



## Outreach to Muslims

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*This seminar was given in the context of University evangelism, but its principles and advice are useful for a variety of different environments.*

### I. Introduction: Unique Time of Opportunity

Opportunities: The University Environment

- 1) Potential for Impact with Muslim students is great
- 2) Muslims are aggressively promoting Islam on university campuses
- 3) World events are sensitizing students to the core issues

### II. Understanding the Muslims on Your Campus

A. Historical Islamic Divisions

Sunni  
Shia  
Sufi

B. Islamic Organizations: Variety

Sectarian

Political: Fundamentalist, Conservative/Moderate, Liberal

Ethnic/National

Urban/Rural divide

Undergraduate/Post-Graduate divide

FOSIS: Federation of Student Islamic Societies (<http://www.fosis.org.uk>)

Other groups

Shia Groups

Sufi Groups

### C. Impediments: Culture and Conviction

For both British and foreign Muslims, they tend to not be post-modern or secular humanist in their thinking.

Our normal assumptions underlying outreach events:

- 1) Spirituality is interesting to students
- 2) Religion should have answers to the big issues of life
- 3) All facets of religion should be open to criticism
- 4) True Christianity, Jesus Christ, the Bible can all stand the scrutiny

They are theists, and usually Muhammad, the Qur'an, and Islam are not opened to outside criticism. As Muslims in particular, this is what they tend to bring to the conversation:

#### 1. Theological Barriers to Christians

A. They don't think Christianity has anything to offer them because they think Islam replaced it. (S. 3:110; 9:33)

B. They may mistakenly think Christianity is a corrupted religion because they are taught this was why the religion of Islam was given. (S. 3:64; 5:16, 77; 9:30; 47:25)

C. They may assume you have bad motives in witnessing because certain Qur'an verses state Christians can have bad motives in their dealings with Muslims. (S. 5:49, 51, 57)

#### 2. Shame/Honour Dynamics

A. Things that confer honour: age, wealth, position, knowledge, good character, piety/devotion to Islam, victory.

B. Things that bring shame: defeat, failure, poverty, public disrespect, immorality of women, conversion to another faith.

C. The Public vindication of Islam's honour is more important to them than the truth, valid criticism, and even friendly relations with you.

#### 3. Emotional thinking vs. Rational thinking

A. Practical Fideism: "Faith, not reason, is what God requires." [1] They are taught primarily to

believe, not how to think about their faith.

B. They are actively taught against thinking critically about Islam, Muhammad, and the Qur'an. Questioning any of them is the first step to hell and can be punished by social, physical and legal punishments. They are often bullied into believing.

C. They use logical fallacies to "prove" Islam in their apologetics:

1. They are taught wrong ways of thinking. (Take verses out of context, force Islamic views of God, Scripture, Christ on the Bible, etc.)

2. Their apologetics arguments are designed more to keep them in Islam than to convince outsiders. (Produce a surah challenge, inimitability of the Qur'an are actually irrelevant to proving the Bible wrong and the Qur'an right.)

3. They are taught that the use of deceit is sometimes legitimate:

a. Muhammad's permission: [2]

- in battle,

- for bringing reconciliation between persons

- for bringing reconciliation between man and wife

b. "Battle is an outwitting." [3]

Many view religious conversation with Christians, especially in the public arena, as a battle to demonstrate Islam's superiority.

### III. Planning your Approach

A. Establish a core group for prayer and planning

B. Evaluate what opportunities comes your way

C. Consider the variety of the kinds of events possible

1. Debates [4]

- a. Cultural Mandate
- b. Polemics/Apologetics
- c. Scientific Exegesis

2. Dialogues/Discussions/Joint events/Panels

- a. Cultural Mandate
- b. Apologetics
- c. Comparative Theological, Spiritual and Felt Need topics

3. Lectures (same range of topics)

With all have open question times with at least an hour set aside for questions.

At all kinds of events have a literature table with free Scripture portions and selected apologetics literature.

### IV. Resources

§ People are available for this range of events and topics, but plan ahead early.

§ Training 

1. § Coordinated with outreach events

§ HPCF every Sunday

§ Information and Materials

[www.spotlights.org](http://www.spotlights.org)

[www.debate.org.uk](http://www.debate.org.uk)

[www.answering-islam.org](http://www.answering-islam.org)

[www.bethinking.org](http://www.bethinking.org)

<http://www.kitab.org.uk> Excellent Bookstore to provide all your book, literature, and video needs for understanding and reaching Muslims.

### V. Conclusion

A. God wants to save Muslims on your campus

B. There are excellent resources in the greater Church to help you

C. God has placed your students in one of the most strategic places in the world.

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, Norman Geisler, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999, p. 246.

[2] Sahih Muslim, no. 6303.

[3] Sahih Muslim, no. 2328.

[4] My thanks to Jay Smith for these categories of Debates.