

How to Use These Tracts

By Daniel Scot Sept. 2008

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We hope and pray that this series of tracts will be uplifting to you and to those with whom you share the truth. Allow us to explain our purpose in publishing these tracts and to give you some general guidelines in our approach.

Purpose

Our approach and purpose have many facets:

1. To bring awareness of various aspects of Islamic teachings from the Qur'an, ahadith [plural for Hadith], Muhammad's practice and life, and their outworking in the lives of Muslims today, and to contrast these with the teachings and practice of Jesus, and their outworking in the lives of Christians today.
2. To challenge the notion of pluralism and multiculturalism. Not all beliefs teach the same things but everyone's beliefs about good and bad and right and wrong, are the primary motivations behind our actions. Where these differing beliefs are incompatible, conflict will result. It is important to identify these areas and to attempt to resolve areas of potential conflict. In the long run society will self-destruct if the real issues are covered up in the name of pluralism, tolerance and multiculturalism.
3. To stimulate the hearts and minds of Christians and Muslims to know and follow the real Jesus—the Jesus of the Bible.
4. To answer questions about Islamic faith, teaching and practice in an objective fashion.

General Information

These tracts are an attempt to show the real teaching of Islam and of the real Muhammad, the founder of Islamic faith, in the light of the teachings of the Qur'an, Hadith (pl. ahadith), and earliest biographies of Muhammad by classic Muslim scholars. This is important because, just as Christians are told to follow the example of Jesus Christ, so too, Muslims are told to follow the example of their prophet Muhammad. Islam teaches that Muhammad did everything by inspiration and in obedience to Allah (Sura 53:2-4); thus obedience to Muhammad is obedience to Allah (Sura 4:80). Obviously then, it will be necessary to observe the life and practice of Jesus and of Muhammad if we are to truly to understand Christianity and Islam.

Just as Christians differ in their devotion and zeal to become like Jesus, Muslims differ in their devotion and zeal to become like Muhammad. Just as some Christians have much Biblical knowledge whilst others have little, Muslims also vary in their knowledge of the Qur'an, ahadith, and Muhammad's life and practice.

Additionally, it is important to recognize that, just as Christians have different denominations, varying in orthodoxy and practice, so do Muslims. Islam is not a monolithic faith; there are a variety of beliefs, teachings and practices amongst Muslims. There are many sects: Sunni (approx. 80%), Shi'a (approx. 15%), Alawi, Alevi, Ismaili, Druze, Bohra and Ahmedi. Sufis are not a sect as such, but are mystics and represented in all sects. *Ummah* refers to the Islamic community in general. *Islam* means 'submission to Allah,' and a *Muslim* is someone who has submitted.

NOTE: Islam and Christianity share many similar teachings. However, the majority of these teachings have only a superficial similarity. The real difference comes in the practices and examples set by Muhammad and Jesus. The only effective way to evaluate a religion is not to look at its followers who differ in their zeal and knowledge, but to look at the teaching and example set by their founder. To

differentiate between the real and counterfeit currency you need to focus on the differences, because focusing on similarities and ignoring the difference can be very deceptive.

The Authoritative Texts

Authoritative Islamic texts are the Qur'an, Hadith and earliest biographies of Muhammad. Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the revealed word of Allah (verse numbers differ slightly in different translations). A Sura (or Surah) is identical to the concept of a chapter so a reference to Sura 1:6 is a reference to chapter one, verse (aya) 6: '*Guide us to the Straight Way.*' The Qur'anic chapters are not organized according to chronology, but to the size of the chapter, with the exception of Sura 1. Within each chapter, there is minimal organisation. This means that careful study is required and caution must be applied as some passages have been abrogated (cancelled out) by later revelations, and there is rarely an indication from the text itself that this is the case.

Muslims believe that Muhammad is the perfect example to be followed by all Muslims. Whatever he said, practiced or approved is called a Hadith. There are six authentic ahadith (Hadiths): Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, Tirmizi, Sunnan Ibn Majah and Sunnan Nasa'i. There are many other lesser ahadith that are not considered authoritative. The majority of Muslims believe the "authentic" ahadith as true accounts of the sayings and practices of Muhammad, but there is a small minority who consider them myths.

The Framework of Islamic Living

The framework of a Muslim's life is directed by the five pillars: confession of faith (the Shahada), prayer (Salat—5 times a day), alms (Zakat) to purify their earnings and help the poor, fasting (Swam), and pilgrimage (Hajj). Some Muslims believe Jihad to be another pillar of Islam, however one must always remember that Muslims are not a monolithic, united, group. They vary in their understanding and commitment to Islamic faith, teaching and practice.

How to use these tracts

1. Pray. Prayer is vitally important to protect your own mind and heart; for getting wisdom; and remembering that it is the righteousness of Jesus Christ that redeems and clothes you. Pray also for the commitment that it will take to follow this through. Pray for love (1 Corinthians 13:1) for the person with whom you share the Gospel.
2. Read carefully the tract that you intend to use; read all the accompanying references. In this way, you can identify the context and are less susceptible to charges of context wresting.
3. Ask us to clarify any point, and get more information and related material. It is impossible to include all the relevant references, examples, arguments, and other material in a two-page tract. Be as equipped as you possibly can.
4. Know the Biblical position intimately and spend more time in Scripture and prayer, rather than studying Islamic material.
5. Pray that the Holy Spirit will:
 - enlighten the mind of your friend to the truth;
 - free them from spiritual, cultural and social bondages that will prevent them from following the truth;
 - convict them of their need of a saviour, and the righteousness of Jesus Christ;
 - free you from fear of Muslims and give you a love for them; and
 - give you boldness, wisdom and opportunity in sharing the truth.

Be prepared to explain Christianity

Just as there are myths about Islam, so too Muslims have many misconceptions about Christianity, the concepts of the Trinity and Mary being chief among them. Be prepared to explain these concepts in detail. It would be helpful, when talking to your friend, to find out his views

on Christianity and understanding of its basic truths. At the same time, get to know his/her level of understanding of Islam; get to know how seriously they follow Islam and what their beliefs and traditions are.

Always be prepared to share the Gospel. Presenting one of these tracts is no substitute for sharing the Gospel; these tracts are designed to strengthen believers in Jesus and to challenge Muslims about their faith and understanding of Islam and Muhammad. Lift Jesus high - by your attitudes, words and deeds and do not fear, because no one can compare with Him, even from the Qur'an!

Do not distribute these tracts indiscriminately. The ideal way is that the Muslim first comes to know you and witnesses Christ working through you first hand. These tracts are intense, and a person needs considerable motivation to read one. They will challenge core beliefs and the person will throw the tract away without a motivating factor of your witness pressing them to read. Discuss the topic, explore the issues; do not simply hand out a tract and think that your work is done.

Your motivation is love

The love of Jesus Christ compels us to share the Gospel with Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and everyone else who lives and breathes. Remember that, whilst they reject the Gospel of Jesus Christ, so did you at one stage.

Our goal is to make Jesus Christ not just acceptable, but irresistible. He is the only Saviour for the entire human race. The tracts attempt to highlight the standard of Allah/Muhammad and the standard of Jesus Christ.

Some other pointers:

Do not enter a debate - for the simple reason that it becomes a contest of wills. Discuss, answer his/her questions, but do not argue; in winning an argument, you may lose a soul.

In general share with people of the same sex (i.e., male to male and female to female). Muslims often already view Christians as sexually immoral, so do not put yourself in such a compromising position; we are to avoid even the *appearance* of evil.

Train yourself to answer from the Qur'an and not just from logic or the Bible. Provoke him/her to think.

When asked what you think about his/her beliefs, be very wise and ensure you don't compromise the Gospel. Avoid insulting Muhammad, Islam, Allah etc.

Show respect even though you may not agree with what he/she believes.

Muslims usually want to know God; this is your opportunity to share the love of God.

Do not be arrogant; it is not the strength of your arguments that will win the person, but the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

Discuss and do not preach. Muslims have many misunderstandings, so clarify rather than preach. Remember that most Muslims will not have the years of learning, teaching and terminology that you have, so don't use complicated terms.

May you grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ; may He grant you wisdom and boldness in sharing the life-changing Gospel of God. We hope and pray that you will be blessed by reading and using these tracts and that the Lord Jesus will draw many people to Himself through these tracts and your love for Muslims.

The next tract gives some practical guidance about Sharing the Gospel and this will be followed by another crucial ingredient in any effective witness to Muslims: Prepare Your Testimony!

If you have any questions, please contact us (Mizan ul Haqq): email anymorequestions@gmail.com

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Watch the Jesus Film online visit: <http://www.jesusfilm.org/languages>