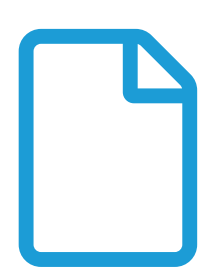
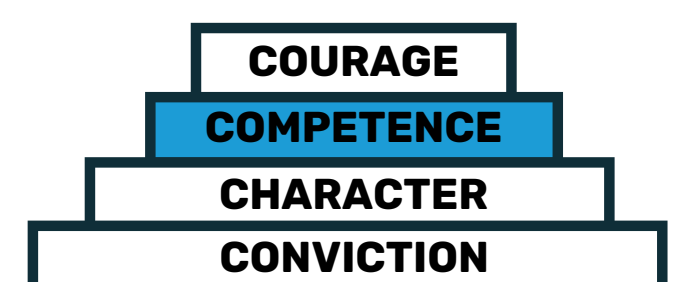




WORLDVIEWS: WORLD RELIGIONS

Lesson 4: Islam



Lesson Introduction

Islam is the world's second largest religion, and one of the more prominent religions in our media. Islam arose in 7th Century, polytheistic Arabia.



Big Picture

Islam is the final message from God through his final prophet, Muhammad. Islam is about submission to the one God, and faith in his messenger.



Key Truths

- Islam's central belief is the *Shahada* - "There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger." Converting to Islam involves declaring the *Shahada*.
- Islam can be summarised in the Five Pillars of Islam:
 - *Shahada*
 - *Salat* - daily prayers
 - *Zakat* - alms for the poor
 - *Sawm* - fasting for Ramadan
 - *Hajj* - pilgrimage to Mecca
- Muhammad is God's final messenger and seals all that come before, including the prophets, Jesus and his apostles.
- The message Muhammad reveals in the Quran - including the exact Arabic words - is God's word. (a translation doesn't cut it)



Key Truths

- Muhammad's life, as recorded in the *Hadiths* is the perfect life lived and so should be imitated (even down to facial hair and clothing). Thus, the *Hadiths* are important and authoritative over a Muslim's life. The ability to derive ones lineage to Muhammad also adds authority and importance.
- There are three main varieties of Islam:
 - *Sunni* - 80% of the world's Muslims
 - *Shi'ite* - 15% of the world's Muslims (but the majority in Iran and Iraq)
 - *Sufi* - a mystic form of Islam



Explore Worldview

Enter	What is their mission?	People are a creature of God whose purpose is to give praise to God, but we forget Allah and disobey him. We need to re-submit to Allah's rule.
	Who are the bad guys?	All who propagate the false religions that declare more than one God, Allah. (including the Trinity [Allah, Jesus, Mary] or that Jesus was crucified)
	Who are the good guys?	Muhammad is the hero of Islam, all who live in line with his life and teaching.
	Why attractive?	Islam very quickly took over much of the known world, conquering many nations. In an honour/shame culture this gives much explanatory power. A devout Muslim should live peaceably. Islam guards against vice and abuse.
Challenge	What's missing?	Islam leans heavily on a strict external system of laws (Sharia) to keep obedience. This doesn't impact the heart that yearns for sin.
	What's clashing?	In those countries where Sharia has been strictly enforced, it has tended to result in backlash and rejection. A harsh crackdown on vice, without changing the heart, results in rebellion. Crime continues in countries with Sharia law.
Fulfill	How is Jesus the answer?	Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. Colossians 2:23



Application

The point of growing our understanding of Islam, is to enter their worldview, help them find a point of challenge, and to suggest how Jesus is the answer to their deepest yearning. And to seek an opportunity to invite them to meet Jesus in the pages of the Bible.

So, what questions could you ask a Muslim to explore their worldview?



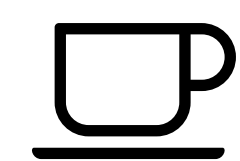
Prayer

Pray for a deeper understanding of Islam so we can go deeper with our Muslim friends and colleagues.

Pray for an opportunity to share Jesus with a Muslim friend or colleague.

Remember

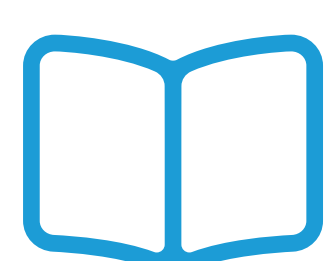
COFFEE



DINNER



GOSPEL



Further Reading

A Spectators Guide to World Religions by John Dickson

Where to Start with Islam by Sam Green

Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus: A Devout Muslim Encounters Christianity by Nabeel Qureshi



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