



The Pillars of Islam

by Harry Morin

Although a Muslim embraces a belief system in which he expresses faith regarding the spiritual realm, his religious works and rituals are seen as the critical pillars which uphold his religious system and provide it with strength, meaning and preservation. Being a good Muslim is determined more by what is done, than what is simply believed. One's inner beliefs can remain hidden in the private realm of reasoning and uncertainty, but religious works provide a public demonstration that reveal both one's religious identity and religious devotion. In addition, religious works are seen as a prerequisite to salvation. Because these works are viewed as prescribed by Almighty God, to fail to fully observe them is to disobey God and incur His punishment. Conversely, to fulfill these obligations is to merit heavenly reward. Thus, such works become a means of hope for eternal salvation.

Consequently, the observance of religious works plays a critical role in the daily application of Islam. These religious works are headed by a traditional list of requirements that have become known as *The Pillars of Islam*. Let's look at each requirement to gain better understanding about a Muslim's religious practice.

Confessions of Faith

Every Muslim is obligated to make a verbal confession of his faith by reciting what is known as the *shabada*. He does this by uttering the words, "I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah." By reciting this confession of faith, one identifies himself as a Muslim who subscribes to the religion and community of Islam. The words of this confession of faith are often the first words a person hears

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Until All Have Heard

How then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? Romans 10:14

Jim Bennett, Director
Center for
Ministry to Muslims



Let me share with you a heart-warming event that occurred in a Muslim country that recently experienced a ten-year period during which 100,000 people were slaughtered in internecine warfare. My heart is stirred to think that two months ago the leaders of nine fellowships in that country put their signatures to a document binding them together as one Pentecostal movement, and all of them are Muslim-background believers in Christ!

PRESENT HARVEST: CMM personnel just concluded the first Institute of Islamic Studies in the largest Muslim country in the world—Indonesia. The president of the host Bible School was born and raised as a Muslim. When he was a child a Christian housekeeper came to live with his large family. Her one aim was to let the light of Jesus shine. She read the Bible to the children at night, planting the Word of God in their hearts. The young president-to-be accepted Jesus as Savior. Just two weeks ago he said, “This Christian girl showed us the love of Christ. Today 39 of the 42 members of my extended family are followers of Jesus.” Coincidentally, one of the teachers at the Indonesian IIS was the general superintendent of a country that is 85 percent Muslim. He himself was born and raised as a Muslim—his first name was Muhammad! Today he leads a great constituency that is planting churches among Muslims.

POTENTIAL LABORERS: 1. The missionary director of the January Institute of Islamic Studies at Azusa Theological College on the campus of the Free University of Amsterdam

was in my office this week and stated, “The IIS was the highlight of our school year. We expect at least 60 students from several groups to attend the Institute next January.” 2. We have just completed the eighth annual IIS on the campus of Asia Pacific Theological Seminary in Baguio, Philippines. 3. The annual School of Missions will convene here in Springfield in July. CMM will present a workshop entitled “Church Planting in Muslim Contexts.” For candidate missionaries headed for Muslim countries, we will provide an extended class entitled “Introduction to Islam.”

Thank you for praying for laborers for the Muslim harvest. There are more than ever before and we are trusting the Lord that the number will continue to grow! In June 2003, Time magazine reported statistics from the Gordon-Conwell Center for the Study of Global Christianity. Their figures suggest that the number of missionaries to Islamic countries nearly doubled between 1982 and 2001—from about 15,000 to somewhere in excess of 27,000!

POWER OF PARTNERSHIP: Recently I heard this: “Missions is done with the feet of those who go, the knees of those who stay and pray, and the hands of those who give.” It’s a package deal! It can’t be done unless each one participates. Paul made it clear in Romans 10:14-15: *How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?*



Muslim World News



Sudan

Sudan's Islamic regime in Khartoum lashed and fined a young Christian Sudanese woman on April 14 for not wearing a headscarf in public in the capital city. Cecilia John Holland, 27, was traveling by minibus to her home in the Khartoum suburb of Haj Yousif on the night of April 13 when she was arrested by a group of 10 public-order policemen. The police told Holland that no one in Khartoum, "even a non-Muslim," was exempt from Islamic bans against wearing improper dress. The Khartoum government refused to compromise on its insistence that Islamic law govern all Sudanese citizens residing in Khartoum. More than two million non-Muslim southerners live in the capital, displaced by the last 20 years of civil war between the African Christian-animist south and the Arab Muslim north.—*Compass*

Turkey

A criminal court in southeast Turkey has for the second time pressed charges against Pastor Ahmet Guvener of the Diyarbakir Evangelical Church, accusing him of "opening an illegal church." State prosecutor Mehmet Isbitiren charged Guvener in February with "using a building registered as a home to open a Protestant church and conducting worship together with music for the people attending."

Guvener could be jailed for up to two years if convicted. The Diyarbakir Evangelical Church has functioned openly in the city's Christian neighborhood of Lalebey since April 6 of last year, gathering from 50 to 60 worshippers each Sunday. "Of course, the real purpose of this court case is to shut down our church," Guvener told *Compass*, stating that the case will set a precedent for all other "existing and newly opened" Protestant churches in Turkey. His hearing before the Diyarbakir Criminal Court is set for May 12.—*Compass*

Nigeria

Muslim fanatics burned down 10 Christian churches in the town of Makarfi in the state of Kaduna, Nigeria, in April. Claims that a mentally retarded Christian teenager desecrated a copy of the Quran, the Muslim holy book, apparently incited the attack. Although officials initially reported no casualties in the incident, eyewitnesses saw trucks piled with bodies of dead Christians from Makarfi being taken away for burial by police in nearby Kaduna. The violence also provoked the displacement of hundreds of other Christians from the town. At a press conference, leaders of the Kaduna chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) confirmed the killings in Makarfi. "It is our conclusion that Muslim leaders are deliberately using

fanatics in the name of Islam to engage in periodic attacks on Christians with the sole aim to intimidate, terrorize and force Christians into submission and to denounce their faith," CAN vice-chairman Dr. Sam Kujiyat said.—*Compass*

Jordan

An Islamic court judge in Amman told Christian widow Siham Qandah that according to new evidence, her children's Muslim guardian recently withdrew another large amount of money from their orphan trust funds. The judge reportedly ordered an immediate investigation into the apparent embezzlement. Qandah has been locked in a legal battle with her brother Abdullah al-Muhtadi for six years to retain custody of her daughter Rawan and son Fadi, now 15 and 14 years of age. Al-Muhtadi converted to Islam as a teenager and remains estranged from his Christian family. He vowed to raise his sister's children, who are both baptized Christians, as Muslims after a "conversion" certificate was found claiming that their father secretly converted to Islam before his death. Two years ago Qandah was ordered by the Supreme Court of Jordan to surrender her children to her brother. She and her children immediately went into hiding, buying time with several desperate legal and diplomatic appeals to reverse the decision.—*Compass*

The Pillar

by H

when whispered into his ears at birth, and the last words he hears when whispered into his ears at death.

Prayer

Every Muslim is obligated to pray five times daily. These prayers must be performed at specifically designated times of the day which are at dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset and evening. Prayer time is announced through loud speakers from the minarets or towers of local mosques across Muslim countries. This prayer call summons Muslims with the words, "Come to prayer; come to prayer. Come to fulfillment; come to fulfillment." Though Muslims can choose to pray in their homes, their traditions speak of greater rewards for those who pray in the mosque.

For the orthodox Muslim, prayer is more of a religious ritual to be observed than a time of personal mutual communion with Almighty God. As a result, great stress is given to methodology. Prayer is a religious exercise that must be performed in a precise manner in order to adequately fulfill the obligation of prayer and receive religious merit.

For example, before entering the prayer hall of the mosque, the Muslim worshipper must remove his shoes and perform a ceremonial washing of ablution of face, hands and feet. This must be carried out in meticulous detail. When ready to pray, the Muslim must place himself in line with fellow worshippers, face the direction of the city of Mecca, and then proceed through the prescribed prayer postures. These include standing, bowing, kneeling and prostrating. While going through these postures, the Muslim recites from memory the words of the prayer in Arabic. These memorized portions of the prayer are, according to Islamic tradition, the words that his prophet uttered centuries ago. An orthodox Muslim dare not pray his own words lest he say the wrong thing and unknowingly incur the wrath of God. Seeing hundreds of Muslims bowing and prostrating in unison is indeed an impressive sight and one in which Muslims pride themselves when talking about the unity of the Islamic community and world.

Fasting

Muslims are also required to fast, which is known as *saum*. Specifically, they are required to fast during the whole month of Ramadan, which is the ninth month of the lunar Muslim calendar. According to Islamic teaching, the month of Ramadan is a holy month because that is the month when Muslims believe the angel Gabriel began to deliver the scriptural revelation from God to the prophet of Islam, Muhammad. Upon the sighting of the new moon, marking the beginning of the month of Ramadan, Muslims are to begin the fast from dawn until sunset of each day, abstaining from any food or liquid. Some Muslims are so strict about not drinking any liquid that they spit out their saliva all day long rather than swallow it and risk divine disapproval. This holy month of Ramadan lasts from 29 to 30 days depending on the sighting of the next new moon.

For most Muslims who happen to live in third world conditions and tropical climates, the fasting of Ramadan is an extremely rigorous exercise. However, it is an exercise that seeks to unite the world community of Islam, as Muslims throughout the world bear this hardship together as an act of religious devotion.

Almsgiving

Every Muslim is obligated to contribute toward the social and religious needs of the community by means of almsgiving, known as *zakat*. His religious teachings are clear in terms of helping the needy such as the poor, the orphan and the widow. As a result, Muslims are required to give 2-1/2 percent of their earnings as charity, or *zakat*. In many cases, this amount is collected by the government and distributed under government supervision toward humanitarian causes, such as orphanages and hospitals, as well as toward religious causes, such as the maintenance of mosques and religious schools.

Pilgrimage

Every Muslim is obligated to perform a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, at least once in his lifetime if financially able. This pilgrimage ritual lasts the first ten

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days of the twelfth month of the Muslim calendar and provides the pilgrim the opportunity to visit the birthplace of the prophet of Islam as well as the greatest of all holy sites, the *Al-Masjid Al-Haram* (the Sacred Mosque) complex which encloses the cubical shrine known as the Kaaba. Like the Tabernacle of the Old Testament, the Kaaba is viewed symbolically as the House of God where Muslims congregate annually to celebrate His praises. According to Islamic tradition, Abraham and Ishmael laid down the foundation of the Kaaba and from that time forward, the rite of pilgrimage was instituted to be a lasting ordinance.

Today, as many as two million Muslims converge in Mecca every year to perform the many rituals associated with the pilgrimage, which is called the hajj. These rituals center around the traditions of Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael, and culminate in the most important and significant ritual of all, the slaughter of an animal sacrifice. This ritual takes place on the tenth day of the pilgrimage and marks the most important of all Muslim holidays, the Celebration of Sacrifice (Eid-ul Adha or Eid-ul Qurban). Muslims throughout the world join in the celebration with animal sacrifices. This holiday specifically commemorates the faith of Abraham and his willingness to sacrifice his son, who according to Islamic tradition, was Ishmael. Because Abraham fully submitted to God, God responded with a substitute sacrifice to replace Ishmael. Thus, in recognition of God's provision, the meat of the sacrifice is shared with family, friends and strangers. It is important to know that this animal sacrifice is not regarded as an atonement sacrifice for sin, but rather as a symbolic reminder of God's reward for Abraham's complete surrender to the will of God.

Perseverance

Some Muslims add to this list of religious obligations the matter of perseverance or struggle which is known as jihad. Jihad is often translated by western authors as "holy war." Muslims, however, want us to know that the word jihad has a much broader meaning and refers to a variety of personal experiences that involve perseverance or struggle. For example, some Muslims speak in terms

of jihad of the soul, jihad of the hand, jihad of the tongue and jihad of the sword. Jihad of the soul is seen as the most important in the list and refers to the spiritual struggle of overcoming the temptations of Satan. Jihad of the hand refers to perseverance against the physical hardships of life. Jihad of the tongue refers to the perseverance a Muslim must exert when trying to share his Islamic faith through dialogue and debate. Jihad of the sword speaks of the Muslim's obligation to defend and spread his faith at all costs, even if it means through the sword or by physical combat.

The Christian's Response

As Bible-believing Christians consider the religious works aspect of Islam, they sometimes may be quick to condemn Islam as a religious system whose salvation is based on works, and reinforce their assessment with the teaching of Ephesians 2:8-9: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

In all fairness, the complete view of salvation by orthodox Muslims can be represented by the following equation: Faith + Works + Divine Mercy = Salvation.

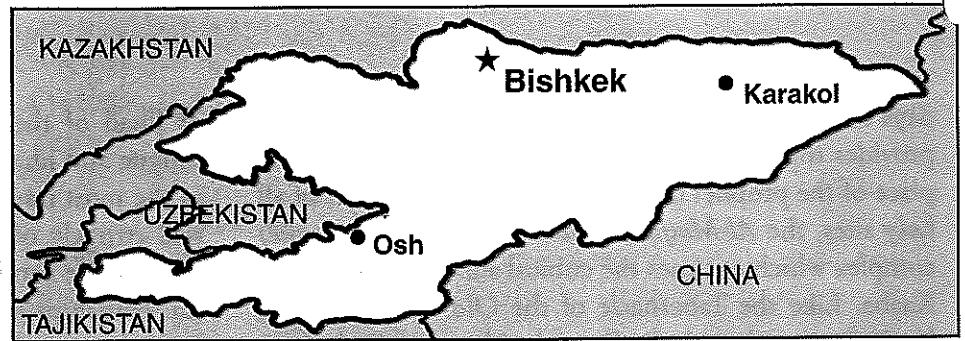
Please note that Muslims do see the need for God's mercy in the preceding equation. What we need to consider, however, is that from a genuine Christian perspective, works have never been fully removed from the equation. Works have just simply shifted, so that the biblical equation for salvation becomes: Faith + Divine Mercy = Salvation + Works.

Remember that works is also an important part of the Christian experience as well. It is just that works is not the input of salvation, but the output of salvation. In other words, the true Christian does not perform works to earn salvation. The true Christian performs works as a result of salvation and the indwelling love of Jesus Christ that compels him to want to become involved in tangible expressions of loyalty and devotion to both God and fellowman.



KYRGYZSTAN

Population: 5 million
Religions: Muslims 78%, Christian 8%, Nonreligious 14%
Official Language: Kyrgyz, Russian
Peoples: Turkic/Altaic 78%, Indo-European 18%



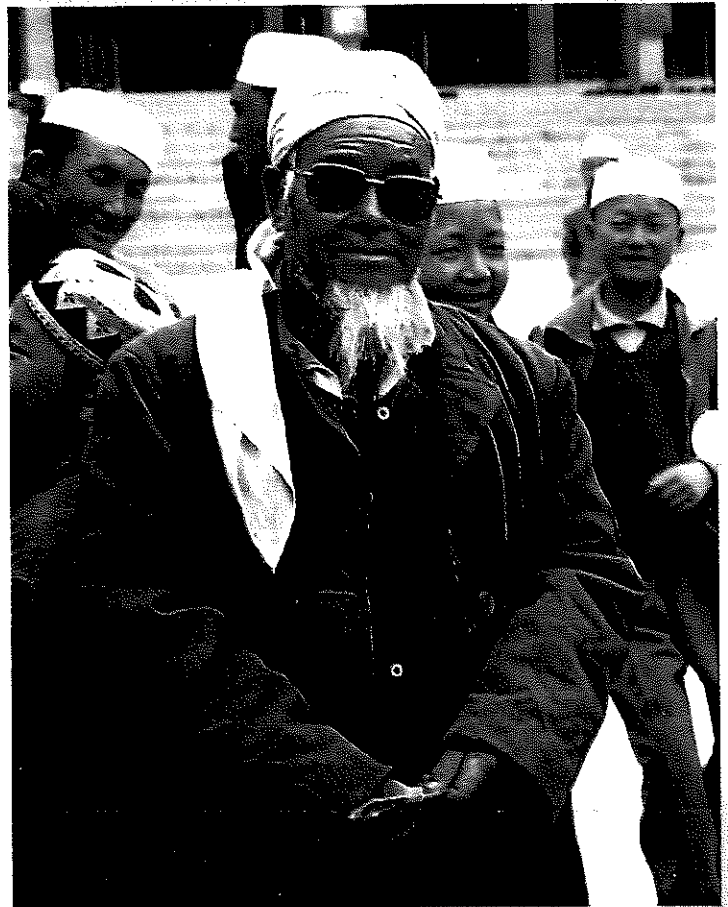
The Republic of Kyrgyzstan is a mountainous Central Asian state bordering on China, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. It was the first Central Asian Republic to break free from the USSR (in 1991) and one of the closest to a western-styled democracy. Economic hardships, criminal control of the economy and attempted invasions by Islamic militants led to some limitations of democratic freedoms in 1999.

Today, Kyrgyzstan is a secular state. The Constitution guarantees full religious freedom of worship, but with a tilt of deference to Islam. The Kyrgyz majority lives in rural villages, few of which have ever been reached. There is openness but also a fear among the people to committing themselves to Christ.

Unreached People Group DUNGAN

Location: Mountains and valleys of Kyrgyzstan
Population: 45,000
Religion: Muslim (Hanafite) 100%
Language: Dungani

The Dungan originated in the Kansu and Shensi provinces of northwestern China. Today, there are people from Kansu living in the mountains and valleys of Kyrgyzstan, and people from Shensi living in Kazakhstan. Culturally, the Dungan are Chinese; but their language is greatly influenced by Arabic, Persian and Turkish. Many Dungan speak the Kyrgyz language in addition to their own, and the young people also speak Russian. Their language, Dungani, is Mandarin Chinese but uses the Cyrillic script and has three tones instead of four. The Dungan are a proud, hospitable and conservative people. Although they have completely cut their ties to China, they refer to themselves as *Hui-Zu*, or "Chinese Muslims."

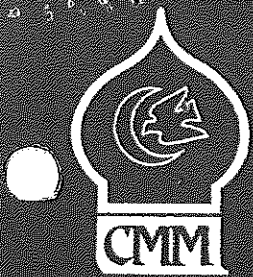


Pray That...

- ...the Lord will call people who are willing to go to Kyrgyzstan and share Christ with the Dungan.
- ...the Holy Spirit will place a hunger for the Truth in the hearts of the Dungan.
- ...God will open the spiritual ears of the Dungan as they listen to Christian radio broadcasts in their language.
- ...many Bibles will be distributed and many house churches planted among the Dungan.

Jumaa Prayer Fellowship

Praying for Muslims
Around the World!



Friday, Sept 3, 2004. Please pray

...for the satellite television programs that are being broadcast into North Africa. Pray that these programs will be greatly used by God in building His Church in the Arab world.

...for university student movements that are meeting in countries in North Africa, Egypt, the Gulf and other Middle Eastern countries. Pray that Bible studies will be the means of bringing many to faith in Christ and outreach to other students.

...for the Christians who are engaged in prison ministry in the southern Philippines, sharing the gospel with Muslim prisoners.

...for the CMM team member and all the participants in the Muslim Awareness Seminars being held in Southeast Asia. Pray for safety for each one.

Friday, September 10, 2004. Please pray

...for President Obasanjo of Nigeria. In May, he sacked the governor of the Plateau State because of continuing Muslim/Christian conflict in the region which had exploded into Kano State in retaliation. Pray for an end to this violence.

...for the ongoing situation in Israel/Palestine that continues to cause many injuries and deaths. Pray that the leadership will desire to see an end to the conflict and bring equality and justice.

...for the KAIROS training program being held in Brazil. Pray that many participants will be encouraged in their desire to reach Muslims with the gospel.

...for the struggling group of believers among the Turkmen who live in Turkmenistan, Iran and Afghanistan. Little gospel witness is available.

Friday, September 17, 2004. Please pray

...for the Sylhetis from Eastern Bangladesh who have emigrated to the West, notably the United Kingdom. Pray that national Christians will settle around them and share the good news of Jesus Christ with them.

...for Turkish Bible studies being conducted in Germany. Many of the seekers are continuing to have difficulties with family members and risk deportation back to Turkey because of their decision to follow Christ.

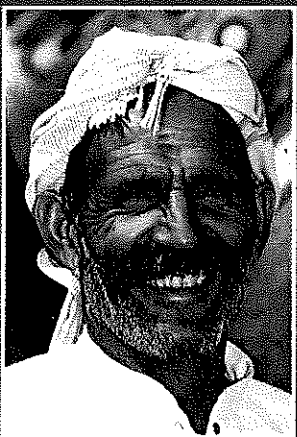
...that genuine Christians living in Rwanda may have a positive influence in that country. Many people turned to Islam because of the involvement of the "church" in the 1994 slaughter. Islam has become the fastest growing religion in Rwanda.

Friday, September 24, 2004. Please pray

...for the protection of Western relief workers in Afghanistan and for progress in humanitarian and state-building tasks.

...for the Institute of Islamic Studies that is being held on the campus of the West African Advanced School of Theology in Lome, Togo, for the next three weeks. Pray that God will provide each instructor and student the insight that is needed to make this a truly great IIS.

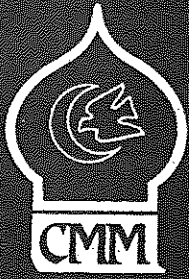
...for the Ambon area of Maluku province in Indonesia. There is great danger that the resurrected Laskar Jihad group may return to this area that has been the scene of much suffering.



urge, then, first of all
at requests, prayers,
intercession and thanks-
giving be made for
everyone.

1 Timothy 2:1, NIV

photos WHO/P. Vivot



Jumaa Prayer Fellowship

Praying for Muslims
Around the World



Friday, October 1, 2004. Please pray

...that many Somalis will read the Scriptures and view the Jesus film and other available Christian literature with an open heart and mind.

...for the many missions conventions that are being held in October and November. Pray that God will provide the necessary insight and motivation needed to make these truly miraculous events, calling and providing for many new outreaches among Muslims.

...for the students at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary in Springfield, MO, who will be studying an Islamics course next week. Pray for open and responsive hearts.

Friday, October 8, 2004. Please pray

...for the repeal of anti-conversion laws in the Maldives where repercussions can include banishment to outer islands.

...for the continuation of wisdom that President Nazabayev of Kazakhstan has shown in handling the economy and culture of his nation.

...against the efforts of the Muslim brotherhood of Yemen to stop all Christian activity.

Friday, October 15, 2004. Please pray

...that the political leaders of Ethiopia will lead the country into economic recovery and a higher quality of life for the people with supernatural help from God.

...for the training of pastors and evangelists in Chad and that any fear of witnessing to Muslims would disappear.

...that the materialistic lifestyle produced by the oil wealth in Qatar will bring disillusionment within the political leaders and that they will begin a renewed search for spiritual life in Christ.

Friday, October 22, 2004. Please pray

...for Tulay, who came to the Lord in Eastern Turkey through reading a New Testament. Her husband has taken another wife and driven her and her son away.

...for a permanent end to the fighting between the predominantly Arab Muslim north and the mostly African-Christian/animist south in the Sudan.

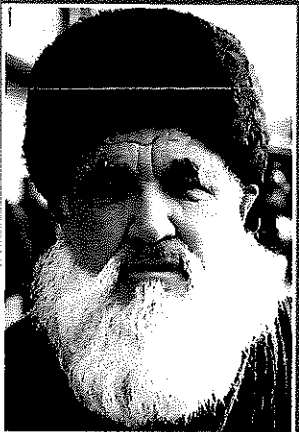
...for peace and stability in Djibouti between the leaders of the two major people groups, the Somalis and Afars, and that there will be a continued openness to the gospel.

Friday, October 29, 2004. Please pray

...for the security of Christian leaders and underground churches in Algeria as some have received death threats, and murders occur regularly.

...for women of the unreached people who are refugees. Eighty percent of the refugees are women and children. Pray that somehow their hearts will be reached with the message of Jesus Christ who is their only source for hope.

...for the needs of Ruth Hussain and her children in the Kurdish area of Iraq. Her husband, a Christian worker was killed in 1997.



*I urge, then, first of all
that requests, prayers,
intercession and thanks-
giving be made for
everyone.*

1 Timothy 2:1, NIV

INTERCEDE is a bimonthly publication of the Center for Ministry to Muslims
2032 East Kearney, Suite 205 • Springfield, MO 65803
www.CMMequip.org