



by R. E. Cline¹

Let's face it, gospel conversations can be messy. After all, we're not talking about a fuzzy, go-along-get-along message. The gospel has some edginess to it. Although the gospel offends, there are ways to share it without adding undue offense.

Here are a few principles and practices I've learned from others over the years about sharing the gospel tactfully with Muslims. These principles apply to evangelism in general, but they're especially helpful in sharing the message of Christ with Muslim friends and acquaintances.

Humbly Love Muslims around You

Your Muslim neighbors, colleagues, and acquaintances may dress differently, talk differently, and worship differently than you. Or they may dress and talk just like you do and not engage in public worship. It doesn't really matter. Christ-followers love God, and they love their neighbors.

Forget that the person is Muslim, and remember that he or she is a person created in God's image, a fellow human being, and a sinner in need of Jesus. Not a worse sinner than you, a sinner like you—without hope and life apart from Christ. Muslims need a Savior, just like you.

Remember that the gospel isn't something you experience once and don't ever need again. Christians daily need the life-changing power of Jesus. As the hymn says, we need Jesus every hour. So, communicate the gospel boldly but humbly, acknowledging that you also desperately needed a new heart, forgiveness, a right relationship with God, a new identity, and a new community.

Love Muslims by Praying for Them by Name

Pray for God to be at work in your friend's heart and in the circumstances of his or her life as you share the gospel. Take a personal interest and ask questions about work, family, and life. Listen to the concerns they share. Pray for those concerns. Remember the names of their relatives.

Praying for your Muslim friends can be a key that opens the door to future conversations. The habit of talking to God in the name of Jesus (your friend) about others who have become your friends is the kind of simple, honest prayer that is basic to faithful evangelism.

¹ <https://www.imb.org/2018/01/02/engaging-muslims-with-the-gospel/>

Love Muslims by Listening in Order to Learn about Them

Listen in order to learn, not to refute arguments. A faithful witness asks questions in order to understand what others believe, not to refute their worldview. Listening is a great way to honor the fellow image bearer with whom you are talking.

Don't worry about winning arguments. Rather, value the person with whom you are sharing and the friendship he or she offers. In Acts, gospel sharing was often a conversation lasting days or weeks. Keep the conversation going. We must want Jesus to win our friend's heart more than we want to win an argument.

Lovingly Share Christ with the Actual Person in Front of You

Engage the person, not a cookie-cutter Muslim worldview you learned from a textbook. You are talking with a real person, not just a set of ideas or concepts. We sometimes wrongly assume things about Muslims that are not necessarily true, like

- all Muslims know the Qur'an well.
- all Muslims know Arabic well.
- all Muslims believe the same things about Muhammed, the Qur'an, and share the same worldview.
- all Muslims are alike.

Love Muslims by Boldly, Humbly, and Winsomely Introducing Them to Jesus

Focus on Jesus. Present a beautiful, accurate picture of the Savior. Tell your friends who Jesus is, why he came, what he is like, what he has done, is doing, and will do. Tell them why they also need to repent and believe this good news.

Remember there may be more than one way to explain the good news, but there is only one gospel. It is the same for all people—Muslim, Jew, atheist, Hindu, Buddhist, whomever. Introduce them to Jesus.

Love Muslims by Reciting, Explaining, and Showing Them Scripture

Jesus is attractive to those in whom the Holy Spirit is at work. Use Scripture to communicate truth about God, about human beings, about Christ, and about how to respond to the gospel.

Read the Word, recite the Word, and talk about the Bible as good news for all people. Sadly, to some people—Muslim and non-Muslim alike—Jesus is repulsive. Some people will reject the gospel no matter how well it's communicated.

Love and Honor Muslims by Learning a Little about Islam

Here are few simple ways to honor Muslim friends as you get to know them.

