

Challenge and Opportunity (Chapter 4), chapter 14, “Facing Difficulties”
Sobhi Malek, *Islamic Exodus: Into the Freedom of Christ*
ET Church SS Life Together 11/24/18, LO

Spectrum (according to Mark Hausfeld):

terrorist • extremist but not terrorist • fundamentalist • moderate • liberal • nominal

Enslavement (215) – under a “cruel taskmaster”

schools teach hatred, mosques teach contempt for non-Muslims

media glorify killing for the sake of God

spiritual grip: <https://www.christianfrommuslim.com/the-qurans-spell-part-2/> (woman who said it was like the Qur’an had spell over her.

Conversion has far-reaching circumstances due to the cross-cultural nature of the Christian witness and work and relationship with Muslims:

1) Difficulties for Muslims when they leave Islam to follow Christ

- a) Muslims’ **theological beliefs** hinder them from leaving Islam
 - a. 14 centuries of faith in Muhammad and the Qur’an
 - b. statements in Qur’an (theology *based* on them) – hostility toward Chr (Violence of Islam: <https://www.christianfrommuslim.com/violence-and-rules-in-the-quran/> 1:48 testimony by Huda, MBB)
See also: https://wikiislam.net/wiki/Main_Page
 - c. the “offense of the cross”¹ and contradictions Muslims see in Chr
 - d. freedom of thought is forbidden (considered heresy or attack); any deviation met w/decisiveness and brutality; anyone outside part of House of War.

- b) Strong grip of Muslim society
 - a. communal; group oriented

 - b. conversion brings dishonor to the convert’s entire **family**
 “loss of family and community are huge for Muslims. This also leads to a loss of personal identity and belonging. The shame of dishonoring the family is probably one of the foremost issues.” (DK)
 “Greatest difficulties for M’s would be the consequences they would suffer from family and community. Excommunication/-distress about disappointing family members. The impact their decision might have on other families who could in turn be bullied, etc.” (LH)
 “*Familial relationships strained.* Depending on the level of religious commitment it could swing from being an “honor killing” to “we don’t agree with your choice, but it is your life. Loss of spouse and children. Again, the level of commitment to practicing of Islam by the family will make a difference.” (MH)

¹ **Rom. 9:33** just as it is written,

“^aBEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION ^bA STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF **OFFENSE**,

^cAND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM ^dWILL NOT BE ¹DISAPPOINTED.”

1Pet. 2:8 and,

“^aA STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF **OFFENSE**”;

^bfor they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, ^cand to this *doom* they were also appointed.

Can involve loss of life and limb.

- c. **friends** reject them (shameful to befriend a Muslim who converts)
- c) Strong **socioeconomic factors**
 - a. Muslim sheiks, imams, preachers, and qur'anic teachers and readers see Christianity as a threat to their social and economic well-being
 - b. *"Loss of employment in Muslim context and even possibly in a context of freedom."* (MH)

2) **Difficulties witnesses face bringing Muslims to Christ (or after they come to Christ)**

- a) In Muslim-majority countries Christians face issues regarding **minority status**
- b) Christians must deal with Muslim attitudes caused by **tragic historical events** (ex. Crusades and colonialism)
 - a. continue to repent? (Neh 1:6-7)
 - b. acknowledge but go on with our commission
 - c. can't get mired in the past (discuss)
 - d. many times colonialists were not interested in converting Muslims

c) Erroneous witness methods

- a. presenting Christianity as a "high" religion only (concerned with cosmic, eternal issues only); "low" has to do with practical, everyday experiences. (See examples of same verse, Matthew 8:23-27 presented two ways: Jesus Lord of Nature or Jesus Calms the Storm). Muslims see Islam as more relevant to the immediate problems of daily life.
- b. Ineffective and even offensive methods
 - i. abrasive means, rudeness (forcing them first to accept things they struggle with the most like Jesus' sonship or the crucifixion; ridiculing Muhammad or Islam)

"Muslims have been inoculated to the Gospel by believing that Jesus is not divine, that he did not die on the cross and that he did not rise from the dead, that the Bible has been corrupted- so the very things that Christians would share, Muslims believe are wrong." (DK)
 - ii. borrowing foreign church patterns (ex. Sunday worship 11 AM)
 - iii. failing to let converts assume responsibility (have to trust as Paul did)
 - iv. "Cultural misunderstandings and gender issues can enter in as well." (DK)
- d) (After Muslims Come to Christ): "Knowing the severity of their [the Muslim convert's] choice, and finding ways to supplant their community related losses. Or being faithful to discipleship through tenuous times." (LH)
- e) "In situations where refugees and asylees have found Christ and [need] community - matters of our own difficulties re matters of their possibly inter-marrying, etc. with our children. All things that present fresh challenges." (LH)

Challenges can be overcome/The way forward

Jesus as our guide

He promised His disciples His presence and power (Matt 28:19-20).
 called His disciples, accepted them, worked patiently with them
 see similarities between the disciples and Muslims (222)

Role of the Holy Spirit

Brill book, 264 - empowerment for creative ideas, open doors, wisdom

The Role of Prayer

“This is where prayer is essential to break down the spiritual strongholds that blind Muslims to the gospel.” (DK)

Understanding the Role of Context

Brill book, 256

In the US

differs because of the role of presence (*why* you are there)

differs because of who is the guest

differs based on if she is an immigrant or not

Abroad - Understand role of honor, gender norms/mores, etc.

Role of Kindness, Hospitality, Love

Brill book:

Nabil quote on hospitality, 258

Every encounter counts (263-4)

Giving a Bible in her language (264)

Love, peace, caring for one another (Nabeel Qureshi, 6 days before he died on Sep 16, 2017, from stomach cancer) – humility!! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B2HISpYDF8U>

Resources for sharing the gospel

Global Initiative: <https://reachingmuslimpeoples.com/resources/>

Say Hello: <https://sayhelloinfo.com/>

learning to present the gospel in both “high” and “low” ways

Testimonies by Muslim Background Believers

<https://jdgrear.com/blog/incredible-testimony-of-a-mbb-muslim-background-believer/>