

Responding to Radical Islam



Radical Islam's agenda is world domination through all possible means—including terrorism and violence. Today over 2500 mosques in the United States promote Islam and the number is growing rapidly. How should we respond in light of the London bombings, current events and the rapid growth of Islam in the West?

Historically, Christians have not always responded to Islam in ways that represent the teachings of Jesus. We have a tendency to judge a race, nation or any distinct group by its least worthy members. However, in spite of homicide bombings and other unspeakably evil deeds, the majority of Muslims instinctively know that militancy, bombings that take the lives of innocent people and

such horrific acts of terrorism are wrong. Most human beings of whatever persuasion are moderate in their approach to life. Common sense tells people that if we kill each other, we also destroy ourselves. We all live in one world, breathing the same air, and God continues to extend his mercy to men and women everywhere.

The Old Testament prophets taught us that we must first of all weep for our nations and warn them of the results of forsaking God. Followers of Jesus are still the salt of their nations, and we represent the Light of the World. Therefore, Christians need to be involved in the public arena, such as school boards, city councils, and local, state and federal government positions. Men and women of



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



Radical Islam has challenged Great Commission believers as never before. Moderate Muslims have failed to provide adequate condemnation of heinous acts committed in the name of Islam. The non-Muslim world would like to see moderate Muslims mount a vigorous campaign to assist in stopping the evil acts of radicals. While we applaud the efforts of a few who speak out, we want to see more.

Most would agree that outright radical Muslims are a relatively small percentage of the world's 1.2 billion Muslims. Partly due to a lack of vigorous response on the part of moderate Muslims, it is tempting to paint with a broad brush and label all Muslims as radical. It is dangerous to do so because it affects our biblical understanding of the responsibility to reach all Muslims with the message of Jesus' love for them.

Above all, our response must be biblical. We must remember that the Lord of the harvest is at work among Muslims. Never before have so many Muslims come to Christ and so many laborers committed themselves to reaching Muslims with the gospel. I often visualize the scene from Revelation 5:9, "...and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation" (NIV).

In Luke 9, Jesus' disciples confronted him with news that the Samaritans did not want him to lodge in their area. In verse 54, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" Verse 55 says, "Jesus turned and rebuked them" (NIV). Note the striking contrast in their responses. Jesus had reason to be angry and upset with the Samaritans. But his response let the disciples know he was unwilling to respond in kind—hate for hate. Certainly he was wise, careful, concerned and no doubt watchful, but revenge and hatred were not a part of his character.

We cannot be naive and ignore what radical Muslims are doing in our world. I constantly reflect on two Scripture passages: (1) *We must "be wary and wise as serpents, and be innocent as doves"* (Matthew 10:16, Amp.), and (2) *"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, 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"* (Ephesians 6:12, NIV).

We ought to do everything we can to stop the efforts of radical Muslims, while at the same time doing everything we can to place the gospel before every Muslim. 



Muslim World News



Bangladesh

Two Christian health workers in Bangladesh were hacked to death on July 29. Police and local officials believe Islamic extremists likely were responsible for the murders. The incident took place about 150 kilometers from the capital, Dhaka. Tapan Kumar Roy and Liplal Marandi worked for Christian Life Bangladesh (CLB). Along with educational films on arsenic poisoning, mother-and-child health care and AIDS prevention, they often showed the “Jesus Film” at the invitation of local villagers. A Christian leader familiar with the two evangelists said an official at a local madrasa (Islamic school) had threatened the men verbally prior to the murders. Some villagers had also threatened to kill Roy and Marandi if they continued to show the “Jesus Film.” Bangladesh is facing an overall deterioration in human rights, both for the Muslims who form 83 percent of the population and for religious minorities.—*Compass*

Turkmenistan

On July 19, police in Turkmenabad raided a Bible study taking place in a private home. Two men in civilian clothes accompanied by the local police captain burst into the apartment of Asiya Zasedatelevaya, according to Forum 18. The police took away all her religious literature and a Russian dictionary. When she refused

to disclose where she had gotten her Christian books, one of the plain-clothes men hit her over the head with her Bible, while the second hit her in the face. “The local policeman threatened to hang me,” she said. “During all this my 4-year-old child was present in the flat (apartment).” Zasedatelevaya was then taken to the police station where another local policeman claimed neighbors had written a statement reporting that meetings lasting two to three hours were held in her apartment. Zasedatelevaya regularly hosts Bible Studies of between 10 and 15 local Baptists in her apartment. Her Baptist congregation belongs to the Baptist Council of Churches, whose congregations refuse on principle to register with the state authorities in post-Soviet countries. Forum 18 reported that the news organization was unable to reach the city police chief to ask him the reason for the raid, confiscation and reported threats.—*ASSIST News Service*

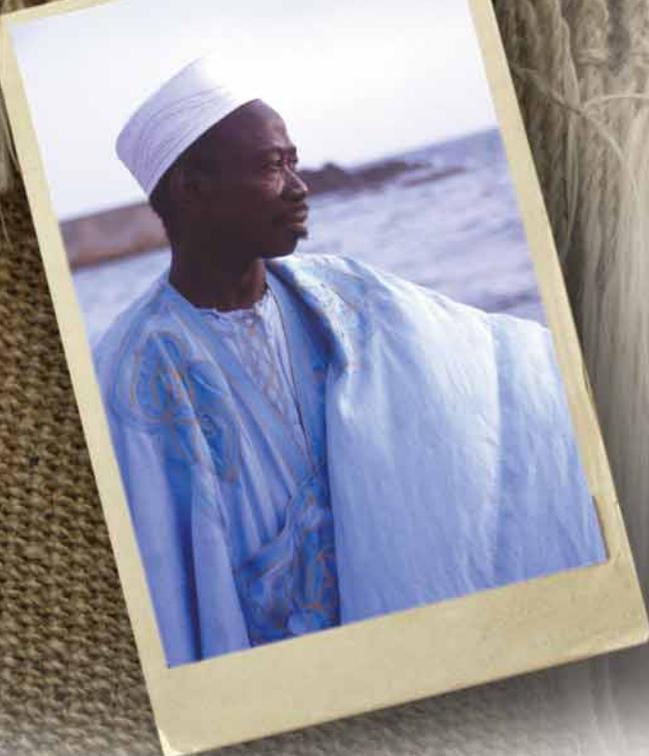
Pakistan

An Islamic government in the North West Frontier Province bordering Afghanistan has just passed legislation enforcing strict adherence to Islamic teachings. Under the new law, an Islamic watchdog will monitor the observance of Islamic values in public places. The All Pakistan Minorities Alliance (APMA) compares the law to

the Taliban regime’s notorious Department of Vice and Virtue in Afghanistan. The Taliban was backed by Pakistan, and many of its members trained in the northwest’s religious schools. A news release from APMA called the bill a “hanging sword” for religious minorities and predicted it will be used by Islamic extremists to both persecute and torture Christians and other religious minorities.—*ASSIST News Service*

Indonesia

An angry mob has twice attacked a boarding house at a theological school in Pulo village, Makasar district, east Jakarta, causing more than \$10,000 in damage. The Arastamar Theological School’s boarding house served students from other provinces. The mob included members of the Front Pembela Islam (FPI or Islamic Defender’s Front); the FPI had accused the school of building a church. Local eyewitnesses say government officials accompanied the unruly crowd that attacked without advance warning. When the mob attacked a second time, students were able to turn them away. Local Muslim leaders such as Habib Hussin, a lecturer at the University of Indonesia, have objected to the presence of the theological school, despite every attempt by the Arastamar school management to comply with Indonesian legal requirements.—*Compass*



godly character should seek leadership positions in the media and in the military.

Christianity, as established by its founder and example Jesus Christ, is first and foremost a religion of love and compassion. Jesus said, “*All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another*” (John 13:35).

Since Muslims are our neighbors, the call from our Savior is, “*Love your neighbor as yourself*” (Matthew 22:39). If some Christians remain convinced that Muslims are their enemies, even then the Savior’s call remains the same: “*Love your enemies*” (Luke 6:27). The call from our Savior is to bring Muslims to Jesus.

Many Muslims today are disillusioned with Islam because of the numerous terrorist acts by fellow Muslims. Their silent cry is for something better.

While preparing this article for *Intercede*, I received the testimony of Ali, a Lebanese Muslim raised in Saudi Arabia. The hateful actions of his Muslim colleagues injected deep doubts into Ali’s heart about his Islamic beliefs. Other disillusionments followed. Ali went abroad to pursue engineering studies and in our Lord’s providence was placed with an evangelical family. Their lifestyle challenged his Islamic view about Christians. A born-again colleague at work demonstrated the warmth of Christian love. This deeply impacted Ali and led him to faith in Jesus.

Disillusionment with the rigidity of fundamentalist Islam creates a gnawing hunger for grace in the lives of many Muslims. This pattern, seen after the Khomeini revolution in Iran, then in Zia al-Haq’s Islamization in Pakistan is also observed elsewhere. Various aspects of the present crises have become the catalyst for Muslims turning to Christ as they see Christians demonstrate love. These crises include political or military turmoil, natural disasters like tsunamis, famines and the migration of refugees. This has been succinctly described as **the hand of God in the glove of current events**.



Disillusionment with the rigidity of fu

nding to Radical Islam

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Hospitality is a high virtue in cultures where most Muslims live. Our Muslim friends are deeply impacted by Christ's love seen in our acts of kindness and hospitality. A militant approach to Muslims is not an option.

Let us see how the apostle Paul applied the principle of love and compassion in his own approach to followers of other faiths. While walking around Athens, Paul observed that the city was full of pagan idols. Although he was *"greatly distressed"* at what he witnessed, this missionary refrained from attacking their repulsive, heathen practices (Acts 17). The apostle Paul could have accused them of being grossly idolatrous, but instead he began his public message by complimenting them! He proclaimed, *"Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and observed your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you."*

What Paul could have assailed as detestable idols he called *"objects of worship,"* choosing neutral terminology. He seems determined to accommodate them as far as possible without compromising his own theology. Notice he did not turn his eyes away in pious disgust from what he saw. Instead he deliberately acquainted himself with the beliefs and practices of the people he intended to reach with the gospel. That is what we must do if we want to influence our Muslim neighbors.

On another occasion, Demetrius and the craftsmen of Ephesus sought to prevent Paul and his companions from drawing more people away from the worship of their goddess Artemis to faith in Jesus Christ. The town clerk quieted the crowd, saying, *"You have brought these men here, though they have neither robbed temples nor blasphemed our goddess"* (Acts 19:37).

Once again we see that this great apostle refrained from reviling the beliefs of others and, in a spirit of compassion, he was careful to show respect even though he did

not agree with their beliefs. Paul summed up his approach this way, *"When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we answer kindly"* (1 Corinthians 4:12-13).

Paul's attitude was derived from the example of his Lord Jesus Christ of whom it was said, *"When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly"* (1 Peter 2:23).

Remember that Paul was a former terrorist *"breathing out threats and murder."* It took a real vision of Jesus to change Saul, even as it has in the lives of a significant number of Muslims who have come to faith in Christ. Even when we are confronted with a spirit of militancy, we are not justified in responding in the same manner. The Christian approach is charitable and compassionate. *"If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also"* (Luke 6:29).

This does not mean that every assault on our faith must be taken lying down, or that we should allow ourselves to be trampled. However, our general temperament must be one of selfless love, having a desire to build up and not to tear down. An old expression states, *"Honey attracts more flies than vinegar."*

Instead of seeking reasons to revile Islam, we would do well to study its heritage and try to relate to Muslims as they are. Some have suggested that we should love Muslims and hate Islam. A more Christ-like approach would be to love Muslims and try to understand Islam. May our approach always be motivated by love.

Whether the world responds with gratitude or hostility, receptiveness or militancy, good or evil, a Christian attitude towards the world must always be conditioned by the love of God that has been revealed in Jesus Christ. May the goal of our relationships with others, including Muslims, be that which is expressed in the chorus, *"Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me."* 



MAURITANIA



Unreached People Group **Tukolor**

Location: southern Mauritania
Population: 190,000 in Mauritania
Religion: Muslim (Sunni) 99.9%
Language: Tukolor (Pulaar)

There are approximately 1.1 million Tukolor living in West Africa. While most of them live in Senegal, they comprise 7 percent of the population of Mauritania. The Tukolor are thought to have descended from the Fulani and the Wolof or Serer tribes. The Tukolor are known by a number of names, including Pulaar, Haal Pulaar and Torobe. They have retained their respective languages and many are also fluent in Arabic.

Most of the Mauritanian Tukolor live a rural lifestyle—raising livestock, farming and fishing. A steadily rising population and an unequal distribution of land have resulted in the emigration of large numbers of Tukolor to the cities in search of better job opportunities.

Population: 2.9 million
Religions: Muslim 99.7%, Christian 0.16%
Official Language: (Hassaniya) Arabic
Peoples: Arabic 70%, Black African 28.8%

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania is located on the northwestern coast of Africa. The land is entirely desert except for the north bank of the Senegal River on the southern border.

An unrelenting drought for many years has devastated the country, made Mauritania one of the world's poorest countries and provoked inter-ethnic violence over limited water and usable land. Independence from France in 1960 was followed by an endless succession of military coups. In 1992 a civilian government was appointed. Diplomatic ties with Israel have resulted in increased internal and external opposition to the government in 2000.

There is no freedom for conversion to another religion and the sentence for apostasy is death—though this sentence has not been carried out in recent years. Proselytism is illegal.

Pray That...

...the Holy Spirit will anoint the gospel as it goes forth via radio among the Tukolor.

...God will save key Tukolor leaders who will share the love of Jesus with their own people.

...the Mauritians who have scattered through West Africa in Mali, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire will be evangelized by all means.



JUMAA PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

***PRAYING FOR MUSLIMS
AROUND THE WORLD!***



The International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church is November 13. Please put this on your calendar now and pray earnestly for your suffering spiritual brothers and sisters around the world on that date. Many resources are available on the internet at www.persecutedchurch.org.

Friday, November 4, 2005. Please pray

- ...for the persecuted converts who don't have a surrounding community of believers to help and encourage them.
- ...for the Church in Libya that is beginning to grow. Pray that house churches may be formed to the extent that the authorities may not be able to stop it.
- ...for a two-week course, Approaches to Islam, which is being taught by a CMM team at a Bible college in Bangladesh.

Friday, November 11, 2005. Please pray

- ...for relief in the world's worst humanitarian disaster according to the World Health Organization. This is not the Asian tsunami, but the crisis in the Sudan in Darfur. More people have died in this crisis than in the tsunami. More than 2 million have fled from their homes, and almost 2.5 million are in need of aid.
- ...that SAT-7 will continue to reach open hearts in the Arab world. Research shows that over 309,000 people in Saudi Arabia alone are regular or occasional viewers. Pray for a great impact.
- ...that God will restrain Kurdish terrorists who are crossing the border from Iraq into Turkey intent on importing violence.

Friday, November 18, 2005. Please pray

- ...for protection for the few believers in the Chechnya and Dagestan area. There has been an upsurge of anti-Russian violence from Islamic "freedom fighters."
- ...that the obstacles preventing Turkish Christians from worshipping in buildings they have rented or purchased will be removed. In the drive to obtain membership in the European Union (EU), the Turkish government has included cosmetic legal reforms concerning the opening of new churches. Pray they will be forced to abide by their reforms.
- ...for the CMM team member who is teaching an Islamic course at Moscow Theological Institute next week.

Friday, November 25, 2005. Please pray

- ...for a speedy and favorable verdict in the case against a pastor in Malaysia who has been charged with conducting church services without local council authorities' approval.
- ...that Christians in Egypt will learn how to share God's truth with Muslims through dialogue.
- ...for a decisive breakthrough among the Muslim peoples of Mali. Pray for the spiritual and numerical growth of the church among the Bambara who are a key people for the evangelization of the country.

***I URGE, THEN, FIRST OF ALL THAT REQUESTS, PRAYERS, INTERCESSION AND
THANKSGIVING BE MADE FOR EVERYONE. –1 TIMOTHY 2:1, NIV***



JUMAA PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

**PRAYING FOR MUSLIMS
AROUND THE WORLD!**



Friday, December 2, 2005. Please pray

...that God will bring growth among the Digo in northeastern Tanzania. Pray for protection for the expatriates and local believers against the opposition that is increasing.

...for two prisoners in Syria who have committed their lives to Christ and are facing intense persecution. Pray for their protection, provision and influence on others.

...for the way the Lord has opened the door for evangelism in Turkey through internet websites and chat rooms since high-speed internet was introduced in 2004. Pray for God's continued blessings.

Friday, December 9, 2005. Please pray

...for new business enterprises being supported by loans from believers in the West. Pray that these projects will be powerfully used by God to provide gainful employment for people who are in need.

...for the bold endeavors being made by Turkish-speaking believers in Bulgaria to reach their own people and other Turkic groups along the ancient Silk Road.

...for use of the new Bible translation for more than 400 million Urdu speakers in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Europe.

Friday, December 16, 2005. Please pray

...for God's blessing and protection on two families of Gagavuz believers who have moved from Moldova to the Crimea to establish churches among Muslim Tatars.

...that the needs for English language teachers in many places, especially Uzbekistan, will be met.

...that the Lord will give wisdom and boldness to Christian leaders and Christ's followers in Iran.

Friday, December 23, 2005. Please pray

...that a fellowship in southeastern Turkey will find a meeting place and that the believers will be able to meet in safety.

...that the power of the mullahs in Pakistan will wane and pray for President Musharraf as he tries to keep the peace.

...for the growth of a healthy church among the Pulaars in Mauritania and that a church will emerge among the Fulaabe.

Friday, December 30, 2005. Please pray

...that the Jesus film will continue to have a powerful effect on people who are viewing it daily, especially in Mozambique.

...for a young believer in Central Africa whose life has been threatened by others in his tribe.

...for continued peace and stability, and justice and favor toward Christians to be established in Kyrgyzstan following the turnover of the government earlier this year.