in any language, culture and society at large. Satan seeks to eliminate that intimacy between the Godhead and His highest creation, humankind.**

Though this seemingly major theological hurdle seems great to many Christians, it is not. Yes it is there and over again the Qur’an mentions “Allah has not partners,” I find that it is rarely a major point of discussion with a Muslim unless I make it so. Be that as it may, we need to be ready to respond with kindness if a Muslim brings it up. Leave it alone if the Muslim does not bring it up.

If it does arise, I begin to discuss the omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence of God the sovereignty of God. I ask my Muslim friend the question: “Is anything impossible for Allah?” In essence, it is rhetorical to the Muslim because their answer will be “No.” So then why cannot the immortal One God manifest Himself to His mortal creation? We only have human language and thus terms to define the immortal God.

Often Muslims say “1+1+1=3.” I say, but “1x1x1=1.” If basic math can affirm this reality than why cannot God be One in three Persons?

Again, this is often not even brought up and if it is not, then don’t discuss.

Islamic hermeneutics has a term to define that which is beyond explanation and knowing: "*Bela Kef*" meaning "without how."

Our goal is to bring Muslims into the intimate understanding of who God is so they may have a Father-child personal relationship with him.

Next week: Jesus, the Cross and Muslims