

Pope Francis Mangles Matthew 28 and Confuses the Masses

It's important to see clearly in the midst of the incredible amount of cultural confusion today, especially when faith leaders like the pope make statements that leave many of the faithful scratching their heads.

Last week, the pope invited Sheikh Ahmed al-Tayeb to the Vatican—the highest figure in Sunni Islam (Al-Ahzar Mosque in Cairo). As the pope put it, “[T]he meeting was the message.”

Now, when it comes to *civil discourse*, a meeting like this can accomplish good things. But when it comes to *Christian doctrine*, a meeting like this can confuse the masses, unless there is abundant clarity, which the pope did not offer.

Not only was Pope Francis not clear, he even twisted the meaning of Scripture to relegate Christ's Great Commission in Matthew 28 down to Islam's command of conquest.

In his words, “It is true that the idea of conquest is inherent in the soul of Islam, however, it is also possible to interpret the objective in Matthew's Gospel, where Jesus sends His disciples to all nations, in terms of the same idea of conquest.”

Seriously? This is an absolutely absurd statement. Here's how simple this is to clarify:

Islam in its truest form, according to the Quran, is a *political* conquest that *forces belief* and prevents *individual freedom*. Just look at Muslim-dominated countries where Shariah law is in effect, and you'll see the result. Women and gays don't bode well there.

Christianity, on the other hand, is a *spiritual* conquest

that *invites belief* and *promotes individual freedom*. A simple look at history in Europe and America reveals the result of this. Unfortunately, both have abandoned Christianity's true, biblical roots.

Jesus sent His disciples to proclaim the good news of the gospel, that all people can be forgiven of their sins and set free by faith in Him. And when sinners turn to Him, they become His disciples, living by the fruits of the Spirit: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control; against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23).

Can you imagine a nation of people like this? You don't need laws to govern them—they govern themselves. This self-government produces great civil government, because the people have *become* a law unto themselves.

Shariah law, on the other hand, forces people to act according to the doctrines of Islam. It removes personal freedom and does not have the power to change a person from the inside out. You see the difference?

All religions, including Islam, are based on two words: Believe and behave.

But Christianity is based on three: Believe, *become*, behave.

You see, the conquest of Christ is in the heart of a man. He changes mankind from the inside out, allowing them to become the righteousness of God and produce the fruits of His Spirit. This is true spiritual conquest.

In a day and age when confusion and chaos are around every turn, it's important to be abundantly clear. Even the pope should know this.