

SEED TO ORCHARD

From Seed Sowing to
Reproducing Jamaats

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— 2026 —

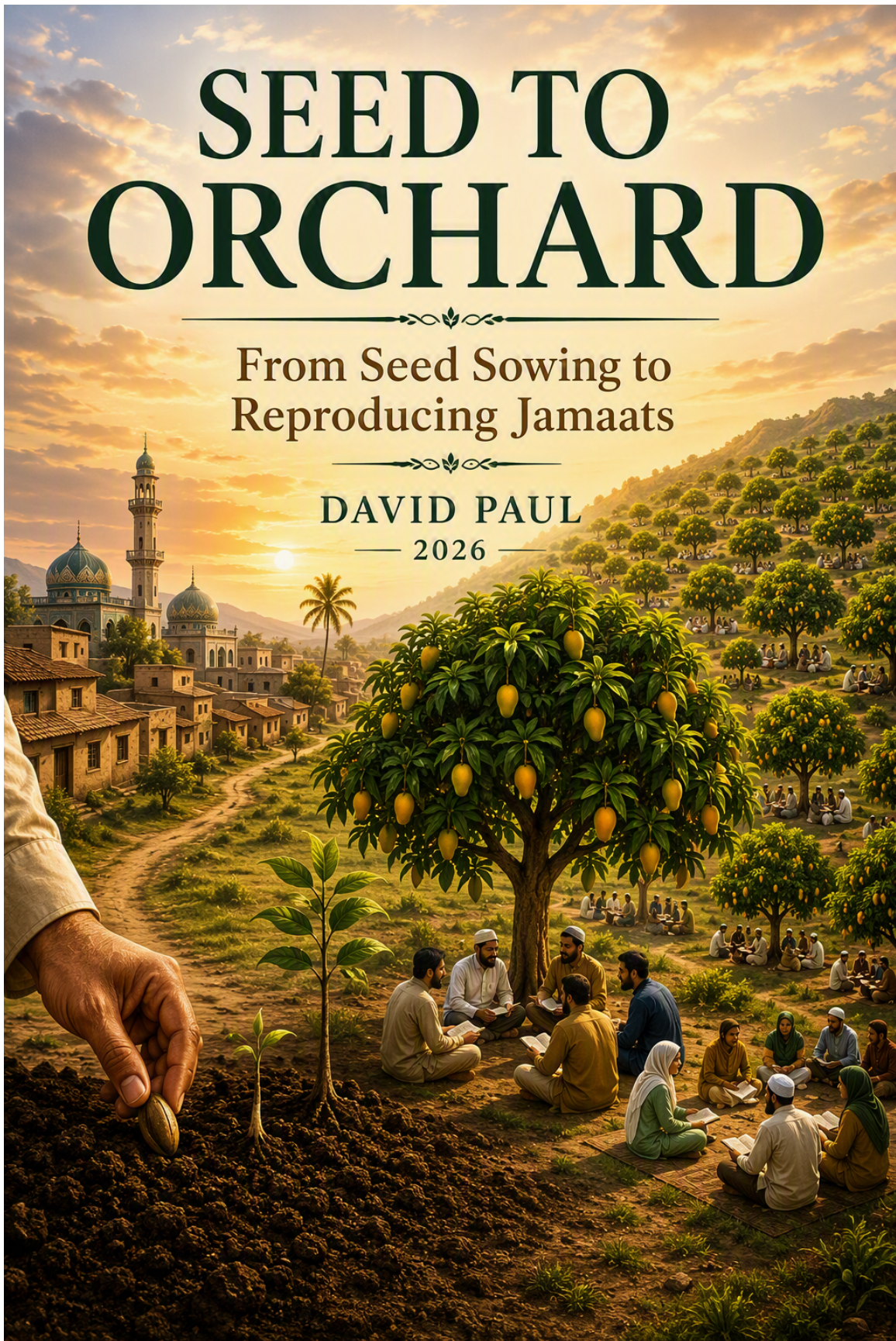


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Seed to Orchard

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It’s the smallest of all the seeds, but when grown, it’s taller than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the sky come and nest in its branches.” Matthew 13:31-32

The kingdom of heaven is growing among Muslims across South Asia. In some places, thousands of Muslims have found life and joy in our Lord Jesus. In other places, the gospel has not taken root in the Muslim community. In those places, sowers are required to take the seed of the gospel and plant it there.

As good farmers, we need to care for this new growth and nourish it. As the seed grows and bears fruit, we take more seed from it and plant it where the kingdom has not grown.

Imagine with me an orchard of mango trees. An orchard of 50 trees might produce 15,000 kg of mangos a year. An entire orchard can come from one mango pit. But it takes time and persistence. After one pit is planted, it may take years to bear fruit. But then the fruit can become enormous. As one tree bears fruit, more pits can be taken and planted, bearing many more trees. Eventually, an orchard emerges, producing great fruit. The same is true when we sow the seed of the gospel among Muslims. As the gospel takes root in the heart of one Muslim, there is potential for it to multiply. One gospel seed has the potential to become a fruitful orchard among Muslims.

My hope in writing this booklet is that you will go plant the gospel among South Asian Muslims. As a few seekers and believers emerge, like young saplings, I hope you will teach and care for them, just as farmers care for new trees. As you nurture this new growth, I hope that God, by His Spirit, will multiply the work of your hands.

I believe that one of the reasons that Jesus used parables about farming is that we, like the farmer, cannot make the growth happen. God’s Word says, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth” (1 Cor 3:6-7).

God gives the growth. Our job is to participate with Him by sowing and watering. But we are simply servants that God chooses to work through. Therefore, work diligently. But devote yourself to prayer, trusting in God to bring a great harvest.

Ajay and Myra's Story¹

Across South Asia, God is using Christians in powerful ways to minister among the Muslim community. One such example is Ajay and his wife, Myra. Ajay came to Christ at the age of eighteen and immediately became involved with ministry. By God's grace, he became an itinerant church planter and was used by God to help start churches in new places and to develop many leaders. He was even involved with training other church planters and developing them to plant churches where he could not go. He occasionally shared the gospel with Muslims, but he focused primarily on Hindus, even though he lived in a Muslim-majority area.

One day, Ajay was at a prayer meeting with other pastors, and God did a miracle in his life. God gave Ajay His love for Muslims. Ajay led a long, passionate prayer for Muslims, to the surprise of the other pastors. During that time of prayer, God put a desire in Ajay's heart to win Muslims for Him.

Ajay's first steps in sharing the gospel with Muslims were awkward, but he was surprised to find they were open and eager to hear more. He found someone who was more experienced in Muslim evangelism to mentor him, and he quickly grew. He began going to share the gospel with Muslims every day. Over the next year or two, he shared the gospel with thousands of Muslims. He also trained hundreds of Christians to share the gospel with Muslims as he had. During this time, Ajay became proficient in speaking the language of the local Muslim community, in understanding their beliefs and culture, and in answering their questions and objections. He also grew a longer beard, began speaking more like local Muslims, and began wearing a shalwar kameez more often.

Myra was slow to adopt Ajay's passion for Muslims. For a few years, while he focused on Muslim ministry, she focused her ministry efforts on Hindus. As she saw her husband's passion and prayed with him, the same passion for Muslims grew in her heart.

Although thousands of Muslims heard the gospel through Ajay and Myra, none repented and believed. So, Ajay called the man who had trained him in Muslim evangelism and asked for help. The man recommended that he look for five or ten households he had evangelized and seemed open to the gospel. He said that, for a time, he should focus less on evangelism and more on following up with those households. Ajay adjusted and saw his first baptisms. But these first believers did not grow into the leaders Ajay hoped for.

During this time, Ajay was putting most of his efforts into developing other Christians who were becoming cross-cultural evangelists to Muslims. But the Lord showed him that he needed to

¹ Please note that this story, and all stories throughout this book, have had names changed and stories slightly altered for the sake of anonymity and security.

switch his focus to developing Muslim-background believers (MBBs) instead. It was a difficult transition for Ajay because it meant spending less time with mature Christians and more time with seekers and MBBs. At times, Ajay felt a bit isolated. Some local Christians even misunderstood Ajay because of his long beard and traditional clothing.

But the focus on MBBs became fruitful. MBB leaders began to emerge. Ajay and Myra helped them begin forming a few churches. More Muslims began coming to Christ. Every step had challenges.

As they worked, God began to break through. MBB leaders began to emerge who were even more successful at reaching other Muslims than Ajay and Myra. Their ministry began to change again from being the primary person reaching Muslims to becoming a shadow leader to emerging MBB leaders. Increasing amounts of their energy transitioned to gathering groups of MBBs for discipleship, growth in the Word, and training them for ministry. As Ajay's focus shifted to developing these leaders, the Word of God grew even more among the local Muslim community.

The guide in your hands is designed to help you walk in Ajay and Myra's footsteps. Across South Asia, many Christians are taking bold steps to be used by the Lord to reach their Muslim neighbors with the gospel. My prayer as I write this booklet is that He will use you in the same way.

Introduction

“For God so loved Muslims that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

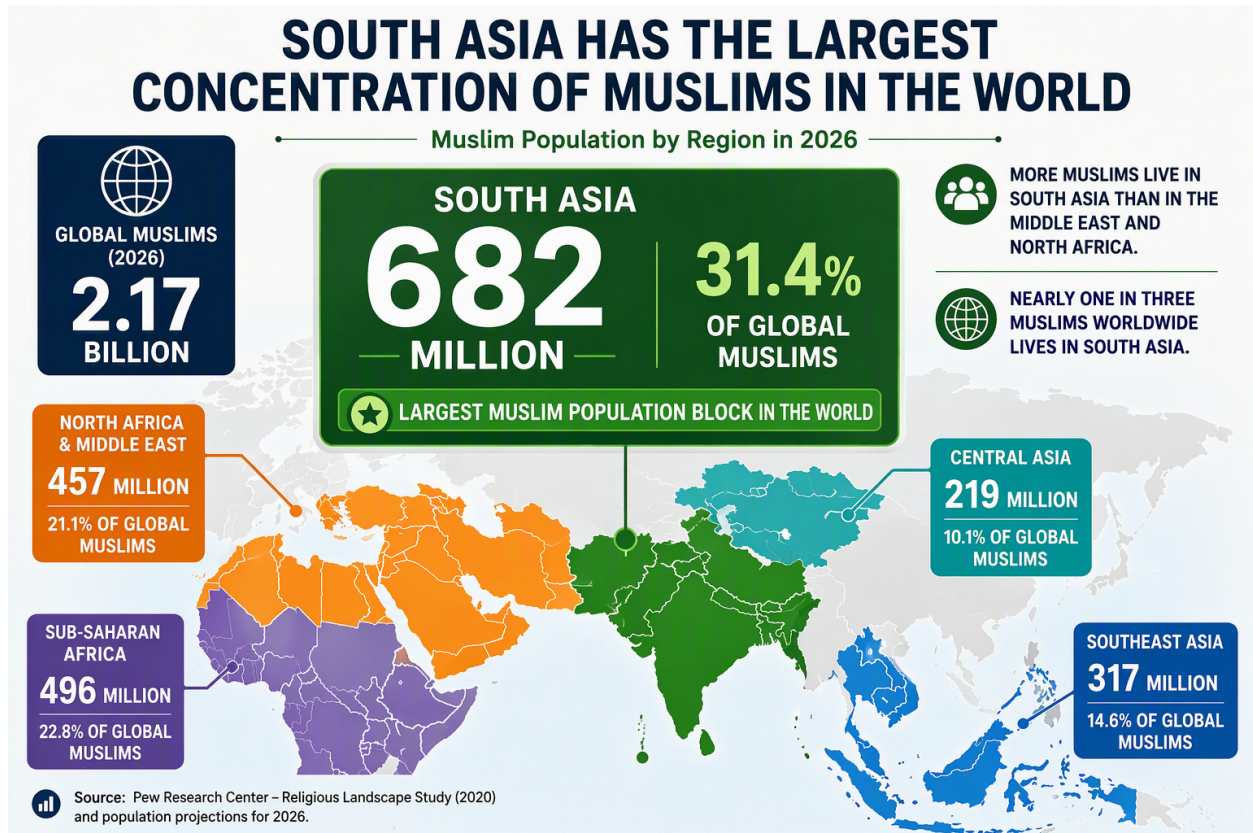
I modified the verse above by replacing “the world” with “Muslims.” The reality is that God loves each and every group in the world so much that Jesus died on a cross for their sins. God loves Muslims just like He loves Hindus, Buddhists, and Christians. He desires that all will repent and come to Him through the sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But many Christians struggle to love their Muslim neighbors. In Luke 10:29, an expert in the law wanted to justify himself. In response to the command to love your neighbor as yourself, he asked, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus responded with the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Our Lord’s point was that his Jewish listeners were obligated to love even the Samaritans. Now, you must understand that Jews and Samaritans were enemies at this point in history. These two communities hated one another. Their language, culture, food, and religion were different. They would not eat together. Jews were convinced Samaritans were bad people deserving God’s wrath. Samaritans felt similarly about Jews. The idea of Jews being obligated to love their Samaritan neighbors would have been radical to those listening to Jesus.

Today, many South Asian Christians feel the same about their Muslim neighbors. They see their Muslim neighbors through a lens of fear and bitterness. They fear that if they seek to love their Muslim neighbors, they will face persecution, insult, or even death. Like the expert in the law in Luke 10:29, many Christians have an internal conflict: “God doesn’t really want us to love Muslims, does He?”

Let me retell the Parable of the Good Samaritan in a more relevant way. A Christian was going from Lahore to Rawalpindi and fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, beat him up, and fled, leaving him half dead. A pastor happened to be going down that road. When he saw him, he passed by on the other side. In the same way, when a Catholic priest arrived at the place and saw him, he passed by on the other side. But a Muslim on his journey came up to him, and when he saw the man, he had compassion. He went over to him and bandaged his wounds with whatever medical supplies he had. Then he put him on the back of his motorbike, brought him to a government medical hospital, and took care of him. The next day, he left money with a trusted person at the hospital and said, “Take care of him. When I come back, I will reimburse you for whatever extra you spend. To ask Jesus’ question, which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers? Jesus commands us to go and do the same.

South Asia is home to the greatest concentration of Muslims in the world. Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh have the second, third, and fourth largest Muslim populations of any country. More Muslims live in South Asia than in the Middle East.



At the same time, the South Asian church continues to grow. God’s kingdom is increasing in numbers and vibrancy. The result is that there are growing Muslim and Christian populations next to one another throughout the subcontinent. Despite this fact, very few South Asian Christians are willing to share Jesus with their Muslim neighbors.

In your hands is a very simple guide for South Asian Christians to learn how to be used by God to take the gospel to their Muslim neighbors. This guide is designed in two parts. Part One walks through five steps of growing in ministry to guide South Asian Christians in ministry among South Asian Muslims. Part Two is a catalog of basic ministry tools that you can use to make disciples among your Muslim neighbors.

Before we go further, let me share five clarifying points from Scripture.

First, our God is on His throne. He rules over South Asia. In Revelation 4, the apostle John told his experience of the throne room of God. “Flashes of lightning and rumbles and peals of thunder came from the throne” (Rev 4:5). The One on the throne was so majestic that John could not adequately describe Him. Around him were four creatures of great power who worshipped

him day and night, and twenty-four elders doing the same. The God described in this passage can do whatever He pleases, which leads us to the next point.

Second, God desires all peoples, including every South Asian Muslim tongue and tribe and people and nation to experience salvation through Jesus and worship Him. In Revelation 5, John saw the One on the throne with a scroll in His right hand. No one was worthy to open the scroll until Jesus appeared. Then all of heaven bowed down and worshipped Jesus, saying,

“You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slaughtered, and you purchased people for God by your blood from every tribe and language and people and nation. You made them to a kingdom and priests to our God, and they will reign on the earth.”

Revelation 5:9-10

“Every tribe and language and people and nation” includes every South Asian Muslim tribe, language, people, and nation. It means that God intends to bring some from each Muslim people group to Himself. And if our God desires to do this, then He will accomplish it. But what is His plan for accomplishing His purpose? This leads us to the third point.

Third, God’s plan is to use His people to bring His gospel to all peoples. In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus declared:

“All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Jesus commands us to “Go and make disciples of all nations.” All nations includes every Muslim tribe and language and people and nation. It means that God has sent Christians in South Asia to make disciples among their Muslim neighbors. The question is, will God’s people obey? My prayer is that God is striking your heart as you read this booklet. If so, your question might be, “What does God want me to do?” Your question leads us to the next point.

Fourth, God’s Word is a sufficient guide for developing a missionary strategy to go and make disciples. The rest of this booklet will be based on the Core Missionary Task that Paul and the apostles followed in the book of Acts. We will define the Core Missionary Task in the next section. When God sent us to do His work, he did not leave us without a pattern. Second Timothy 3:16-17 declares,

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

As God's Word promises, the Bible equips us for every good work, including the work of going and making disciples of Muslims. But as we go, we need to keep a final point in mind.

The **fifth** point is that we will only experience a breakthrough among Muslims by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, prayer and fasting are our greatest tools. We must depend on Jesus and abide in Him. Otherwise, we can do nothing.

Action Step – Pray for your Muslim Neighbors

Knowing that prayer and fasting are our greatest tools for Muslim ministry, I want to give you a simple challenge. Dedicate yourself to praying for the Muslims of your community every day for thirty days. Ask the Lord to bless Muslims that you know by name. Ask Him to raise up witnesses to share the gospel with them. Ask the Lord to give you His heart for this community.

Reflection Questions

1. Why do many South Asian Christians struggle to love their Muslim neighbors?
2. What is the responsibility of South Asian Christians towards Muslims, since South Asia has the largest number of Muslims in the world?

Part One: Five Steps to Effective Muslim Ministry

Part one consists of six chapters. The five steps to effective Muslim ministry will be introduced in the next chapter about the Core Missionary Task. Then the following five chapters will outline these five steps. The five steps are:

Step 1: Beginning Muslim Evangelism

Step 2: Sustained Yellow-Light Follow-Up

Step 3: Getting to Baptism and Discipleship

Step Four: Getting to MBB Leaders and Jamaats

Step 5: Getting to Reproduction

FIVE STEPS TO EFFECTIVE MINISTRY AMONG SOUTH ASIAN MUSLIMS

From sharing Jesus to multiplying disciples, leaders, and churches

1



BEGINNING MUSLIM EVANGELISM

Enter Muslim communities and boldly share the gospel.



PLANT
THE SEED

2



SUSTAINED YELLOW-LIGHT FOLLOW-UP

Invest deeply in yellow-light seekers and model how to overcome barriers to faith through God's Word.



CULTIVATE
THE SEEKER

3



GETTING TO BAPTISM AND DISCIPLESHIP

Share your life with them to help them understand what it means to follow Jesus.



GROW
IN CHRIST

4



GETTING TO MBB LEADERS AND JAMAATS

Equip believers to lead, serve and start churches in their communities.



BEAR
FRUIT

5



GETTING TO REPRODUCTION

Multiply leaders who multiply churches and develop new leaders.



REPRODUCE

THE GOAL IS NOT ONE MANGO TREE.
BUT AN ORCHARD OF MBB LEADERS AND JAMAATS
THAT MULTIPLY AND BEAR FRUIT.



SEED



SEEDLING



YOUNG TREE



FRUIT TREE



ORCHARD

The Core Missionary Task

Our God is a missionary God who delights in taking the gospel to all peoples through us. God's heart to redeem the nations runs through the entire Bible. Here are a few key verses:

- God's promise to Abraham: "and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Gen 12:3). Galatians 3:8 teaches that this verse was fulfilled through Jesus.
- "May God be gracious to us and bless us; may he make his face shine upon us so that your way may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations." Psalm 67:1-2
- "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord shines over you. For look, darkness will cover the earth, and total darkness the peoples but the Lord will shine over you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to your shining brightness." Isaiah 60:1-3
- "This good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed in all the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." Matthew 24:14
- "This is what is written: The Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead the third day, and repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in his name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Luke 24:46-47
- "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8
- "After this I looked, and there was a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language, which no one could number, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" Revelation 7:9-10

Throughout Scripture, God declares His desire to bring the nations to Himself.

The Book of Acts shows how Jesus intends for us to participate with God in this mission. The work of the apostle Paul provides the most complete picture of missions in the New Testament.

In the life of Paul, Acts 13-14 provide the clearest picture of the core missionary task from beginning to end. In Acts 13:2, the Holy Spirit tells the church at Antioch, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then Acts 14:26 declares that "work" is complete. In between those two verses, Paul and Barnabas pioneered the gospel in Cyprus and Galatia (Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe). By the end of the journey, they left churches with elders behind in at least four cities (Acts 14:21-23). Therefore, we know that the core missionary task results in the establishment of churches with elders. Paul and Barnabas

were then able to leave and continue pioneering the gospel in new locations, though they also regularly ministered to these new churches they had planted.

The Core Missionary Task, as seen in Acts 13-14, consists of six parts:

1. **Entry** – Entering unreached places or peoples to pioneer ministry there.
2. **Evangelism** – Sharing the gospel.
3. **Disciple-making** – Developing new believers to follow Jesus.
4. **Church Planting** – Gathering new Disciples into groups and entrusting a pattern of fellowship and ministry to them.
5. **Leadership Development** – Developing elders to lead new churches and missionaries to take the gospel to new places.
6. **Exit to Partnership** – The missionary moves to a new place to continue the work, while maintaining a partnership with the churches they planted.

Before continuing, please put this booklet down and read Acts 13-14.

- (1) **Entry.** Paul and Barnabas entered at least six cities where they preached the gospel: Salamis (13:5), Paphos (13:6), Pisidian Antioch (13:14), Iconium (13:51), Lystra (14:6), and Derbe (14:20). Since they were Jews, they usually began their ministry by going to the Jewish synagogue, which also meant that they would meet some God-fearers, who were non-Jews that were reading the Jewish Scriptures (13:5, 14, 42-44; 14:1). Acts 14:1 says, “In Iconium they entered the Jewish synagogue, as usual.” In other words, they developed a plan to enter new cities and share the gospel. Their plan was modeled on the passages in which Jesus sent His disciples two by two to preach the gospel (Matthew 10; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6; 10:1-12). Paul and Barnabas went together to proclaim, as Jesus commanded His disciples. Then in Acts 13:51, when Paul and Barnabas shook the dust of their feet at Iconium as Jesus commanded (Matthew 10:14; Mark 6:11; Luke 9:6; 10:10-11). As Jesus sent His disciples two by two, and as Paul and Barnabas modeled, we can go two by two to proclaim the gospel among South Asian Muslims.
- (2) **Evangelism.** In each of these cities, they proclaimed the gospel of the Lord Jesus, usually with great boldness. As they proclaimed Christ, they faced problems with a sorcerer (13:6), angry crowds (13:44-45), persecution (14:5), and even a stoning (14:19). They later warned their disciples, “It is necessary to go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22). Disciples and churches were formed through the direct result of their preaching and hardship endured for Jesus. In Antioch, we read, “The word of the Lord spread through the whole region” (13:49). What did they proclaim? The only sermon in this section highlights their proclamation of the good news of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection (13:16-41). In the same way, God desires to send His people to proclaim the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus to the Muslims of South Asia.

- (3) **Disciple-Making.** In each place, gospel proclamation led to disciples. In Acts 13:52, we read about the disciples at Pisidian Antioch being filled with joy and the Holy Spirit. In Lystra, the disciples gathered around Paul after he had been stoned (14:19-20). It appears that they raised him from the dead! In Derbe, Paul and Barnabas “made many disciples” (14:21). Then they returned through each place and strengthened and encouraged the disciples (14:22). In Muslim ministry, it is vital that we strengthen Muslim-background believers and help them be strong in the Lord. Muslims often face personal hardship after believing in Jesus, as is written in Matthew 10:21-25.
- (4) **Church Planting.** Discipleship led to the formation of new churches of new believers. In each of the cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, a new church was planted and left behind by Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in each church and prayed for them with fasting, committing them to the Lord (14:23). Paul and Barnabas did not stay to pastor these new churches. Instead, they developed churches from these new believers and entrusted them to the Lord. In the same way, it is a biblical pattern to plant new churches composed of Muslim-background believers.
- (5) **Leadership Development.** But Paul and Barnabas did not leave these churches without leaders. Instead, they “appointed elders for them in every church” (14:23). Most scholars estimate that the whole journey (Acts 13-14) lasted about 18 months. Therefore, the development of these new elders was not a lengthy process, especially since they repeated it at least four times. Paul later gave qualifications for local church elders (Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 3:1-7). The focus of those qualifications was that elders were to be of high character, capable of leading their own families, and able to teach. When Paul returned through these churches, he also selected Timothy from among them to develop as a fellow missionary (Acts 16:1-5). The missionary task is incomplete until there are churches with elders. In the same way, we must patiently develop Muslim-background elders to lead these majority Muslim-background churches.
- (6) **Exit to Partnership.** Lastly, we see that Paul and Barnabas left Cyprus and Galatia. They entrusted the work there to these local churches, but they visited often. Paul visited Galatia two more times in Acts (16:6; 18:23). He also wrote a letter to those churches and developed Timothy and Gaius from Galatia (Acts 20:4). No doubt, Timothy and Gaius continued to care for the believers in their home area as well. Even once a missionary departs from a field, faithfulness to Scripture demands continued care and concern for the believers and churches they left behind. Our commitment to South Asian Muslims and MBBs must be long-term.

This booklet is formed around the Core Missionary Task. In fact, it is based on five steps that we have seen that South Asian Christians need to take to be fruitful in their ministry among South Asian Muslims. It is important to note that this booklet does not cover every part of the Core Missionary Task. See Tool 11 on the Seven Phases of Progress for more information.

However, this booklet covers the most relevant of Muslim ministry across most contexts. The next five chapters will detail these five steps.

1. **Muslim Evangelism.** The first step is to begin entering Muslim families and communities to boldly proclaim Jesus.
2. **Develop Seekers.** When you share the gospel with Muslims, seekers will emerge. Commit to these seekers and help them work through their barriers to faith in Jesus.
3. **MBB Discipleship.** Pray that some will repent and take baptism. Pour yourself into developing these new MBBs as followers of Jesus. Help them to grow in the Word and prayer. Guide them to love their families and communities and to share the love of Jesus with their families, friends, and neighbors.
4. **Church Formation and Emerging Muslim-Background Leaders.** As groups of Muslims come to Christ, guide them to form into churches. Develop emerging Muslim-background leaders.
5. **Leadership Reproduction.** As some Muslim-background leaders grow in the Lord, help them multiply so they can develop more churches and leaders.

The steps above may sound audacious, but others have gone ahead of you. The power of the Holy Spirit in you can do this great work through you as you work according to His energy within you (Col 1:29).

Before continuing, it is necessary to emphasize prayer and our dependence upon God. Without God, all these steps are impossible. It is tempting to include our need to pray on every page. Instead, we are emphasizing it again here. If you want to make an impact among Muslims, devote yourself to prayer and call others to pray for this great work as well.

Reflection Questions

1. Which of the six parts of the Core Missionary Task is your church or ministry strongest in?
2. Which of the six parts of the Core Missionary Task is your church or ministry weakest in?

Step 1: Beginning Muslim Evangelism

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” Romans 1:16

Several years ago, I met with two young men who were part of a successful church-planting ministry among Hindus. They excitedly shared story after story of God moving, churches people planted, and God’s kingdom expanding. I knew that their area had a large Muslim population, so I asked, “Has God brought any Muslims to Jesus?” They said, “no.” So, I asked, “What do you do when you get to a Muslim village?” They said, “We go around it until we come to the next Hindu village.”

Unfortunately, those young men are not alone in their approach. I would estimate that, if I met 100 gospel ministers in South Asia, maybe one or two have experience sharing the gospel with Muslims. There are substantial barriers that often hinder South Asian Christians from sharing the gospel with their Muslim neighbors. My question for you is, are you willing to overcome these barriers in your own life?

The Five Barriers

In many trainings on Muslim evangelism, I have asked, “What are the reasons that Christians do not share with Muslims?” and recorded answers on a whiteboard. I have found that identifying and discussing these barriers often helps Christians to overcome them. Over the years, I have come to see that there are five prominent barriers to Christians engaging Muslims with the gospel.

1. **Fear** of Muslims
2. **Bitterness** (or anger) with Muslims
3. **Hopelessness** that Muslims will respond
4. A lack of **language** and culture to share
5. A lack of **ministry tools** to use

My experience is that until we overcome fear, bitterness, and hopelessness, we cannot be used by God to reach Muslims thus it is fruitless to train in overcoming the last two barriers. Fear, bitterness, and hopelessness are barriers within our own hearts that keep us from being willing and ready to be used by God to share the gospel with Muslims. The first step in Muslim evangelism is asking God to change our hearts.

Five Barriers in Muslim Ministry



THE FIRST STEP IS HEART CHANGE.

Fear, bitterness, and hopelessness are internal barriers within our hearts. We must overcome these before training in language, culture, and tools will be fruitful. **Ask God to change your heart.**

HEART BARRIERS — MUST BE OVERCOME FIRST

1



FEAR of Muslims

Fear of danger, harm, or rejection prevents us from reaching out. Focus on God, not people. "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matthew 10:28)



God is with us. He sends us as sheep among wolves, but our hope is in Him, not in this world.

2



BITTERNESS (or Anger) with Muslims

Anger or bitterness closes our hearts and contradicts the gospel. Jesus calls us to love our enemies and forgive, as He forgave us from the cross.



If Jesus died for our enemies, we are called to love and forgive Muslims as well.

3



HOPELESSNESS that Muslims Will Respond

We may think Muslims will never respond to the gospel. But God is at work—He draws people to Himself by His Spirit. We are the sowers; some seed will fall on good soil. "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matt 19:26)



Our God is able and is bringing Muslims into His kingdom around the world.

PRACTICAL BARRIERS — ADDRESSED AFTER HEART CHANGE

4



LACK OF LANGUAGE & CULTURE

Language and cultural gaps can make sharing the gospel difficult. With effort, we can learn languages, understand cultures, listen, ask questions, and build relationships.



Understanding language and culture opens doors and builds bridges to share Jesus effectively.

5



LACK OF MINISTRY TOOLS

Many Christians don't know how to share their faith. Tools help us follow Jesus' model, share our testimony, and communicate the gospel clearly and respectfully.



Good tools build confidence and effectiveness in sharing the gospel.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- 1 Which of the heart barriers—fear, anger, and hopelessness—do you struggle with?
- 2 Are you willing to let the truths of Scripture overcome these barriers in your life?
- 3 Are you ready to be trained in language, culture, and tools? You are only ready when you have let Jesus overcome the heart barriers first!



KEY PRINCIPLE
Change begins in the heart. Let God transform our hearts first.



OUR RESPONSIBILITY

- Go
 - Speak
 - Share
 - Sow the seed
- Leave the results to God.



REMEMBER

God is bringing Muslims into His kingdom around the world—join what He is doing!

Barrier #1 – Fear of Muslims

Fear is the strongest barrier. When some Christians look at Muslims, they see the entire community as jihadis who are ready to kill Christians. Christians often believe that if they attempt to go and share Jesus with Muslims, they will face beatings, imprisonment, or death.

The reality is that the Muslim community has a very warm and hospitable side. I have often joked that the greatest danger I face from the Muslim community is high cholesterol from the delicious biryani and korma that I have received from their great hospitality! I have shared the gospel with thousands of Muslims. The vast majority spoke respectfully with me about Jesus and the gospel. Many pushed back and defended their beliefs, but did so respectfully, leading to good conversation. Some became angry. I have especially found that some Muslim religious leaders became angry because they felt that my presence threatened their community. And a handful threatened me with violence.

When Jesus sent His disciples, He told them, “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves” (Matthew 10:16). Jesus’ imagery is vivid. When a sheep meets a wolf, it quickly becomes a meal. In the same way, we know that going to proclaim the gospel carries inherent danger. Despite that danger, He sent his closest twelve friends, knowing the danger they faced. In the same way, He sends us.

We can face this danger because of the hope that we have in heaven. Even if someone were to harm or kill us, the worst that can happen is that we would enter the presence of God. As Jesus said, “Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28). When we fear people more than we fear God, we have lost perspective. Our hope is in heaven and not in anything this world can offer (Matt 6:19-20).

If you fear Muslims enough that you are unwilling to go and share Jesus with them, then you are showing that you fear Muslims more than you fear God. If this describes you, then put down this book and pray. Ask God for forgiveness. If you believe that Jesus Christ died for your sins and that you have eternal life by His sacrifice, then place your focus on that great truth again. Ask God to deepen your faith in the gospel. Because it is the gospel that gives us power to overcome fear.

Barrier #2 – Bitterness with Muslims

One time, I shared about God’s love for Muslims with a church, and a man approached me afterward and said, “We should just kill them all!” We cannot share the gospel with Muslims if our

hearts are filled with anger or bitterness. If we do not love Muslims as Jesus loves Muslims and died for them, then how can we share the gospel with them?

It is true that some Muslims have done terrible things. There are many terrorist attacks in the name of Islam. Some (not all!) Muslims have expressed their religion through violence. There have been longstanding tensions in South Asia between Muslims and Hindus and between Muslims and Christians. In Pakistan and Bangladesh, Christians and Hindus are often treated as second-class citizens. In India, there is a long history of communal violence between Hindus and Muslims. The result is that many have a deep bitterness with Muslims.

The life of Jesus stands in sharp contrast. Even when they crucified Him, He said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). In the same way, as Stephen was being stoned to death, he said, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them” (Acts 7:60). Jesus commands us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us (Matthew 5:44). Jesus taught us to pray, “forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Matthew 6:12). Jesus’ command to love our enemies is radical. And if we harbor hate for others, we are not living according to the gospel. If Jesus died on the cross for His enemies, to follow Him means to love our enemies that deeply as well.

What is your heart attitude towards Muslims? When you see Muslims, do you feel anger and fear? If so, I want to invite you to forgive the Muslim community, as Jesus commands us. Put down this booklet again and pray. Confess your bitterness to God and ask Him to help you forgive Muslims. I do not know how Muslims may or may not have wronged you personally. But I do know that the gospel demands that we forgive.

Barrier #3 – Hopelessness that Muslims Will Respond

Along with fear and bitterness, many are hopeless that Muslims will respond to the gospel. Years ago, I was meeting with a friend named Yusef, whose father had come to Christ from a Muslim family. He was a pastor in a majority-Muslim area, but he was very clear that his ministry was only to Hindus and Christians. As we spoke, we discussed the fear and anger he held towards Muslims. Then he said, “It does not matter, even if we share the gospel with Muslims, they will not respond.” I was surprised at his lack of faith, especially because his father was a Muslim-background believer (MBB)!

If we believe that Muslims cannot respond to the gospel, then we believe that Muslims are more powerful than the Holy Spirit. It is our responsibility to proclaim the gospel. It is God’s job to draw people to Himself by the power of the Spirit. In Jesus’ words, we are like the sower who goes to sow the gospel, and some seed will fall in good soil. If we say that Muslims cannot or will not

respond to the gospel, then we are saying that the God who is on His throne cannot draw these people to Himself.

Let me reassure you, the God who made the heavens and the earth can and is bringing Muslims into His kingdom around the world. The number of Muslim-background believers continues to grow rapidly worldwide. I have personally met thousands of Muslim-background believers. Conservative estimates place the number of MBBs worldwide in the millions. Since many of these MBBs live in secrecy due to fear of persecution, some Christians have never met an MBB. But our God is doing an amazing work among Muslims. My question for you is, do you believe that our God is powerful enough to do this work? If you do, then consider joining Him in what He is doing. As Jesus said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26).

Barrier #4 – Lack of Language and Culture

Once we let God change our hearts about the three heart barriers – anger, bitterness, and hopelessness – then we can begin learning how to talk to Muslims about Jesus. The final two barriers are a lack of language and culture and a lack of ministry tools.

Many Christians do not share the gospel because of language barriers. For example, in North India, most Christians speak Hindi while Muslims speak Urdu. In southern Pakistan, Muslims speak Sindhi while Christians speak Punjabi. In Sri Lanka, most Muslims speak Tamil while Christians speak Sinhala. The reality is that these barriers are often smaller than they first appear, but they do require some effort for Christians to overcome. In my experience, if a Hindi-speaking Christian wants to learn Urdu well enough to share with Muslims, they can become quite proficient with only a few months of effort. In fact, most Hindi-speaking Christians know more Urdu than they think because of Bollywood movies and other media. Today, Urdu Bibles are available in Devanagari script, making it easier for Hindi-speaking Christians to read. Simply reading this Bible and practicing speaking to Muslim friends and neighbors will help you learn Urdu quickly.

Others have a broader language-learning gap, such as the one between Tamil and Sinhala. However, I have seen that South Asians are perhaps the fastest learners of new languages in the world. If a South Asian desires to learn a language to communicate the gospel, they can do so far better than Western missionaries.

Along with learning a language, it is good to begin learning about Muslim culture. In fact, this is a great way to begin building friendships with Muslims. Ask many questions. Go as a learner. It will open many hearts to you. As you better understand their language and culture, you will become more effective at sharing Jesus with them. In the ministry tools section, there is a tool

called The Muslim Triangle that you might find helpful as a starting point for understanding Muslim culture.

Barrier #5 – Lack of Ministry Tools

In each section of this booklet, you will be told about some basic ministry tools that will help you share Jesus. For example, to begin Muslim evangelism, three tools will be helpful for you: (1) learning how to follow Jesus' model of going in Luke 10, (2) learning to share your testimony, and (3) learning how to communicate the gospel. While you will find some help in these steps below, I recommend that you look in the ministry tools section for more complete details about these tools.

Reflection Questions

1. Which of the heart barriers – fear, anger, and hopelessness – do you struggle with?
2. Are you willing to let the truths of Scripture overcome these barriers in your life?
3. Are you ready to be trained in language, culture, and tools? You are only ready when you have let Jesus overcome the heart barriers first!

First Steps in Muslim Evangelism

Having begun to overcome the five barriers, you are now ready to try. If you know someone who is actively proclaiming the true Gospel among Muslims, the best option is to go with them to learn from their example. Evangelism is better modeled than taught. Before Jesus sent His disciples to preach the gospel, He showed them how to do it. But if you have no one to show you, then you can learn on your own. I also had no one to teach me, so I had to learn on my own.

Before going, it is helpful to learn a few ministry tools, so you know what to share. The easiest two tools are your personal testimony and the five unique things about Jesus. You can find guides for these two tools in the Ministry Tools section.

Sharing Your Testimony

Our testimony is our greatest tool in evangelism. With our testimony, we share what Jesus has done in our lives and point to His greatness. You should learn to share your testimony in about a minute or two, but also be ready to share it in a longer, more comprehensive way. You can use your shorter testimony to help build interest in the gospel. You can share your longer testimony

when you have built a relationship and want to show them more fully what it meant for you to follow Jesus. Your one-minute testimony is often the first spiritual truth you will share in a conversation. Here is my one-minute testimony, as I might share with a Muslim:

“When I was a child, we went for prayer every week, but I did not follow or know God. From my childhood, my heart was filled with anger. I fought with my brothers and my parents. I did not have any close friends. Then God sent someone to tell me about Hazrat Isa al-Masih. I began to read the Injeel Sharif. As I read, I realized that I was far from God, and I repented and believed. I prayed, ‘God, I am a sinner who is far away from You! But I am ready to become a disciple of Hazrat Isa al-Masih. Please save me from my sins!’ As I prayed, God began transforming my life by taking away my anger and bitterness. He filled my heart with love, joy, and peace. Now I have many great relationships. God continues to transform me as I pursue Him every day.”

In fact, the testimony above is less than a minute. Now it will be helpful for you to use the Ministry Tool Guide on testimonies to develop your own testimony.

Some of the words I used in my testimony, like Hazrat Isa al-Masih or Injeel Sharif, might also have been strange for you. I encourage you to read the section, “Speaking Like a Muslim” in the Ministry Tools section.

Your testimony is a powerful tool for proclaiming Jesus, and it's the most natural way to share repeatedly how Jesus has transformed your life. As you share your testimony, you will find that some people are curious to learn more. If they are, then use the opportunity to share about the Five Unique Things about Jesus

The Five Unique Things about Jesus

The gospel is the message that Jesus Christ died on a cross for our sins, was buried, and raised from the dead on the third day (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). There are many ways to share the gospel, but one simple way to reach Muslims is the Five Unique Things about Jesus. They are:

1. Jesus' unique birth
2. Jesus' unique miracles
3. Jesus' unique teaching
4. Jesus' unique sacrifice
5. Jesus' empty tomb

Go to the Ministry Tools section on The Five Unique Things about Jesus to learn to share this tool.

There are several reasons that the Five Unique Things are a good way to share the gospel with Muslims. First, the Five Unique Things are faithful to the gospel and include the death, burial,

Five Unique Things about Hazrat Isa al-Masih

1 Hazrat Isa al-Masih's Unique Birth

Hazrat Jibril (alayhi salaam) came to Hazrat Maryam (alayhi salaam) with the glad tidings that she would conceive and give birth to a son, Isa.

Maryam (alayhi salaam) asked, "How can this be, seeing I am a virgin?" Jibril (alayhi salaam) replied, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you."

No other prophet was born without a father, nor was their birth announced by angels.

Key Question:

Is the birth of any other prophet this special? Did angels announce the birth of any other prophet? Was any other prophet born without a father?

2 Hazrat Isa al-Masih's Unique Miracles

Hazrat Isa al-Masih healed the sick, gave life to the dead, walked on water, and fed 5,000 people with five pieces of bread and two fish.

The power of Hazrat Isa al-Masih was great. Was any other prophet able to do such powerful works?

Healed the sick

Gave life to the dead

Walked on water

Fed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish

3 Hazrat Isa al-Masih's Unique Teaching

Every other prophet said, this is the way of God, walk on this path.

Hazrat Isa al-Masih said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

All the other prophets merely taught about a path, while Hazrat Isa al-Masih became our path.

Key Truth:

He did not merely teach the way. Hazrat Isa al-Masih is the way to God.

4 Hazrat Isa al-Masih's Unique Sacrifice

So, His birth was special. His miracles were special. His word was special.

But the most special thing He did was give the sacrifice of His own life.

A perfect sacrifice. A blameless sacrifice. He gave his life upon a cross for our sins.

5 Hazrat Isa al-Masih's Empty Tomb

Three days after His death, He came back to life! No one else has been in the grave for three days and come back to life. Hazrat Isa al-Masih rose from the dead and ascended to heaven.

His tomb remains empty.

Every other prophet, teacher, or leader remains in a grave, but Hazrat Isa al-Masih is alive in heaven, in the presence of God.

Key Truth:

He went to heaven and remains in heaven today in the presence of God.

and resurrection of Jesus in parts four and five. Second, the Five Unique Things is an easy method for Christians to share and is not complicated theologically or practically. There are many ways to share the gospel with Muslims that are quite difficult to learn. But this is a simple and direct method. Third, the Five Unique Things build a good bridge with Muslims and is often well received. Most Muslims believe in the virgin birth of Jesus and that He performed great signs and miracles. When we begin with those things, we build a good discussion with Muslims about Jesus, which often makes them willing to hear about the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

Now go to the Ministry Tools section and learn how to share the Five Unique Things. Practice this method until you become comfortable with it. Practice using some of the Muslim terminology from the Speak Like a Muslim section in the Ministry Tools. If you know Jesus, then learning to talk about the Five Unique Things about Jesus should be natural for you. These are stories and truths you already know well. Do not feel you need to be perfect from the beginning with this tool. For now, you are just taking your first steps! Now that you have practiced your testimony and the Five Unique Things, it is time to think through how you will go to share these truths.

Luke 10: Jesus' Model of Going

In the gospels, our Lord Jesus went village by village proclaiming the gospel. His disciples followed Him and learned how He went (Luke 8:1-3). Then Jesus sent His twelve disciples to go do the same (Luke 9:1-6). In Luke 10:1-12, Jesus sent a larger group with the same purpose: to go and make disciples. It is good for us to study Jesus' method of going. If this passage is unfamiliar to you, go read it now. You can learn more about Luke 10 in the Ministry Tools section.

Luke 10 shows us an ideal way to enter new places to share the gospel. It is a simple method. First, we pray and ask for God's help. Then we go to the area with a partner. We ask God to help us find a home that is ready for the gospel. As God opens a door, we ask for God's peace to be on that house. Here, "asalamu alykum"² is very appropriate! We receive hospitality from them. We pray for them and proclaim the gospel.

Now, this is an ideal evangelism process. We have often found that when we share the gospel with a whole household, it becomes an opportunity for them to believe, which can lay the foundation for a new church. However, we often do not function in the ideal. Jesus went for

² "Asalamu alykum" is a standard Muslim greeting, meaning, "May the peace of God be with you." Most Muslims respond back by saying, "walakum asalam," which means, "And may the grace of God be with you." Simply beginning to use this phrase to greet Muslims is a great step to helping build bridges. Some people do have questions about using this phrase. See "Can Followers of Jesus Use Terms Like Allah and Isa?" for more information.

evangelism by Himself before He called His disciples. In the same way, it is best to go with a partner, but we can go by ourselves. As you begin, you may start with individuals rather than households. It is fine to start in this way, but Jesus' model of sharing with households is ideal.

Much of the book of Acts is the record of Peter, Paul, and others following Jesus' model of going in Luke 10. As you consider growing in Muslim evangelism, I recommend studying the book of Acts to deepen your understanding of this work.

Getting Practical

Now that we have discussed the barriers and learned some ministry tools, it is time for you to put your learning into action. Here is what I want you to do.

First, make a list of Muslims you know. Friends, family, neighbors. Perhaps you do not personally know any Muslims, but you know where some live. Make a list of Muslims in your area who need to learn about Jesus.

Second, pray daily for the people on your list by name. Ask God to show you three people on your list that He wants you to share the gospel with. Ask a few others to be praying for these three.

Third, begin seeking opportunities to show love for these three people. Keep praying for them.

Fourth, share your testimony with each of these three people.

Fifth, if they respond positively to your testimony, share the Five Unique Things about Jesus with them.

Sixth, ask them if they want to keep learning about Jesus with you.

Next Step?

Once you have shared Jesus with a few Muslims, keep practicing sharing the gospel with more. Try to become friends with them while you engage and talk about differences in the religions. It's okay to talk about normal life and family matters also, but don't forget the main purpose. As you share, it is likely that some Muslims will ask you difficult questions. In the Ministry Tools section, go read the Handy Apologetics Guide. No doubt, you will reference this guide repeatedly as you grow in Muslim evangelism. Please remember that this guide is to help you love Muslims well as you proclaim truth to them. The guide should not be used in order to win the argument or debate.

My prayer is that God will give you great favor and that you will find some Muslim seekers. I think you will be surprised at how open many Muslims are to learning more. As you begin finding Muslim seekers, move on to Step 2: Sustained Yellow-Light Follow-Up.

Reflection Questions

1. Do you have the tools you need to start sharing the gospel with Muslims?
2. Do you know anyone who can model for you how to share the gospel with Muslims?
3. Who can you bring with you to begin doing Muslim evangelism together?

Kushi's Story

God used a former Muslim, now a Christian, to share the gospel with Kushi and her family. When her relatives discovered their new faith, they threatened them, saying they had to “either choose the family and their possessions or choose Jesus.” Kushi and her family chose to follow Jesus, trusting that God would never leave them.

Kushi grew up knowing Christ. While in college, she learned how to share the gospel and began sharing with her Hindu friends and classmates. Over time, God placed a burden on her heart for the Muslim community. Kushi connected with people who equipped her to share the gospel with Muslims. She began sharing the gospel with Muslim women and working with seekers. One family invited her into their home, and through this experience, Kushi realized that it is not tools or human effort that change people's hearts, but the Holy Spirit working through us.

After college, Kushi moved to a larger city, where she began reaching more people. As she shared the gospel, she learned to depend more fully on God, remembering Proverbs 3:5: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.” God began to work in powerful ways, especially among Muslim women.

Ministry was not always easy or safe. Once, while speaking with a Muslim woman in a park, a man showed up and began arguing with her. Several weeks later, he began following her around the park and harassing her. Although fear sometimes tempted Kushi to stop, she continued trusting God to protect and guide her. She prayed to remain attentive and wise, being “wise as serpents and innocent as doves,” while remaining prayerful, faithful, and committed to abiding in Christ.

As Kushi continued in ministry, she trusted God to lead her to the people He wanted her to meet. One day, God led her to a Muslim woman who had dreamed about Jesus reaching out to her. That same day, Kushi shared the gospel with her, and she heard about Jesus for the first time.

Kushi has continued serving in God's kingdom, following up with women in their homes. Some are not allowed to leave their homes. Others are unable to hear God's Word because of family responsibilities. Despite the efforts of Kushi and her teammates, countless women have never had the opportunity to hear the gospel.

As believers and God's people, we need to pray for more kingdom-minded people to be sent so that more souls may be saved. As Matthew 9:38 says: “Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.”

Kushi's story reminds us that we can overcome barriers not through our own strength, but by completely depending on God. Her life challenges us to trust Him, remain faithful, and continue working for His kingdom, knowing that He is the One who changes hearts.

Step 2: Sustained Yellow-Light Follow-Up

"I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some."

1 Corinthians 9:22



About ten years ago, an Indian Christian friend asked me for advice. He had shared the gospel with thousands of Muslims, but none had yet repented and believed. He wanted to know what he was doing wrong. As we talked, I gave him a single piece of advice: make a list of five or ten Muslim seekers that you know and focus your time on them. That single change in ministry style yielded great fruit.

When we share the gospel, we find three kinds of people: green lights, yellow lights, and red lights.

- Green lights are individuals who hear the gospel and are immediately ready to repent and believe.
- Yellow lights are individuals who have heard the gospel and are curious to learn more.
- Red lights are individuals who hear the gospel but show no interest in it or are opposed to it.

One key to Muslim ministry is making a sustained effort to follow up with yellow-light contacts.



When someone grows in skill in Muslim evangelism, it is easy to find yellow lights in South Asia. One man told me that before being trained in Muslim evangelism, 80-90% of the Muslims he shared with were red lights. Evangelism to Muslims was very discouraging. After being trained and having some coaching, the same man reported that about 80% of Muslims had become yellow lights. It is possible for you to see a similar result in your ministry to Muslims with training and coaching.

In Muslim ministry, there are three key tasks as we begin ministry: (1) evangelizing new contacts, (2) following up with yellow-lights, and (3) discipling new MBBs. Discipling new MBBs is the most important of these three activities. In general, focus on discipling new MBBs over evangelizing new contacts or following up with yellow lights. In the same way, following up with yellow lights is generally more valuable than evangelizing new contacts. Successful Muslim workers prioritize yellow-light follow-up while also constantly sharing the gospel with new contacts.

There are two ditches you want to avoid in sustained yellow-light follow-up. The first ditch is to focus on evangelism to the exclusion of yellow-light follow-up. Some find it easier to share with new people than to follow up, so they focus on evangelism. The reality is that very few Muslims repent and believe in our first contact with them. The second ditch is to do very little evangelism and focus all your efforts on one or two yellow lights. It is rare that those one or two

contacts will be the ones to repent and believe. Instead, it is better to continue sharing the gospel with many and looking for those whose hearts are very open. Some in Muslim ministry have focused on one or two contacts for years, only to be frustrated that those contacts never move forward in following Jesus. Instead, we need to broadly sow the gospel while also focusing on interested individuals.

The Necessary Sacrifices

In my experience, it is easier for South Asian Christians to overcome the barriers of fear, bitterness, and hopelessness to become successful evangelists to Muslims than to make the sacrifices necessary for sustained yellow light follow-up. The reason is that the further we go down these five steps in Muslim ministry, the greater our sacrifice. Ministers to Muslims must die to their own cultural preferences for the sake of the gospel. They must also give to the Lord their preferences about how to use their time and energy. Making disciples of Muslims requires significant death to self. But as Jesus said, we must be willing to take up our cross and follow Him. My question is, are you ready?

The first sacrifice is your schedule. To make disciples of Muslims, you must be willing to give up the necessary time and energy to spend time with them. It is not enough to visit genuine seekers only occasionally. Ideally, once you find a genuine seeker, spend as much time with them as you can. Call and message regularly, but they really need significant face-to-face time with you. I have a Christian friend in Pakistan who has baptized dozens of Muslims. I recently asked him what he has learned over the years. He told me that when he finds a Muslim who is genuinely interested, he drops everything he can to focus on that one individual. Sustained yellow light follow-up will require significant time. There is no substitute for investing this time in yellow lights. There is no perfect tool or training package that will eliminate the necessity of investing significant time in yellow light contacts.

The second sacrifice is your cultural preferences. To paraphrase the apostle Paul, “To the Muslims I became as a Muslim, in order to win Muslims. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some” (1 Cor 9:19-22). As you commit yourself to Muslim yellow lights, you should begin taking on more of their culture and language. They will need to come partway in bridging the gap between your cultures, but you should also meet them in the middle. Just spending more time with Muslim seekers will cause you to adjust what you eat. Many who work among Muslims begin wearing more traditional clothing like kurta pajama and adjusting your language to theirs.

The third sacrifice is facing the confusion of your family and church. An Indian pastor friend of mine began spending more time with Muslims for the sake of the gospel. He ended up

growing a longer beard, speaking more Urdu, and picking up some mannerisms. This brother was kicked out of his local pastors' association because the other pastors were uncomfortable with the changes in his life. However, he was successful in winning Muslims to Christ, as Paul said. He became a Muslim to the Muslims, and his friends and family were unhappy with the change. Some others have told me that they have struggled to make disciples of MBBs because their wife or father will not allow Muslim seekers into their own home. If you want to make disciples of Muslims, you must be willing to treat them like family.

Lastly, a barrier for many at this point is simply a lack of organization. Some try to follow up on too many yellow lights, leaving too little time for each. Others fail to properly track their yellow-light contacts and end up evangelizing only new contacts. I have seen that the sweet spot is about five to ten yellow lights. It is enough that your energy is not focused solely on one individual and their decision, but is enough that you can follow up with all of them weekly. Keep a notebook or file and pray for all of them regularly. Keep notes on what you are discussing with each and where you are in your progress with each. Your organization will help you plan for your next meetings. Ask others to pray with you that these seekers would repent and believe.

Tools for Yellow-Light Follow-Up

There are two sets of tools that you need to grow in yellow-light follow-up. First, you need a strategy for what you will teach seekers. Second, you need to grow in your ability to answer Muslim objections to the gospel. At the same time, you should be committed to learning and growing in your understanding of Muslim beliefs and culture.

Yellow Light Strategy

You should develop a written plan about what you will use when you visit Muslim seekers. We call this a Yellow Light Strategy. The strategy I use is simple. I use five Bible stories around the Five Unique Things about Jesus. You can find my strategy and a few others in the Ministry Tools section.

Some people in Muslim ministry avoid having a written strategy, instead going with the Spirit's leading in the moment. However, there are a few reasons I think it is wise to ask the Spirit to guide us as we develop a written strategy. First, a written strategy ensures we cover the necessary topics for Muslim seekers. Second, a written strategy is usually simpler and more direct than not following one. If we have a plan, we can get to important conversations sooner than if we don't. Third, a written strategy is easier for us to help others follow, including new MBBs. If we have a strategy, it is easier to help others follow it.

Using the

Five Unique Things

about Hazrat Isa al-Masih
with Yellow Lights

1

UNIQUE BIRTH



Matthew 1:18-25

2

UNIQUE MIRACLES



Matthew 9:1-8

3

UNIQUE TEACHING



Matthew 7:24-27

4

UNIQUE SACRIFICE



Matthew 27:32-54

5

EMPTY TOMB



Matthew 28:1-10



After reading the story with your yellow light friend, discuss
“What does this story teach us about Hazrat Isa al-Masih?”



The ideal strategy guides the evangelist to have key conversations with Muslim seekers. It is Bible-based and focuses on Muslim seekers growing in their understanding of the gospel and in their decision to follow Jesus.

I have also found that it is best to follow your yellow light strategy within a short time frame. What I mean is that it is better to go through your yellow-light strategy in days rather than weeks. I remember a time when I shared the gospel with a Muslim who immediately wanted to learn more. We went to a safe place, and I spent three hours going through Five Unique Things

Bible studies from Matthew. After hearing it, he brought me to his home, and I shared these Bible studies with his father, brothers, wife, and sisters-in-law so they could decide whether they wanted to follow together. I spent about 7-8 hours with that brother on that day. He and his family were left with a deep understanding of the gospel.

Apologetics: Answering Muslim Objections to Christ

As you go deeper with yellow lights, you will encounter objections to the gospel. Muslim seekers have many questions. In my experience, there are six primary objections that Muslims make in South Asia:

1. The Bible has changed.
2. Jesus is not the Son of God.
3. God is not a Trinity.
4. Jesus did not die on the cross.
5. Muhammad is the last and greatest prophet.
6. Jesus was only a prophet.

Thankfully, there are many answers that we can give to these objections. In the ministry tools section, there is a guide to help you with these objections. I encourage you to read it often. This guide will not answer every possible objection. Instead, it focuses on the 95% most common objections Muslims make in South Asia.

Regarding apologetics, I have a few points of caution. Your goal in apologetics is to answer your seeker's objections clearly. Your goal is not to learn how to debate Muslim leaders. These are very different skills. When a Muslim seeker asks you questions, do not be offended. They are often just trying to process many things they have heard. Be loving and gentle. Avoid attacking their religion, their prophet, or their book. Focus on defending your own beliefs.

I have seen that many Christians struggle with certain points of doctrine as they answer Muslim objections. If you have questions, this is a good time to deepen your understanding of the Bible. In the tools section, there is a Bible study on the dual nature of Christ, which will help you understand what the Bible says about Jesus being fully God and fully man. In the apologetics guide, there is help in understanding the Trinity. You will have difficulty teaching what you do not understand!

Growing in Understanding Muslim Belief and Culture

Lastly, I want to encourage you to be a learner. Ask questions of Muslim seekers and those you share the gospel with. Learn about the beliefs and culture of the Muslims around you. Understanding the beliefs and culture of Muslims around you will empower you to be a better witness.

Next Steps

The process of being a sustained witness to yellow lights is simple. Make a follow-up plan and meet with yellow lights regularly. Teach them the Word. Walk through their questions. Show them the love of Jesus.

While this may seem simple, the application requires you to change your normal life patterns. You must count the cost of making Muslim seekers your friends and of adjusting your own culture. You must give up preferences in how to use your time and energy. Your friends and family might misunderstand you at this point. If so, you can ask them to read this book to understand what Jesus has called you to do and why you are doing what you are doing.

To move to the next step, you must commit yourself to yellow lights until they are ready to repent, trust in Jesus, and become disciples of Jesus by then obeying in baptism.

Step 3: Getting to Baptism and Discipleship

“Whoever does not take up their cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me.” Matthew 10:38



I have an MBB friend from South Asia who came to Christ while in jail in Saudi Arabia. He was arrested on a visa violation and put into a cell with many others, including an MBB from Bangladesh. Every day, my friend and the other prisoners would beat and torment their Bangladeshi cellmate. Despite that, this Bangladeshi MBB would continue in prayer and even sing hymns of praise to Jesus. Over time, my friend came to hear and see the gospel in this man's life. Eventually, my friend confessed Jesus with this man. Immediately after following Jesus, my friend was beaten along with his Bangladeshi friend.

Once you are sharing the gospel boldly, following up with yellow lights, and deepening your ability to answer objections and questions, one great barrier remains in seeing Muslims come to Christ. The remaining barrier is the fear that Muslim seekers face. Muslim seekers are afraid of losing their families, their jobs, their homes, and potentially even their lives. In the face of these potential consequences, many Muslim seekers will choose the broad path that leads to destruction. But if we continue to sow the seed of the gospel, some seed will fall on good soil and produce a thirty, sixty, or hundredfold harvest.

The Persecution Muslim Seekers Face from Their Community

Persecution is normal for MBBs. In this way, our MBB friends are often very close to the New Testament. “Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Timothy 3:12). “You will be hated by everyone because of Me” (Matthew 10:22). “Whoever does not take up their cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me” (Matthew 10:38).

In 2005, a study on the persecution of MBBs in Pakistan was released by a man named Edward Evans. He wrote about 70 MBBs who came to Christ in Pakistan between 1947 and 1998. Each one was the first in their family to believe, from a Pakistani family, and each remained in Pakistan. Of those surveyed, only seven of the 70 were women. The lower number of women indicates that fewer Muslim women came to Christ. Women also faced far greater persecution than men for following Jesus. Evans’ survey studied what happened to each of these seventy. Table 1 provides the raw data.

Severity of Persecution	Number of Cases	% of Cases	Description
Murder	4	6%	Killed for their faith in Jesus. 3 of 7 women were killed for their faith
Life-threatening	8	11%	Attempt made to kill believer, usually by male family members.
Severe	23	33%	Range of issues, such as physical beatings, deprived of food and needs, lost job, expelled from family, etc.
Moderate	24	34%	Intense emotional pressure from close family members and boycott from the wider circle of relatives.
Mild	6	9%	Family disapproval
Neutral	5	7%	No reaction. All five were Sindhis.
Positive	0	0%	No positive reactions were recorded.

Table 1. Severity of persecution of 70 MBBs in Pakistan from 1947 to 1998. See Edward Evans, “‘Coming to Faith’ in Pakistan,” in *From the Straight Path to the Narrow Way: Journeys of Faith*, ed. by David Greenlee (Waynesboro, GA: Authentic, 2005), Kindle locations 1621-1635.

The data from this study demonstrate the seriousness of the decision facing Muslim seekers. They know that they face great difficulties if they repent and believe. However, some Christians have falsely believed that all MBBs will be killed if they go public with their faith. In fact, only one in sixty-three males in Pakistan died as a martyr when his faith was revealed. However, a full 50% of those surveyed faced at least severe persecution. The persecution MBBs face is real and significant. Muslim seekers are those standing at the edge of this decision and are counting the cost. Is knowing Jesus worth the great troubles they may face?

It is necessary that we also understand the cost that Muslims face in this decision. We must have patience and understanding. If Muslims are rejected by their family and community for following Jesus, we should be ready to be their new community. MBBs need a community to stand with them as they face persecution and hardship. The reality is that churches in South Asia have often failed in this responsibility.

The Rejection Muslim Seekers Experience from the Church

Let me share another story. When Muhammad repented and took baptism, he lived in a city. A few months later, he returned home but did not know any other believers in his village. His family was unhappy about his new faith in Jesus, and his experience was probably moderate persecution based on the table above. In his excitement to follow Jesus, Muhammad began searching for a church to attend. The following Sunday, he attended church. After church, he sat with the pastor and shared his experience of learning about Jesus and following Him. He shared about what he was learning in the Bible and his desire to share the gospel with other Muslims. The pastor rejoiced at Muhammad's story but then told him he was not welcome at his church. The pastor told him that he and his church did not want the trouble they could face for inviting a Muslim to be a member. Muhammad left that day feeling rejected not only by his family but also by the church.

Unfortunately, this is a very common experience for MBBs when they try to join churches across South Asia. Churches are often afraid of many things when a Muslim seeker or MBB begins to attend. First, they fear that the Muslim community will persecute the whole church for evangelizing Muslims. Second, they fear that their own members will become unhappy because of MBB members in the church. In India, Hindu seekers may stop coming to a church if they learn that an MBB is a member there. In other countries, some members are simply afraid or uncomfortable about having an MBB there. Pastors often face a great dilemma about how to minister to MBBs.

It seems the ideal is that new MBBs be guided to share the gospel with their community, which could lead a group of Muslims to choose to follow Jesus together through a shared experience. However, some MBBs try to share the gospel with their community and are rejected. Those MBBs are often isolated and deeply in need of community. The next chapter will address how to help form new churches, or jamaats, for MBBs. However, at this stage of discipleship, we need to understand the challenges MBBs face and be ready to walk with them.

MBBs Should Keep Their Culture but Leave Islam

As MBBs follow Jesus, a major question is their relationship to their former religion and culture. It is my conviction that MBBs should remain in their culture while rejecting their former religion. A few years ago, one of my disciples was baptizing a new MBB named Azad. Azad came from a boating community. At the baptism, Azad was asked if he pledged to leave Muhammad, the Quran, and the mosque as he followed Jesus. He replied, “A man cannot stand in two boats. If he tries, he will fall into the water!” Indeed, it is impossible for a believer to stand in Jesus and Islam at the same time, although many try.

Once you have established a few MBBs, they will be able to help new MBBs as they navigate issues relating to faith, rituals, and culture. They will ask questions like, “Should we circumcise our male children?” “Can we participate in Ramadan with our families?” “What should we do for burial?” “Who will our children marry?” MBBs face a multitude of issues in navigating their relationship to their former faith and the culture that is deeply interconnected with that faith.

First Corinthians is a very helpful book for MBBs facing these issues. Regarding an MBB’s relationship with their community, this biblical text is helpful: “each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God called them” (1 Corinthians 7:17). In simple terms, an MBB should retain their marriage, their job, their family, their language, and their culture.

On the other hand, Scripture also commanded early believers to flee from their former religion, especially idolatry (1 Corinthians 10:14). Just as believers in the early church were expected to flee from their former religion, we should have the same expectation for MBBs. So simply put, MBBs should be cultural insiders but theological outsiders.³ They should retain as much of their former culture as possible while clearly separating from Islam.

We use a simple tool to coach MBBs in this transition, which we call the three transitions. The three transitions are:

1. Transition #1: Leave Muhammad and cleave to Jesus.
2. Transition #2: Leave the Qur’an and cleave to the Bible.
3. Transition #3: Leave the mosque (and especially salat) and join a church.

Regarding joining a church, we have seen that the ideal is to develop new MBB churches where MBBs worship together in their own culture and language.

These three transitions provide clarity around what is expected of MBBs as they follow Jesus. It seems that these transitions make the most sense for Muslim seekers as they realize that

³ I have taken the term cultural insiders but theological outsiders from an MBB who writes under the name Abu Jaz.

Jesus is God. When they realize that Jesus is God, then He, His book, and worshipping Him take precedence over their former religion. We need to be patient and wise with Muslim seekers during this stage of learning and growing. For most, it is a huge step for them to separate from their former religion in this way. And it is often what leads to persecution. Some will quickly be ready to separate from their former religion, and some will take months to walk through this decision.

Adopt a Discipleship Strategy

In the New Testament, Christian leaders used strategies to make disciples. For example, the apostle Paul referred to his pattern of ministry on more than one occasion. For example, Paul wrote, “I urge you to imitate me. This is why I have sent Timothy to you... He will remind you about my ways in Christ Jesus, just as I teach everywhere in every church” (1 Corinthians 4:16-17). Paul sent Timothy to Corinth to remind them of his ways. In other words, Paul had a clear pattern of teaching for disciples that he could entrust to them to establish. When Paul left Titus in Crete, Titus no doubt followed Paul’s pattern. Because Paul had a clear pattern for ministry, he could easily send his disciples, delegating the work to them. In the same way, it is to our advantage to have such a strategy today for helping new MBBs grow strong in the Lord. I have used a pattern called the 8 Commands of Christ with my disciples, which you can find in the Ministry Tools section.⁴ If you do not have a tool, you may use ours.

If you already have a pattern for making disciples in other communities, you should be able to use the same tool with minor adjustments. As you walk through your discipleship tool with new MBBs, you will quickly discover where you need to grow and adapt it. You will need to be ready to adopt language in your tool. You may also need to adjust your expectations with your tool, especially with new MBBs. For example, many new MBBs or Muslim seekers will want more information about what it means to be a disciple before they are ready to take baptism. They struggle with baptism because they do not have anyone from their community that they can look to for understanding what it means for an MBB to follow Jesus. Be willing to invest the extra necessary time and energy. As some MBBs are established, they can serve as models for subsequent MBBs, often accelerating the process.

Once you have a discipleship tool, commit to going through that tool with a handful of MBBs or Muslim seekers. Discipleship requires time, energy, and a great deal of love and care. You must be committed to walking through these steps with your new MBBs!

⁴ You may be surprised to find our discipleship tool only has eight lessons. This discipleship package is just to get new MBBs started growing in Jesus. God’s long-term discipleship plan for believers is the church. A basic discipleship package is simply a path to establish the basics and move them towards this long-term solution.

Getting to Baptism

When the first Muslim in a village or family comes to Christ, it often takes longer for them to be baptized. They often understand baptism as the point at which they truly leave their former faith and fully follow Jesus. When they are the first person in their community to take this step, they know that persecution and difficulty will most likely follow baptism. It has been common for us to go through our entire yellow light curriculum and our basic discipleship curriculum before seekers are ready to follow Jesus. The reason is that these seekers are often counting the cost at this stage, which is healthy.

There are a few things you need to do with Muslim seekers to help them cross the line to baptism. First, at this step, they want to know that there is a community that will receive them as they take this step. It will be helpful for you to have plans in mind for how you can help if they face severe persecution. As you develop plans, you will be able to communicate care and help in more concrete ways. In addition, it will be very helpful for them to meet other mature MBBs as they prepare for baptism. Muslim seekers have many practical questions at this point and can be greatly helped by others who have navigated these issues before.

After the first few MBBs have taken baptism, it will be easier for others in their community to follow their example. They will have a model to look to for so many cultural and practical issues. They will also understand what baptism means and what it does not mean.

Practical Steps

As you progress through these steps, the cost to you will increase. Your cost is to set aside your preferences and your time, and you give yourself to your MBB disciples. As you work through these steps with MBB disciples, you must become like family to them. They need a community to stand with them through what is coming, especially as they leave Islam, take baptism, and face persecution.

Step Four: Getting to MBB Leaders and Jamaats

“When they had appointed elders for them in every church and prayed with fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.” Acts 14:23



In Acts 14:23, Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in each church they planted during their first missionary journey. Their work was not complete until they accomplished this task. In the same way, work among Muslims must result in establishing churches with elders.

About 10 years ago, an MBB leader named Yakub asked me to disciple him. As we began meeting, one of my first questions was about the church he attended or led. He replied that he currently had no church. Under prodding, he shared that he had baptized 800 Muslims into Christ, but that zero churches had resulted. Since then, I have heard the same story from other ministries. They have reported hundreds or thousands of MBB baptisms, but no church. The reality is that without local churches, MBBs will not grow strong in Christ. God's plan is for believers to meet in local churches.

As I disciplined Yakub, we worked through the issue of the church with his disciples. As we looked further, they had also done a poor job of discipling these MBBs. Yakub and I met with groups of his disciples for two or three days at a time to provide basic discipleship, teach them what a church was, and organize them to begin meeting regularly in churches. Over six months,

we helped them start nineteen small churches in various villages. These believers wanted to obey Jesus and recognized their need for church but had never had a plan for how to do it in practice.

Barriers to MBB Church Formation

Before getting to the practical details of planting MBB churches, we must discuss the barriers that hinder their start. There are three primary barriers to the formation of MBB churches: (1) fear of persecution, (2) MBBs not “thinking church”, and (3) a failure to reach Muslim households.

Fear of Persecution

In Matthew 10:16, Jesus commanded His disciples, “be as shrewd as serpents and as innocent as doves.” While Jesus’ original command was in the context of boldly sharing the gospel village by village, the same could be said about MBB churches meeting. In many places, MBBs want to meet to worship, pray, and study the Bible, but out of fear, they have chosen not to. To be fair, when groups of MBBs gather as a church, persecution is common. The persecution can come from neighbors, a Judas within the group, or any number of sources. But persecution is normal in the New Testament. The book of Acts is full of stories of churches being attacked. In Jerusalem, the believers were scattered from persecution after Stephen was martyred (Acts 8:1). In Thessalonica, unbelievers dragged the new believers in front of the city officials to accuse them (Acts 17:5-9). In Ephesus, Paul’s traveling companions were brought before a mob in the amphitheater (Acts 19:29). In Hebrews, the believers were commanded not to neglect gathering (Hebrews 10:25). In that context, believers had stopped meeting as a church because of fear of persecution. When MBB churches face persecution, they stand together with the New Testament churches.

So, members of MBB churches need to decide that they are ready to take up their crosses and follow Jesus. But at the same time, they should be as shrewd as serpents and as innocent as doves. To be shrewd means applying all wisdom to reduce persecution. They should consider when and where to meet to attract the least attention. They should avoid being overly noisy in their worship. At the same time, they should be innocent, meaning they should not be deceitful about the purpose of their meeting. While they should be discreet, as friends, neighbors, and family learn of their faith, they should clearly share what they believe and be ready to stand firm in Jesus.

MBBs Do Not “Think Church”

A second major barrier to MBB church is that many MBBs do not “think church.” I mean two things by this phrase. First, most MBBs have never been part of a church, so they do not know what people do there. Therefore, MBBs need careful training on what a church is and how it should meet. There are simple tools to help in the Ministry Tools section. In the New Testament, a church is not a building but rather the gathered people of God. It is often helpful to teach MBBs about the symbols of the church. For example, the church is the people of God, the priesthood of the believers, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit. These symbols often give the church a reason in ways MBBs understand.

A second meaning of the phrase that MBBs do not “think church” is that they simply do not naturally value church. What they do value and need is community. Carefully help MBBs realize that their need for community and fellowship is meant to be met in church. Often, MBBs do not feel at home in churches, so they latch onto one or two individuals and try to get their relational and fellowship needs met through them. It is common for ministers to Muslims to find several MBBs grasping hold of them in this way. These MBBs have a legitimate need (fellowship) that they seek to fulfill in an individual, when God intends to fulfill that need in the church. The wise minister to Muslims will recognize this issue and help MBBs gather into churches.

Failure to Reach Households

A third major issue regarding churches is that often individual Muslims come to faith in Jesus rather than households. When individuals come to Christ, they are often cast out from their community. A whole section below covers how to minister to MBBs who have become outcasts from their community. Experience has shown that evangelizing Muslims as a community provides a much stronger opportunity for the church. As a male head of household, and as some of his household members believe, there is an opportunity for the church to emerge in that household. One believing household can then share with other nearby households. In many places, male MBB heads of household are leading the way in evangelism. They can go to other male heads of household to share. They are respected within the community and often have greater resilience to persecution.

In my experience, wherever Muslims are coming to Christ in significant numbers, households are coming to believe together. In contrast, some evangelize youth, and others evangelize those in society who lack this societal respect. When younger individuals come to faith in Jesus, there are more barriers for a church to start. These individuals have difficulty building trust and community among themselves. Church planting among Muslims is most natural when churches are born from pre-existing communities, especially as families follow Jesus together.

Tools and Practices to Get to Jamaat

Having discussed the barriers to church planting among MBBs, it is helpful to discuss practical tools for getting to church. A few years ago, a few of my friends developed a guide called the Basic Church Intensive, which you can find at www.nocousinsleft.com. If you want more information, I recommend that manual. But here, I want to share three simple tools to get started: (1) simple church in Acts 2:37-47, (2) practicing church, and (3) accountability about church formation.

Before we get started, I want to briefly discuss the terms we use for church with MBBs. When we use the word “church” with MBBs and Muslim seekers, they usually think that we mean a church building rather than the people. In Islam, worship centers around the mosque, so MBBs often think that worshipping Jesus should center around a building as well. However, most MBB churches start small and meet in homes or other discrete places. So, using the term “church” can be a barrier to church formation with Muslims.

Many use the term “jamaat” instead, which is an Arabic term for a class, group, or gathering. The term “jamaat” is also vague, which can cause confusion. Jamaat can mean a class in grade school, a political organization, a religious conference, or a religious group. Very often, a jamaat is understood to be a religious gathering that occasionally meets for teaching or a specific purpose. It is usually not used to refer to a group of people who have covenanted together in Jesus to become a regular religious community in a particular location. Therefore, whether “church” or “jamaat” is used, care must be taken to train deeply in what a church is according to Scripture.

Simple Church in Acts 2:37-47

Acts 2:37-47 is the story of the formation of the first church in Jerusalem after our Lord Jesus died on the cross, was buried, rose from the dead, and then ascended. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit upon His people, and Peter preached a sermon resulting in 3,000 repenting and believing. Then we read about what the first church did in Acts 2:37-47. Please go read that passage of Scripture now.

In many places, we begin teaching about what a jamaat should be by reading this passage of Scripture and asking five simple questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why?

1. Who is in the jamaat? People who have repented, believed, and been baptized.
2. What does a jamaat do? Pray, study Scripture, share the gospel, love one another, have regular fellowship, take the Lord’s Supper, and give.

3. When does a jamaat meet? In this story, the jamaat met daily. This means that a jamaat can meet on any day, but the meetings should be regular. Healthy churches meet at least once a week, often more.
4. Where does a jamaat meet? In this story, the jamaat met in two places: (1) the Jerusalem temple and (2) in homes. This means that a jamaat can meet as a large group in public, but it can also meet more discreetly in homes. We have seen that most MBB jamaats begin as discreet churches in homes, which is a common pattern in the New Testament (Acts 2:46, 5:42, 12:12, 16:15, 16:40, 18:7, Rom 16:3-5, 1 Cor 16:19, Col 4:15, Philemon 1:1-2).
5. Why does a jamaat meet? For the glory of God

This simple inductive study will be a helpful guide for MBBs to begin to see what the Bible says about the church. For example, when I met with Yakub and his disciples, I went through my basic discipleship curriculum. Then we studied Acts 2:37-47 in this manner. Over about six months, we organized nineteen jamaats in his area. This simple pattern, along with modeling church, helped these MBBs find a pattern for church.

Modelling Jamaat

It is not enough to teach MBBs about jamaat; they need a model. My advice is to gather MBBs, teach about jamaat, and then practice jamaat together. At this stage, most MBBs need help just forming an order of worship. You can find a sample order of worship in the ministry tools section. At this stage, there will be many questions. For example, the order of worship recommends singing worship songs. Many MBBs are unfamiliar with congregational singing as worship. They need to know what songs to sing. Then they will have questions about security. In some contexts, MBBs are afraid to sing together. They fear neighbors will hear, inviting persecution. These kinds of practical issues need to be resolved.

In the same way, you will need to help them find ways to study the Bible together as leaders emerge in these new churches. Most commonly, they will read a section of Scripture and then ask basic study questions about the text together. In the ministry tools section, a description of how to do this is called the Sword Method. The biblical pattern is that pastors and teachers will emerge who can teach, but a plan must be in place for the period before skilled Bible teachers do.

In the same way, questions will arise about baptism, the Lord's Supper, and how to manage church offerings. All these issues require us to provide models and guidance to help biblical churches emerge.

Accountability for Jamaat

After you have taught your new MBBs about jamaat and modeled it, you should continue to assist them as these jamaats grow. If the jamaat is close to you, you might attend it regularly. If it is at a distance, please still try to attend sometimes. Continue to coach them in where they are weak and help the jamaat to grow. I also encourage you to provide regular accountability so that these jamaats continue to meet.

Developing MBB Leaders

As jamaats emerge, it is essential to develop leaders for them. Here are a few beginning considerations for developing MBB leaders.

Walking with Jesus and Reaching their Oikos

The most common path that I have seen for MBB jamaats to form has been for one Muslim to come to Christ. As they grow, their oikos come to Christ through them, leading to a church. Oikos is a Greek word meaning “household.” We often use it to describe oikos evangelism as someone reaching out to their friends, family, and relatives. The most expedient way we have seen these jamaats form is to publicly share the gospel with the male head of household in front of the rest of the family. In that ideal circumstance, either the male head of household or other men may begin emerging as potential leaders. Usually, this sort of group requires an MBB who is sharing Jesus with their family and others.

We must invest deeply in new MBBs who are coming to Christ in order to see jamaats form. We need to help them both develop their own spiritual lives and reach out to their oikos. Developing MBBs who can do these basic steps is the first step in developing them as potential future leaders.

MBBs Must “Go Public” to Grow to Maturity

A second aspect of developing MBB leaders is helping them “go public” with their faith. The best biblical example is Nicodemus. He originally came to Jesus at night as a seeker (John 3:1-10). Jesus taught him the truth and honored him as a secret seeker. Later, when the Pharisees plotted against Jesus, Nicodemus tried to defend Jesus but backed down because of fear (John 7:50-52). But after Jesus died on the cross, Nicodemus helped Joseph of Arimathea bury Jesus, which was a very public act (John 19:38-42). In fact, Joseph was also a secret believer because of fear (John 19:38). But both chose to go public with their faith in Jesus. In the same way, at some

point, new MBBs need to show their faith to others. Usually, MBBs begin by showing their faith to their own oikos.

One of the primary reasons MBBs must show their faith to others is to stop living a double life. It is common for Muslim seekers to continue acting like a Muslim for their family but showing others that they are followers of Jesus. Often, new MBBs do this out of fear and to avoid persecution. As we saw, Jesus permitted Nicodemus to walk this path for a period. But eventually, Nicodemus stopped living this double life.

Going public does not mean that an MBB should change their Facebook profile to Christian, start wearing a cross, or do something overly public. Instead, it is best for them to prepare their testimony of faith in Jesus and learn how to share the gospel. Then they should pray about a person or two in their oikos who might be most open to hearing about Jesus. Then, they slowly begin to reveal their faith to family and friends.

Developing Jamaat Leaders

As MBBs begin to grow, their first steps are to do basic spiritual disciplines: pray, read the Bible, love their oikos, share the gospel, and attend a jamaat. Spend time with them, showing them how to pray and study the Bible. It takes a long time to help develop them in their spiritual lives. But this is a primary place that we should invest. At the same time, go with them to share the gospel with others. Just as Jesus showed His disciples how to share the gospel with others, you should do the same. The hope is that they develop into seed sowers, regularly sharing the gospel with their oikos and with others. As they see some respond to Jesus, train them in how to guide new seekers and believers through your discipleship process. As they teach others how to follow Jesus, they will also grow.

As they grow, and if they begin leading others to Jesus, you should prayerfully ask whether to train them as a new jamaat leader. Prayerfully read through 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and evaluate their life by this passage. Are they above reproach in their character? As Jesus transforms their life, are they leading their household well? Very often, you will see areas of weakness that require discipleship. Help this emerging leader grow through these character issues. It takes time to develop spiritual leaders. At the same time, help them grow in depth in the Scriptures. A jamaat leader must be “able to teach” (1 Tim 3:2). This requirement does not mean that they must know all Scripture, but they should be growing in the Word. Walk through passages in the New Testament that focus on the responsibilities of a pastor (such as 1 Peter 5:1-5, Acts 20:17-38, and Ephesians 4:11-16) and what a church/jamaat is. Developing your first few MBB jamaat leaders well will set the foundation for you and them to develop more leaders together.

Ministering to Isolated MBBs

At this stage, you will often encounter isolated MBBs. By “isolated MBBs,” I mean MBBs who are alone in their faith. Often, they are somewhat estranged from their families because of their faith in Jesus, yet local churches have not embraced them. In addition, these isolated MBBs often do not feel at home in local churches because of cultural differences. These isolated MBBs have not been able to win any of their oikos to Christ. So, they are essentially alone in their faith.

It is very common for these isolated MBBs to find those who are ministering to Muslims and desire to spend great amounts of time with them. Isolated MBBs often see people like you as their solution for community and often hope that you will fulfill the functions of the church and fellowship in their lives. If you begin to fulfill this need in many isolated MBBs, your entire time and energy can be consumed by them. When you see this happening, it is important that you help these isolated MBBs find a better solution for the church than you. The options are that they either share the gospel and start a jamaat, find an MBB jamaat to join, or that you help them build a relationship with a local church that will accept them. Very often, this third choice is the best if they cannot win others from their oikos to Jesus.

Conclusion

Usually, MBB jamaats and leaders begin emerging together. The most common path for MBB jamaats to form is for one or a few MBBs to grow strong together, share the gospel with their oikos, and help others from their friends and family follow Jesus. Great care and diligence must be applied in helping MBB disciples form into jamaat leaders.

Step 5: Getting to Reproduction

“What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.” 2 Timothy 2:2



When Ahmed repented and believed in Jesus, he began to grow as a disciple. He learned to pray and study the Word. Jesus began transforming his life. He learned to share the gospel with strangers and help others follow Jesus. At the same time, he continued calling himself a Muslim to his family and going to the mosque for prayer. Eventually, he shared Jesus with his family. After a period of ostracism, some of his family came to believe while others continued to reject him. Over time, he led others to Jesus, and a jamaat started. Ahmed began investing in other men who came to Christ in the jamaat, and some of them began to grow as leaders as well. A few of them started their own jamaats. And now a few of those jamaats have started other jamaats.

Our work in ministering to Muslims is not complete until we have developed many local MBB leaders who can carry out the Core Missionary Task (described in a previous section) among their own people. This means we need to see MBB jamaats and leaders reproducing.

Barriers to Reproduction

The reasons MBB jamaats do not reproduce are similar to those of other ministries. There are theological excuses that people use against reproduction. The biblical teaching of the priesthood of the believers is the solution to these theological excuses. Heart barriers to reproduction also exist. The solution to these heart barriers is the biblical teaching on servant leadership.

Theological Excuses Against Reproduction

When Jesus sent the twelve (Luke 9:1-6) and then the seventy (Luke 10:1-12), it is doubtful that these individuals had perfect lives or theology. In Luke 9:49, Jesus' disciples told Jesus that they had tried to stop an unknown man from ministering in Jesus' name. Jesus clearly responded, "Do not stop him" (Luke 9:50). In contrast, today some leaders restrict who can share the gospel or disciple new believers. They fear new believers will not be able to share the gospel accurately or teach the basics of the Christian life. First Timothy 3:6 does say that new believers should not be a jamaat leader, but that verse does not restrict new believers from sharing the gospel or discipling new seekers and believers. However, a common theological excuse against reproduction is imposing extreme restraint on new believers' participation in evangelism or discipleship.

The Priesthood of the Believers

When God called Israel to Mount Sinai, he declared that His people would be "a kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19:6). Old Testament prophecies about the New Covenant often described the Spirit being given to all believers, empowering them in ministry (Joel 2:28-32; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Isaiah 44:3-5, etc.). Jesus sent the Holy Spirit upon His disciples in Acts 2, empowering all of them to speak the Word of God. The New Testament affirms that we are a priesthood of believers so we can proclaim the gospel (1 Peter 2:9-10, see also Rev 1:6-7, 5:9-10). The gift of the Spirit is God's empowering presence within us, enabling us to proclaim Jesus to a lost world.

While Scripture is clear that elders of jamaats are set apart for a special role, every believer is expected to function as a priest in the kingdom of God. Every believer is to be directly connected to God through Scripture and prayer. God intends for every believer to confess God and the gospel to their friends and family. Jamaat leaders are to train their believers in these tasks and then trust that the Holy Spirit can guide believers in their role as priests in the kingdom of God.

Heart Barriers to Reproduction

Along with theological excuses against reproduction, some leaders' hearts hinder it by preventing their disciples from functioning as priests in the kingdom of God. Pride is a common barrier here. Many leaders believe that their disciples simply cannot do what they do. In light of that thought, these leaders believe the Holy Spirit is not powerful enough to guide their disciples in sharing the gospel and making disciples.

Some leaders are afraid of theological integrity. They are afraid that their disciples will teach wrong doctrine or even the wrong gospel. It is the role of the jamaat leader, as a teacher, to continue helping new believers grow in the Word. But it is also the responsibility of the Holy Spirit.

Another heart barrier is fear for their disciples. Many jamaat leaders are afraid that their disciples will fail and become discouraged. They are also afraid that their disciples will face persecution for the gospel. Leaders should view their disciples as their spiritual children and have the same concern and love for them. But every parent is also responsible for growing their children to maturity. It is the same with our disciples, our spiritual children. We must set them on a course of maturity as priests in the kingdom of God. The New Testament is clear that persecution is normal. So, we must be ready to send our disciples into persecution as Jesus sent His disciples into persecution (Matthew 10).

Servant Leadership

Spiritual leaders are called to be servant leaders. When Jesus' disciples argued about which one of them was the greatest, Jesus taught them, "whoever would be great among you must be your servant" (Mark 10:43). In the kingdom of God, the role of a leader is to serve those we lead and empower them to grow into their role as priests.

One role of spiritual leaders is "to equip the saints for the work of ministry" (Eph 4:12). In contrast, some spiritual leaders today see the role of believers as supporting them so that they can do the ministry. According to Jesus, it is the opposite. Spiritual leaders are instead called to be servants and to help others to be used by God for His work.

If jamaat leaders understand themselves as servants called to empower their disciples to become priests in the kingdom of God, they will be ready to reproduce and develop more leaders.

The Path to Reproduction

The path for jamaat leaders to reproduce is simply to have a discipleship path and to give authority and responsibility to their disciples. In Step Three, we discussed the need for a basic

discipleship path to get to disciples and leaders. My basic path is to share the gospel, teach seekers the Five Unique Things about Jesus from the Gospel of Matthew, and then walk through the Eight Commands of Christ. You can find these in the Ministry Tools section. If a jamaat leader walks through these steps with new disciples, they will begin teaching them about how to pray, study the Bible, love others, share the gospel, and become part of a jamaat. They will set the stage for new disciples to grow in spiritual maturity and make disciples. The jamaat leader simply trains their disciples how to use these same steps with their new seekers and disciples. As their disciples win others to Christ and disciple them, they will also grow to increasing maturity.

At this point, the jamaat leader should begin analyzing their disciples from 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and prayerfully ask the Lord if some can be developed to become jamaat leaders. They should help these disciples work through character and practical issues. They should begin looking for ways to grow these individuals as leaders in their jamaat. Perhaps they give them a chance to share their testimony with the jamaat, or lead in singing, or teach a devotional from the Psalms. As they grow, they are given more opportunities.

Releasing authority and responsibility to disciples is a primary way we grow them as leaders. Releasing disciples to share the gospel and teach basic discipleship lessons is a great way to give them the authority and responsibility to help disciples grow and become leaders. Since these lessons are already developed, they will provide a guide for teaching the Word well. The leader should follow the MAWL (model, assist, watch, leave) method as they release authority and responsibility. First, they model sharing the gospel and making disciples to growing disciples. Then they assist their disciples in sharing the gospel and making disciples. Third, they watch their disciples share the gospel and make disciples to see what coaching and growth they need. Finally, they leave, which means releasing them to share the gospel and make disciples.

A leader should rejoice when their disciples grow to the maturity to start their own jamaat. Spiritual leaders should view it as success when their disciples grow to become their peers in the ministry. As their disciples become jamaat leaders, you should continue coaching them about how to release their disciples to become priests in the kingdom of God who grow into spiritual leaders.

Becoming a Shadow Leader

So far, this chapter has focused on the role of MBBs and how they reproduce. So, what is your role as the outsider who led these MBBs to Christ and developed them as leaders? During this stage, you play a vital role, but more as a servant and helper than the primary leader. We often refer to this role as being a shadow leader. A shadow leader is a servant leader who assists other leaders from the “shadows.” What I mean is that they are not the leader that everyone looks to.

Instead, they stand behind these emerging MBB leaders and help them to grow spiritually. They help guide them and their ministries to grow. Consider, for example, the role that Barnabas played in helping Paul grow as a leader. Barnabas' role is a good example for us as we develop MBB leaders.

Stop for a moment and think about all the things that these MBB leaders continue to need from you as they grow. They probably need your help in growing in the Word and in theology. They need your ongoing spiritual coaching to help them to continue to grow. They could use your help in developing their leaders in growing spiritually. They need coaching on how to grow their ministries in practical ways. They will face many practical issues and need your advice. They will benefit greatly if you remain close to them and coach them to grow. However, your goal should be to develop them in such a manner that they no longer need you.

Many people struggle to step into the role of shadow leaders because they want to continue being the primary leaders. However, it is necessary and good to develop MBBs into leaders among Muslims. Consider, at this point, Paul's continued care and concern for the churches that he planted. For example, in Acts 13-14, Paul and Barnabas planted the churches of Galatia: Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. They left behind churches with elders (Acts 14:21-23). Later, Paul went back and encouraged those churches (Acts 16:1-6). He even selected Timothy from these churches to join his team, thereby ensuring a long-term relationship with them. Then he wrote a letter to the churches in Galatia when false teachers came to disrupt their faith. Later, Paul visited these churches again (Acts 18:23). Just like Paul transitioned into a long-term pattern of coaching and helping these churches, shadow leaders should move into a long-term pattern of coaching and helping emerging MBB leaders.

When Female MBB Leaders Emerge

About ten years ago, God brought a few illiterate Muslim women into His kingdom in a very remote village area in South Asia. If I remember the story correctly, their husbands lived somewhere else for work. These women managed their households and did some basic farming in their area. A team began meeting with these women monthly to help them grow in Jesus. As they grew in Jesus, they began traveling to visit friends and relatives in neighboring villages, bringing the gospel with them. Before long, friends and relatives in other villages began to come to Jesus as well. Through these women, whole households began to come to Jesus. These women then began introducing these new believers to the team who was discipling them. The team began training these new believers, resulting in both men and women growing in their faith and reproducing.

As I mentioned in the discipleship step, MBB women face greater persecution than men when they follow Jesus. However, some stories like these have also emerged. Women are highly connected with one another. In a major Western city, a network of South Asian MBB women has emerged over the past ten years. It started with one Christian wife and mother who faithfully shared the gospel with Muslims. One day, she met a woman who was open to learning more. They began to meet in secret, leading to the first South Asian Muslim woman repenting and believing. She began to grow in her faith and began sharing with her friends. About twenty MBB women have emerged as leaders in that ministry, with many groups and baptisms. However, no men have repented and believed yet. Many of those women have been persecuted and even killed for their faith. But they are faithful to Jesus despite the challenges. We continue to pray for some of the husbands of these faithful women to repent and believe.

The same principles are true when working with MBB women as with men. Ideally, the gospel flows from wives to husbands, but that is often difficult. Many Muslim husbands will beat their wives, or worse, when they learn of their faith. Often, we have introduced MBB women's husbands to people who can share the gospel with them. Sometimes that has resulted in these men showing interest in Jesus, and sometimes it has not. When looking at MBB work across South Asia, it is evident that more is being done to evangelize and disciple MBB men than women. We need to continue to ask God to send more laborers among Muslim women.

Conclusion

As jamaats and jamaat leaders grow, you should move into the role of a shadow leader, coaching them to multiply. We develop leaders by releasing authority and responsibility to them. Our desire is that one jamaat becomes two, which becomes four. Our prayer is that reproduction becomes multiplication. As the gospel multiplies, we hope that Muslims come to Christ in places we have never visited and from people groups we have never met for the glory of God.

Next Steps

Now that you have read this booklet, my advice is to go back through the Five Steps. Determine which step you have progressed to. Then take the steps necessary to move to the next step.

- **Step One: Beginning Muslim Evangelism.** If you have just started or have not yet started, then go back and study this chapter. Learn the basic ministry tools you need. Pray for your Muslim neighbors and go boldly share Jesus with them.
- **Step Two: Sustained Yellow-Light Follow-Up.** If you know how to share the gospel with Muslims, but have not seen any repent and believe, study this chapter. Learn how to become a Muslim to the Muslims. Commit deeply to following up with Muslim seekers.
- **Step Three: Getting to Baptism and Discipleship.** If some Muslims are taking baptism and following Jesus, but you are not seeing strong disciples emerge. Go and study this chapter. Learn how to help your MBBs grow.
- **Step Four: Getting to MBB Leaders and Jamaats.** If God has used you to develop maturing MBB disciples, but you have not yet seen MBB jamaats/churches and leaders emerge, go and study this chapter. Mostly, your task is to work with your MBBs to help them reach their friends and family and grow in spiritual maturity.
- **Step Five: Getting to Reproduction.** Have one or a few MBB leaders and jamaats begun to emerge, but you need coaching on how to reproduce? Go read this chapter for advice. Our desire is that MBB leaders and jamaats reproduce and multiply.

Please know that I am praying that God will use you as you do this work.

Part 2 Ministry Tools

Tool 1: How to Adapt Your Ministry Tools for Muslims

Across South Asia, many ministries are seeing God's kingdom advance in amazing ways. You may be part of a ministry God is using powerfully, but it has not yet begun working among Muslims. Here are a few general principles:

1. **Do you currently have tools for each part of the Core Missionary Task (CMT)?** Go back to the section on the CMT in Part One. Evaluate your ministry and determine if you have ministry tools for each part. If you have gaps, you should develop or adopt tools to fill them.
2. **Are your ministry tools biblical and reproducible, and do they help progress in the CMT?** By biblical, I mean that ministry tools should come from Scripture. Your gospel should be about the sacrificial death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor 15:3-5). Your discipleship process should drive people to grow in the Bible. Your church-planting process should form biblical churches. By reproducible, I mean is your plan clear and simple enough that your disciples and their disciples can do your ministry process? If we desire reproducing churches and disciples, our ministry tools should be clear and simple enough for others to adopt and use. When I ask whether your tools move to the next step in the CMT, I am asking, does your evangelism plan help move to discipleship? Does your discipleship plan help move new disciples to church? If there are weaknesses in these areas, prayerfully consider working on your tools.
3. **Some modifications to your tools may help you better reach Muslims.** The tools below are among our most recommended; prayerfully consider them and ask whether you should incorporate them. The two that most find most helpful are the Five Unique Things about Jesus and our Apologetics Guide. In addition, you will benefit from a yellow-light plan for working with seekers. You may already have a plan like that, but without a plan to identify and follow up with seekers, you will struggle.
4. **Try to minimize changes to your tools for reaching Muslims.** While some changes for Muslim ministry are helpful, you should avoid completely changing your ministry plans with Muslims. If you have a strong discipleship plan, use that plan with Muslims as well. You may need to adapt some of the language and even help contextualize the content, however. For example, I know many who use the Seven Commands of Christ as part of their discipleship plan. Please know that there are multiple versions of the seven, or eight, or nine, or more commands of Christ. The same plan can be used with Muslims, but the language will require updating. For example, in Hindi, the 7 commands are: (1) man phirao aur vishwaz karo, (2) baptisma lo, (3) prathna karo, (4) chela banao, (5) prem karo, (6) Prabhu bhoj lo, and (7) dan do. In Urdu, the 7 commands are: (1) tauba karo aur iman lao,

(2) pak guzl lo, (3) dua karo, (4) shagird banao, (5) mohabbat karo, (6) jama karke roti toro, and (7) dil se do. So, while the basic pattern might remain the same, the wording should change.

5. **It is not enough to modify tools.** Even more than you need to modify your tools, you need someone to help you understand Muslim culture and language in your target people group. Muslim-background believers are often your best coaches for understanding. Very often, you might learn language and culture from them while they learn ministry tools from you. If you need help and do not have anyone who can help you with this cultural understanding, email me at nocousinsleft@protonmail.com. I will do my best to help find someone to help you.

Tool 2: Luke 10: Jesus' Plan for Going

In Luke 8:1-3, Jesus went village by village, sharing the gospel and modeling ministry for His disciples. Then, in Luke 9:1-6, Jesus sent these Twelve, two by two, into villages to preach the gospel. Finally, in Luke 10:1-12, Jesus sent 72 disciples out for ministry. In the book of Acts, when the disciples went for ministry, we see the same pattern: going two-by-two into unreached places to share the gospel. Paul also wrote about sending his disciples to various places. In Romans 10:14-15, Paul rhetorically asked, “How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent?” In Paul’s words, the lost cannot call on Jesus unless people are sent to them.

Considering the entire New Testament, the sending passages of Jesus provide the clearest model for sending disciples to preach the gospel. Matthew 10 is the longest of these passages and has the clearest instructions on facing persecution. Luke 10:1-12 is usually seen as the clearest and most direct sending passage. Go and read Luke 10:1-12 now. You will see that this method is very direct and clear. It is biblical. It is easy for disciples to reproduce. And it easily reaches the next step in the CMT: evangelism.

It is clear from what I have shared above that following Luke 10:1-12 is biblical. Jesus sent His disciples at least four times in the gospels using this method (Matthew 10; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6; Luke 10:1-12). The disciples followed this pattern in Acts (see especially Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13-14). And Paul advocated this kind of sending in Roman 10:14-15.

The Luke 10 model is also easy to reproduce, as it requires nothing. It is common in South Asia for people to say, “If I only had X, then I could start sharing the gospel with Muslims.” For example, “If I only had the budget to start a school, then I could start sharing the gospel with Muslims.” Or “If I only had a sewing center, then I could start sharing the gospel with Muslims.” However, in the Luke 10 model, we only need the gospel and the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, there is no budget limit for more people to begin this kind of ministry.

The Luke 10 model also clearly gets to evangelism. In this model, people go two by two into new places or among new people. They pray for them and share the gospel. It is clear and direct. One challenge of using methods like schools or sewing centers is that the gospel is not always shared directly. In fact, those using these methods often want to avoid sharing the gospel very directly, for fear it may create problems for the school or sewing center.

Since Luke 10 is a biblical and reproducible ministry model that clearly gets to evangelism, we should consider it the primary model for going to new places to share the gospel with Muslims.

Tool 3: Speaking Like a Muslim

In 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, the apostle Paul said, “I have become all things to all people, so that I may be every possible means save some.” As we ask God to use us to bring the gospel to Muslims, we should become Muslims to the Muslims, so that we might save some. What this means is that we should take on the culture of our Muslim friends as much as we can when going to share the gospel with them. A primary way we do this is by changing the way we speak with them.

In most places in South Asia, Muslims and Christians speak different languages. For example, in Uttar Pradesh in India, most Christians speak Hindi, while Muslims speak Urdu. These languages are quite close but differ significantly in their religious language. The same is true of almost every Indian language. For example, the Tamil spoken by Hindus and Christians is quite different than the Tamil spoken by Muslims. The Gujarati spoken by Hindus and Christians is quite different than the Gujarati spoken by Muslims. The primary difference is that the Hindu and Christian versions of these languages tend to borrow more words from Sanskrit, while the Muslim versions borrow more from Arabic and Persian.

If a Hindi-speaking Christian in Uttar Pradesh says to a Muslim, “Adi me Parmeshwar ne sansar ki rachna ki” (In the beginning, God made the world), it is likely that the Muslim will either not understand or believe that they are promoting Hinduism. A word like “Parmeshwar” for God sounds like a Hindu deity to many Muslim ears. Most of the other words are from Sanskrit and will be hard for a Muslim to understand. A Muslim in Uttar Pradesh is more likely to say, “Sharu me, Khuda tala ne is duniya ko banaya” (In the beginning, God made the world). If you compare these two sentences, almost every word is different. However, the average Hindi speaker understands both versions. Part of Muslim evangelism is becoming accustomed to proclaiming the truth in the way Muslims understand it.

Most people in South Asia understand a great deal of Muslim language. They hear it in Bollywood or in literature. Many Christians even sing songs in church that use a great deal of Urdu, Arabic, or Persian. For example, Urdu worship songs such as “Jo Krus pe Korban hai,” “Yeshe Mera Charwaha Hai,” and “Masih Mera Zinda Hai” are known to millions of North Indian Christians. The difficulty is that most are not accustomed to speaking in Muselmani languages. It takes practice and time.

People in Pakistan and Bangladesh might think that this is a problem for India. However, the language barriers are quite high in Pakistan. Punjabi Christians need help communicating the gospel in Sindhi, Balochi, or Pashto. Even the Punjabi spoken by Christians in Pakistan is distinct from the Punjabi spoken by Muslims.

Tool 4: Should Followers of Jesus Use “Isa” and “Allah?”

In South Asia, some Christians take offense when we use Urdu or Arabic terms in our worship and witness to Muslims. The terms that create the most significant discussion are Hazrat Isa al-Masih and Allah. The purpose of this section is to explain why we use these terms.

Hazrat Isa al-Masih. Some have taken offense over the use of Isa as a name for our Lord. There is disagreement about which term to use for Jesus in Muslim evangelism. Some argue that only the name Yeshu⁵ should be used (e.g., Khudawand Yeshu, Yeshu Masih). Others use Hazrat Isa alayhi-salaam.

- Etymology of the name of our Lord. In Greek, the name of our Lord is Ἰησοῦς (pronounced “Iesous”). In classic Syriac, the name of our Lord was transliterated from Greek to be Isho. It seems likely that the Arabic transliteration, Isa, was derived from this Syriac transliteration of the Greek. The Arabic name “Isa” is as faithful to the original Greek as the English name “Jesus.” The name “Jesus” for our Lord was a transliteration of the Latin transliteration of the Greek name of our Lord. Therefore, we should not be offended that the name Isa is somehow an incorrect name for our Lord.
- Why do we have different names for our Lord in different languages? One significant difference between the Christian and Muslim faiths lies in our approaches to language. In Islam, the Qur’an is revealed in Arabic. Therefore, the Qur’an is read in Arabic, prayers are said in Arabic, and Arabic has a significant influence on local languages in areas with large Muslim populations. In contrast, the Bible is written in two languages, Greek and Hebrew.⁶ The Old Testament was translated into Greek before the birth of our Lord. In the New Testament, the Greek Old Testament is often quoted, meaning that our biblical text permits us to use translations of Scripture. From a theological perspective, Christians believe that God is so great that He can understand prayers in every language and that, as our heavenly Father, He wants to hear from His children in their heart languages.
- Whether to use Isa or Yesu in Muslim evangelism in India depends on the type of Muslim you are trying to reach and the evangelistic style you are using. Many who prefer to use Yesu focus on apologetic and polemical debate with educated, orthodox Muslims. Therefore, using a different term for Jesus helps create a clear boundary between Islamic and Christian teachings on Jesus.
- Most who are engaging ordinary (or folk) Muslims prefer to use Isa. Using Isa helps the evangelist to enter the world of the person they are evangelizing. The goal is to reinterpret Isa not merely as a prophet, but as Savior/Son of God/God for the Muslim listener.
- Since Hazrat is a Persian term for “honored,” there is no issue in attaching that prefix. It seems to be an inoffensive term to both Muslims and Christians. In worship, we tend to use the name Khudawand Isa al-Masih. Khudawand is a term for “Lord” that implies his deity.
- Regarding a suffix to Hazrat Isa, some prefer al-Masih, while others use alayhi salaam.

⁵ In most Urdu Bibles, Yesu is used in lieu of Yeshu, which is more common in Hindi.

⁶ With a few sections of the Old Testament being written in Aramaic.

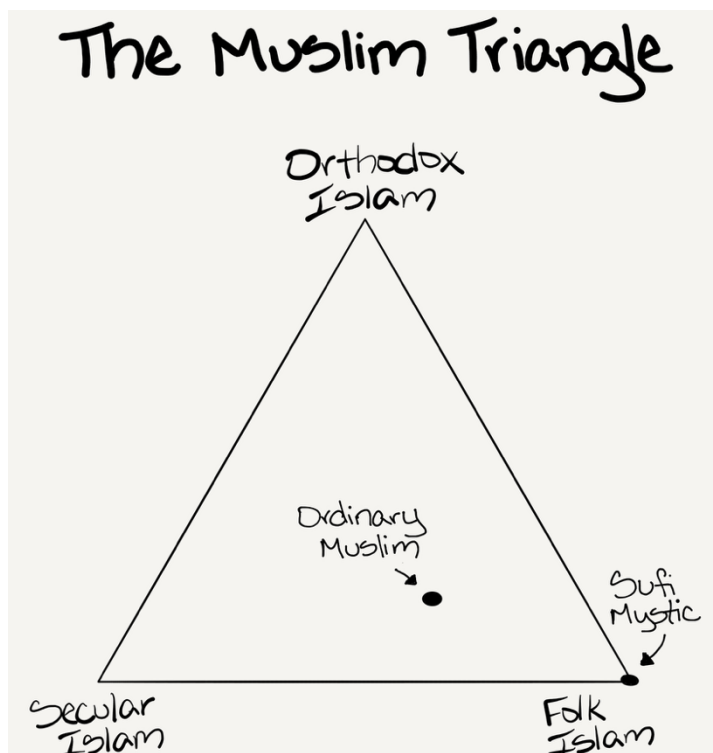
- Alayhi salaam is an Arabic phrase meaning “May the peace of God (Allah) be upon him.” In Islam, it is considered disrespectful not to use this phrase after the name of a prophet. Some Christians have objected to this phrase, since Isa is the one who gives us peace. We cannot grant peace to Him! However, in Islamic cultures, this phrase is usually used as a show of respect. Therefore, I think it is permissible to use.
- In contrast, I prefer to use a suffix of al-Masih, which is Arabic for “the Messiah.” There are four reasons for this preference. First, al-Masih is a term for our Lord in both the Bible and the Qur’an. Therefore, this term serves as something of a bridge for understanding between Christians and Muslims. Second, most Muslims see this replacement of alahi salaam with al-Masih as respectful towards our Lord. Therefore, this term seems to mitigate the removal of alayhi salaam as offensive to Muslims. Third, using this term for our Lord helps Muslims realize that I am emphasizing something different about Hazrat Isa al-Masih. It usually helps them realize that I am not simply telling them about a prophet of Islam but calling them to follow our Lord. Fourth, when training South Asian Christians, al-Masih is simply easier for Christians to master than alayhi salaam.

Allah. Likewise, some Christians are offended at the use of Allah. I personally tend to use Khuda for God, but there are times when Allah is more appropriate. For example, the traditional Muslim greeting, asalamu alykum, means “may the peace of Allah be upon you.” Therefore, some Christians use only salaam (“peace”) when greeting Muslims so as not to invoke the term “Allah.” However, I believe that the term “Allah” for God is permissible for Christians to use for three reasons.

- Reason #1: Etymology. Etymologically, the term "Allah" is related to the Hebrew term for God, "Elohim." In the Hebrew Bible, the plural "Elohim" is commonly used; however, the singular "Elah" is also used in some places (e.g., Deut 32:15; Isa 44:8; Psa 50:22). Since both Hebrew and Arabic are in the Semitic language family, it is easy to see how the singular “Elah” and the Arabic “Allah” are related. Therefore, the root of “Allah” derives from the Hebrew word for God.
- Reason #2: Historical use of Allah. Historically, both Christians and others used Allah in Arabic-speaking contexts before the advent of Islam. Before Islam, “Allah” was a term that meant God in the Arab world. Therefore, we can use “Allah” with a clear conscience since historically it did not hold the technical meaning of the God of the Qur’an.
- Reason #3: Current use of Allah. At present, Allah is the term used for God in Arabic-speaking churches. It is also used by Christians as the primary word for God in other countries. Since Allah is currently used by Christians in worship in some languages, it is permissible to use it in South Asia as well.

Tool 5: The Muslim Triangle: Understanding South Asian Islam

South Asia also has the greatest diversity of Islam in the world. The Muslim Triangle is a simple training tool for helping people understand the diversity of South Asian Islam. The Muslim Triangle has three poles –orthodox, folk, and secular. By far, the folk Muslim pole is dominant in South Asia. Here is a brief description of each pole.



Orthodox Islam is the view that Islamic belief and practice should be derived by reading the Qur'an and Hadith and obeying these texts. Orthodox Muslims focus on proper Islamic theology and practice. The Deobandi movement is an example of orthodox Islam in North India. The Deobandi movement began from a madrassa near Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh.

Folk Islam is a local variety of Islam that blends Sufism, local traditions, and other elements to develop a practical form of Islam that addresses their particular “needs.” The primary focus of folk Islam is to develop a spirituality that provides practitioners with blessings (answered

prayers, good harvests, high test scores, etc.) and protection (from accidents, evil spirits, etc.). Folk Islam usually looks very different than orthodox Islam. However, sometimes folk Islam looks like orthodox Islam but has a significant amount of folk Islamic belief just below the surface. The dargah of Khwaja Garib Nawaz in Ajmer, Rajasthan, is one of the most important sites for folk Islam in North India.

Secular Islam is familiar to most Westerners. Secular Muslims blend secular thought and materialism with Islam. Secular Islam has different flavors in South Asia but tends to focus on education, career advancement, and/or politics. Aligarh Muslim University in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, is an important center of secular Islam in North India.

It is best to understand the Muslim Triangle using local Muslim sects or places for each of the three poles. For example, in North India, many people understand Deoband, Ajmer, and Aligarh as representatives of these three poles. However, in South India or Bangladesh, these three places

do not work. Discuss this triangle with a few people and discover the best ways to describe this tool in your area.

Think about these questions:

1. Which of these types of Muslims is most common among Muslims in your area?
2. Which of these three types of Muslims do you think is most open to the gospel?

My purpose in sharing this tool is to help you understand folk Islam and to see that these kinds of Muslims should be the focus of our ministry. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Many ministries seeking to engage Muslims in South Asia focus on reaching orthodox Muslims. They focus on learning the Qur'an and Hadith, as well as apologetics. This triangle allows us to celebrate the work of those ministries and show that they are reaching a significant group of South Asian Muslims.
- However, folk Islam is the dominant pole in almost every area of South Asia (you must determine if this is true for your context). The gospel approach in this manual assumes that those you are engaging are most influenced by folk Islam. You will have to modify this approach somewhat for work with orthodox Muslims, but these tools seem to work well with secular Muslims as well.
- It takes a great deal more training to share the gospel with orthodox Muslims (who are a minority of Muslims). But the average rural Muslim is a folk Muslim. It is much easier for Christians to learn how to share the gospel with these Muslims.

Tool 6: Sharing your Testimony with your Muslim Friends

One of the most useful tools for evangelism is our testimony. In our testimony, we are simply sharing what Christ has done in our lives. When sharing with Muslims, it is useful to include some Urdu in our testimony rather than only in Hindi.

A testimony should have three parts:

1. Your life **before** Hazrat Isa Al-Masih.
2. How you **met** Hazrat Isa Al-Masih.
3. How your life changed **after** meeting Hazrat Isa Al-Masih.

A testimony should be short – maximum 3 minutes, **1 minute for each part**. A testimony should point to Isa Al-Masih and give Him glory.

A testimony should help create hunger to learn more in those who hear. Practice makes perfect!

I often share my testimony like this with Muslims: *“When I was a child, we went for prayer every week, but I did not follow or know God. From my childhood, my heart was filled with anger. I fought with my brothers and my parents. I did not have any close friends. Then God sent someone to tell me about Hazrat Isa al-Masih. I began to read the Injeel Sharif. As I read, I realized that I was far from God, and I repented and believed. I prayed, ‘God, I am a sinner who is far away from You! But I am ready to become a disciple of Hazrat Isa al-Masih. Please save me from my sins!’ As I prayed, God began transforming my life by taking away my anger and bitterness. He filled my heart with love, joy, and peace. Now I have many great relationships. God continues to transform me as I pursue Him every day.”*

Here are three biblical passages that show the power of personal testimonies.

1. The Woman at the Well in John 4. At the end of this story, the woman returned to her village and shared her experience with Jesus (John 4:39). As a result, many from her village went to Jesus, heard, and believed (John 4:40-42). The story of the woman at the well is especially powerful because it was a sinful woman, a new believer, who was being used. If God could use the testimony of that woman, He can use any believer’s testimony.
2. In Mark 5:20, the man possessed by the legion of demons went to proclaim in Decapolis his testimony, “and they were all amazed.”
3. In Acts 22 and 26, the apostle Paul shared how he met Jesus on the road to Damascus. The three parts of a testimony are clearly seen in Paul’s testimony.

Here are a few more miscellaneous tips for sharing testimonies with Muslims:

- Be genuine. Share your story with eagerness and passion.

- Many Muslims are touched to hear about Hindus leaving their idols to follow the one true God as they become followers of Jesus. If that is part of your testimony, consider including it.
- Be genuine in how Jesus transformed your life in practical ways. For example, in my testimony above, I shared about how Jesus took away my anger and gave me peace. Think through how Jesus has transformed your life and include that in your testimony. Specifically, you might think about ways in which Jesus has transformed your character or a specific sin that Jesus helped you overcome.

Tool 7: The Five Unique Things About Jesus

The Five Unique Things about Jesus shows how we can present Jesus to Muslims in an understandable way. The unique birth of Jesus and His unique miracles act like a bridge. Islam affirms the virgin birth of Jesus. Islam also teaches that Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, and did other miracles. So, when we begin to share the uniqueness of Jesus, there is usually agreement at these two points. Many Muslims disagree with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. See the apologetics guide for more info.

#1. Jesus' Unique Birth. One day Hazrat Jibril (alayhi salaam) came from heaven with an announcement to Hazrat Miriam (alayhi salaam), saying, "Behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and will call his name Isa" (Luke 1:31). When she heard this, Hazrat Miriam (alayhi salaam) was amazed and said, "How can this be, seeing I am a virgin?" (Luke 1:34). Hazrat Jibril (alayhi salaam) responded, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (Luke 1:35). And it happened just as Hazrat Jibril (alayhi salaam) announced. Is the birth of any other prophet this special? Did angels announce the birth of any other prophet? Was any other prophet born without a father?

#2. Jesus' Unique Miracles. Hazrat Isa al-Masih is also famous for His miraculous works. He healed the sick. He gave life to the dead. Once, He walked on water. Another time, Hazrat Isa al-Masih fed 5,000 people with five pieces of bread and two fish. The power of Hazrat Isa al-Masih was great. Was any other prophet able to do such powerful works?

#3. Jesus' Unique Teaching. Hazrat Isa al-Masih had the most unique birth of any prophet. He also did the greatest miracles. The teaching of Hazrat Isa al-Masih was also unique. Every other prophet said, this is the way of God; walk on this path. However, Hazrat Isa al-Masih said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). Hazrat Isa al-Masih's teaching was different. Since He Himself is the path for us to gain access to God. All the other prophets merely taught about a path, while Hazrat Isa al-Masih became our path.

#4. Jesus' Unique Sacrifice. So, Hazrat Isa al-Masih's birth was special. His miracles were special. His word was special. But that is not the most special thing about His life. The most special thing that He did was give a sacrifice for our sins. Hazrat Isa al-Masih gave the sacrifice of His own life. A perfect sacrifice. A blameless sacrifice. He gave his life upon a cross for our sins.

#5. Jesus' Empty Tomb. And, do you know what happened three days later? He came back from the dead! Have you ever met anyone who was in the grave for three days and came back from the dead? Know this. Hazrat Isa al-Masih's birth was special. His miracles were special. His word was special. His death was special. And His resurrection was special. Where is Hazrat Isa al-Masih today? He went to heaven. He remains in heaven today in the presence of God. Every other prophet, every other teacher, or spiritual leader remains in a grave. We know where many of these graves are today, and people still visit them. However, one grave is empty because Hazrat Isa al-Masih was great enough to walk out of His grave and ascend to heaven.

Tool 8: Yellow Light Strategy: The Five Unique Things

As you go and share the Gospel, you will find three kinds of people. Think of it like a traffic light:

- **Red Light**—Not interested. **What to do?** Show lovingkindness, leave, and pray for them.
- **Yellow Light**—Interested but not ready to follow Jesus. **What to do?** Begin meeting weekly to share the Yellow Light Stories about Jesus. When you finish these stories, begin the Eight Commands of Christ.
- **Green Light**—Decides to follow Jesus. **What to do?** Begin meeting weekly for discipleship.

Think about Muslims you have shared with in the past. Were they red, yellow, or green lights?

In our experience, a yellow light strategy is necessary in Muslim ministry. The reason is that it often takes longer for Muslims to fully comprehend the gospel, repent, and believe. We are seeing that the areas where more Muslims are coming to Christ are typically areas where more follow-up is occurring with Muslim seekers/yellow lights. When follow-up to yellow lights is neglected, fewer Muslims come to Christ.

Here are our Five Unique Things about Isa al-Masih Bible studies for yellow lights.

1. Birth: Matthew 1:18-25
2. Miracles: Matthew 9:1-8
3. Word: Matthew 7:24-27
4. Death: Matthew 27:32-54
5. Resurrection: Matthew 28:1-10

Use them in this way.

- If they are literate, read the story from the Injeel with them. If they are illiterate, either tell them the story or read the story to them from the Injeel.
- Repeat and retell the story until they understand and remember it.
- Ask – ***What do we learn about Hazrat Isa al-Masih from this story?***
- The purpose of this tool is to help Muslims understand Jesus and the gospel. So, make sure to clearly share the gospel each time you meet.

Tool 9: Apologetics Guide

Many Muslims have questions when they hear the gospel. Some Muslims ask these questions with open hearts, while others are closed. Many Muslims are curious when they hear the gospel but have honest questions that they want to ask. We should provide straightforward answers to their questions. Apologetics are answers we can provide to seekers' questions.

However, other Muslims will ask the same questions in a very demanding way. If you think someone is asking these kinds of questions with a closed heart, it is best not to argue and to move on to share with others. Here are ways to respond to some of the most common questions from Muslims.

Please know that it is not essential to become an expert in the Qur'an and Islam to share the gospel with Muslims. Most Muslims in South Asia have never read the Qur'an. When Muslims ask hard questions about our faith, many do not have much depth behind their questions. On the other hand, for some Muslims, these answers are too simple.

Apologetics #1. The Bible Has Not Changed.

Muslim Objection – "The Bible has changed or been corrupted!"

Background: The Qur'an teaches that there are four books from God (Urdu *Asmani Kitaben*), the Taurat of Hazrat Musa (i.e., the Torah of Moses), the Zabur of Hazrat Dawood (i.e., the Psalms of David), the Injeel of Hazrat Isa (i.e., the Gospel of Jesus), and the Qur'an of Muhammad. The Qur'an speaks positively of the Taurat, Zabur, and Injeel and never says that they have been changed or corrupted. Instead, the Qur'an repeatedly states that these books are from God. However, today, most Muslim leaders say that these books have changed or been corrupted.⁷

This confusion is likely since Muhammad and other early Muslims did not have access to the Bible. Therefore, they spoke positively about it but were unable to compare these texts. Later, Muslim scholars compared the Qur'an and the Arabic Bible, identifying differences

⁷ Some Muslim leaders do not believe that the first three books (Taurat, Zabur, and Injeel) have been changed. For example, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d. 1898) believed that all these books were preserved, and that Muslims should read all of them. Also, I have encountered many other Muslim leaders in South Asia who are eager to get a copy of the former books and read them for themselves.

between the two texts. The primary difference was whether Jesus died on the cross or not (see Qur'an 4:157).⁸

When Muslim scholars realized that the Bible taught something different than the Qur'an, they were left with a choice: one of them must be incorrect. They decided to believe that the Qur'an was correct and the Bible was not. However, the Qur'an states that the Taurat, Zabur, and Injeel were true. Therefore, Muslim scholars deemed these books to be once correct but now corrupted. Most Muslims have now been taught to reject the Bible since it has been changed. But they say that the Qur'an has been perfectly preserved.⁹

Answer #1 (start here): NO!!! God has protected His Holy Books. It is impossible for God's books to change because God is all-powerful. Why would He allow His books to be corrupted?

In the end, answer #1 is THE answer to this question. All the other answers can provide some evidence, but ultimately, the answer is that God has protected and preserved the Bible.

Answer #2: Although Christians do not believe in the Quran, if your Muslim friend is having trouble believing in the Injeel, you can **show them some of these verses from the Quran that speak highly of the Injeel:**

⁸ Qur'anic references in this manual are from the translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. At points, these translations have been adapted to modern English. For example, "thou" has been changed to "you." Also, please note that Muslims do not refer to Qur'anic references as "Qur'an 4:157." If you talk to a Muslim in this way, they usually will not understand. Instead, they will use the name of the Surah. There are 114 Surah's in the Qur'an, they are something like chapters. For example, the fourth Surah is Surah An-Nisaa. Muslims often quote the Qur'an without verse references. So, when quoting 4:157, they would simply say something like, "In Surah An-Nisaa, we read..." The names of Surah's have not been included in this manual for two reasons: (1) most folk Muslims do not know the Qur'an and would not know the names of the Surah's, even if we did. (2) I have found that too many Arabic terms overwhelm people trying to learn about Muslim ministry.

⁹ In fact, there is great evidence that the Qur'an has not been perfectly preserved. There are thousands of small differences in the oldest copies of the Qur'an. Moreover, Uthman, the third caliph after Muhammad, undertook a process of making a "pure recension" of the Qur'an than involved burning the older copies. As a result, the oldest copies of the Qur'an were destroyed (see Sahih al-Bukhari 6:61:510). Here is the text of that Hadith, "Narrated Anas bin Malik: Hudhaifa bin Al-Yaman came to `Uthman at the time when the people of Sham and the people of Iraq were Waging war to conquer Arminya and Adharbijan. Hudhaifa was afraid of their (the people of Sham and Iraq) differences in the recitation of the Qur'an, so he said to `Uthman, "O chief of the Believers! Save this nation before they differ about the Book (Qur'an) as Jews and the Christians did before." So `Uthman sent a message to Hafsa saying, "Send us the manuscripts of the Qur'an so that we may compile the Qur'anic materials in perfect copies and return the manuscripts to you." Hafsa sent it to `Uthman. `Uthman then ordered Zaid bin Thabit, `Abdullah bin Az Zubair, Sa`id bin Al-As and `Abdur Rahman bin Harith bin Hisham to rewrite the manuscripts in perfect copies. `Uthman said to the three Quraishi men, "In case you disagree with Zaid bin Thabit on any point in the Qur'an, then write it in the dialect of Quraish, the Qur'an was revealed in their tongue." They did so, and when they had written many copies, `Uthman returned the original manuscripts to Hafsa. `Uthman sent to every Muslim province one copy of what they had copied, and ordered that all the other Qur'anic materials, whether written in fragmentary manuscripts or whole copies, be burnt."

- "God protects his word and guards it from corruption" (Quran, Surah 15:9). The Qur'an claims that God protects his word. If God protects his word, then He has protected the Bible.
- "If you are in doubt as to what We have revealed to you, then ask those who have been reading the Book from before you: the Truth has indeed come to you from thy Lord: so be in no wise of those in doubt" (Quran, Surah 10:94). This verse shows that if a Muslim doubts the Qur'an that they should consult the former books (Taurat, Zabur, and Injeel). This verse directs Muslims to the Bible.
- "And in their footsteps we sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the Taurat that had come before him: We sent him the Injeel: therein was guidance and light, and confirmation of the Taurat that had come before him: a guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allah. Let the People of the Injeel judge by what Allah has revealed therein" (Qur'an 5:46-47a). The Quran says that the Injeel contains guidance and light, and it also shows that the Taurat and Injeel agree with one another. The Qur'an commands Christians to judge Islam by the Injeel.

Answer #3. If your Muslim friend is still not convinced, ask them to show you where the Qur'an says the Bible is corrupted. There are no verses in the Qur'an that teach that the Taurat, Zabur, or Injeel have been changed or corrupted.

Answer #4. Where did the idea come from that the Bible has changed? It is not in the Qur'an. It is not in the Hadith. Ibn Hazm (d. 1064), a Muslim scholar in Spain, first wrote about it around 1,000 AD. Muhammad died in 632 AD, meaning that this teaching did not come until over 350 years later! The Qur'an repeatedly teaches that these three books are from God.

Answer #5. The Greek and Hebrew texts of the Bible have not Changed. Some Muslims believe that the Bible has changed because it has been translated. However, we have about 20,000 ancient copies of the Bible in Greek and Hebrew. These ancient copies have never changed. Just as some Muslims learn Arabic to read the Qur'an, some Christians learn Greek and Hebrew to read the Bible in the original languages. Because we love and respect the Bible, we have translated it into many languages. Because we have so many ancient copies, we have great confidence that the Bible that we have now has not changed.

Answer #6. The Bible testifies that God's Word does not change.

- "Lord, your word is forever; it is firmly fixed in heaven" (Psalm 119:89).
- "The grass withers, the flowers fade, but the word of our God remains forever" (Isaiah 40:8).

- "For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or one stroke of a letter will pass away from the law until all things are accomplished" (Matthew 5:18).

Answer #7. A Courtroom Analogy: Three Books against One Book. A straightforward answer we can give our Muslim friends for why we follow the Bible rather than the Qur'an is that the Bible contains three of the Heavenly Books: the Taurat, Zabur, and Injeel. As Christians, we have preserved and studied these three books and see unity between them. However, the Qur'an disagrees with these three books. In a court, if there were four witnesses and three agreed against one, who would win? The three, of course. In the same way, the three agree with one another and stand together in the Bible. Since the Qur'an disagrees, we reject it.

Answer #8. We reject a new revelation that contradicts the old revelation. In the Qur'an, a long argument shows continuity from the Taurat to the Injeel to the Qur'an (Qur'an 5:44-48). For example, the Qur'an says, "To you we sent the Scripture in truth, confirming the scripture that came before it, and guarding it in safety" (Qur'an 5:48). Therefore, a logical principle is that any new revelation that contradicts the old should be rejected. In South Asian Islam, there is an excellent example in Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908). He claimed to be a new prophet with a new revelation and began a pseudo-Islamic cult called the Ahmadiyyas. All Sunnis and Shias reject Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet because his revelation contradicts Islam and the Qur'an.

In the same way, Christians reject the Qur'an as a source of truth since it contradicts the Scriptures that were previously revealed. Note: this answer is **very** aggressive and should be used with caution. I usually only speak this directly to open people.

Answer #9. See for yourself. If a Muslim still insists that the Bible has changed, give them a simple challenge. Ask them to take part of the Injeel and read it for themselves. Tell them to mark the places they believe were changed, then come back to you to show them to you.

Additional note. Muslims often have many misconceptions about the Bible. As a result, this is an area where many people pursue further study. The best place to begin is to study the doctrine of Scripture in a Systematic Theology book. Understanding the doctrine of Scripture from the Bible will be the best way to prepare for Muslim attacks on the Bible.

Apologetics #2 Jesus is the Son of God

Muslim Objection – "Jesus is not the Son of God!"

Background: Most Muslims' objections to Jesus being called the Son of God are based on misconceptions. For example, many Muslims think that Christians believe God the Father took a wife and had a son. For example, the Qur'an says:

- "And exalted is the Majesty of our Lord: He has taken neither a wife nor a son."
(Qur'an Surah 72:3)
- "How can God have a son when he has no consort?" (Qur'an 6:101a)

Our Muslim friend might say that it is blasphemy to think that God is like a man who would take a wife. All of us agree with him. Therefore, the primary response is to help our Muslim friend see what the Bible teaches about Jesus as the Son of God. Even so, the Qur'an teaches against Jesus being the Son of God. Qur'an 112:3 says, "He begets not, nor is He begotten." This verse teaches against calling Jesus the only begotten Son of God (see John 3:16).¹⁰

Answer #1 – Spiritual Son versus Physical Son. The most straightforward answer to this objection is just to state that we do not believe that Jesus was God's physical son (Urdu *jismani beta*) but rather God's spiritual son (Urdu *ruhani beta*). Often, this simple explanation sufficiently describes the relationship, removing the offense.

Answer #2 – The Birth of Jesus. Sharing the story of Jesus' birth clears up most Muslim objections to Jesus as the Son of God. Here is the recommended process.

- When a Muslim asks if you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, say, "What do you mean?"
- If they answer with the idea that God took a wife and they had a son, tell them clearly that no Christian in the world believes this.
- Then ask if you can tell them the story of Jesus's birth

If they say yes, simply open to Matthew 1:18-25, read the story with them, and explain that it shows what it means for Jesus to be the Son of God. Note that Matthew 1:18-25 is the first of the five yellow-light stories we use. Therefore, a seeker asking about the term "Son of God" can also help initiate the yellow light process.

Note: As background, it is helpful to know that the biblical account of the birth of Jesus is similar to the account in the Qur'an. Muslims also believe in the miraculous virgin birth of

¹⁰ In John 3:16, Jesus is referred to as the "only begotten" Son. The Greek term used for "only begotten" is *monogene*, which is a reference to Jesus' uniqueness. It does not mean that Jesus was born. In fact, Jesus was with the Father before the foundation of the World (John 17:5, 24). Therefore, even this objection is primarily based on the Qur'an misunderstanding a biblical term used in reference to Jesus.

Jesus and see Jesus as unique in this way. To learn more, compare Matthew 1 and Luke 1 with Qur'an 3:42-55 and 19:16-33. Note some significant differences to the story in Qur'an 19. As we discuss the unique birth of Jesus, some Muslims will say that Jesus' birth is no more remarkable than Adam's. In response, I often share that every person from Adam until Jesus was born of a father. Also, prophets prophesied the birth of Jesus, and angels came to announce His birth! In these ways, Jesus' birth was unique.

Answer #3 – The Bible testifies that Jesus is the Son of God. Here are a few of the many biblical witnesses to the fact that Jesus is the Son of God.

- God the Father called Jesus His Son – Matthew 3:17
- The demons recognized Jesus as the Son of God – Matthew 8:29
- Jesus' disciples recognized Him as the Son of God – Matthew 16:16
- Jesus called Himself the Son of God – Matthew 26:63-64
- Unbelievers called Jesus the Son of God – Matthew 27:54

Answer #4 – Describe Son of God as a Title of Christ. It can also be helpful to explain to Muslims that “Son of God” is a title. When we call Jesus the Son of God, we are not calling him the physical Son of God, as if He were born the way that a father begets a Son. Instead, Jesus is the spiritual Son of God (Urdu *ruhani beta*) rather than a physical son (Urdu *jismani beta*).

Note. A helpful step to prepare for Muslim attacks on the Son of God is to understand better what the Bible teaches about the Person of Christ. Again, I encourage you to read a systematic theology book and study Christ's humanity and deity. Learn about the historical discussions in the Church about his dual nature as fully God and fully man. Go back to the Scriptures and learn more about this subject, and you will be able to better respond to these objections.

Apologetics #3 Jesus Died on the Cross

Muslim Objection – Jesus did Not Die on the Cross!

Background. Many Muslims attack our belief that Hazrat Isa al-Masih died on the cross. The reason for this objection is that the Qur'an teaches against the death of Hazrat Isa al-Masih.

"That they said (in boast), "We killed Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah" – but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it was made to appear to them,

and those who differ in that respect are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for of a surety they killed him not." Qur'an Surah 4:157

Because of this verse of the Qur'an, many Muslims believe that Hazrat Isa al-Masih did not die for our sins. However, many folk and rural Muslims have never heard this, so do not assume that every Muslim you share the gospel with has this perspective.

Educated Muslims often hold two theories about the cross in South Asia: (1) the replacement theory and (2) the swoon theory. The replacement theory is that someone else was made to look like Jesus and died on the cross in his place. Some Muslim leaders have said that this was Judas Iscariot because of an obscure 15th-century pseudepigrapha called The Gospel of Barnabas. The replacement theory appears to have Quranic support in Qur'an 4:157, "it was made to appear to them." Some intellectual Muslims have sometimes heard of the Gospel of Barnabas.

The swoon theory is that Jesus did not die on the cross. Instead, he "swooned." His disciples thought he was dead, but he was not. In the Indian theory, Jesus came out of the grave, moved to Kashmir in India, got married, died, and his tomb is there until today. The swoon theory is propagated in India primarily by the Ahmadiyya sect, especially the Kashmir theory.

Answer #1 – The Korbani Gospel (start here). The Korbani Gospel presentation shows how all the sacrifices of the prophets were insufficient to take away the sins of the world and why Jesus needed to come and die for us.

Answer #2 - The Injeel Sharif testifies that Hazrat Isa al-Masih died for our sins. As followers of Hazrat Isa al-Masih, we believe in the Bible. We believe that Jesus died on the cross because God's Word said that this happened. Many Muslims follow up by then attacking the Injeel and saying that it has changed. When this happens, simply defend the Injeel (See Apologetics #1). Showing the Injeel's testimony of Jesus' death is one reason we use Matthew 27:32-54 as one of our yellow light lessons. When Muslims see this story in the Injeel, they often receive it as truth.

Answer #3 – Jesus prophesied his death in the Bible. In Matthew, Jesus foretold his death three times (Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:28-19). Ask your Muslim friend, "Do prophets ever lie?" Almost always, they will say, "No." Then simply tell them that Jesus prophesied his death (show them the verses if you can). Since He prophesied it and He never lies, then it must be true.

Answer #4 – Angels announced the death of Jesus in the Bible. In Matthew 28:5, an angel told two women, "Don't be afraid, because I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified." Since angels came to announce the death of Jesus, we can be confident that it was a historical event.

Answer #5 – Jesus prophesied his death in the Qur'an. In the birth story of Surah al-Miryam, Hazrat Isa al-Masih said the following while a baby, "So peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life (again)" (Qur'an 19:33). As followers of Jesus, we do not believe that Jesus spoke these words. We believe what Jesus said in the New Testament rather than what is said in the Qur'an. However, for some Muslims, this verse can be convincing that Hazrat Isa al-Masih also spoke about his death and resurrection in the Qur'an.¹¹

Answer #6 – The Mutawaffika Clause. This response is far more technical and would require some level of knowledge of Arabic. There is a dispute among Muslims about how to translate the Arabic word *mutawaffika* in the Qur'an. The most common translation of this Arabic word is "caused to die." However, some Muslim scholars argue that it should be translated as "to take away." Here are the verses in question from the Qur'an:

"Behold! Allah said: 'O Jesus! I will take you and raise you to Myself.'" (the translation most corresponding to the Arabic meaning)

Or, "Behold! Allah said: 'O Jesus! I will cause you to die and raise you to Myself.'" (some translate it like this)

Quran, Surah 3:55

This same clause appears in Surah 5:117 of the Qur'an. Many who know Arabic well argue that this should be translated as "Allah caused Hazrat Isa to die."

Answer #7 – Another courtroom analogy. In court, four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) testify against one Qur'an. One of the blessings of the New Testament is that God provided four witnesses to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. All four of these agree that Jesus died on the cross, was buried, and rose again. Moreover, all four of these witnesses were from the time of Jesus. In contrast, Muhammad's testimony about Jesus in the Qur'an comes almost 600 years after Jesus's lifetime. One later witness cannot

¹¹ There is a very similar verse in Qur'an 19:15 about John the Baptist (Urdu Hazrat Yahya). If your Muslim friend says that Isa did not die, this verse can demonstrate that 19:33 also refers to a literal death.

contradict four eyewitness testimonies. In a court of law, any judge would side with the New Testament's four witnesses against the Qur'an's one.

Answer #8 – Explaining the Substitutionary Atonement to Muslims. Some Muslims say that the whole idea of Jesus making a sacrifice for our sins is absurd. Their point is that the only fair system is a works-based system of salvation and that we are each responsible only for ourselves. Therefore, they argue that Jesus cannot pay the punishment for our sins. When Muslims argue in this way, they are beginning to understand the good news of the gospel. However, what this hypothetical Muslim fails to understand in this argument is the depth of our sin. We cannot earn our salvation. The issue is that our hypothetical Muslim friend has not yet realized that he is a sinner separated from a holy God. Therefore, when a Muslim begins to attack the substitutionary atonement, an appropriate response is to help our Muslim friend realize the depths of our sin. Here are a few tips for doing so:

- Use Romans 3:23, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." This verse demonstrates that every person has sinned and that the consequence of that sin is separation from God. Make it clear that you are not personally attacking the person you are talking with, but simply describing the state of everyone.
- The water bottle analogy. "Imagine a bottle of drinking water. Can we drink it? Yes, this water is clean. However, imagine someone comes and adds just one drop of something unclean. Can we drink it then? No! Why not? One drop of something unclean makes the whole impure. The water was pure, but even one drop of impurity makes it impure. In the same way, if we are pure, just one sin makes us impure. Can that which is impure enter heaven? Of course not! Can that which is impure enter the presence of the holy God? Of course not!"

The Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16 clarifies the biblical roots of substitutionary sacrifice for sins. God gave these instructions to His people through Moses to prepare them to understand Christ's sacrifice for our sins. In other words, the concept of substitutionary sacrifice for sins dates back to the teachings of Moses. Read Leviticus 16 and consider what it teaches about substitutionary atonement. Here are a few key verses:

- "and the Lord said to Moses, 'Tell Aaron your brother not to come at any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat that is on the ark, so that he may not die. For I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat. Aaron is to enter the most holy place in this way: with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering' (Lev 16:2-3)
- "Aaron will present the bull for his sin offering and make atonement for himself and for his household. Next he will take the two goats and place them before the LORD at the entrance to the tent of meeting. After Aaron casts lots for the two goats, one

lot for the LORD and the other for an uninhabitable place, he is to present the goat chosen by lot for the LORD and sacrifice it as a sin offering (Lev 16:6-9).

- "And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area, and he shall let the goat go free in the wilderness" (Lev 16:21-22).

Note: Most of these responses to the crucifixion point to the Bible as the answer. Therefore, it is expected that objections to the crucifixion of Christ return to a discussion of the trustworthiness of the Bible. As with other apologetics questions, one of the best ways to prepare to answer Muslims on the crucifixion is to study theology. Study the Scriptures regarding the theme of sacrifice, especially read Leviticus 1-8, 16-17, and Hebrews 9-10. Also, if you have a systematic theology book, study the doctrine of the Substitutionary Atonement.

Apologetics #4 God is a Trinity

Muslim Objection – Why do you worship three Gods!

Background. As with other Muslim attacks on our faith, Muslims often have significant misunderstandings about the Trinity. One misconception is that Christians believe in three gods. Some Muslim leaders have tried to twist the doctrine of the Trinity. As a result, most Muslims have heard inaccurate depictions of the Trinity.

Another misunderstanding is that the Trinity is the Father, the Son, and the Mother (e.g., Mary). This misunderstanding is because the author of the Qur'an seems to have misunderstood this doctrine. Qur'an 5:116 says, "Allah will say: 'O Jesus the son of Mary! Did you say unto men, 'Worship me and my mother as gods in derogation of Allah?'" Since the Qur'an implies that Christians worship Mary as a god, Muslim leaders have taught that she is the third person of the Christian Trinity.

Answer #1 – Doctrine of the Trinity in Brief. If a Muslim is very open and wants a significant answer, the best thing is to show them what the Bible teaches about the Trinity. Here are three biblical statements regarding the Trinity. Personally study the doctrine of the Trinity and resolve your questions about this doctrine before seeking to explain it to your Muslim friend.

1. **There is One God.** Deuteronomy 6:4 (quoted by Jesus in Mark 12:29); Isaiah 45:5-6, 21-22; James 2:19.

2. **God is Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.** Matthew 28:19, 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:13; Ephesians 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2. These verses show the three persons of the godhead together. The baptism of Jesus is clear. God the Son went into the water, God the Father spoke from heaven, and God the Spirit came upon Jesus (Matthew 3:16-17).
3. **Each person is fully God.**
 - a. It is evident that the Father is God.
 - b. The Son is God: John 1:1; 20:28; Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1, etc.
 - c. The Holy Spirit is God: Acts 5:3-4; Psalm 139:7-8

Answer #2 – We believe in a God who is One! To believe in more than one God is a great sin! Deuteronomy 6:4 says, "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!" This statement is quoted by Jesus in Mark 12:29, showing its importance. It is attached to the Greatest Commandment that we must love the Lord our God (Deut 6:5; Mark 12:30). Many Muslims will be happy to hear us declare that God is One, but will also be confused, since they know that we hold that Jesus is God. In Arabic, the phrase “La ilaaha illaa Allah” means “there is no God but God.” This is the first part of the Islamic declaration of faith called the Shahada. I believe that we can say this part of the Shahada with a good conscience. However, the remainder of the Shahada declares that Muhammad is the messenger of God, which we do not affirm.

Answer #3 - We believe in a God who is very great! We believe in a God who is very powerful! We believe in a God who is beyond our understanding! The point here is that the Trinity is accurate but hard to understand. However, this is to be expected since God is so much greater than us. How can we understand Him fully? The answer is that we cannot.

- Spend time speaking about the greatness and power of God
- Then ask: Can man fully understand God?
- Of course not! We cannot fully understand God!
- Isaiah 40:22 says that we are like grasshoppers compared to God's majesty.
- We can only understand what God reveals about Himself. God has revealed Himself as a Trinity. Therefore, we believe it.

Answer #4 - God revealed the Trinity in the Injeel. Christians did not make up the Trinity; the Trinity is what God has revealed about Himself. If we trust the Bible, we can trust that it will teach us what we need to know about the Trinity. Inform your Muslim friend that, as a follower of Jesus, you must believe all of God's Word. Then share the doctrine of the Trinity as shown in Answer #1. They can attack it, but this is God's Word! Make it clear to them that they are attacking what God has revealed.

Answer #5 – The Trinity is Good News! Each part of the Trinity plays a great role in our salvation

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure." 1 Peter 1:1-2

- God the Father chose us
- God the Spirit sanctifies us – this means that the Holy Spirit makes us holy
- God the Son (Jesus) does two works: (1) gives us truth to obey, and (2) saves us by his blood

Apologetics #5 What about Muhammad?

When we share about Isa al-Masih, many Muslims want to know how we feel about Muhammad. Or they state that Muhammad is the last and greatest messenger of Allah. Here are four tips for responding to these questions in evangelism

Tip #1 – Do not attack Muhammad. If we attack Muhammad in our first visit or two with Muslims, we often create offense, with the result that Muslims' hearts close to the gospel. It is better to deflect and focus on Jesus. Often, as Muslim seekers come close to Christ, we must help them compare Jesus and Muhammad. For help with this step, go to the section "Comparing Jesus and Muhammad" below. When Jesus and Muhammad are compared, many see that Jesus is greater than Muhammad.

Tip #2 – Share your testimony. When a Muslim points to Muhammad, the best answer is to share that Jesus is the one who changed your life. Share your story and how your life was transformed as you met Isa al-Masih. Then ask, "Do you want Hazrat Isa al-Masih to change your life in the way that He changed mine?" Our best answer is to show that Jesus changes lives!

Tip #3 – Share the Five Unique Things about Jesus. Again, we are pointing to Jesus, clearly showing how Isa al-Masih is better than Muhammad without directly attacking Muhammad. Muslims will often understand our point.

Tip #4 -As you disciple Muslim seekers, you want them to reject Muhammad, the Qur'an, and the mosque explicitly. Therefore, it can be helpful to have increasingly clear conversations with Muslim seekers about the difference between Isa al-Masih and

Muhammad. For more about this point, see the "Comparing Jesus and Muhammad" section in Advanced Topics.

Apologetics #6 Isa al-Masih was Only a Prophet!

Answer #1. Share your Testimony. Show your Muslim friend how Jesus has changed your life. The power of Jesus to change our lives is perhaps our most important answer.

Answer #2. The Five Special Things about Jesus. Our answer to this question is to use the Five Unique Things about Hazrat Isa al-Masih. He is greater than any other prophet.

Answer #3. The Bible shows that Jesus is the Son of God! Use the apologetics sections that the Bible has not changed and that Jesus is the Son of God.

Answer #4. The Bible shows that Jesus is God! Use the apologetics sections on the Bible not changing and the Trinity to defend the truth that Jesus is God.

Tool 10: The Eight Commands of Jesus

When discipling MBBs, it is vital to have a strategy. The strategy we follow is to share the gospel, then go through the Five Unique Things Bible studies (Tool 8), and then go through the Eight Commands of Jesus. These studies are not sufficient to teach MBBs everything they need to know, be, and do as followers of Jesus. However, they set MBBs on a course of growth in their lives in Jesus.

Here are the Eight Commands we use for discipling MBBs:

1. Repent and Believe: Luke 19:1-10 (*Tauba Karo aur Iman Lau*)
2. Take Baptism: Acts 8:26-38 (*Pak Gusul Lo*)
3. Pray: Matthew 6:5-15 (*Dua Karo*)
4. Study the Word: Matthew 4:1-11 (*Kalaam se Sikh Lo*)¹²
5. Go and Make Disciples: John 4:4-42 (*Jao aur Shagird Banao*)
6. Love: Luke 10:25-37 (*Mohhabat Rakho*)
7. Lord's Supper: Luke 22:7-20 (*Jama karke Roti Toro*)
8. Give: Mark 12:41-44 (*Dil se Do*)

Teach the Eight Commands as follows:

- Use the three-thirds process: (1) accountability, (2) new teaching, and (3) planning and prayer. Your goal is for new MBBs to obey the 8 Commands rather than only hear them.
- Use the sword method as a simple Bible study method. Your goal is to teach them how to study the Bible. The sword method is an inductive Bible study method that asks four questions about the text: (1) What do we learn about God? (2) What do we learn about each character? (3) What should we do from this story? (4) What should we stop doing according to this story?
 - At first, inductive Bible study might be difficult for new MBBs, especially those with less education. However, if you are able to teach your new disciples how to self-study the Bible, you will set them on a course to learn the whole Bible.
- Encourage them to immediately teach these studies to others. Your goal is to make disciples who make disciples.

¹² Some use a version called the Seven Commands of Christ that does not include this command.

Tool 11: The Three Transitions – Cultural Insider Theological Outsider

In many areas, there are no mature MBBs for new MBBs to learn from regarding what it means to follow Hazrat Isa al-Masih. As Muslims begin to follow Hazrat Isa al-Masih, they must grow in their understanding of how their faith in Christ relates to Islam. Three transitions are necessary for Muslims as they follow Christ:

1. They must leave the Qur'an and cleave to the Bible.
2. They must leave Muhammad and cleave to Jesus.
3. They must leave the mosque and cleave to a local church. It is preferable that this local church be composed of Muslim-background believers who worship in a manner that corresponds to the local culture.

In South Asia, there are some who argue that MBBs should remain in Islam after they come to Christ. However, the New Testament is clear in its call for new believers to separate from their former religious practices. One of the clearest texts on that issue is 1 Corinthians 10:14-22. In that passage, Paul told the Corinthians that they could eat meat sacrificed to idols as long as it did not impede the faith of others (1 Cor 8:1-13). He taught that believers should give up their freedoms for the advancement of the gospel (1 Cor 9:1-27). In that context, Paul wanted to make sure that the Corinthians did not misunderstand and continue in their former religious practices. Read 1 Corinthians 10:14-22 and note the following key verses.

- “So then, my dear friends, flee from idolatry.” 1 Cor 10:14
- “You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot share in the Lord’s table and the table of demons.” 1 Cor 10:21

It is sometimes a slow process for MBBs to make the transition out of the mosque. A good biblical picture of that process is Nicodemus, who first came to Jesus by night, in secret (John 3:2). Nicodemus eventually publicly took Jesus’ body and buried him (John 19:39). Rushing this process often causes significant long-term issues, such as new MBBs being expelled from their community. The best method for helping MBBs make this transition is to slowly and carefully teach them, from Scripture, that Jesus is fully God. If new MBBs believe that Jesus is God, then allegiance to Muhammad, the Qur'an, and the mosque loses its meaning. Additionally, many new MBBs or Muslim seekers must go through a process of comparing Jesus and Muhammad as their allegiance shifts from Muhammad to Jesus (see Advanced Topic #3).

While new MBBs need to separate from Islam, it is important to coach them to remain in their community, keeping their jobs and living in their own homes. While we want MBBs to leave Islam, we do not want them to leave their culture and family. For example, read 1 Corinthians 7:17-24. Here are a few relevant teachings from this passage:

- “Let each one live his life in the situation the Lord assigned when God called him” (1 Cor 7:17). For MBBs, this means that they should seek to maintain their family relationships, jobs, and communities.
- “Was anyone already circumcised when he was called? He should not undo his circumcision” (1 Cor 7:18). This command was to Jews who followed Jesus. They were called to retain some of their Jewish identity even as they followed Jesus. The same can be said of Muslims who follow Jesus. However, there is a large difference between Muslims who follow Jesus and Jews who follow Jesus. Judaism is built on the Old Testament, which is a true revelation from God. Islam is built on the Qur’an and Muhammad, a false book and a false prophet. Therefore, while Muslims who follow Jesus should retain much of their culture, whatever pertains to Islam theologically should be discarded as they follow Jesus.
- “Brothers and sisters, each person is to remain with God in the situation in which he was called” (1 Cor 7:24). This passage ends by reinforcing the teaching that each person should remain in their own situation. This teaching should safeguard against the extraction of new believers from their context.

Note that Paul commanded the Corinthians to both remain in their situation (1 Cor 7:17-24) and to separate from their former religious practices (1 Cor 10:14-22). The approach of contextualization here can be called the Cultural Insider, Theological Outsider Approach.¹³ This approach emphasizes MBBs retaining their culture, while leaving Islam religiously. Three different approaches can be compared here:

1. **Cultural and Theological Insider.** This approach is also known as the Insider Movement (IM) or C5/C6 practice. Many in this perspective emphasize MBBs remaining in the mosque and some Islamic religious practices. However, in this approach, MBBs usually end up partly in Islam and partly in Christ. In contrast, the New Testament commands believers to separate from their former religious practices (e.g., 2 Cor 6:14-18).
2. **Cultural and Theological Outsider.** When there is no plan for MBBs to retain their culture as they follow Jesus, many leave their culture by default. They begin worshipping in Hindi-speaking churches. They move from their homes, villages, and families. The issue is that once they leave their culture and family, they often have difficulty ministering to other Muslims. This stops the flow of the gospel into their own community. In this approach, many MBBs also change their names as they follow Jesus.
3. Therefore, it is preferable to seek a **Cultural Insider and Theological Outsider** approach. The Three Transitions ensure that they leave Islam definitively. However, new MBBs are taught that their language, dress, food, and other aspects are good and should be retained. In this approach, MBBs retain the ability to remain in their families as witnesses while taking a stand for Christ.

¹³ This term is taken from Abu Jaz, “Our Believing Community is a Cultural Insider but Theological Outsider (CITO),” in *Muslim Conversions to Christ: A Critique of Insider Movements in Islamic Contexts*, ed. by Ayman S. Ibrahim and Ant Greenham (Peter Lang; New York, 2018), 423-430.

Tool 12: The 7 Phases of Progress

Around the world, many organizations are transitioning from using the terms unreached people groups (UPGs) and unreached unengaged people groups (UUPGs) to describing ministry in terms of the 7 Phases of progress. This transition is helpful because it more clearly describes what is happening among a people group or in a particular place. On the next page, you can see an illustration of these 7 Phases of Progress for Muslim ministry. In that illustration, descriptions of the key tasks required to move from one phase of progress to the next among Muslim people groups appear.

In this section, I want to share two things: (1) the relationship of this booklet to the 7 Phases and (2) some aspects of the 7 Phases that are not included in this booklet. The best way to describe the relationship of this booklet to the 7 Phases is to show that the five steps of this booklet correspond to Phases 2A, 2B, 3, 4, and 5.

Phase in 7 Phases	Step in this Booklet
2A Gospel	1 Beginning Muslim Evangelism
2B Seekers	2 Sustained Yellow-Light Follow-Up
3 Disciples	3 Getting to Baptism and Disciples
4 Local Church	4 Getting to MBB Leaders and Jamaat
5 Church Reproduction	5 Getting to Reproduction

As you can see, the five steps in this booklet identify the key phases where Muslim ministry gets stuck and focus on how to move teams forward in those phases.

The Phases do illustrate some key points about getting started in Phases 0-1. They also remind us that beyond reproduction, we should prayerfully desire to move to church multiplication (Phase 6) and Sustained Gospel Presence (Phase 7).

PRIMARY TASKS FOR PROGRESS IN MUSLIM MINISTRY

A Pathway from First Engagement to Reproducing Jamaats



THE PATHWAY OF PROGRESS



Recommended Resources

No Cousins Left Trainer's Manual. Most of the tools section in this guide are from the NCL Manual. You can find this manual at www.nocousinsleft.com

Entrust Manual. The Entrust manual is a guide for developing cohorts of emerging MBB Jamaat leaders/pastors. It is a six-month process where trainees gather once a month for about three days. The primary goals of this training are to help emerging Jamaat leaders understand the big picture of Scripture, develop and deliver Bible teachings, learn about the role of a pastor, and understand what the Bible teaches about the church. You can find this manual at www.nocousinsleft.com.

Basic Church Intensive Manual. The Basic Church Intensive is a trainer's guide to helping groups of MBBs learn how to do church together. It is based on cohort-style learning, where trainees gather for three weekend sessions to deepen their understanding and practice of jamaat/church. You can find this manual at www.nocousinsleft.com.

MBB Discipleship Guide. The MBB Discipleship Guide is a new guide developed by someone in South Asia with many years of experience in discipling MBBs. It is designed to help near- and far-culture workers among Muslims navigate issues particular to MBB discipleship.

No Cousins Left Blog. This is the blog where the author of this manual writes. You can find some articles that go deeper into these issues.

Taleem-ul-Kalaam website. www.taleemulkalam.org. Taleem-ul-Kalaam has audio-visual resources for using the Five Unique Things and Eight Commands of Christ in English and Urdu.

About Dr. David Paul

David Paul is a Westerner who has been sharing the gospel with Muslims for 25 years. He has been working among South Asian Muslims for the past 15 years. Dr. Paul has an M.Div., Th.M., and D.Min. from an evangelical seminary in the West. While Dr. Paul is the primary compiler of this booklet, many of the stories, truths, and tools are taken from others. You can contact Dr. Paul at nocousinsleft@protonmail.com.