**Lesson 5: Jesus in Islam**

Starting to come full circle…

 Some time on some of this that we have discussed before…

 Some time starting to question and formulate our answers to debates, questions:

 Some world religion comparisons down to simple as Post-It Notes

**Jesus in Islam…**

Muslims do not believe that Jesus died on the cross..

4:157, “They slew him not for certain”. (Muslims do not trust the Gospel accounts about the death of Jesus simply because this one verse has authority over all Biblical material to the contrary…)

Keep reminding selves of the different worldviews and perspectives…

 We are so often told that “all religions are basically the same”. Not true!

 We can’t assume Jesus is pre-eminent in others faiths as He is in ours!

 Jesus may be praised in other faiths, doesn’t mean He’s central.

“Just as Muhammad gets virtually no time in the reflection of North American Christians, most Muslims give little attention to the claims of Jesus Christ. Most Jews spend little time in the gospels, Christians devote few moments to Talmudic law (oral commentary on the Torah that had to be codified, written out). Most Buddhists seldom think about Jesus or God. Orthodox Buddhism teaches that there is no God.”

**Comparative Pages on the 5 major world religions:**

 Take out your pages and fill in the Post-It note blank squares…

**Back to Jesus in Islam**

Over 6,000 verses in the Quran. Jesus is named in how many? (28). (His name appears on nearly every page of the New Testament…)

I checked Matthew for the sermon and I asked Andria Bolden (2 Corinthians) Does Jesus or Christ or Jesus Christ appear on every page of 2 Corinthians? (Yes—He even speaks in 2 Corinthians 12:9!)

Study of the 28 verses indicate that Muhammad was never really introduced to the biblical portrait of Jesus Christ.

Only 6 passages give substantial detail. If Muslims look to the Quran for info on Jesus, no wonder they don’t think of Him much…

**Summaries of Quran passages:**

Jesus is a prophet, righteous man. Jesus taught and received same message as Muhammad, disciples of Jesus were called Muslims (3:52); Jesus is a model of virtue and wisdom (43:57, 63). Jesus did not die on the cross of Calvary…(4:157) Muslims believe that God would never let Jesus die a criminal’s death…

Muslim teaching is that a true prophet’s work is marked by ultimate success (see Muhammad) so Islamic teaching has someone else dying in Jesus’ place. Muslims believe rather, that Jesus was preserved from death and taken straight up to Allah to avenge His message. (Jesus never died)

As to miracles, Sura 5:113 has Jesus making clay birds that He gives flight to, but that “miracle” is from later Church tradition, not the Bible.

19:20-21 affirms the virgin birth of Jesus…Unfortunately, Jesus is born under a palm tree and He talks to family when He is just an infant (19:30)

Muslims contend that when Jesus says the *paraclete* will come (John 14:16), that is not a reference to the Holy Spirit, but to Muhammad…

John 14:16 text: *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—*

 Counselor, helper, encourager, mediator, advocate

John 14-16 chapters are clearly about the Holy Spirit (takes Muslim sleight of hand to think otherwise)

 How do we argue this text with a Muslim who is misinterpreting it?

(Starting to get into the debate/discussion parts)

 Question: How long does Jesus say this counselor will be with us? Forever!

 Muhammad been with us forever? Holy Spirit with us forever?

\*Muslims CANNOT pick and choose portions of the Bible…If they say that the Bible predicts Muhammad, then they have to be willing to take the rest of its redemptive message as well!!

You can’t say Jesus predicted Muhammad and I believe that part, BUT I don’t believe any of the other parts about the Deity and Salvation of Christ on the cross!!

*The gospels are foreign documents in the Muslim world.*

Quran knows nothing of the rest of the New Testament, nothing from Paul…

Why do the Muslims not believe more of the accuracy of the Bible?

Muslims believe that the Bible has been corrupted by Jews and Christians so they don’t turn to it as source. The Quran is proper source on Jesus, so the gospels are not checked…this leads to Muslim denial and ignorance of the true identity and work of Jesus.

Bob’s article about that very fact! (Here is God giving us what we need THE WEEK that we need it!)

Questions for discussion:

“How would you approach a Muslim on the question of Jesus’ death on the cross?” (any third party sources?) Die for a lie? (But Muslims do!)

“How use Muslim belief in virgin birth and Jesus’ miracles as a better starting point”?

What if a Muslim asks me to share just one reason why he should leave the great faith of Islam?

 Leave Islam to embrace Jesus!

Worth everything to obtain the pearl of Great price…(Matthew 13:45-46) *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.*

 Muslim gains a Savior who is above the law…solves legalism.

Muslim gains a friend…Jesus died for him…solves the lack of assurance.

 Muslim gains peace over sin and death…

**Hinduism and its beliefs**

Most Hindus worship one Being of ultimate oneness (Brahman) through infinite representations of gods and goddesses. These various manifestations of gods and goddesses become incarnate within idols, temples, gurus, rivers, animals, etc.

Hindus believe their position in this present life was determined by their actions in a previous life. Hinduism therefore provides a possible explanation for suffering and evil in this life. If a person’s behavior before was evil, they might justifiably experience tremendous hardships in this life. Pain, disease, poverty or a disaster like a flood is deserved by that person because of their own evil actions, usually from a previous lifetime.

A Hindu's goal is to become free from the law of karma...to be free from continuous reincarnations. Only the soul matters which will one day be free of the cycle of rebirths and be at rest.

Hinduism gives a person freedom to choose how to work toward spiritual perfection. There are three possible ways to end this cycle of karma: 1. Be lovingly devoted to any of the Hindu gods or goddesses; 2. Grow in knowledge through meditation of Brahman (oneness)...to realize that circumstances in life are not real, that selfhood is an illusion and only Brahman is real; 3. Be dedicated to various religious ceremonies and rites.

**New Age and its beliefs**

New Age promotes the development of the person's own power or divinity. When referring to God, a follower of New Age is not talking about a transcendent, personal God who created the universe, but is referring to a higher consciousness within themselves. A person in New Age would see themselves as God, the cosmos, the universe. In fact, everything that the person sees, hears, feels or imagines is to be considered divine.

Highly eclectic, New Age presents itself as a collection of ancient spiritual traditions. It acknowledges many gods and goddesses, as in Hinduism. The Earth is viewed as the source of all spirituality, and has its own intelligence, emotions and deity. But superseding all is self. Self is the originator, controller and God of all. There is no reality outside of what the person determines.

New Age teaches a wide array of eastern mysticism and spiritual, metaphysical and psychic techniques, such as breathing exercises, chanting, drumming, meditating...to develop an altered consciousness and one's own divinity.

Anything negative a person experiences (failures, sadness, anger, selfishness, hurt) is considered an illusion. Believing themselves to be completely sovereign over their life, nothing about their life is wrong, negative or painful. Eventually a person develops spiritually to the degree that there is no objective, external reality. A person, becoming a god, creates their own reality.

**Buddhism and its beliefs**

Buddhists do not worship any gods or God. People outside of Buddhism often think that Buddhists worship the Buddha. However, the Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama) never claimed to be divine, but rather he is viewed by Buddhists as having attained what they are also striving to attain, which is spiritual enlightenment and, with it, freedom from the continuous cycle of life and death. Most Buddhists believe a person has countless rebirths, which inevitably include suffering. A Buddhist seeks to end these rebirths. Buddhists believe it is a person's cravings, aversion and delusion that cause these rebirths. Therefore, the goal of a Buddhist is to purify one's heart and to let go of all yearnings toward sensual desires and the attachment to oneself.

Buddhists follow a list of religious principles and very dedicated meditation. When a Buddhist meditates it is not the same as praying or focusing on a god, it is more of a self-discipline. Through practiced meditation a person may reach Nirvana -- "the blowing out" of the flame of desire.

Buddhism provides something that is true of most major religions: disciplines, values and directives that a person may want to live by.

**Islam and its beliefs**

Muslims believe there is the one almighty God, named Allah, who is infinitely superior to and transcendent from humankind. Allah is viewed as the creator of the universe and the source of all good and all evil. Everything that happens is Allah's will. He is a powerful and strict judge, who will be merciful toward followers depending on the sufficiency of their life's good works and religious devotion. A follower's relationship with Allah is as a servant to Allah.

Though a Muslim honors several prophets, Muhammad is considered the last prophet and his words and lifestyle are that person's authority. To be a Muslim, one has to follow five religious duties: 1. Repeat a creed about Allah and Muhammad; 2. Recite certain prayers in Arabic five times a day; 3. Give to the needy; 4. One month each year, fast from food, drink, sex and smoking from sunrise to sunset; 5. Pilgrimage once in one's lifetime to worship at a shrine in Mecca. At death -- based on one's faithfulness to these duties -- a Muslim hopes to enter Paradise. If not, they will be eternally punished in hell.

For many people, Islam matches their expectations about religion and deity. Islam teaches that there is one supreme God, who is worshiped through good deeds and disciplined religious rituals. After death a person is rewarded or punished according to their religious devotion. Muslims believe that giving up one’s life for Allah is a sure way of entering Paradise.

**Christianity and its beliefs**

Christians believe in a loving God who has revealed himself and can be known in a personal way, in this life. With Jesus Christ, the person's focus is not on religious rituals or performing good works, but on enjoying a relationship with God and growing to know him better.

Faith in Jesus Christ himself, not just in his teachings, is how the Christian experiences joy and a meaningful life. In his life on Earth, Jesus did not identify himself as a prophet pointing to God or as a teacher of enlightenment. Rather, Jesus claimed to be God in human form. He performed miracles, forgave people of their sin and said that anyone who believed in him would have eternal life. He made statements like, "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."1

Christians regard the Bible as God's written message to humankind. In addition to being an historical record of Jesus' life and miracles, the Bible reveals God's personality, his love and truth, and how one can have a relationship with him.

Whatever circumstances a Christian is dealing with in their life, the Bible teaches that they can confidently turn to a wise and powerful God who genuinely loves them. They believe that God answers prayer and that life takes on meaning as they live to honor him.

How distinct are these major religions?

In looking at these major belief systems and their views of God, we find tremendous diversity:

* Hindus acknowledge multitudes of gods and goddesses.
* Buddhists say there is no deity.
* New Age followers believe they are God.
* Muslims believe in a powerful but unknowable God.
* Christians believe in a God who is loving and approachable.

Are all religions worshiping the same God? Let's consider that. New Age teaches that everyone should come to center on a cosmic consciousness, but it would require Islam to give up their one God, Hinduism to give up their numerous gods, and Buddhism to establish that there is a God.

The world's major religions (Hinduism, New Age, Buddhism, Islam, following Jesus Christ) are each quite unique. And of these one affirms that there is a personal, loving God who can be known, now in this life. Jesus Christ spoke of a God who welcomes us into a relationship with him and comes along side us as a comforter, counselor and powerful God who loves us.

In Hinduism a person is on their own trying to gain release from karma. In New Age a person is working at their own divinity. In Buddhism it is an individual quest at being free from desire. And in Islam, the individual follows religious laws for the sake of paradise after death. In Jesus' teaching, you see a personal relationship with a personal God -- a relationship that carries over into the next life.

<http://www.everystudent.com/features/connecting.html>

Teacher’s note: The above pages are not the whole of the article. The author will go on to teach a “faith only” invitation to Christianity that we do not endorse or agree with.

Belief in Jesus is a necessity and a valid starting point, but the whole of the salvation teaching in the New Testament also includes repentance (Acts 2:38), confession (Romans 10:9-10), immersion (Romans 6:3-5), and growing in Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

**Who has performed the greatest act of love? Yahweh or Allah**

by Matt Slick

In Islam, what is the greatest act of love Allah has ever accomplished? I asked this question of several Muslims, and I got similar answers: he forgave us of our sins, he gave us families and provisions, he showed us mercy, he gave us the Qur'an. The answers didn't vary much beyond these responses. I found them lacking.

Most Muslims believe that the Bible is not trustworthy, it has been corrupted, the Injeel (gospel) of Jesus has been lost, and the Qur'an restores God's truth to mankind. But, that is another subject to be debated.

In John 15:13, Jesus said, "*Greater love has no man than this, that he lay his life down for his friend."* I have the Nestle Aland Greek New Testament with the textual apparatus included in it. The textual apparatus is the complete listing (per verse) of any textual variants that occur in any of the ancient New Testament manuscripts. Therefore, it is a very easy thing to go to John 15:13 and look at the textual evidence to see if there are any manuscripts at all--anywhere that have any variation on that verse. There are none. In other words, there is not a single manuscript of the more than 25,000 manuscripts of the NT that have a different translation on that verse. Every single one of them says the exact same thing. I will, therefore, conclude that it is an authentic and reliable saying of Jesus.

Again, Jesus said, "Greater love has no man than this, that he lay his life down for his friend." According to Jesus, the greatest act of love is to sacrifice one's life for another. This means that giving one's life for another is a greater act of love than providing food for him, giving him a family, being nice to him or being honest, helpful, or whatever. Self-sacrifice, to the point of death, is the very greatest act of love.

Has Allah performed the greatest act of love? The answer is no. Allah has not sacrificed himself at all. Allah has not died for another. Allah has not loved us to the point of death.

In Christianity, Jesus, who is God in flesh (John 1:1, 14), laid His life down for us. Jesus performed the greatest act of love.

If Islam is true . . .

If Islam is true and Allah is the true God, then Jesus, a creation (according to Islam) has performed a greater act of love than Allah (according to the Bible). A mere man has outdone Allah in love and sacrifice. But, of course, Islam denies that Jesus ever died. They then say that Jesus has not done the greatest act of love. Their denial does not change the fact that Jesus died on the cross as is amply attested to by the eyewitnesses who wrote the gospel. Besides, whether or not the Muslim believes Jesus died on the cross does not change the fact that Jesus told us what the greatest act of love was--and Allah has not done it. Yet, according to Christianity He has. Since Muslims want Christians to adopt Islam, they are asking Christians to give up their Lord who has performed the greatest act of love on their behalf. Why would they want to do that?

If Christianity is true, then God has performed the greatest act of love. If Islam is true, then God hasn't. Which "god" then is more loving: the one who speaks of love or the one who acts out love?

I have found nowhere in the Qur'an where it says that Allah is love. The Qur'an says that Allah loves people, but it never says that Allah is love. By contrast, the Bible clearly tells us that God is love. "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him," (1 John 4:16).

Who does God love?

Does God love all? In Islam, the answer is no. In Christianity, the answer is yes. Consider the following verses from the Qur'an.

 "Whoever is an enemy to Allah and His angels and messengers, to Gabriel and Michael,- Lo! Allah is an enemy to those who reject Faith," (2:98, Trans. Yusuf Ali)

 "Say: Obey Allah and the Messenger; but if they turn back, then surely Allah does not love the unbelievers," 3:32, Trans. Shakir).

Consider the following verses from the Bible

 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life," (John 3:16).

 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.' 44 "But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you 45 in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same? 47 "And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect," (Matt. 5:43-48).

We can easily see the huge difference between the God of Islam and the God of the Bible. In Islam, God does not love all people. In the Bible, God does love all people. In Islam, Allah did not die for the sins of those who were not his. In the Bible, God did do that. In Islam, Allah has not performed the greatest act of love. In the Bible, God did exactly that.

My question to the Muslims is: "What makes you think that I want to give up my Lord, who loves me so much that He would die for me and did die for me, for a god who has not and cannot perform the greatest act of love?

**A Christian Response to Islam**

Lesson 5: Jesus in Islam

**My Notes**

Reference sites:

Comparisons between the five major religions:

<http://www.everystudent.com/features/connecting.html>

Who loves more? Yahweh or Allah?

<https://carm.org/who-has-performed-greatest-act-love-yahweh-or-allah>