

Islam

Since September 11, 2001, Islam has been launched into the mindset and forefront of Western civilization; with the War in Iraq and Afghanistan, it has only intensified. Therefore, our knowledge and understanding of Muslims and Islam is even more important as our world is growing increasingly smaller.

In today's ever changing global economy, it's not uncommon to work alongside Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Greek Orthodox, and Roman Catholics as well as many other religious groups.

As we get to know these folks, become friends with them and understand where they are coming from, it's helpful to be able to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with them in a way that they can relate to.

A biblical example would be the apostle Paul who "became all things to all men, that [he] might by all means save some." (1 Corinthians 9:22). Paul was essentially saying that in order to reach them, he adapted his message to their way of thinking and to their culture.

Paul did not compromise, change or dilute the gospel, but merely used their beliefs to demonstrate and show them the way to The Truth, and in order to do that, Paul understood the belief systems of his day – we should do the same in order to dialogue with Muslims, share the love of Jesus Christ and defend the Christian faith.

This is called *Apologetics* and it comes from the Greek word *apologia* meaning "to give a rational defense of the Christian faith." Webster's second edition defines apologetics as, "that branch of theology having to do with the defense and proofs of Christianity."

Titus 1:9 exhorts as in the context of qualified elders to "hold fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict." NKJV

1 Peter 3:15 says "and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" NKJV

- The same verse in the NASB reads "with gentleness and reverence."
- The NIV says "with gentleness and respect."
- The word *meekness* or *gentleness* [Greek: *prautes*] means mild, gentle or humble.
- While the word *fear*, *respect* or *reverence* [Greek: *phobos*] means alarm or fright but it also means "in reverential awe of God."
- In other words, 1 Peter 3:15 could be translated "with humbleness and in reverential awe of God."

With these verses in mind, what I'd like to talk to you about tonight, over the next hour or so, is Islam and where Islam parts ways doctrinally and theologically from Evangelical Christianity.

Basic Definitions of Islam

Islam is an Arabic word that simply means to *submit, surrender* or to *commit oneself*.

Muslim simply means, "one who submits to God". Anyone who submits to the teachings of Islam, no matter what nationality, are called *Muslims*.

A *Mosque* is the building or public place of worship.

Koran, Quran or *Qur'an* means "the reciting" or "the reading" and is considered Islam's Holy Scriptures.

Sura is basically a chapter in the Koran. The Koran has 114 *Suras* and is arranged according to length with the largest first down to the shortest one last.

Shirk means “the most serious sin is to associate partners or companions [i.e., the Trinity], with the nature of God [Allah].” (Sura 4:48; 112:1-4)

Beginnings of Islam

The religion of Islam began with a man by the name of *Muhammad*.

Muhammad was born in Mecca, Saudi Arabia in AD 570 into a culture that was polytheistic -- meaning the people believed in many gods and goddesses.

Muhammad was raised by his grandfather and eventually by his father’s brother after the deaths of his parents. Muhammad’s last remaining parent, his father, died when Muhammad was six years old.

According to the Koran, Muhammad grew up in poverty (Sura 93:6) and shared the polytheistic religious beliefs of his community.

As time passed, Muhammad grew dissatisfied and uncomfortable with the religion of worshiping 360 gods and idols and this dissatisfaction stayed with him into adulthood.

As was the custom of the day, spiritually minded people would retreat once a year and spend time in solitude in caves pondering questions about God.

It was during one of these retreats on the outskirts of Mecca in AD 610, at the age of 40, that Muhammad was supposedly visited by the angel Gabriel, the same angel that appeared to Daniel and to the Virgin Mary in the Bible, and commanded him to “recite” in the name of God.

Muhammad failed to respond and the angel grabbed him by the throat, shook him and again commanded Muhammad to “recite” in the name of God.

Again Muhammad failed to respond and Gabriel started to choke Muhammad until he complied.

According to Muhammad, what started as angelic visitations and revelations turned into his teachings which in turn, into the Koran.

Muhammad would teach that the local "deities" of Mecca were false and that to worship them was idolatrous.

He said that there was only one true God (Allah) and he preached monotheism.

He taught that man's duty was to Allah and to submit and obey and to be Allah's slave.

Early on, Muhammad "the prophet" had very few converts and only a small following of people that were mostly from the poorer classes.

Part of the reason that Muhammad had such a small following only from the poorer classes was because the local, wealthier business men would not accept his teachings.

The reason for this was if Muhammad suddenly branded all the "deities" as false, the number of visitors to Mecca would dwindle and the local business market would suffer.

In AD 622, Muhammad became aware of a plot to kill him from Gabriel and fled 280 miles north of Mecca to Yathrib, later to be renamed Medina – "city of the Prophet," with 150 of his followers.

Yathrib was open to Muhammad's teachings and 8 years later in AD 630, Muhammad with 10,000 of his men, attacked and conquered Mecca.

Muhammad proceeded to the main sanctuary, known as the Kaaba, and ordered that all the idols be destroyed and from that point on; only Allah would be worshiped in the Kaaba.

Only a short 2 years later, in AD 632, Muhammad died with no designated successor to follow him, which created a problem.

The choosing of a new leader caused a conflict between the Muslims:

- The *Sunnis* (85 to 90 percent of all Muslims today) believed the *caliphs* (a representative or delegate) should be elected by the Islamic leadership from among Muhammad's closest followers.
- The *Shiites* (10-13 percent of all Muslims today) thought Muhammad's successor should be hereditary.

Today, along with the Sunnis and Shiites, there exist smaller sects of Islam in the form of:

- Sufism – A mystical wing of Islam that seeks a personal experience with God.
- Wahhabism - The ultra-orthodox wing of Islam of which Osama Bin Laden came from.
- The Nation of Islam - Led by Louis Farrakhan.
- As well as other sects.

After Muhammad's death, Islam spread rapidly by military conquest and religious conversion over the next century:

- Up through Central Asia and into China
- Across the North African Continent
- Up into Southern France and Spain

It was there, in France, near a town called Tours, that the Battle of Tours was fought in October of AD 732. In this decisive battle, the *Franks*, lead by Charles Martel ("The Hammer") defeated the armies of the invading Muslims thus ending their advancement into Europe.

Three centuries later in AD 1095, the first of four Crusades started as Christians in the West were motivated to help defend Christians in the East and to protect pilgrims and churches in the Holy Lands.

- The First Crusade (AD 1095-1099)
- The Second Crusade (AD 1147–1149)
- The Third Crusade (AD 1189-1192)
- The Fourth Crusade (AD 1202-1204)

It's recognized that while the *motives* of the Roman Catholic Church were well intentioned (i.e. defending Christians in the East); it was ultimately *bad theology* that initiated the Crusades in November 1095.

Today, Islam has seen staggering growth. In the last 20 years the number of adherents to Islam has more than doubled.¹

Consider the following statistics:

- Islam is currently the second largest religion in the world surpassed only by Christianity.
- In 1982, there were approximately 450 million Muslims in the world, but today there are approximately 1.3 billion Muslims worldwide.
- There are more Muslims (19.2%) in the world than Catholics (17.4%) which make up approximately 1 billion worldwide.
- There are approximately 190 nations in the world and over 65 of those are considered Islamic. That's 34 percent of the worldwide nations.

- It is estimated that Muslims make up 85 percent of the population in 32 countries.

And closer to home:

- In 2004, there were an estimated 6.5 to 8 million Muslims in the United States.²
- There are more practicing Muslims in the United States than Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons combined.
- In 1990, there were 30 Muslim mosques in the United States, as of 2002, there are over 3,000 with an average of one mosque opening per week.
- In 2002, there were 165 Islamic schools, 426 Islamic associations, and 90 Islamic publications in the United States.
- Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries are donating many tens of millions of dollars toward the furtherance of Islam in the United States.

³

Tonight, we're going to learn about Islam and look at important areas where Islam and Christianity do not agree doctrinally and theologically.

I'll be using the acronym **M. A. K. E. R. S.** to help you remember these differences.

1. **M**uhammad vs. Jesus
2. **A**llah vs. God
3. **K**oran vs. Bible
4. **E**ssential Doctrines & the Five Pillars of Faith
5. **R**esurrection of Jesus
6. **S**in and Salvation in Islam

The first letter in the acronym of **M. A. K. E. R. S.** is 'M', or Muhammad vs. Jesus.

1. Muhammad vs. Jesus

While orthodox Islam does not hold to the deifying of Muhammad, the fact remains that this practice comes dangerously close.

- "There is an abundance of traditions that speak of Muhammad's preexistence; other traditions affirm that he was the purpose for God's creation of the universe."⁴
- "Muhammad takes on some of the attributes of other holy personages, such as...preeminence above all created things, and perfect wisdom."⁵
- "Devotion to the prophet extends to veneration of his relics. There are several shrines around the world devoted to an individual hair from his beard."⁶

The Koran asserts that Allah sent a prophet to every nation to let the people know that there was only one true God.

Islamic tradition also asserts that 124,000 prophets have been sent to mankind to lead them to the one true God.

Most Muslims believe that the prophets were basically sinless even though the Koran records the sins of the "prophets" Adam, Moses, David, Solomon and even Muhammad's need for forgiveness (Sura 47:19).

Muslims will assert that Muhammad's life and character demonstrate and prove that he was the last and greatest prophet of all the prophets.

The Koran teaches that Muhammad "is the last prophet and messenger of Allah. His mission was for the whole world and for all times."⁷

Let's look at some of the differences between Muhammad and Jesus:

- The Koran (and the Bible) speak of Jesus as being sinless, there are no such claims for Muhammad but rather the Koran speaks of Muhammad's need to ask for forgiveness (Suras 40:55; 48:2).
- The Koran commands that men should have no more than four wives (Sura 4:3) yet Muhammad married 11 women including a nine year old girl after the death of his first wife while Jesus never married.
- Muhammad allowed his armies to attack tribes that would not submit to his teachings and rule, killing or subduing them. He would then allow his men to take the booty as long he was given one-fifth of everything while Jesus sent out the twelve to preach repentance, cast out demons, anoint and heal the sick (Mark 6:12-13).
- Muhammad taught revenge (Sura 2:194), while Jesus taught us to love our enemies (Matthew 5:44).
- Muhammad was known as the "prophet of the sword" and urged the use of it (Sura 8:65), while Jesus forbade the use of the sword (Matthew 26:52) and taught forgiveness (Matthew 5:38-39).
- Muhammad doubted whether the revelation he received was divine or demonic while Jesus was not only the divine revelation of God but the Word of God (John 1:1).
- Muhammad did not know his eternal destiny (Hadith 5.266), while Jesus was going back to be with the Father and prepare a place for those who are His (John 14:2-3).

Jesus stands out over Muhammad because...

Jesus is called the "Son of God":

- John 3:16, 17 says, "For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that *whoever believes* in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."
- John 19:7 says, "We [the Jews] have a law, and according to our law, He [Christ] ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." – Even the Jews recognized that Jesus was claiming to be God and wanted to kill Him for committing blasphemy.

Jesus is called the "Son of Man":

- In Matthew 26:63, 64, the high priest asks Jesus, "I put you under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Son of God!" Jesus said unto him, "It is as you said...you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming in the clouds."
- Jesus is referring to the "Son of Man" passage in Daniel 7:13 where the Messiah is described as the "Ancient of Days," a phrase used to indicate His deity (see Daniel 7:9).

Jesus is the Savior:

- In Isaiah 43:11 God says, "I, even I, am the LORD, and *apart from me there is no savior.*"
- Luke 2:11 says, "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."
- Titus 2:13 says "we should [be]...looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."
- See also 2 Peter 1:1

Jesus is the Creator:

- God says in Isaiah 44:24, "I, the LORD am the maker of *all things*, stretching out the heavens *by Myself*, and spreading out earth *all alone.*"
- In Colossians 1:12 we read of Jesus, "For by Him *all things* were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. *All things* were created through Him and for Him."

Jesus Accepted Worship:

The word "worshiped" [Greek: *proskuneo*] is the same word used in the Gospel accounts that is used when God the Father is "worshiped" and Jesus always accepted such worship as completely appropriate.

- Jesus accepted worship from Thomas – John 20:28
- All the angels are told to worship Jesus – Hebrews 1:6
- The wise men worshiped Jesus – Matthew 2:11
- A leper worshiped Jesus – Matthew 8:2
- A ruler bowed down before Jesus to worship Him – Matthew 9:18
- A blind man worshiped Jesus – John 9:38
- A woman worshiped Jesus – Matthew 15:25
- Mary Magdalene worshiped Jesus – Matthew 28:9
- The disciples worshiped Jesus – Matthew 28:17

Muslims have a high respect for Jesus and will maintain His sinlessness and that He was "the Messiah", "a good Prophet", "a spirit from Allah", "the Word of Allah" and a "miracle worker" but not God incarnate.

The Bible makes it PERFECTLY clear in John 10:33 that the Jews KNEW Jesus claimed to be GOD!

- "The Jews answered [Jesus], saying, 'For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, *make Yourself God.*'"

But can Islam really call Jesus a "good Prophet", hold Him in high regard, revere Him and still deny the Biblical teaching that He is God? It boils down to two issues:

1. Jesus is NOT "a good prophet" and "sinless" because Jesus lied in the Bible when He claimed to be God.

Conclusion: *The Koran is wrong* – for lifting Jesus up.

2. Jesus was who He claimed to be (i.e. God) and the Koran missed the target by downplaying Jesus and making Him less than what He is.

Conclusion: *The Koran is wrong* – for NOT lifting Jesus up.

The bottom line is that Muhammad was a man, a man who shed blood for the furtherance of Islam while Jesus is the “fullness of the Godhead” (Colossians 2:9), who shed His own blood so that those who believe in Him would have eternal life (John 3:16).

Moving on to the second letter in the acronym of M. **A.** K. E. R. S. is the letter ‘A’ – for Allah vs. God.

2. Allah vs. God

Allah is not a personal god:

- As Islam scholar Jamal J. Elias points out, “Human Beings can know God through his attributes (such as mercy, justice, compassion, wrath, and so on), but the ultimate essence of God remains unknowable.” There is no personal fellowship to the Allah of the Quran. The main emphasis in Islam is not personal fellowship with God, but rather service, obedience and allegiance to him. There is no concept of God as father at all.⁸
- In other words, Allah does not *personally* manifest himself to those he is “close” to.

Allah is not Triune:

- Allah is not a Trinity according to the Koran, “O People of the Book [Bible], exceed not the limits of your religion...And say not, Three [Trinity]. Desist, it is better for you. Allah is only one God.” (Sura 4:171)
- The Koran says, “They are unbelievers who say, ‘God is the Third of Three. No god is there but one God.’” (Sura 5:73)

Allah does not love sinners:

- "And Allah loves not an ungrateful sinner." (Sura 2:276)
- "Allah surely loves not the disbelievers." (Sura 3:32)
- "Surely Allah loves not such as are proud, boastful." (Sura 4:36)
- "Surely He [Allah] loves not the prodigals." (Sura 6:141)
- The concept that Allah does not love sinners is repeated twenty-four times in the Koran.⁹

This is quite different from the God of the Bible. Over and over again, we read of God's personal message of love, salvation and grace to mankind.

The Christian God is personal and knowable:

- John 17:3 says, "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."
- In Eph. 1:5, we are also adopted into the family of God, "having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself"
- And we can address God as Father:
 - In Matthew 6:9 Jesus teaches us, "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our *Father* in heaven"
 - Romans 8:15 says, "but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, '*Abba, Father.*'"

As Dr. John MacArthur points out, "Abba is an informal Aramaic term for Father, connoting intimacy, tenderness, dependence... Modern English equivalents would be Daddy, or Papa."¹⁰

The God of the Bible is Triune:

The unity of the Three can be seen in the following verses:¹¹

- Matt. 28:19 – “baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”
- 1 Cor. 12:4-6 – “There are diversities of gifts, but the same *Spirit*. There are differences in ministries, but the same *Lord*. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same *God* [the Father]”
- 2 Cor. 13:14 – “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.”
- Eph. 2:18 – “For through Him [Christ] we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”

God sent Jesus to die for *All the World*:

- John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

You’ll want to point out to your Muslim friend that the word “begotten” [Greek: *monoganes*] means “unique” or “one of a kind” and not procreated. It simply means that Jesus, the “Son of God” was unique as having the same nature as the Father – a divine nature.

- 1 John 4:19 says, “We love Him because He first loved us.”

This of course means that God loved us before we even came to Him, while we were still sinners.

The God of the Bible offers mankind a loving and personal relationship where we are adopted into the family of God and can call Him “Abba, Father or Daddy.”

Islam is not about a personal relationship and fellowship with God but *service, submission and allegiance to Allah.*

Moving on to the third letter in the acronym of M. A. **K** E. R. S. is the letter ‘K’ - for Koran vs. Bible.

3. Koran vs. Bible

Islam teaches that the Koran is eternal, meaning that there is an exact copy on stone tablets in heaven, since Allah will not allow his word to be altered.

Muslims believe that Allah gave the Koran in its finished form to Jibra'il (the angel Gabriel) then Gabriel dictated it or revealed it (Sura 12:97; 16:102) piece by piece (Sura 76:23) over a twenty-three year period from AD 610 to the time of Muhammad's death in AD 632.

The Koran is believed by Muslims to be perfect and without error.

Muslims Musa Qutub, PH.D., and M. Vazir Ali assert that the Koran is the only book ever to "withstand the microscopic and telescopic scrutiny of one and all, without the book stumbling anywhere."¹²

Muslims claim that the Koran is in perfect harmony with the original autographs of the Bible but that the Bible has been corrupted and is now unreliable.

- "And We have sent down to thee the Book [the Quran] with the truth, confirming the Book [the Bible] that was before it, and assuring it."¹³
- "This Quran could not have been forged apart from God; but it is a confirmation of what is before it."¹⁴

The Koran states that it contains no contradictions.

- In Sura 4:82, Allah challenges men, "Will they not then meditate on the Qur'an? And if it were from any other than Allah, they would have found in it many a discrepancy."

Here are a few contradictions between the Koran and the Bible:

- The Koran teaches that Noah's ark came to rest on Mt. Judi (Sura 11:44) where the Bible teaches that it was Mt. Ararat (Genesis 8:4).
- The Koran teaches that Abraham's father was Azar (Sura 6:74) while the Bible teaches that Terah was his father (Genesis 11:31).
- The Koran teaches that it was Ishmael that Abraham was going to sacrifice (Sura 37:100-112) not Isaac as the Bible teaches (Genesis 22:6).
- The Koran teaches that it was Pharaoh's wife who adopted Moses (Sura 28:8-9) and not Pharaoh's daughter as the Bible teaches (Exodus 2:10).
- The Koran teaches that the Flood happened in Moses' day (Sura 7:136) instead of the Days of Noah (Genesis 7).
- The Koran teaches that Jesus was not crucified or even killed (Sura 4:157) while the Bible teaches that Jesus was crucified (Matthew 27:35) and rose on the third day.
- The Koran teaches that Jesus was no more than a messenger (Sura 5:75) but the Bible teaches that Jesus is the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person (Hebrews 1:1-3).
- The Koran teaches that salvation is attained through good works (Sura 18:107, 110; 23:102-103) but the Bible teaches that it's by faith alone through grace alone (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5) with no works in sight.

The previous examples, as well as others, show the differences between the Bible and the Koran. How can these differences be since God never changes and does not lie so He could not have given us both the Bible and the Koran:

- Numbers 23:19 – "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man that He should repent [i.e. change his mind]."
- 1 Samuel 15:29 – "And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor relent. For He is not a man, that He should relent."

- Malachi 3:6 – “For I am the LORD, I do not change.”
- See also (Matthew 24:35; John 17:17 and James 1:15)

Even the Koran admits that the Bible is the “Word of God” (Sura 2:75) and that “There is no one who can change His [Allah’s] words” (Sura 6:115) and then commends the Bibles reading (Suras 5:66; 10:94).

Since the Koran holds such a high value of Scripture (Suras 4:47; 4:54) and believers are encouraged to check the Bible against the Koran (Suras 5:44-49; 10:94) ask your Muslim friend the following questions.

Ask:

- Who was Jesus?
- If Jesus was only a good man and a prophet how could He teach that He was the only way to God (John 14:6), He was equal with God (John 5:18), that He takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29) and salvation is found in no other (Acts 4:12)?

Muslims will contend that the Bible has been corrupted. It is important to establish the authenticity and reliability of the Bible when dialoging with Muslims.

If your Muslim friend presses the issue of Biblical corruption as the reason why there are so many Koran verses that contradict the Bible. Simply require that they show you proof that the Bible has been changed.

Ask:

- What historical evidence is there to back up your claim that the Bible has been corrupted?
- If the Bible was changed *before* Muhammad was born, why does the Koran commend Bible reading?

- If the Bible was changed *after* Muhammad's birth, how do you explain the thousands of manuscripts that prove that the Bible we have today is the same Bible that was before Muhammad's time?

In order to help your Muslim friends understand that the Bible could not have become corrupted before or after Muhammad's time and that it's unreasonable to believe so; the following points were taken, and can be used, from *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims*.

- By Muhammad's time there were hundreds of thousands of copies of the Bible dispersed over a large part of the world. To successfully corrupt the Bible, all these copies would have had to be meticulously gathered...and then the changes would have to be made.
- Another scenario is that hundreds of thousands of Bible-owning people from around the world met together and *colluded* to make the changes. But since most of these people were true believers, is it likely they would tamper with a book upon which they were basing their eternal salvation? Would such collusion even be physically possible?
- Hundreds of years before Muhammad was even born, the Bible had already been translated into a number of languages. Would Muslims have us believe that these various translations were identically altered all over the world so they would have a uniform corruption?
- Is it likely the Almighty and Sovereign God of the universe would allow His Word to have become corrupted like this?

Even the Bible itself argues against the possibility of its corruption:

- In Isaiah 40:8 we read, "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of God stands forever."
- Jesus says in Matthew 24:35, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."

The next and fourth letter in the acronym of M. A. K. **E**. R. S. is the letter 'E' – for Essential Doctrines & the Five Pillars of Islam.

4. Essential Doctrines & the Five Pillars of Faith

This section is geared more towards the goal of helping us better understand what Muslims believe. With that in mind, I recommend the *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* suggestion of learning as much as possible about Islam.

Islam involves both:

1. Beliefs - *The Five Doctrines of Islam*
2. Obligations - *The Five Pillars of Faith*

The Five Doctrines of Islam:

The Koran teaches that "but righteous is the one who believes in Allah, and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Book and the prophets." (Sura 2:177)

1. **Monotheism.** There is but only one true God and his name is Allah. Allah is absolute unity. He is not part of a Trinity and He does not have a Son. Allah is all-seeing, all-knowing, all-hearing, all-speaking, all-powerful, and all-willing. You might have heard a Muslim state "If Allah wills", "Praise Allah", "Glory to Allah" or "Thanks be to Allah."
2. **Angels.** Muslims believe that there is a hierarchy of angels with Gabriel, the angel who delivered the revelations to Muhammad chief among them (Sura 2:97). Muslims believe that two angels are "attached" or "follow" every human being and record every good deed and bad deed (Sura 50:17) which will then be brought forth at the judgment.
3. **Holy Books.** The Koran is the infallible, inerrant scripture revealed to Muhammad from Gabriel. The Torah of Moses, the Psalms and the Gospels are considered inspired but have become corrupt.
4. **Prophets.** There allegedly have been 124,000 prophets including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Jonah, John the Baptist, and Jesus but Muhammad was the latest and greatest prophet.

5. **Judgment.** At the Day of Judgment, Allah will weigh a person's good deeds and their bad deeds and depending on how well they do, they will end up in either paradise or hell.

The Five Pillars of Faith:

1. **The Great Confession.** "There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah," otherwise known as the *shahada* or the *great confession* and is whispered into a person's ear at birth and if possible at death. (Sura 2:255; 3:18; 3:81, 3:144; 4:87; 5:83-84; 7:172; 33:40; 48:29; 64:8)
2. **Prayers.** Prayers known as *salahs*, are done five times a day each time with a physical posture of standing, kneeling, hands and face to the ground, and so on. The call to prayer is sounded by a Muslim crier or *muezzin*, from a tower called a *minaret*. (Sura 2:3, 177; 11:114; 17:78; 20:14, 130; 30:17-18)
3. **Giving Alms.** Muslims are required to give 2 ½ percent of their currency as well as giving of possessions for the cause of Islam. (Sura 24:56, 57:18)
4. **Fasting at Ramadan.** The fasting of the month of Ramadan is done to commemorate the first revelations of the Koran given to Muhammad in AD 610. Serious Muslims fast during the day and are allowed to eat at sundown for the entire month. (Sura 2:183-185)
5. **The Pilgrimage to Mecca.** This pilgrimage to Mecca, Islam's most holy city, is required at least once in a Muslim's lifetime if they are physically and financially able. This pilgrimage or *hajj* to Mecca is considered meritorious and greatly enhances one's chances for salvation. (Sura 2:196-201; 3:97; 22:26-29)
6. **Jihad.** A Jihad, or often translated *Holy War* can be considered one of the *Pillars of Faith*. A Jihad can be interpreted as an internal struggle, a struggle within oneself or a spiritual struggle, or it can be considered as an external struggle or defending Islam. Muslims popularly refer to *Jihad* in four expressions:¹⁵
 - Jihad of the Tongue: Speaking about their faith
 - Jihad of the Hand: Expressing their faith in good works
 - Jihad of the Heart: Making their faith a force of good

- Jihad of the Sword: Defending their faith when under attack

The “Greater” Jihad is considered to be the internal struggle a Muslim has to be a true believer and follower. (Sura 22:78; 49:15)

While the “Lesser” Jihad is traditionally what is called the “Holy War” and launched against the enemies of Allah and Islam. (Sura 2:244; 47:4; 9:5; 9:29)

The next and fifth letter in the word M. A. K. E. **R.** S. is the letter ‘R’ – for the Resurrection of Jesus.

5. Resurrection of Jesus

Islam teaches that Jesus was not crucified, but was taken into heaven by Allah and thus He could not have been resurrected from the dead on the third day as the Bible teaches.

The Koran confirms this teaching that Jesus did not die by crucifixion:

- “And for their saying [in boast]: We have killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah, and they killed him not, nor did they cause his death on the cross, but he was made to appear to them as such. And certainly those who differ therein are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge about it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for certain.” (Sura 4:157)

So, who was crucified on the cross if it wasn’t Jesus?

Muslims offer a variety of different views on who was crucified.

- One view is that the Roman soldiers seized the wrong Jesus. They argue that the man that was seized was *Barabbas* (tradition says that his name was also Jesus) – and they actually crucified him.
- Another popular theory is that it was Judas who was crucified on the cross. In this theory Judas was crucified after he betrayed Jesus. Allah

supposedly turned Judas into a Jesus look alike and then Judas was nailed to the cross.

- Abdul-Haqq says, "The shape of Jesus was put on Judas who had pointed him out, and they crucified him instead, supposing that he was Jesus. After three hours God took Jesus to Himself and raised him up to Heaven."¹⁶
- There are about three different versions of the Judas theories in all.
- Yet another theory is the "swoon" theory. This theory states that it was Jesus on the cross but that he didn't actually die, he merely "swooned" or passed out and was mistaken for dead.

So, why all the different theories and stories to disregard the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

The reason is that Muslims believe that Allah would not abandon Jesus and allow his enemies to "get the upper hand on him" as it were.

- "As an arbiter of the destinies of all living creatures, God would not allow his prophet-servant to be defeated or humiliated by his enemies."¹⁷
- If the Messiah Isa [Jesus] had been allowed to die this cruel and shameful way, then God himself must have failed – which was an impossible thought."¹⁸

If your Muslim acquaintance charges that Jesus did not die on a cross, ask them to back up that claim with historical proof. The burden of proof lies on them.

Of course they will not be able to because there is none, but they will repeat what they have heard or read from the Koran.

At this point and as often as possible, take them to Scripture to show that beyond any doubt, Jesus was crucified:

- There are many predictions and prophecies in the Old Testament that Jesus Christ would die (Isaiah 53:5-10; Psalm 22:16; Daniel 9:26; Zechariah 12:10).
- There are also many predictions and prophecies that Jesus would be resurrected and of course *Jesus had to have died in order for Him to be resurrected* (Psalm 16:10; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2; John 2:19-21; Matthew 12:40; 17:22-23).
- Jesus spoke often of the fact that he *had to die for the sins of the world* (John 2:19-21; 10:10-11; Matthew 12:40; Mark 8:31).
- Jesus' mother, His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, Mary Magdalene and the "disciple whom He loved" were witnesses to his crucifixion (John 19:25-27).
- Jesus was scourged, which was enough to kill a man, beaten and a thorn of crowns twisted onto his head. He was then nailed to a cross. The wounds would have been gaping; bleeding holes that would have produced huge amounts of blood loss. He was then stabbed in the side with a spear that produced "blood and water" (John 19:34). ***This form of torture yields a 100% non-survival rate.***
 - According to Luke 23:46-49, at this point Jesus gave up His spirit, in other words, He died.
 - Pilate sent a Roman centurion to ensure Jesus was dead (Mark 15:44-45). This man would have been fully acquainted with death and what it looked like.

According to Islam, Jesus could not be resurrected since He never died. We have just shown the opposite to be true and now let's turn our attention to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

After three days in the tomb, Jesus Christ was resurrected according to Scripture (Matthew 28:6; Acts 17:18; Romans 6:5) as well as His own predictions in John 11:25 "I am the *resurrection* and the life"

- John 20:1 tells us that it was Mary Magdalene who Jesus first appeared to, which is *highly significant* as Ron Rhodes explains:

- “If the resurrection story were a fabrication by the disciples, *no one in the first-century Jewish culture would have invented it this way*. The fact is that in Jewish law a woman’s testimony was unacceptable in any court of law except in a very few circumstances. A fabricator would have been much more likely to place Peter or one of the other male disciples at the resurrection tomb.”¹⁹
- The risen Jesus then appeared that evening to the disciples gathered in a locked room (John 20:19). He showed them the wounds in His feet and side for the purpose that it was His *same* body (John 20:20).
- As the days passed, Jesus showed Himself proving that He did indeed rise from the dead.

Acts 1:3 says, “to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during the forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.”

1 Corinthians 15:6-8 confirms even more sightings of the risen Lord, “After that He was seen *by over five hundred brethren at once*, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep [died]. After that He was *seen by James, then by all the apostles*. Then last of all He was *seen by me also*, as by one born out of due time.” (emphasis added)

- It’s well documented that the disciples went on to change the world and most were martyred for their faith *all for the sake of an elaborate lie* as Islam would have us believe.

While it’s true that people will die for a lie, it’s inconceivable that people will die *for what they know is a lie*.

Here’s just a few of the deaths of the apostles for preaching Jesus.

- Peter was crucified after being forced to watch the crucifixion of his wife.
- Andrew was crucified on an X shaped cross.

- James is the only apostle whose death is actually recorded for us in Scripture (Acts 12:1-3).
- Phillip was stoned to death by most accounts in Asia Minor.
- Thomas is said to be buried in India after being killed by a spear for spreading the gospel.

At this point you could ask your Muslim acquaintance:

- If you were a disciple of Christ and had known that He really didn't die, would you have suffered terrible persecution and been martyred for a lie? Would you allow your wife to die for that lie?
- If Paul had lied in 1 Corinthians 15:6 that over five hundred people saw the resurrected Jesus, why didn't any step up to say he was lying? Paul did say that "the greater part remain to the present."

As for the theory that Jesus really didn't die but was revived by the coolness of the tomb – the "swoon" theory:

- Jesus was scourged and beaten beyond description.
- He was so weak after the beatings that He couldn't even carry His own cross.
- Huge nails were driven through His hands and feet.
- The Roman soldier pierced His side with a spear.
- The four Roman executioners and centurion mistakenly err'd when it came to Jesus' death even though they quite possibly had years of experience between them.
- A hundred pounds of gummy spices were applied to Jesus' encased body and no one saw Jesus breathing.
- Jesus' body was "wound" or "bound" in linen with the spices – the word *wound* or *bound* [Greek: *deo*] means "to bind, to be in bonds, knit, tie or wind."

- This *bound* or *wound* is the same word used of Lazarus in John 11:44 – “And he who had died came out *bound hand and foot* with grave clothes...Jesus said to them ‘*Loose him, and let him go.*’”
- A large stone was rolled over the entrance to the tomb and Roman guards were placed around the tomb.

At this point you could ask your Muslim acquaintance:

- How could Jesus, with the scourging and beatings, spikes in the hands and feet, pierced with a spear, placed in a tomb, shed the encased gummy spices covering that weighed “about a hundred pounds” – John 19:39, roll away a stone that was undoubtedly quite a few hundred plus pounds, over power elite Roman guards and walk away on feet that had spikes driven through them just three days earlier?

Luke 24:46-47 reads, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem.”

And finally, the fifth and last letter in the acronym of M. A. K. E. R. **S**. is the letter ‘S’ – for Sin and Salvation in Islam.

6. Sin and Salvation in Islam

“It has long been said among Christian theologians that a weak view of sin will always lead to a weak view of salvation. If one does not recognize a serious sin problem for human beings, then one will generally minimize any need for an atonement.”²⁰

According to Islam, Adam did sin in the garden and was expelled but he did not suddenly gain a “sin nature.”

Adam repented of the minor “slip-up” and it was quickly forgotten. The matter affected no one but Adam.

Because of this belief, Muslims deny the Christian doctrine of original sin that was caused by the fall of Adam as indicated by the following quotes.

- "There is no single act which has warped the human will."²¹
- "No child is born except in the state of natural purity (*fitra*) and then his parents make him Jewish, Christian, or Magian."²²
- "People are born innocent and remain so until each makes him or herself guilty by a guilty deed. Islam does not believe in 'original sin' and its Scripture interprets Adam's disobedience as his own personal misdeed – a misdeed for which he repented and which God forgave."²³

This Muslim concept that humans are "born pure or born innocent" is called *fitrah*.

Islam does believe in sin, but they believe that people commit sins because they are weak (Sura 4:28), not because of a sin nature.

Since human sinfulness is caused by human weaknesses, Muslims believe that *through their own strength*, they can free themselves by choosing to follow Allah thus atonement for sin becomes absolutely unnecessary.

Thus, Islam is a religion of works.

Salvation is achieved through surrendering completely to Allah.

The Koran says:

- "And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers." (Sura 3:85)
- "In the day of judgment, they whose balances shall be heavy with good works, shall be happy; but they, whose balances shall be light,

are those who shall lose their souls, and shall remain in hell forever." (Sura 12:102,103)

As seen in the previous quotes, salvation is based on one's own merit and then hoping that the scale tips just enough in your favor to merit Allah's mercy.

There is no assurance of salvation since Muslims can never really be sure that they have done enough.

Many Muslims will "recite extra prayers, observe extra feasts, make more gifts to charity, repeat the 99 most beautiful names of Allah, go on pilgrimages not just to Mecca but to other Muslim places as well, and perform other good works – all in order to gain merit before Allah."²⁴ There is one exception to the "no assurance of salvation" rule and that is if one dies in service to Allah, whether this person is good or bad, he is automatically guaranteed a place in paradise.

This of course explains why so many radical Islamic groups will send people to their grave happily taking as many "infidels" with them as possible.

Now let's take a look at what the Bible, our *Final Court of Appeal* says about sin and salvation.

While the Muslim view is that Adam's sin only affected himself, the Bible makes it clear that the fall in the Garden of Eden had universal implications of spiritual death to *all* mankind.

While the Bible talks about *Physical* death as the soul being separated from the body, it also talks about a *Spiritual* death and it means a "separation from God."

When Adam and Eve took of the fruit of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" in Genesis 2:13; 3:6, they died spiritually. In other words, they had broken from God in a spiritual sense.

We see this when God called for Adam, "Where are you?" in Genesis 3:9.

From that moment of separation on, we were "dead in our trespasses and sin" according to Ephesians 2:1.

The Bible teaches that not just Adam suffered from this "minor slip-up" but the whole of mankind.

- In Romans 5:12, the apostle Paul wrote, "Therefore, just as through one man [Adam] sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned."
- And again in Romans 5:19, "For as by one man's [Adam] disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's [Jesus] obedience many will be made righteous."
- Paul again reiterates in 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, "For since by man came death...in Adam all die"
- In Psalm 51:5, David echoed this truth, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."
- Even the LORD God in Genesis 8:21 said about man that, "every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood."

Sin is universal, ramped and everywhere. Just look at the news. Man is not getting better, he's getting worse.

Even though Muslims deny the doctrine of original sin, even the Koran speaks of man's sin problem.

- "surely (man's) self is wont to command evil" (Sura 12:53)
- "Surely man is very unjust, very ungrateful." (Sura 14:34)
- "And if Allah were to destroy men for their iniquity, He would not leave therein a single creature." (Sura 16:61)

- "Man doth transgress all bounds." (Sura 96:6)

Since we've shown that the Bible and the Koran teach that man is sinful what can we do about it?

In John 6:29, the people asked Jesus, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, *that you believe in Him whom He sent.*'"

The need for atonement or a sacrifice or ransom for our sins is important. We can never pay the price for our sins no matter how hard we try. We will continually "fall short" or "miss the target" when we try to please God with our works.

- Ecclesiastes 7:20 says, "There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins."
- Isaiah 64:6 declares, "All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags."

Jesus Christ's work of atonement on the cross makes it possible for the forgiveness of sins for all who trust in Him for salvation as seen in the following verses.

- Hebrews 10:17-18 says, "'Their sins and lawless deeds I will remember no more.' Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin."
- Ephesians 1:7 says, "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."
- Micah 7:19 says, "He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea."
- Psalm 32:1-2 says, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit."

- Psalm 103:11-12 says, "For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us."

While there is no certainty, no assurance for a Muslim's salvation, there is for the Christian, and that is wonderful news!

"And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, *that you may know that you have eternal life*" – (1 John 5:11-13, emphasis added).

Conclusion

This wraps up the acronym **M. A. K. E. R. S.** This is not an exhaustive list, but as we have seen, there are many areas that we as Christians would disagree with Muslims both doctrinally and theologically regarding Islam.

1. **M**uhammad vs. Jesus
2. **A**llah vs. God
3. **K**oran vs. Bible
4. **E**ssential Doctrines & the Five Pillars of Faith
5. **R**esurrection of Jesus
6. **S**in and Salvation in Islam

I must also point out that there is a difference between Islam and radical Islam and not every Muslim you meet on the street or work along side in the United States is a radical Islamist.

Most Muslims are a lot like you and I. They want to work, maintain a family life, raise their children in a better environment and save for college so they can have a better life for their children and themselves.

Some Muslims even proactively and openly oppose radical Islam as a perversion of the Koran.

As Christians, we need to be able to dialogue with Muslims and talk openly and freely about who the real Jesus of the Bible is in order to share the Good News of the Gospel.

The real enemy is **Not** the Muslim who practices Islam but against "principalities...powers...rulers of the darkness of this age".

- Ephesians 6:12 says, "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

Resources used for this teaching and recommended reading material:

1. *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims*, Ron Rhodes, Harvest House Publishers, ISBN 0736910107
2. *Fast Facts on Islam*, John Ankerberg and John Weldon, Harvest House Publishers, ISBN 0736910115
3. *Correcting the Cults*, Norman L. Geisler and Ron Rhodes, Baker Books, ISBN 080106550X
4. *Islam*, DVD Video with accompanying text by Charlie H. Campbell – www.AlwaysBeReady.com
5. *What You Need to Know About Islam & Muslims*, George W. Braswell Jr., BroadMan & Holman Publishers, ISBN 0805418296
6. *Differences – The Bible and the Koran*, by Ben J. Smith, Cumberland House Publishing, ISBN 1581823495
7. *Answering Islam*, Norman L. Geisler and Abdul Saleeb, Baker Book House, ISBN 0801064309
8. *Jesus and Muhammad*, Mark A. Gabriel, PhD., Charisma House, ISBN 1591852919
9. *The School of Biblical Evangelism*, by Kirk Cameron and Ray Comfort, Bridge-Logos Publishers, ISBN 0882709682
10. *The Interlinear KJV-NIV Parallel New Testament in Greek and English*, Alfred Marshall, Zondervan Publishing House, ISBN 0310950708
11. *From Jihad to Jesus: An Ex-Militant's Journey of Faith*, by Jerry Rassamni, AMG Publishers, ISBN 0899570917

If you have questions or comments, please feel free to email info@calvaryCO.church

Notes

1. *Islam* - DVD teaching handout from Charlie Campbell at www.AlwaysBeReady.com, p. 1
2. Kirk Cameron and Ray Comfort, *The School of Biblical Evangelism* (Gainesville, FL: Bridge-Logos Publishers, 2004), p. 517 while Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 8 says between 1.8 – 2.8 million.
3. Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 8.
4. Norman Geisler and Abdul Saleeb, *Answering Islam: The Crescent in the Light of the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1993), p. 86 as cited in Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 46.
5. Fredrick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam* (New York: Macmillan, 1985), p. 159 as cited in Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 46.
6. Jamal J. Elias, *Islam* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1999) p. 26 as cited in Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), pg. 47-48.
7. Badru D. Kateregga and David W. Shenk, *Islam and Christianity: A Muslim and a Christian in Dialogue* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), p. 37, as cited in John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *Fast Facts on Islam* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 26.
8. Jamal J. Elias, *Islam* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1999) p. 62 and Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), pg. 97-98.
9. Ben J. Smith, *Differences – The Bible and the Koran* (Nashville, TN: Cumberland House Publishing, Inc. 2002), p. 51
10. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Commentary – Romans* (Chicago, IL: Moody Bible Institute, 1991), p. 437
11. There are grammatical rules that apply to the Bible just as there are grammatical rules that apply today's English (i.e., nouns, verbs, adjectives, sentence structure, etc.). For a very detailed discussion on grammatical rules such as the *Granville Sharp* rule, please refer to *The Trinity Evidence and Issues* by Dr. Robert Morey
12. Musa Qutub and M.Vazir Ali, *The Glorious Quran – The Unique Divine Document for Mankind*, in the *Invitation*, 11/1987, vol. 4, no. 4, p. 1 as cited in John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *Fast Facts on Islam* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 37
13. A.J. Arberry, *The Qur'an Interpreted* (New York: MacMillan, 1976), p. 135 as cited in John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *Fast Facts on Islam* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 37
14. A.J. Arberry, *The Qur'an Interpreted* (New York: MacMillan, 1976), p. 229 as cited in John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *Fast Facts on Islam* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 37
15. George W. Braswell Jr., *What You Need to Know* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2000), p. 38
16. Abdiyah Akbar Abdul-Haqq, *Sharing Your Faith with a Muslim* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany), 1980 cited in Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), pg. 137

17. Bruce A. McDowell and Anees Zaka, *Muslims and Christians at the Table* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1999), p. 118 as cited in Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 138
18. Norman Anderson, *Islam in the Modern World* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), p.219 as cited in Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 138
19. Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p.179
20. *Ibid.*, pg. 233
21. Badru D. Kateregga and David W. Shenk, *A Muslim and a Christian in Dialogue* (Scottsdale, PA: Herold Press, 1997), p. 18 as cited in Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 234
22. J. Dudley Woodberry, *Dimensions of Witness Among Muslims* (Seoul, Korea: Chongshin University, 1997) ; in *The World of Islam* CD-ROM as cited in Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 234
23. Isma'il R. Al Faruqi, *Islam* (Niles, IL: Argus Communications, 1984), p. 9 as cited in Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 234
24. Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Muslims* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), p. 236