

The Crescent and the Cross: Engaging Muslims for the Sake of the Gospel

by William D. Barrick, Th.D.
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Introduction

- Conflict
- Fear
- Solution?

I. Luke 5:17-26

1. It is “the **power** (*dunamis*) of the Lord” (v. 17) that worked in this situation.
2. These men exhibited **partnership** in their compassion for a fellow citizen (v. 18).
3. **People** crowded into the home to hear Jesus (v. 19a).
4. **Persistence** marked these men as they found a way to help their brother (v. 19b).
5. Note the **priority** from the divine viewpoint (v. 20). Jesus *forgave the man's sins*.
6. **Polarization** took place (v. 21). *Only God can forgive sins*.
7. Jesus offered a **proposition** (“Isn't it easier to heal than to forgive?”—vv. 22-24).
8. The **product** of this encounter: glorifying God and religious awe (vv. 25-26).

II. Characteristics of Islam

A. Islam means *submission*. A **Muslim** is one who is *submitted* to the will of God.

B. Muslims are **theocentric**—centered or focused on God.

C. Muslims view Islam as the **final revelation**.

- Popular Muslim belief holds that the OT and NT have been corrupted and have been abrogated.

III. Compassion for Muslims

A. Hope: Muslims have no real, certain hope and seek it by earthly means.

Cf. 1 Peter 3:15 – What are we doing to bring hope to Muslims?

B. Grace & Forgiveness: The Muslim concept of merciful involves Allah's benevolence or providential care—not His gracious mercy in not punishing people as they deserve.

- Forgiveness is earned, not granted.
- Allah's forgiveness is inscrutable . . . He forgives whom He will.
- In Islam, no one can be certain until the Day of Judgment.
- There is no example of a direct confession of sin in the *Qur'an*.
- Islam has no developed personal analogies like Hosea or the Prodigal Son.

IV. Conflict with Islam

A. Different viewpoints:

- To the Muslim, Christians represent lascivious life styles.

- To the Muslim, Christendom is inconsistent regarding their judgment of “terrorists.”

B. Comparative World Views:

Concept	Muslim	“Christian”*
Unity	Emphasized— <i>umma</i>	Only if pragmatic
Time	Respect past**	Orientation to future
Family	Solidarity	Individualistic
Peace	Integration, external	Contentment, internal
Honor	All important	Not the priority
Status	Family, name, age	Wealth, accomplishment
Individualism	Subordination to group	Independence a priority
Secularism	Totally unacceptable	Largely acceptable
Change	Undesirable	Desirable
Efficiency	Little or no concern	Imperative

V. Just the Facts

- Forgiveness—what they desire deeply.
- Assurance—what they lack completely.
- Compassion—what they need as evidence of Christian faith.
- Time—what it takes.
 - Ask the following questions, listen carefully, interact by quoting Scripture—don’t say, “The Bible says,” but “God says.”
 - What is sin?
 - How does sin affect one’s relationship to God?
 - How do you obtain forgiveness for your sins?
 - How should we forgive others when they sin against us?
 - What does God say about forgiving our sins?
 - How can you know that your sins have been completely forgiven?
- Scripture—without which nothing will happen: “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17).

[Some material inserted here in the presentation is from “Islam & Christianity” © Rose Publishing, 2006. I recommend this material for your use.]

Conclusion

- ✓ Encourage your Muslim friends to read the Bible for themselves and to ask questions about what they have read.
- ✓ Begin with the Gospel of John.
- ✓ Remind them that even Muslims call Jesus (Isa) *Kalimatullah* (“Word/Speech of God”).
- ✓ Love them unconditionally.
- ✓ Pray fervently for them.

Full Notes will be available March 15 at www.drbarrick.org online.