

How to Share Your Faith? “Evangelize”

A- Develop a Christian attitude

As you develop friendships with Muslim students, you may ask yourself: am I helping them. Do I like them? How do I regard them? An appropriate response is “Because I’ve experienced God’s goodness in my life, and He’s told me to show kindness to others.”

I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ because it is the power of God, saving all those who believe in him Roman 1:16. The Apostle Paul said in Philippians 1:14-15 *“Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly. It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of good will”*. When you describe the situation of Muslims, you find that, they are blind, in darkness, proud for what they believe and under the power of Satan. Acts 26:18 *“Jesus sent Paul to the nations to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness, of sins...”* Your Muslim friend will never give up his beliefs and religion, if he doesn’t find a better one to replace it with. Because Muslims are viewing Christianity as crusaders, pagans (Mushrekeen) Polytheism, not following Jesus’ teaching, they change the message of God, they are divided and weak, blind and unreasonable, immoral and enemies. As a Christian, then, I want to effectively communicate the gospel (good news) to unbelievers so they respond in faith and move toward discipleship.

“There is a particular responsibility which Christians have towards the world as the bible describes those outside Christ and his church: Evangelism, to evangelize means literally to spread the good news of Jesus Christ.” (Basic Christianity, P. 140)

Friendship evangelism works differently for every Muslim because the spiritual awareness of each person can be at a different level, because each one has different style, culture and personality. They are many, open and closed, poor and rich, male and female, old and young, experienced and non experienced, educated and non educated, religious and non religious.

There are many important things which the workers among Muslims must observe.

B. How do I attract them? How do I win them to Christ? We should not only seek out opportunities to build relationships with Muslims, but we must build Jesus' attitude in our life. Ephesians 4:23-24 *To be made new in the attitude of your minds and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor...*

1- Walk by the rules of the kingdom of God

The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many Matthew 20:28. Jesus did not sit on a throne above us, and teach us but he was standing among us, sharing his love and doing merciful acts to the people around him. The idea of faithful service should penetrate all Christians, rather than the desire to reign. Because the desire to be right in pride is deeply ingrained in everyone.

We need to allow Jesus to make us fishers of men not fishermen: like Peter. *Mark 1:16 As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. Come follow me, Jesus said, and I will make you fishers of men. At once they left their nets and followed him. In Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 4:20 The kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power. We are called to bless people around us not to curse. So let us be a channel of blessings to our friends. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing 1 Peter 3:9. When you do anything pleasing to them: they will tell you: "Barakaka Allah" which means "God had blessed you". In fact these are biblical greetings.*

Paul's greetings to the church in the New Testament "*Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*".

Show your Muslim friend the Bible morality. They like to see it in your life. Talk with them about Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5, 6 and 7 forgiveness, speaking positively, encouraging others, Giving, Praying, Fasting, holiness, parenting, and loving your enemies.

In Philippians 2:5 Paul says, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus." We must be available as a daily witness of God's leading in our lives. *Peter says in 2:21 "Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps."* If Jesus did indeed set an example, then it is clear that it is my responsibility to work as hard to become anything, an American, Middle Eastern or Asian, as He did to become a Jew. *1Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude.*

Our words and actions should provide natural opportunities to share our faith. *Jesus said, in Matthew 5:13. "you are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.* Become an incarnate in their cultures when we enter their world. We need to enter their world and not expect them to come to our world. Simplify your thoughts and ideas. If you need people to come to you, you need to go to them.

God wants to free us from the great "I" and to direct us to the others. He wants us to leave the 99 righteous sheep and seeks the one lost sheep until we find it Luke 15:4-7.

"Jesus said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself" (Matt.16:24). We must be willing to give up our American or Middle Eastern or Asian lifestyle and begin as children, learning at the feet of those we have gone to serve. We must be willing to become world Christians. The challenges will shake us and the changes will trouble us. Our bodies will get sick, our minds will suffer fatigue and our emotion will sweep us from ecstasy to depression. Yet the love of Christ will sustain us so that we can identify with Paul, who said In 1Cor 9:22-23 "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save

some. I do this all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings. Our way of life is often equated with godliness, and we defend vigorously its apparent rightness. In Philippians 2:6-7 Being in very nature God did not cling to that identity, but instead became not only a Jew, but a servant among the Jews. We must learn to love the people to whom we are sent to minister so much that we are willing to enter their culture as children, to learn how to speak as they speak, play as they play, eat what they eat, sleep where they sleep, study what they study, and thus earn their respect and admiration. ”

Don't hide the light of Jesus that is in you and don't be ashamed from being a gospel to your friend. *Matthew 5:14-16 You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden...Let your light shine before men, that may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*

2- Willing to Hear God's Voice and Obeying it

Hearing God and obeying what we hear is the key for evangelism. We need the courage, and understanding to believe the promises and to obey God no matter what, in order to take the land. Take an example Joshua the servant of Moses. We are to proclaim the Good News and the Holy Spirit is the one that is working to do God's will and to do good. Our Muslim friends will never catch fire unless the fire from the Holy Spirit burns in our hearts. We see the Holy Spirit at work in *Acts 9:26 "The Lord said to Philip, go south along the desert that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza. So Philip left... An important Ethiopian happened to be going along the road...He was sitting in his chariot reading the book of the prophet Isaiah. The Spirit told Philip to catch up with the chariot...So Philip explained the good news about Jesus...The Lord's Spirit took Philip away"*.

My testimony when I was sharing the gospel with a Muslim student and his family: After I had finished trying to convince them of Jesus, the Holy Spirit told me to ask them if there was anyone in the room who was sick. They looked to each other and asked me how did I know?

Then they told me, they had a very sick friend and he was suffering, and he didn't have insurance. I asked them, if I could pray for him. When they brought him, I felt the Holy Spirit and His presence and as I prayed for him all of them were amazed at what the Holy Spirit did.

Remember success occurs when you respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit and obey. Jesus said; *"I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor"*(John 4:38). We need to faithfully turn our lives and spiritual conversations over to the Holy Spirit and trust God to bring success from our faithfulness.

3- Be enthusiastic and Positive About Your Faith

Mean what you say, do what you say and feel what you say. While people do need to be warned, their greatest need is for positive direction. Have a sense of humour and be joyful while you are talking to your friends:

"Humour was one of the weapons in the armoury of the Master preacher. It is very important the evident purpose of Christ's humour is to clarify and increase understanding. Humour is legitimate and power to break down people's defenses and it humbles us by pricking the bubble of human pomposity" (Stott. Between two worlds P. 288,289)

4- Be Biblical

The Bible says that the children of the kingdom should take care of their characters and watch life and doctrine closely 1 Tim 4:16. We need to prepare ourselves and not a passage to defend our Christian religion. One of the fatal habits a preacher can ever fall into is to read his bible simply in order to find texts to prove that our Muslim friend is wrong.

"Do not read the bible to find texts for sermons. Read it because it is the flood that God has provided for your soul, because it is the word of God, because it is means where by you can get to know God. Read it because it is the bread of life, the manna provided for your soul's nourishment and well being" (Unveiling Islam, P. 32)

Do not try to prove the doctrines of the Bible before your friend accepts the authenticity of the Bible as the word of God.

⁶⁹*“Don’t come to him with speech which is unintelligible or strange to his ears. The blessed gospel is full of verses easy to understand, which yet are able to bring those who accept them to salvation. Your first duty is to present him with proof of the accuracy of the bible and its freedom from alteration”* (Unveiling Islam, P. 32)

When a person believes in the Bible, then accepting what it teaches becomes natural, even the difficult parts. Know your Bible well and know God’s prophecies more than any other book. Stick to the topic, and don’t go off on a tangent. We are preaching not a word which is ineffective but a word which is effective in the hand of God, for God’s own good purposes. The effectiveness of Scripture are in its authority, inspiration and infallibility. When your friend recites a verse from the Qur’an in the same way he expects and assume that you will quote a verse from your Injeel and share it with him. Remember when Jesus faced the devil in Matthew 4 during the temptation he resisted him and confronted him by the word of God. You need to have a clear message - to study the Bible and become a student so that you can understand God's word. As you share your faith, don't hesitate to support what you say with the Bible. Quote from it, and turn to it as an authority for answering questions and dealing with life situations. Learn how to explain the message and interpret the prophecies and the doctrines. God has many commands about His word; He commands us to remember it, love it, study it, understand it , remain in it, use it and let it be your life. Remember that Jesus Christ is “the Word of God” (John 1:1). The bible is not a religion book. It has been handed down by God. It is not merely a code of conduct, or a set of rules about how to make it to heaven. Over time, God reveals more and more about Himself, and about His purposes, mainly in the story of salvation.

5- Be Ready to Share Your Testimony with Your Muslim Friend

Learn how to share your testimony with an effective way, and be natural, happy and clear. Don't share about your adventure. Lift Jesus high and glorify him for what he did to you. Again you have to dismiss fear of Muslim from your heart.

People need from me to tell them of true experiences and testimonies not made up stories of people. Who have found hope in the midst of despair.

Paul shared his testimony 3 times in Acts, before the Jews, before the gentiles and before the kings. When Paul was commissioned to work among the non-Jews the Lord *In Acts 26:12-18* Jesus said to Paul: "I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from the darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me."

Remember the three stages of salvation: In stage one we need to open the eyes of the people.

The word says that the truth sets us free in Christ. The first shock to a Muslim is seeing Islam with open eyes. He sees the truth of Jesus and its basic anti-Christ spirit becomes clear. During the second stage we talk about turning from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. We need to plant truth from God's word into his heart. It leads the Muslim to turn from evil to an awareness of his need for a savior, Jesus Christ. In the third stage the seeker knows his need for forgiveness of sins and his place among those who are sanctified by faith in Jesus. If your Muslim friend has arrived at this point in his spiritual journey, you may lead him in a prayer of commitment to God and to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and break the bondage of every enemy of God (2Cor 10:4).

6- Be Persuasive. (Acts 19:8-10)

"They are sources of persuasive effectiveness: the first is logical, it refers to the facts in the logic of the subject matter. The second, the pathetic, refers to the emotions, bias and opinions of your friend and the third is the ethical, it involves the speaker's personality. These three have been

referred to as logos, pathos and ethos” (Perry, L Loyd M. Biblical preaching for today’s world, P.173)

In Matthew 10:16 “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves” Use logic and give illustrations from nature, books, history, other people and every day incidents. Use your imagination to show the relationship between ancient truth and modern life. Jesus used illustrations in his sermons when he spoke of the kingdom of heaven. The aim is to help the hearer to remember and stimulate his imagination and to throw light upon the darkness.

We must be clear in our sharing that Christ is our Lord as we are asking the person to seek Christ. We are not trying to change them to be like us as a Christian, but rather confronting them to the person of Jesus. Explain to them about the kingdom of God, the sin, redemption, righteousness and how they could be saved. Salvation means freedom from the prison of Sin because Jesus Christ took my place in calvary. By believing in his redemption and accepting Him as my savior and Lord I become free from the symptoms of death.

The power of persuasion increases when you intimately know your Muslim friends, and knowing comes from actively listening to their opinions and needs.

7- Be Friendly

Recognize your friend: Do not condemn your friend if he or she refused to follow your suggestions. Take his or her address and build friendship even if he refuses to accept Christ. Be sure that the Muslims leave the discussion knowing that you like them for who they are. Be sincere and genuine. They need to see it in you, keep confidence and live what you say. We should know that our confidence comes from the Holy Spirit. Be available to them, emotionally and physically. *Don’t say that you will help someone tomorrow, if you can help today* (Prov.3:28). Not to attack personalities respected the Muslims directly or indirectly. Treat his

audience with the kindness of Christ and the patience of Christ, so that the atmosphere will be one of confidence.

C- The Pattern we Should Follow in Reaching out the Gospel

We communicate truth, but God saves. When the sun rises all stars disappear. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness. God promises that he will open doors for witness. Don't rush to open your book and present your gospel. In *1 Cor 3:5-6 Paul writes, "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow."* You have to believe that there is a way, time and place for everything you want to do.

1- Be Creative.

God likes those who use their mind, and those who invent things. Because God created us man and woman on his own image. One of his own image "They are the most intelligent of God's creatures and have a creative power" Genesis 1:27-28. Be creative, and don't satisfied with what you have already, look for changes and new ways in sharing the gospel and be flexible.

2- Avoid Political and Patriot arguments:

Do not defend the crusades and the Christian views in front of your Muslim friend. Every intelligent Muslim remembers that Popes in Rome called for crusades against Islam. Muslims may think that you share the gospel especially the Old Testament as a defense of Israel, Be wise and avoid political conversations.

"Patriotism vs. evangelism: World wide, Muslims do not distinguish between Christianity and America. Any westerner who comes into a store where a Muslim is working and spits on him or calls him a name "a Christian" It does not matter if the bigot has never stepped into a church in the Muslim's mind, a Christian did this. Therefore, Christians of any nationality must be careful not to confuse Christ with pride of country. The authors are happy to be American citizens but citizenship saves no one's soul. Defending Christ does not mean defending a national foreign policy." (Unveiling Islam, P.228)

We are hearing on the Arabic televisions, the radical Muslims believing that Crusader mentality, western in particular, the United States and the power of Zionism pit the West against the Islamic world. According to the Muslim World, Christians and Jews are generally regarded as unbelievers rather than “People of the book” and they are seen as partners against Islam and the Muslim world.

We need to remember that even though students may call themselves Muslims, they are not necessary religious. For this reason, it is important not to push the Muslim students to defend the religion of his family or nation.

3-Create an Environment of Acceptance Among Your Muslim Friends

Encourage him or her to share his or her opinions. Muslims from some cultures may be hesitant to speak out in a group or in the presence of others. Encourage the Christian women to get involved with Muslim woman. Women will play a major role. As a woman you can enter the kitchen and cook and have a cup of tea with the family. A Christian woman can open a deep conversation with other Muslim woman, and sometimes a Muslim woman can relate more closely to a Christian woman than to her husband. Once her husband knows that you don't like sin you are not like others in the American society and you are taking care of his wife, then the whole home will trust and listen to you. The Internet today could play major role in your Muslim' life. He likes to go to it and use it for dirty stuff. Instead, you can guide him to Christians web sites and share with him Christ.

4- Deal With Your Muslim Friend Personally, Not With Other Muslims Around.

Don't assume that church is the only place he will hear and understand the Bible. Don't put yourself above others or you will be put down. *“Don't drag me away, Lord with those who speak kind words to their friends while planning trouble” (Ps 28:3). Don't gossip because it*

causes hard feelings and brings divisions (Prov. 16:28). Don't depend on your eyes for your wisdom. But above all else, we must break the yoke or resentment inherited from our fore-fathers and look at our Muslim friend as equal as you or any other people we love whom Jesus died for.

5- Build Bridges.

Think of yourself as a bridge. Be a good listener, reasonable and respectful to others. All you need to know is your message and enough about the religion and culture of Islam to help you bridge the gap.

“Some people seems unable to communicate faith in Jesus Christ without using theological “church talk”. Such terms as born again, atonement, saved and lost become a Christian’s natural language. For the Muslim, such words constitute a foreign vocabulary...Speak in clear terms, without using language that assumes previous knowledge” (Unveiling Islam, P.228)

Find points in common for an ongoing relationship. Answer criticism if necessary so as to expel false information about Christ, Christians, and Christianity. Have something to give to your friend. Give a New Testament, Jesus film or a Christian book as a gift if the person shows interest. Give time and commitment. In *Matt. 4:17* we read that the time had come for Jesus to preach, and in *Matt. 16:21* the time had come to explain his suffering, death and resurrection. In both instances, that time as stressed in these texts does not refer to a schedule but to opportunity.

6- Build an Offensive Strategy:

Shake the ground under the feet of your Muslim friend. You need to shake his faith in Islam. When Jesus had received all authority from His Father, He commanded His disciples to stand up and use it. When his disciples the seventy-two return back with joy from their short trip to the villages around them. In Luke 10: 17-18 they said; *Lord, even demons submit to us in your name” . Jesus replied, I saw Satan fall like lighting from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy.*

Use your gifts, authority and armor. Don't be afraid to challenge your enemies. Ephesians 6:10-18; 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 and Revelation 11:10-12

"The Christian worker has to be ready to pay with his or her life for daring to challenge the enemy powers and setting their prisoners free" (Unveiling Islam P.209).

Don't allow the devil to take ground in your life by leading you to a sin. If you do sin, confess and repent quickly. Allow the power of the Holy Spirit to touch the weaker areas in your life. In 1John 1:9 *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."*

The worker should know that we are engaged in a deadly war. We must develop the mentality of one at war.

In 1 Timothy 2:21 *"If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work."* God ordered Joshua before he goes to the war to tell the people of God in chapter 3:5 *"consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you"*.

7- Pray Boldly

Prayer is the key for everything before the conversation, during the conversation and after the conversation. Many Christians are worldly fearful of engaging the enemy on the higher levels. In 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 say that *the weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of Christ.* When your Muslim friend is blind you cannot argue or discuss with him about anything spiritual. What you have to do is to pray that the Holy Spirit will remove all the demolish strongholds from his mind. Choose the right way to give an honest invitation and accept Jesus and that can only be done by the

leading of the Holy Spirit. Explain how and why we pray and the importance of prayers. Usually Muslims like to hear that, and talk freely about prayer and share it in public. Ask him; if you can pray with him. When you pray; pray in faith, and be humble show him your concern.

8- Share Boldly

Do not be too humble nor apologize for believing in Christ. Be strict, stand very strongly on your faith and practice what we preach. Do not beat around the bush, but present your belief in Christ. *Matthew 10:26-33 So do not afraid of them... whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven).*

9- Remove the Fear of Islam From Your Heart

Don't be afraid to be clear about your faith and present a biblical point of view on the issue. *God did not give us a Spirit of timidity, but a Spirit of power, of love and of self discipline 2Timothy 1:7.* As Christians we need to be aware that Jesus has defeated Satan and the evil spirits once and for all. And we have to believe that perfect love casts out all fear (1 John 4:18). Remember that Jesus delivered us from the fear of the people, loneliness, darkness, poverty, responsibility, injustice, persecution, future and death.

Remember our battle is not with blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Distinguish between your Muslim friend and the spirit of Islam and the work of evil. Your Muslim friend is under these powers, fear and darkness. The spirit of Islam is misleading, (Genesis 3:1-4) it is savage (Genesis 16:12, Galatians 4:29), it spoils the way of God (Acts 13:10), disfigures the image of God, it ridicules (Genesis 21:9-10), (Colossians 2:16), Spirit of lust, eating and drinking (Genesis 25:31), aggressive and violent, hypocrisy (1Sam 15:3-11), and it is one of the spirits of Anti-Christ (1John 2:18, 4:1-2). Use your authority that

has been given to you by Jesus Christ against the evil spirits and learn how to free your friends from the power of Satan. The bible says: *Resist the devil and he will flee from you (James 4:7)*

In the end we need to remember that the battle is the Lord's. He is in charge, He will save, we are to obey and He will direct us to the battle, but in the end the victory always belongs to Him.

10- Build a Defensive Strategy:

Be humble and submit to the word of God. One thing that God asked Joshua to do was to be careful to obey the law that Moses had presented. Don't be ignorant. Many Christians are ignorant of sharing their faith with Muslims, even among those who are called to preach among them. Because of the lack of training and unwillingness to submit for learning. Many are unaware of dealing with Muslim questions.

Learn how to defend your beliefs from a solid and strong place and prove to your Muslim friend that your Bible is uncorrupt and is not changed wisely and biblically 1Peter 3:15. Prove to him that Jesus had to die on the cross in order to save the human being from sin. Prove to him that Jesus came to build his church and you are part of his church. Tell your friend that you don't understand everything about God you have just to accept and receive it by faith.

11- Ask Questions.

We need to be sensitive to the big public questions. Again we use Jesus as our model. Jesus asked people around him around 150 questions. Limit your questions to single topic and avoid questions that assume a certain answer will be given. Ask your Muslim friend questions about Muhammed, Qur'an and his belief, like: Was Muhammed a true Prophet? It is in doubt. A true Prophet must receive a direct call from God and not from Angel and must perform miracles and be a total agreement with the other prophets and he must live a holy life. Why does the

Qur'an have grammatical errors? Is in the Qur'an true miracles from God? If yes, why does it contradict itself and the Bible. Why does it have a lot of scientific, geographical and historical errors? Why many of its verses proclaim immoral conducts? We can ask questions about aspects of Muhammed's life, social and ethical etc. The Muslims has no answers.

12. Conversation with a Muslim Student Based on Effective Questions

Attef is practicing Islam, and is also teaching and studying at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

- Elie: "I believe that, Jesus died on the cross to forgive our sins". We go to heaven only by repenting and accepting Jesus. Salvation is by grace. What do you believe?
- Attef: "Without a concept of sonship and Jesus' atoning sacrifice on the cross, there is no remission of sins and therefore no grace. Salvation by faith is arrogance. God is all merciful, all knowing.. Muslims have 99 names for what God is, but none conveys the intimacy of Abba whom we approach in reconciliation by virtue of his saving grace." I think that Christians are lazy, they sin and Jesus forgives.
- Elie: "How does God forgive your sins?"
- Attef: "There is no view of redemption as such for the Muslims. Adam was the first sinner, and also the first prophet. He missed the mark by disobeying the divine command, and he asked for God's forgiveness. Every human is born like Adam, capable of knowing God and having pure faith. There is no original sin in Islam, only original purity. Adam had the capability to right ourselves and rehabilitate our standing before God, through submission and through the five pillars. God punishes each according to his/ her sins. The

characteristic description for human status before God is "abd" which means servant or slave. God, in his mercy, revealed himself, through the Qur'an and his final prophet, but Islam nevertheless remains a religion driven by ongoing human efforts to earn God's favor." So God is judge. He is a great businessman you cannot steal from him. Our life will test on the judgement day, our individual good works will get into paradise.

- Elie: "Where do you go after death?"
- Attef: "I don't know. I hope to heaven, but I am not sure."
- Elie: "Why are you praying then?"
- Attef: "I pray that I will not go into the sin and that God will forgive my sins. That's why I am praying five times or more a day and why I repent. I am trying to do human effort and good deeds." Because the Qur'an said so.
- Elie: "Where did the sin come from?"
- Attef: "I don't know. Maybe from God!" (He laughs.)
- Elie: "The Qur'an said God is Good, and if God is good how did He create the sin, or the evil in this world? And Why are you trying to do good, but find yourself doing evil things? From where did all these things come from?"
- Attef: "I don't know." (He wrote these questions down on a paper and said to me.) " I will ask the 'Sheik' the leader of Islam."
- Elie: "Would you like to know what we believe in and what the bible says about sin?"
- Attef: "Yes!"
- Elie explained to him the origin of sin, the fall, Satan, and how much we need redemption or atonement and sacrifice. That's why we need Jesus. Genesis 2-3 teaches that sin is serious as does *Romans 6:23 'For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal*

life in Christ Jesus our Lord' and Rom 3:10-12 'There is no-one righteous, not even one, there is no-one who understands no-one who seeks God. All have turned away they have together become worthless; There is no-one does good, not even one.' Sin reflects an attitude of moral rebellion against the Holy God, which causes us to be alienated from Him. Therefore an atonement is necessary.

13. Questions that help make contacts with Muslims

An American friend Handbook laid out very good questions for Americans that would like to establish friendship with Internationals and it could be helpful to establish conversations with your Muslim friend.

1- I'm interested in what Muslims think about God. I would like to know your opinion. Could we get together for a few minutes sometime soon and talk about this?

2- I'm interested in getting to know Islam here in the United States. Try this over lunch with new contacts.

3- I know that you are interested in learning as much as you can about American life while you are here in the States. I would love to have the opportunity to share with you just what it means to me.

4- As a Christian I learned about Jesus' culture, You came from that region can you explain a little about your culture especially hospitality?

5- There have been many misconceptions about Christianity, and I'm sure you would like to know just why we believe what we do. Maybe you could share with me your experiences along this line too.

6- I'm interested in learning more about your country and your culture.

7- Ask to see any photographs your Muslim friend may have of his or her family and share your own life and family photographs. Discuss issues like how large is your family? And what is your position of birth?

8- Point out a map and ask him where his home is located and discuss the environments in the Middle East?

9- What kinds of work do men and women do? Do Married women work outside the home? If no why? What about the husband's responsibility at home? What are wedding customs?

10- How do you feel about the role women play in America's culture? Do women hold political office in your country? Or why not

14. Questions that we are Expected to Answer About Christianity

Since September 11, Christians and Muslims are not only becoming interested in the differences between their belief systems, but they are also becoming interested in each other as individuals.

There are many misunderstandings in this country about Muslims. Many Christians are afraid of getting too close to Muslims; some even believe that Muslims are all terrorists or evil people.

Conversely, Muslims have the same fears and suspicions. These people are asking some very fundamental questions which need to be answered. Some of these questions are:

1- Has the Bible been corrupted?

2- Why do Christians worship three Gods?

3- Who really is Jesus Christ?

4- Who is the Holy Spirit?

5- Is there really a Triune God?

6- Why do Christians insist on the Crucifixion?

7- Why do so many Christians live an unholy lifestyle?

8- Why the innocent people has to suffer?

9- Who will be saved?

10- Do the Qur'an and the Bible agree, and why does this matter?

11- Why do you have four gospels?

15. Another Conversation with Muslim friend

In a friendly debate with a Muslim student, the following conversation took place:

Mustafah is a doctoral student from Palestine who is not practicing Islam and is open to the Bible. Our conversation might provide insights into how to communicate with Muslims.

Elie: "What do you think about Jesus?"

Mustafah: Well! "He was one of the major prophets. We don't associate Jesus with God and to call him Son of God is blasphemy. The Qu'ran talks about Jesus in the book of (Surah Al-Mariam 4:169). There is no category in Islam for the One true God with a triune nature. 'The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was only a messenger of God, and his word that he committed to Mariam (Mary), and a Spirit from him'. The Qur'an says. '*So believe in God and His messengers, and say not, three.*'

Mustafah continues: "Like many Muslims we honor Jesus and allow that miracles are associated with him, but we are not worshiping him like the Christian. The prophet Jesus can be virgin-born, but not "Emmanuel- God with us". We also don't believe that he was crucified. The Qur'an asserts that: "*they did not slay him neither crucified him, only a likeness of what was shown to them*" (Surah 4:155)."

Mustafah continues: " Islam cannot conceive of either a prophet or a son who is executed as a criminal. If Jesus died on the cross, enduring the shame, then from the Muslim perspective he utterly failed. Muhammad's victory, first in Medina and later in Mecca, validated his prophetic

role. Manifest success became the measuring rod for authentic Sunni Islam (its major branch), and by that standard, Jesus failed. His mission was cut short without his realizing any real measurable “success”.

Elie: “ Paul writes in the Bible *“though he was God, he...made himself nothing and took the humble position of a slave...dying a criminal's death on a cross”* (Phil. 2:6-9). The reason is to save us from the sin and redeem us from sin.”

Mustafah: Prayed and recited this verse from the Qur’an (Istaghfara Allah, Wa Sallah hala Muhammad rassul Allah): Than he said, “Jesus as God's son is even more problematic. But I don't think this in the Bible is right. The Bible is corrupted, abrogated by the Qur'an. It's a losing proposition from the Muslim perspective. A son of God would never be a slave and would never die a criminal's death. The logic by which, for the Qur'an, Jesus can never be the Son of God is precisely the logic by which, for Paul and the New Testament, He is truly God, one God the Qur'an says. *“Glory be to him whose are all things in the havens and the earth”* (Surah 4:171).”

Conclusion of this conversation:

In Luke 1:26-35 The angel brought the news to Mary that she would conceive and give birth to a son. *“The Holy Spirit will come upon you and for that reason the Holy offspring shall be called the Son of God”* Son of God means He comes from God. As Christian we do not believe that God ever had a physical relationship with a woman to have this son. We believe it is blasphemy. For example, you are from Lebanon, so we say son of Lebanon. This doesn't mean that Lebanon literary is your father. We say that, because you are from Lebanon. One could also be called “son of education” meaning that he is a very well- educated person. Also the Bible said Jesus not only was the Son of God but also was the Son of Man” because he became a flesh and a human being like us.

Then we went to a new discussion about the Bible. Is the Bible true? Elie tried to convince Mustafah that the Bible is Authentic, divinely inspired, and the final authority in all matters of faith and truth.

16. Circulate conversation with Muslims

“Modern Muslim attempts to limit our information about Jesus to what the Qur’an says about Him reflect Circular reasoning:

Muslims: Muhammad is the Prophet of God

None M.: Why is this true? How do you know?

Muslims: The Qur’an says so

None M.: Why is the Qur’an true?

Muslims: Muhammad is the Prophet of God and the Quran is without error

None M.: Why is this true?

Muslims: Because the Qur’an says so

None M.: But why is the Qur’an true?

Muslims: The Qur’an is without error.”

17. Testimony from a Converted Muslim

Many Muslims believe in Jesus Christ through dreams and visions and through the testimonies of God's peoples. I have met here in Milwaukee, five Muslims who have converted to Christ. They have great testimonies. We know that any attempt to convert a Muslim to another faith is subject to criminal persecution. Their faith is very strong. Today one of the strong proofs that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven and that He is Lord, is the changes that He makes in people from any religion along with the great testimonies that we hear from converted Muslims. We hear lots of stories from all over the Muslim world, people who come to the Lord through visions and dreams, like this man who identified himself only as a brother from Saudi Arabia writes:

“As a teenager I went to the mosque five times a day in obedience to my parents. One night while I was asleep, I had this horrible dream of me being taken into hell. What I saw there brought me real fear. This dream kept coming to me almost every night. Suddenly one day

Jesus appeared to me and said, "Son, I am the way, the truth, and the life. And if you would give your life to Me and follow Me, I would save you from the hell that you have seen." After I converted I was taken into custody and tortured. They told me I would be beheaded if I did not turn back to Islam. I told the authorities that I was willing to die for Jesus and that I would never come back to Islam. The appointed day came for my execution, and I was waiting with much anticipation, yet very strong in my faith. One hour lapsed; two hours went by; then it became three hours and then the day passed by. No one turned up. Then two days later the authorities turned and opened the doors and told me, "You demon! Get out from this place!"

- "Discover who Jesus is! Jesus said, 'All who are weary and heavy laden come to me' (Matt. 11:28). He commented the faith of the Roman Centurion (Matt. 8:5-13) and forgave the sinful woman (Luke 7:36-50). The Gospels portray Jesus as the provider for the physically hungry (Matt.14:13-21) and the spiritually hungry (John 6:35). Jesus is the healer of the leper, the lame, the blind, the deaf and the mute (Matt.18:10-14; Luke 19:10). Jesus is the lover of the children (Matt. 19:14). Jesus is the light of revelation to the world Luke 2:32 and John 8:12). He is the gate through whom one passes to receive eternal life (John 10:9).

18. Another Discussion with a Muslim Student:

"Scholar Muslims assume that if they can refute the bible then the Qur'an is established. You cannot prove your own position by simply refuting someone else's position, Each book must stand or fall on its own merits:" (Muhammad and Jesus P.90)

Eli: How do you know that the Qur'an is true?

Ali: The Qur'an is a miracle and it comes from God directly.

Eli: But it contradicts the Bible (Jesus)

Ali: Then, the Bible is corrupt. The Qur'an is true miracle

Eli: Do you have proof?

Ali: I don't need any textual proof because I know that the bible is corrupt.

Eli: How do you know that the Bible is corrupt?

Ali: The Qur'an is true in all things. Do you believe in the Qur'an?

Eli: I believe in the Qur'an: "if the Qur'an believes in the Bible then it shouldn't contradict it".