

10 Ways Muslims View Christianity

The following is based on numerous personal conversations with Muslims, personal study and intensive training I received from a missions organization in preparation for one month of outreach in a Muslim nation in 1979.

The astonishing thing about my conversations with Muslims is that most of them have the same moral values that Christians should have, and that this is one of the biggest stumbling blocks hindering them from believing that Christianity is true. (Most of them are very warm, friendly people. Some experts estimate that only about 7-10 percent of them are affiliated in some way with radical Islam, which is still about 100 million adherents globally.)

The majority of the early church was of Middle Eastern descent (e.g., the seven churches in the book of Revelation were situated in modern day Turkey), and some of the great church fathers (Augustine, Tertullian and others) lived and ministered in North Africa (which eventually turned almost totally Islamic). Yet Christians today are reticent in regards to ministering to Muslims.

The following points are meant to aid Christians in their understanding of their Muslim neighbors before attempting to share the gospel.

1. They view Christians as wimps

Muslims view our belief that Jesus, as God the Son, died on the cross as a great sign of weakness and as an affront to the all-powerful God who can never die!

Muslims believe it is an honor to die defending their faith, family and friends, and they view the Christian practice of

turning the other cheek as wimpy. They also look at how quickly Muhammad spread Islam with the sword in Christian nations and believe that all Christians are wimps.

Of course, many Christians have distorted Jesus' teaching on the Sermon on the Mount regarding this (Matt. 5:38-39). Jesus was merely speaking about not retaliating against a personal insult; He was not saying Christians should not fight to protect their lives, families or nations (with the exception of having the honor of being persecuted for Christ, as we see through the model of the apostles in Acts 4).

2. They view Christians as espousing idolatry

Most Muslims don't know the difference between the various Christian denominations (in the same way most Christians don't know the difference between the Sunnis, Shiites and Wahhabi sects) and view Christianity through the dominant Roman Catholic church. Hence, they believe we worship four gods: the Father, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and Mary. Furthermore, they see the statues in many of the Roman Catholic churches as morally reprehensible. (Mohammed was primarily motivated to eradicate Christianity because of all the idolatry he saw in the churches in his homeland.)

3. They view Christians as morally decadent

Since most Muslims view Western Europe and the United States as Christian, they equate the moral decadence of these nations with the morality of the average Christian. With the preponderance of pornography, scantily-clad women, abortion, homosexuality, the use of foul language on television and the overall corruption of society, they believe it to be a reflection on Christian ethos.

Furthermore, they also see the decadent public lives led by television and music stars and professional athletes who claim to be Christians. The public moral collapse of Mel Gibson, who came out with perhaps the most powerful movie ever made about

Jesus (*The Passion of the Christ*) and claimed to be part of a sect of Roman Catholicism, is the most recent example of an immoral Christian.

4. They view the church as compromising true religion

I was with a wonderful Muslim family not long ago. They were anxious to ask me why the church was marrying same-sex couples. They do not know the difference between the liberal mainline Protestant churches and Bible-believing churches. I had a great time explaining to them the difference. When Muslims see the Episcopal church ordaining homosexual bishops and lesbian priests, they view the church as a corollary and even the cause of the dominant secular humanistic culture.

5. They connect Christianity with radical feminism

When Muslims see the way many of their Christian co-workers dress (especially ladies), they are appalled and convinced Christians believe in an uninhibited sexuality that has succumbed to radical feminism.

This is in addition to their belief that many Christian wives are too disrespectful—running the house, calling the shots, making more money than their husbands and even having abortions. Muslims want no part of our faith! They would much rather their ladies dress modestly, covering their faces and bodies, reserving their bodies for their spouses only. As much as we in the church despise their head coverings and burqas, they despise the immodesty in the way we dress—or undress—ourselves in public!

6. They view the Bible as filled with contradictions

Muslims are taught that the Bible (especially the New Testament) has been corrupted and is filled with contradictions. Clearing up these contradictions in the Bible regarding faith in the one true God and how to follow Him is one of the main reasons why many Muslims believe God had to

send the angel Gabriel to dictate the Holy Quran to the prophet Muhammad.

7. They view the church as espousing Zionism

Muslims see evangelical church leaders like John Hagee on television constantly espousing pro-Jewish positions regarding the right to disputed land and siding with them on other political issues. This further foments their opposition to both Christians and Christianity.

8. They believe Christians hate them

The church spends millions of dollars every year sending Bibles and missionaries to evangelize Muslim nations. But the church largely ignores the Muslim families in their neighborhoods! Jesus told us to first spread the gospel in our own regions before we go to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Instead, Muslims see their Christian neighbors giving their women dirty looks because of their head coverings and avoiding conversations with them at their workplaces. They constantly hear negative banter against Islam from Christian leaders in the media.

In spite of the command by Jesus to love our enemies and do good to those who spitefully use us (Matt. 5:44-48), we in the church have avoided, disregarded and even despised the many Muslims God has allowed to immigrate to our communities. While Christians look at the infiltration of Muslims in our cities as a threat, God is looking for Christians who will rightly view this as a great opportunity to befriend Muslims with love and dialogue with them as a witness of the true faith.

9. They believe Christians have conformed to the world in regards to the bearing of children

While Muslims continue to bear many children and multiply (although the Quran allows Muslim men to have more than one wife, which can help greatly in the multiplication of

children), the birth rate of most Christian couples is almost equal to the average non-believer in the West. Many so-called Christian nations (Italy, England, France, Spain) have lower birth rates than death rates (less than 2.1 children per family) and must allow massive immigration by Muslims to keep their economies afloat! (Read Pat Buchanan's *The Death of the West* for more on this issue.)

The United States is not much better (about 1.8 children per family). The truth is that Muslims believe in the cultural mandate to "bear fruit and multiply" (Gen. 1:28) more than the average Christian. The steps to biblical dominion in culture found in this passage clearly show that having strong nuclear families who have many God-fearing children is the primary way culture and society will be transformed by the church.

10. They view the church as full of impractical mystics who separate the spiritual from the natural world

Islam is a life and worldview that includes every realm of society, with just a part of it being about the spiritual life. When they hear television preaching or speak with Christians in the workplace they view the church as having a dualistic view of the world. This is because we only speak about the spiritual life and subjects like prayer, healing, faith and emotional well-being, but we rarely get involved in economics, public policy and politics. Many Muslims see Islam as connecting the dots in every area of life but Christianity as only concerned with the next life, forgiveness of sins and having peace in our hearts.