

A Biblical Structure of our Missionary Approach  
*with special focus on Muslims*

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God is Creator: Man was made in God's Image with Dignity

Implication: God has allowed people the Right to choose their worship

Abraham was chosen by God from out of the world's peoples to father the Covenant people.

From that point on, all other people's were considered 'Gentiles'; those who are 'outsiders' to the covenant.

God did not destroy the people of other faiths, instead He placed His covenant people in their midst as witnesses to the true and living God.

Biblical 'pluralism' is that all religious people have the right to worship freely, not that all other religions are equally true.

This religious freedom has been codified into American law.

In traditional Muslim lands, historic Christian groups are sometimes allowed to continue within their family unit, but conversion of Muslims to Christianity is rarely allowed.

In the 1920's Turkey became a 'secular' Muslim state, though true freedom to follow Jesus is not common there.

Kazakhstan, following the pattern of Turkey, aspires to be a secular Islamic nation. Currently, there is freedom of religion in Kazakhstan, even for Kazakhs (who are all considered Muslims) to follow Jesus.

Application:

1) Christians should be advocates of 'freedom of religion', whether we agree with them or not, as a creation right given to man as responsible moral agents.

2) Christians should seek to better understand other religions and philosophies so that we might live in greater harmony in our pluralistic societies, and most importantly that we might more effectively communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ.

3) Christians should build friendship relationships with unbelievers that they might have greater opportunity to see the gospel lived out in our lives and our Covenant community.

Biblical Examples:

Abraham lived among his neighbors with respect and business integrity; Genesis 21.22 to 34.

Joseph could be trusted in the house of Potiphar and from the throne Pharaoh; Genesis 39.2 to 6, 41.38 to 44.

Moses sought peaceful passage through the Sinai to the Promised Land; Numbers 20.14 to 21.

David, while fleeing from Saul, lived with integrity among pagan peoples; 1 Samuel 25, 27, 29

Daniel, and his three friends, served with distinction in the government of Babylon; Daniel 2.48, 3.30, 4.18, 5.12-16,29

Jesus treated the Samaritan woman with respect and dignity; John 4.9,29

Paul was well versed in Greek poets and Creetan prophets; Acts 17.28, Titus 1.12.

Jesus summarized the believer's relationship with the world in John 17:

v. 11 "they are still in the world"

v. 14 "they are not of the world any more than I am of the world"

v. 15 "My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one."

v. 18 "As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world."

God is Judge: Man has fallen from God's Standard into Depravity

Implication: God holds people Responsible for how they worship

Moses condemns the false worship of the neighboring Gentiles;  
Deuteronomy 7.1 to 10.

Old Testament poets and prophets sarcastically expose the foolishness of idolatry; Psalm 115, Isaiah 44.

Jesus rejected Canaanite and Samaritan religion:

Matthew 15.26 "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs."

John 4.22 "You Samaritans worship what you do not know"

Paul told the Athenians that God will judge their false religion:

Acts 17.30 "In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."

Man's sinful rebellion expresses itself in religious perversion:

Romans 1.18-23

"The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles."

The manifestation of God's wrath in the book of Joshua is a grim foreshadowing of the final judgment. (See Gen 15.16 "the sin of the Amorites reaching its full measure", Deuteronomy 7.1,2.)

The characteristic of the first coming of Jesus is grace and gospel opportunity for the nations; John 3.17, Matthew 24.14.

The church today, does not carry out its program with the sword; Ephesians 6.12.

But the gospel message God has entrusted to the church, has the eternal power of life and death; 2 Corinthians 10.3-5.

Ezekiel 18.32 "For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent and live!"

2 Peter 3.9 "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

Romans 12.17-21 "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Application:

- 1) As you respectfully examine Islam, or any other religion, show how it has no power to save because they presume that we save ourselves.
- 2) No other religion has a savior or teacher who is morally qualified to save. Only Jesus is fully God and sinless man.
- 3) Only in the cross is God's love and righteousness fully displayed.

Romans 3.21-26

“But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished-- he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.”

4) The emphasis of our evangelistic approach should be focused on Jesus, he is the only ‘Good News’ we have for the world.

God is Redeemer: Man can be restored in Christ unto a new Destiny

Implication: God can transform us in Christ so that true worship is Restored

God’s love for all peoples is clearly revealed in:

Creation

Genesis 1.28 “God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Covenant

Genesis 12.3 “all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Isaiah 49.6 "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."

Commandment

Matthew 22.36-40 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with

all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

## Commission

Matthew 28.18-20 "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

## Church

Ephesians 2.13-17 "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near."

## Consummation

Revelation 7.9,10 "After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

## Application:

- 1) We should reach out to all lost peoples with confidence in God and His Word.
- 2) We should model before all peoples the compassion and justice of God.
- 3) We should realize that we are Christ's ambassadors.