

Engaging Muslims with the Gospel

By Dean Sieberhagen

Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

Assignment One

Search for a website that explains what Muslims believe (such as www.islam-guide.com). Prepare to share your answers to the following question: What are the five pillars all Muslims should practice?

Assignment Two

Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: How do you answer a Muslim who says that something as precious as salvation cannot be free?

Assignment Three

Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: Believing in Jesus sounds simple, but what does it really mean?

Scripture to Memorize

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. Romans 10:4

Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will understand how to engage Muslims with the gospel in a loving, Christlike manner.

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It's in the Book

30 minutes

Real-Life Scenario

Abdul and his sister, Fatima, have arrived in your neighborhood. They seem quiet and withdrawn, keeping to themselves most of the time. One day you decide to talk with them. You find out that they have come from Syria and had been living in a community for refugees near you. Some of your friends and family tell you Muslims are dangerous and to leave them alone. Should you keep trying to make friends with them, or is it safer and better to leave them alone?

Love Your Enemies

One of the basic truths of the Christian faith is that God loves all the peoples of the world. That love compelled Jesus to die for mankind so that people could be reconciled to God. Jesus taught that we, as His disciples, should have that same love. He even says, "Love your enemies" (Matthew 5:44).

Some Americans consider Muslims as enemies, which may cause some of Jesus' disciples to question whether they should take the gospel to these people. In Romans 10:1–4, Paul expressed his passion for taking the gospel to the Jews. He also communicated principles regarding how to engage them with the good news. These principles are useful for engaging Muslims with the gospel.

Read Romans 10:1–4 out loud.

Studying the Passage

Verse 1. my heart's desire. Engaging Muslims with the gospel must begin with your own heart. Do you see them as Jesus does? Are they bad and evil people or those who desperately need to know Jesus as Lord and Savior? Without a heart of love, your witness will fail.

On Your Own

Paul said his heart's was desire to see the Jews come to know Christ. In another place he said he would be willing to miss heaven if it meant the Jews would be redeemed (see Romans 9:3).

In the space below, write a brief prayer. Begin by sharing your honest feelings about Muslims today. Then ask Jesus to give you a genuine desire to see multitudes of Muslims come to know Him as Savior—including Muslims in your immediate world.

Studying the Passage

Verse 1. prayer to God. Engaging Muslims with the gospel must begin, continue and end with prayer. **That they may be saved.** Redemption is the focus of your prayer. Muslims have many needs and issues, but none is as important as their salvation.

Verse 2. zeal for God. Many Muslims truly want to know and obey God.

Discussion Question

What is one principle from Romans 10:1–2 that could be used to engage Muslims with the gospel?

Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week may now share an answer to this question: What are the five pillars all Muslims should practice?

Studying the Passage

Verse 2. not according to knowledge. Muslims think they know how to be saved, but they have faulty knowledge. They are doing what they think is right according to the teachings of Muhammad and the Qur'an, but they need to know how to be saved according to what God's Word (the Bible) teaches.

Verse 3. seeking to establish their own [righteousness]. Instead of knowing and understanding the free gift of salvation through Jesus, Muslims use a system of good works and thereby hope for mercy and salvation from judgment.

Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week may now share an answer to this question: How do you answer a Muslim who says that something as precious as salvation cannot be free?

Studying the Passage

Verse 4. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness. This is the good news Muslims need to hear. Jesus has already completed all that is required for salvation. Jesus is the end, and we need to do nothing more than believe! **to everyone who believes.** As with all mankind, all Muslims have to do is believe in Jesus and the righteousness He has already completed on the cross. Belief here does not only mean believing in His existence. Belief involves complete faith in both the *person* and *work* of Jesus according to the Bible.

Assignment Three Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week may now share an answer to the question: Believing in Jesus sounds simple, but what does it really mean?

Engaging Muslims with the gospel can be a daunting challenge, and many people feel scared and unequipped. You do not have to know everything about the Muslim faith. Begin with your own heart as you come to love them as Jesus does. Then pray for their salvation. Find individuals for whom to pray. Understand that Muslims are trying to find salvation through good works, and be ready to share the salvation found in the person and work of Jesus alone.

Heart and Hands

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

Since Last Week

5 minutes

Give the group this update: "In our last session I made a commitment to . . . I want to let you know how that turned out. On that same issue I think the Holy Spirit now is leading me to . . ."

Grace-Filled Accountability

5 minutes

Disciples can agree on a way to hold one another accountable. Confessing faults with other disciples allows them to offer grace, insights, and encouragement. Even more important is confession to Christ, the source of true forgiveness and cleansing.

Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service

5 minutes

Groups of disciples always are making preparations for evangelism, missions, and service. Use these minutes to work on the next plan.

Prayer

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally, and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

At Home: Nail It Down

As disciples of Jesus, we know we are supposed to share the gospel with any lost people around us. This can be a big challenge when we meet people who, like Muslims, are different from us. We can choose to say we do like them and do not understand them. We can choose to say that someone else should reach them with the gospel. In neither case will Christ be pleased.

When it comes to sharing the gospel, our only choice is to be like Jesus. He loves all the people of the world. Since this is true, we have no option but to engage Muslims with the gospel.

How we do this is important, and so we learn from the example of Paul in Romans 10:1–4. There he speaks of how he engaged the Jews with the gospel. In this passage are valuable principles disciples can use today related to Muslims.

- Before we even open our mouths to engage Muslims, we need to examine our own hearts to see if we love them as Jesus does.
- Begin by talking to God and pleading for their salvation.
- Try to understand what we can about the Muslim faith, especially their attempt to work their way to salvation.
- Remain ready to share about salvation that comes through Jesus and what He has done on the cross to save us.

Follow up question

Muslims are so different. How is it possible to witness to them?

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.