

THE ATTRACTION TO ISLAM

ASSESSING WHY PEOPLE CONVERTED TO ISLAM IN THE WEST

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Learning Objectives:

- To gain a clearer picture of why people convert to Islam
- To consider whether they are legitimate reasons or not
- To assess ways to respond to these reasons
- To understand how we can use the attractions of Christianity to counter Islam

INTRODUCTION

- Islam is not perceived as openly evangelistic
- Islam grows primarily due to **biological growth**
- Yet, recently there has been increased **Da'wah**
 - Ahmad Deedat, Shabir Ally & Youtube
- Thus, supposedly much stronger conversion growth
- I needed to assess this growth, and attraction
- Went to **7 cities** (Harrisburg, Lancaster, New York, Montreal (Canada), Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington D.C.)
- Interviewed 30 converts and 7 Imams
- Came up with **12 primary reasons Christians converted to Islam**, which are (in order of importance):

1) ISLAM'S SOCIAL LAWS

- **Comprehensive guide** to life
- Brought about **disciplined living**
- **Women felt protected, ennobled**
- Islam is the only religion powerful enough to stand **against the depravity in society**
 - Prisoners** converting
 - Drug dealers** controlled
 - Islamic schools** an alternative

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

- It's guide to life is an **Arab 7th – 9th century lifestyle**
 - Dress code, Arabic language, penal laws
- The testimony of Muslim countries today defies this '**romantic**' view of Islam
 - Kidron's New State of the World Atlas
 - Frank Kaleb Jansen's 'Quality of Life Index'
 - In every category, Islamic states fail their citizens compared to the West
- While initially **disciplined living**, many prisoners **revert once out of prison**
 - Islam attracts the weakest and most insecure
 - The fact that many converts didn't understand Islamic law is telling
- Power is evidenced using violence (gangs)
- **Schools** can create **isolation**, 'we and them' mentality, & **hot-bed for radicalization**
 - i.e. The 'Trojan Horse' scandal in Birmingham

- **Women** may feel protected, but become **2nd class citizens**
 - Where is nobility in **Surah's 4:3, 24, 34; 2:282, 223, and 230?**
 - See Kidron's statistics on women in Islam
 - Betty Mahmood's 'Not Without My Daughter' = man's control over children

2) THE UNITY OF GOD ('TAWHID')

- **No mystery**, 'Tawhid' **easy to explain** ("*La Ilaha illa-l-lah, Muhammadun rasulu-l-lah*")
- **No intercessor**
- Problem with the **trinity**
 - Jesus at God's right hand implies 2 gods
 - Why did he not go back to his original form?
- God's (Jesus') humanity **dilutes God's power**, and transcendence
 - Assumed God is dependent on humanity

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

- There is **no** reference for '**Tawhid**' in the **Qur'an** (like no 'trinity' in the Bible)
- May be no intercessor, but believers are to **believe 'Allah & his messenger'?** Why?
 - Surah 7:158 and others 'Believe in Allah and his messenger'
 - The '**Shahada**' **includes Muhammad...why?**
 - Muslims problem with an intercessor may be due to a Catholic background
 - The **Priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:5)** is what Protestants believe
 - Translating the Bible into 2,500 languages was to give it to the laity, direct!
- **Trinity** is best explained in **Scripture** (Gen.1:1, 26-27; Ex.33:9-23; Dt.6:4; Mt.28:19)
- **Qur'anic Trinity?** (Surahs 16:13 [Creator] 50:16 [Spirit] 85:22 [Word])
- 'Eternal' names for Allah (**'al Rahman, al Raheem, al Wadud'**), yet needs an object
- Jesus doesn't dilute God's Power, their criticism dilutes God's Power
 - If God cannot become a man, then **their god is too small.**
 - 'God's right hand' is a metaphor for 'having the power of/with God'
 - His original form on earth implies **Sabellianism** (all 3 are included in Jesus)
- **Qur'an's** confused view of the Xtian **trinity**: (Surahs **4:171; 5:72, 75, 116; 6:101**)

3) BROTHERHOOD (TAUGHT AND PRACTICED)

- Only **Christianity** had a problem with **racism, and slavery**
- **Equality, tolerance and broadmindedness**, only found in Islam
- **Hajj** proved the **equality** for all races
- **Christianity is for whites, Islam is for blacks**

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

- The problem of 'Brotherhood' the **Afro-American/Caribbean** church has to face
- Interestingly, the word "**slave**" meant a person who was of **Slavic origin**
- Need to address the racism against '**black faces**' within the Qur'an
 - Surah **3:106; 39:60**
- Need to address the Qur'anic **verses on slavery**
 - Surahs **4:3, 24; 23:1, 5; 33:50** (Allah gives slave-girls for booty)
- Need to address **racism against Africans** within the Muslim scholar's writings
 - Al-Tirmidhi, Al-Jahiz, Ibn Qutaybah, Ibn Sina, Al Muqaddasi, Al-Tusi, Ibn Khaldun, Al-Tabari, Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-Yahsunbi
- Need to show the history of Slavery in Islam
 - From **624 – 2000 Slavery has existed in Islam** (and still does = Cox)
 - Europeans had slaves from 1441 – 1833 AD (**400 years, vs 1400 yrs**)
 - 11 – 17 m.** slaves left the **West Coast**, yet **17 – 20 m.** left the **East Coast**
- Robert Hughes, "The Fraying of America", February 3, 1992 Time magazine quote
- Need to show the **history of the abolition movement**



-1673 (Richard Baxter – Puritan) – 1833 Christians pushed for abolition
 -Qatar (1952), Niger (1960), Saudi Arabia, Yemen (1962), UAE (1964)
 Oman (1970), Mauritania (1981 & 2007 = becomes a crime)

- If the Hajj is a heightened time, what happens **after the Hajj**, when they come home?
- Why do **inner city mosques** in America **not integrate** with **suburban mosques**?
 -Is this the HUP principle, which we use in Christianity, interpreted as racist?
- Trevor Phillips criticism of UK Muslim's isolation & **lack of multi-culturalism**
- The recent killing of the Glasgow Ahmadiyya merchant by a Sunni
- Kidron's statistics on imposing beliefs by the state
- What should we do with Surahs **9:3, 5, 29; 8:39; 47:4** = all against the unbeliever?

4) THE MORALITY OF ISLAM

- **Less immorality in Islam** than in Christianity, especially in the black community
- Only **Islam** can **control immorality**
- **Stricter laws** brought about better morality
- Examples in Africa support this fact
- Morality needed **universal parameters**, which only Islam provides

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

- Christian immorality is a problem the Afro American/Caribbean church needs to address, and correct
- Look at Interpol's **statistics on sex crimes**
- We need to focus on the **morality of the Bible vs the Qur'an**
 -Mt. 5:21-22 [murder vs anger], 27-28 [adultery vs lust], 31-32 [divorce vs fidelity], 33-34 [oath vs swear], 43-44 [hate vs love enemy] – Qur'anic equivalent?
- Differentiate between **European culture** and the Christian church
- **Islam** defines its morality using rules and regulations **based on the Sunnah**
 -It is exemplified by a few celebrities, or the rich & powerful
- **Christianity** defines its morality **based on Christ's example**
 -It is exemplified by millions of **the poorest and weakest**
 -This is known as the '**redemption and lift**' principle
- **Secular Societies** define their morality based on the **51% majority**
 -It is ever fluid, and 'changes with the wind', based on 'political correctness'

5) THE QUR'ANS BEAUTY AND APPLICABILITY

- Almost a **mystical beauty** to the Qur'an
- It was the **seal of the revelations**, protecting and correcting that which came earlier (Surah 3:3-4a)
- It was **unchanged**, and found everywhere
- It was treated with **respect**, unlike the Bible
- It was sonorous, and **pleasant to listen to** (i.e. Surah 24:35-38, and Surah 2:3-18)

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

- **Psalm 23** (or any Psalm) is better sounding than the Qur'an
- If it protects that which comes earlier, why does it contradict the Bible (prophets & Jesus)
- **Which Qur'an?** The Topkapi, Sammarqand, Houseini, Ma'il, Petropolitanus, Sana'a?
- **Surah 6:115; 18:27** = '**None can change Allah's word**' ≠ Dan Brubaker's research.
- It is no longer eternal, sent down, complete, nor unchanged
- It is not **chronological**, nor **sequential**, and has little to **no context** ≠ Bible
- Rote reading & **memorization** of the Qur'an is prized above understanding its content



- Do not Qur'anic '**Giri-Giris**' suggest the Qur'an has supernatural powers = **shirk**?
- Does respect for the Qur'an not **deify it** (i.e. death to anyone who burns it)?
- The power of the **Bible** is in **its content**, not from the paper it is written
- The admiration for the Qur'an was not always evidenced in the way they treated them
- There are many other **books superior to the Qur'an**, even besides the Bible
-See quotes by Reinach, McClintock and Strong, Dashti, and Tisdall

6) THE SIMPLICITY OF ISLAMIC TEACHING

- Deen (pillars) & Iman (beliefs) are **easy to understand** and follow
- **No mysteries**, even a child could understand it
- No trappings, **no liturgy**
- Mosques were **simple and attractive**
- **No singing**
- Women kept behind men in the mosque helps men concentrate on god

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

- Deen and Iman are **9th c. inventions**, and not even in the Qur'an
- **True religion** should not be simplistic, but **full of mystery**
- **Simplistic** theology are proof that they are **Man-made beliefs**
- 'Bells and Smells' and **liturgy** are replete with **deep theology**, and symbolism
- Churches were built to create awe and symbolic space between Man & God
- **Singing** is one of the **best gifts from God** to the world (i.e. the Negro-Spirituals)
- We **no longer keep women behind men**, using Jesus' example
-Why do Muslims have such a problem with women's sexuality?
-Why penalize the women for the men's failings?

7) THE TESTIMONY OF OTHER MUSLIMS

- Roommates, or fellow students
 - The example of an Imam, or teacher (Their honesty and trustworthiness)
- The example of Muhammad
- The example of celebrities

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

- One's **testimony is always powerful**, as we have found in Christianity
- Bad testimonies can cause one to **doubt** (i.e. **ISIS** today)
- **Muslim countries**, or Muslim cultures are **not good testimonies**
 - Look at the **10/40 window**, mostly Islamic, and mostly poor
- Muslims tend to be **more religious 'away from home'** (i.e. S. Arabian roommate)
- **Celebrities** can be detrimental to Islam, and should not define Islam anyway
 - Mike Tyson, Jacques Ellul, Neil Armstrong
- **Muhammad** is a terrible witness for Islam
 - Most modern **biographies** are **sanitized**. Alfred Guillaume's is the best
 - What he did to the **Jews in Medina** between 624-627 AD is awful!
 - His example with **his wives** is awful!
 - His **violence** towards any who criticized him (i.e. Asma bint Marwan) is bad!
 - Muhammad does **not fulfil the four Biblical criteria** for prophet-hood

8) ISLAM'S RATIONALITY

- No **Trinity**
- No belief in the **Incarnation**
- No belief in '**imputed sin**'
- No need for **Redemption**
- No water **baptism, catechisms**, nor complicated traditions
- Evolution in Religion, with **Islam the last and best**



A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

- The **Trinity** defines **true relationship**, which a monad Allah cannot
 - Islam has a trinity (Surahs 16:13; 60:16; 85:22)
- Islam has an **incarnation (Surah 20:10-14)**
- Islam has **'imputed sin' (Surah 7:24)**
- Islam has **redemption**, it's by man, not God ≠ Christianity = by God (See Gen.15)
- Islam has a **baptism** = the **'Shahada'**
- **Christianity**, due to its **deep theology and doctrines**, needs strong catechisms
- Evolution = Law of abrogation
 - What about Ahmaddiyyas, Mormons, JWs, Moonies?
- Islam has **irrational beliefs** as well: virgin birth, Messiah, Isa's name, burning bush
- **1 Corinthians 1:18-19** reminds us of the **foolishness of the cross**

9) THE PRACTICES OF ISLAM

- **Polygamy**
- **Hijab**, or Jilbab
- **Prayer**

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

- Interesting that **only men liked Polygamy**...why not women?
 - What does this say of the **sanctity of marriage?**
 - It goes against Gen 2:24; Mt.19:4; Lk.16:18 = God's plan for families
 - How can a man **treat women equally** (i.e. Ali in Senegal)?
 - Why not allow **polyandry**, for the sake of reciprocity?
- The **Hijab** (Jilbab, Niqab, Chador Purdah) is **archaic and barbaric**
 - Why are **women paying the price of men's weaknesses** (their sin)?
 - What happens to a **woman's identity**?
 - Can this not be **abused for security purposes** (i.e. Cairo dorms)?
- **Prayer is formulaic and mechanical**
 - It only goes one way...**upwards**
 - It allows **no response**, nor any communication between God and Man
 - Why are there only **3 prayers** in the **Qur'an**, and not 5?

10) ISLAM'S SUPERIORITY TO OTHER RELIGIONS

- **Final revelation**
- **Fastest growing** religion
- Christianity prepared for the hereafter, while **Islam prepared for both**, then and now
- Islam had **programs for all spheres of life**: political, social, economic, and moral
 - All founded on religious principles
- Responsible for the enlightenment, & **modern technology**
- **Scientific Exegesis** proves its authority

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

- It is **not the final revelation**... 'Book of Mormon', Charles Taze Russel's writings
- The fastest by **biological growth**, but Christianity is 5% vs **2.5% conversion growth**
- Islam does poor job here and now (i.e. **poor economic and social growth**)
 - The example of **India vs. Pakistan** and Bangla Desh since Independence
- Islam promises **little for women** in the hereafter (Surahs 76 & 78)
- Political = Khilafa, Social = Fiqh, Economic = Islamic finance, moral = polygamy?
- Enlightenment & modern technology = Christianity and the **Protestant work ethic**
- **Science** (embryology from Galen) is **borrowed** and in error
- If so superior, **why are Muslims now migrating to the 'Judeo-Christian' countries?**



11) THE THEOLOGY FOUND IN THE QUR'AN

- **Sin** is understandable and **based on justice** (each pays for their own sin)
- **Paradise** was something to yearn for
- It is **comprehensive way of life** (24/7), which is practical
- It's a theology of **peace**
- Islam allows an **assurance of salvation**

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

- **Sin** in Islam is only **personal (horizontal)**, and has nothing to do with God (vertical)
- Surahs **53:38 & 6:164** say no-one can pay for another's sin
 - What about the **women paying the price for the men's sin?**
 - What about the **man on the cross**, paying for Isa's sin (Surah 4:157)
 - Aren't **we all paying** the price for **Adam and Eve's sin** (Surah 7:24)
- The **Bible** takes sin **very seriously**, claiming it comes from Man's disobedience
- The Bible is clear that **everyone is guilty** (Rom.3:23) and **deserves death** (Rom.6:23)
- The **Qur'an trivializes sin**, suggesting it is not doing rules and regulations
- The **Qur'anic Paradise is very carnal**, and only for **men** (not me)
- Unlike **Christianity**, which gives us **principals**, **Islam** controls using **rules**
- 24/7 rules and regulations are for **children**, not mature adults
- Islam has **no assurance**, **only a hope**, unlike Christianity, where all are assured
- Where are the **peaceful verses** (Surahs 2:190, 256; 5:32; or only 109:6)?
 - Where is there peace in Surahs 5:33; 8:39; 9:5, 29; 47:4-6
 - Where are there any examples of **peace in the past 1400 years?**

12) ISLAM'S SPIRITUALITY

- Purified **against corrupting influence**
- Placed **Allah** where he belonged, **high and transcendent**, and above any needs
- Absolute **dependence of man** on him

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE

- If so purified, why then is there so much '**Folk Islam**' in the Muslim world?
- Allah is so high and transcendent that he is **no longer able to relate to mankind**
 - Likewise, he is under **no moral obligations** either, and is thus pernicious
- Mankind is so dependent on Allah, that Muslims are '**slaves of Allah**'
 - This **predestination** creates **passivism** and resignation to one's fate
- Allah loves only those who do his will, yet **Yahweh loves everyone unconditionally**
- We are not slaves of God, but **Children of God**, with all the rights of a child of God

CONCLUSION: 'Come on home'

Thank you for joining us today

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