

# Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>God Is Moving in the Muslim World!</b> But You Won't Hear It on the Nightly News	
<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Why Muslims?—The Call</b> <i>“Oh No! A Mid-Life Crisis!”</i>	
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>The Lebanese Muslim: “Who Could Pass Up an Offer Like That?”</b> I Thought, <i>“This Muslim Ministry Stuff Is Easy!”</i> Little Did I Know . . .	
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Why Muslims?—The Confirmation(s)</b> The Dream of a Song, the Vision of a Plane, and the Missionary Who Called Me a Coward	
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>The Palestinian Grad Student: “Tim, I Swear to You, I Love Jesus More     Than You Do!”</b> How Would <i>You</i> Respond?	
<b>CHAPTER 5</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>“Look, Ahmed, All These People, Going to the Hell-Fire!”</b> The Pain of a Muslim Zealot—Do We Have the Same Pain?	
<b>CHAPTER 6</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>What Causes a Muslim to Risk It All and Follow Jesus?</b> The Top Five Reasons—Number One Is . . .	

<b>CHAPTER 7</b>	<b>41</b>
Does a Person Have to be a “ <i>Christian</i> ” to Enter the Kingdom of God? Is That What We Tell Muslim People?	
<b>CHAPTER 8</b>	<b>45</b>
Which Do We Promote: <i>Christianity . . . or Christ</i> ? Are We Trying to Convert Muslims to “Christianity”?	
<b>CHAPTER 9</b>	<b>49</b>
He Said, “ <i>I Want Jesus and Muhammad</i> ” Betwixt and Between: The Painful Back-and-Forth of a Muslim Coming to Christ	
<b>CHAPTER 10</b>	<b>53</b>
One Size Doesn’t Fit All Who Is Your Muslim Friend? What Does <i>He</i> or <i>She</i> Believe?	
<b>CHAPTER 11</b>	<b>59</b>
Is Pepperoni Pizza a Problem? You’re Going to Make Mistakes in Ministry to Muslims!	
<b>CHAPTER 12</b>	<b>63</b>
“ <i>I Just Wanted a Tour and a T-Shirt</i> ” Open Doors into the Heart of a Middle Eastern TV Station	
<b>CHAPTER 13</b>	<b>67</b>
I Asked Him, “ <i>Do You Fear Hell?</i> ” The Muslim’s Terrible Fear of the Day of Judgment and Hell	
<b>CHAPTER 14</b>	<b>71</b>
Patriotism or . . . Evangelism? Our Trip to See Thousands of Muslims Pray—in Washington, DC	
<b>CHAPTER 15</b>	<b>75</b>
What Would You <i>Lose</i> So That Muslims Might Truly <i>Live</i> ? Your Clothes, Your Car, Your Health, Your Visa, . . . Your Life?	
<b>CHAPTER 16</b>	<b>81</b>
Who Brought Muslims to America? It’s <i>Not</i> a Trick Question!	

<b>CHAPTER 17</b>	<b>87</b>
<i>“Muslims Are All the Same, Right? They’re All Out to Get Us, Right?”</i>	
A Satirical Slant on a Real Event	
<b>CHAPTER 18</b>	<b>91</b>
<i>“Aren’t You Afraid They Will Kill You?”</i>	
<i>“Yes! We’re Afraid They Will Feed Us to Death!”</i>	
<b>CHAPTER 19</b>	<b>95</b>
<i>“Where’s Your Robe?” He Shouted at Miriam</i>	
Standing Out Like a Sore Thumb at a Middle Eastern Animal Market!	
<b>CHAPTER 20</b>	<b>99</b>
<i>“They Have Sharia Law in Dearborn, Michigan, Don’t They?”</i>	
The Short Answer Is . . .	
<b>CHAPTER 21</b>	<b>105</b>
<i>“Why Don’t You Have an ‘I Love Muslims Day’?”</i>	
Countering a “Pastor” Who Was Sponsoring an International “Burn a Qur’an Day” on 9/11	
<b>CHAPTER 22</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Pens and Purses</b>	
A “Scavenger Hunt” in One of the Richest Countries in the World	
<b>CHAPTER 23</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Christians Visiting Mosques and Muslims Visiting Churches</b>	
Why Don’t You Have a “Good Will Tour” in Your Town?	
<b>CHAPTER 24</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>The Dearborn International Arab Festival: “Christians” Giving Christianity a Bad Name</b>	
They Called Themselves the “Bible Believers”	
<b>CHAPTER 25</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>The Saudi International Student: “That Day, I Was Praying to Meet a Kind American”</b>	
How Many Others Are Still Waiting?	
<b>CHAPTER 26</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Muslim People Say to Us, “You Love Muslims? Really? Why?”</b>	
A Totally New—and Different—“Operation Shock and Awe”	

<b>CHAPTER 27</b>	<b>137</b>
Our Muslim Good Samaritan #1—in Petra, Jordan <i>“Please Wait for Us!”</i>	
<b>CHAPTER 28</b>	<b>141</b>
Our Muslim Good Samaritan #2—in Bethlehem, Israel/Palestine Lost, Alone, and Trying to Get Back to Miriam	
<b>CHAPTER 29</b>	<b>145</b>
Helping Desperate Syrian Muslim Refugees <i>“Thank You for Listening to Our Pain!”</i>	
<b>CHAPTER 30</b>	<b>151</b>
Going to the Yemeni Mosque: <i>“You Have Insulted My Holy Qur’an!”</i> And Then My Friend Said It Was Time to Go!	
<b>CHAPTER 31</b>	<b>157</b>
<i>“Tim, I Just Want to Hit You Right Now!”</i> The Frustration of a Muslim Witness	
<b>CHAPTER 32</b>	<b>161</b>
Signs and Wonders Near Ramallah, Israel/Palestine When Healing Opens the Heart of a Muslim Person	
<b>CHAPTER 33</b>	<b>165</b>
<i>“Can We Both Be Right about What We Believe?”</i> In Jerusalem: Speaking the Truth . . . in Love	
<b>CHAPTER 34</b>	<b>169</b>
Do You Look Different to Muslim People? <i>“Your Smile Entered My Heart . . . The Grace of God Was Radiating through You”</i>	
<b>CHAPTER 35</b>	<b>175</b>
<i>“I Love You Too Much . . . to Be Silent”</i> “Friendship Evangelism” Should Mean Friendship <i>and</i> Evangelism	
<b>CHAPTER 36</b>	<b>179</b>
<i>“You Are Sadder over a Lost Game than a Lost Soul!”</i> What Causes <i>You</i> to Be Sad?	

<b>CHAPTER 37</b>	<b>185</b>
<b>Many Muslims Are Secretly Seeking</b> <i>“Excuse Me, Sir, . . . Could I Have Five Minutes of Your Time?”</i>	
<b>CHAPTER 38</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>When a Terrorist Attack Happens, How Do You Respond to the News?</b> What Is a Jesus-Like Response?	
<b>CHAPTER 39</b>	<b>193</b>
<i>“They Wanted to ‘Arrested’ Me . . . for Fasting”</i> Look for Opportunities—Not Excuses—to Be a Witness	
<b>CHAPTER 40</b>	<b>199</b>
<i>“Can You Believe It? God Loves the World!”</i> How One Iraqi Muslim Friend Grew to Love John 3:16—and Died with It on His Lips	
<b>CHAPTER 41</b>	<b>205</b>
<i>“If You Go to Iraq, You Will Never See Your Grandchildren Again”</i> Three Voices Telling Me Not to Go	
<b>CHAPTER 42</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>Washing the Dirty Little Feet of Jesus</b> Learning about the Power of Servant Evangelism in Ethiopia	
<b>CHAPTER 43</b>	<b>219</b>
<b>The Holy Spirit Said, “Be Quiet!”</b> Trying Too Hard and Talking Too Much	
<b>CHAPTER 44</b>	<b>223</b>
<i>“God Would Never Allow His Prophet to Be Killed! It Doesn’t Make Sense!”</i> He’s Right, You Know . . . That Kind of Love <i>Doesn’t</i> Make Sense	
<b>CHAPTER 45</b>	<b>227</b>
<b>Islam and Christianity: Is There Just a Thin Line between Us?</b> <i>“The Difference between Us and You Is No Thicker than This Line.”</i>	
<b>CHAPTER 46</b>	<b>235</b>
<b>The Holy Spirit and the Moroccan Rug Salesman</b> Is There a “Silver Bullet” in Outreach to Muslim People?	

<b>CHAPTER 47</b>	<b>239</b>
<i>“I Fear for Your Soul on the Day of Judgment!”</i>	
The Bold and Loving Words of a Muslim Man to Me	
<b>CHAPTER 48</b>	<b>243</b>
<i>“Are You Having ‘Success’ in Your Ministry to Muslims?”</i>	
Johnny Appleseed, Muslims, and a Different Metric: “One Step Closer”	
<b>CHAPTER 49</b>	<b>249</b>
What Happened to Our Muslim Friends? They <i>“Disappeared”!</i>	
Islam Does Not Let Go of Its People Easily	
<b>CHAPTER 50</b>	<b>255</b>
Links in the Beautiful Chain of One Muslim’s Salvation	
Even Someone Picking up Trash for the Glory of God!	
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>263</b>
<i>“Throw Us Out, Lord, Throw Us Out!”</i>	
May God Throw Some People Out of The Church . . . and into the Harvest Fields!	
<b>APPENDIX 1</b>	<b>269</b>
A Glossary of Terms Commonly Used by Muslim People	
<b>APPENDIX 2</b>	<b>275</b>
Islam’s Origin, Practices, and Beliefs—a Simple Overview	
<b>APPENDIX 3</b>	<b>283</b>
Finding Muslim People Where You Live + Helpful Conversation Starters	
<b>APPENDIX 4</b>	<b>289</b>
Cultural Do’s and Don’ts in Reaching Out to Muslim People	
<b>APPENDIX 5</b>	<b>293</b>
Suggested Guidelines for Interacting With Your Muslim Friend	
<b>APPENDIX 6</b>	<b>299</b>
Heart-to-Heart Interfaith Dialogue Questions for a Group of Christians and Muslims	

<b>APPENDIX 7</b>	<b>301</b>
A Multitude of Resources to Help You With Outreach to Muslim People	
<b>APPENDIX 8</b>	<b>315</b>
Is Islam Inherently a <i>Violent</i> Religion?	
<b>APPENDIX 9</b>	<b>317</b>
Different Evangelistic Strategies Regarding Outreach to Muslim People	
<b>APPENDIX 10</b>	<b>323</b>
A Few Words About <i>Vision</i> and <i>Calling</i>	
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	<b>327</b>

# Introduction



## **God Is Moving in the Muslim World! But You Won't Hear It on the Nightly News**

---

**W**e met Kareem in 2017 when we were Christmas caroling in a Muslim neighborhood in Michigan. As we approached his well-kept home on an unusually warm December afternoon, we were singing our Christmas carols with the joy of the Lord! Kareem's mother happened to be outside the house with his sisters. When she saw and heard us, we noticed that she immediately began to cry. What had we done? We knew the vast majority of Muslims—even in the US—don't celebrate Christmas. But we didn't anticipate that our carols about the birth of Jesus could elicit such a sad response!

As this Muslim woman invited our group of about ten carolers into her large, attractive home, we quickly found out why she was touched by our song. She and her husband informed us that their sixteen-year-old son, Kareem, was in the battle of his life against lymphoma. The whole family needed encouragement, and the Holy Spirit's choice of our particular Christmas carol had touched her heart.

Kareem's parents graciously seated us in their spacious living room and encouraged us to sing more Christmas carols for the whole family. As we did, their Arab hospitality was on display as they brought us all manner of refreshments. You would have thought we were members of this generous Lebanese Muslim family, but we had never met them before that day!

Before we left, we took several pictures together. We also had a time of

prayer for Kareem—prayers offered up to the Father in the name of Jesus—which this Muslim family clearly appreciated.

One year later, we took another group Christmas caroling in that city, and we remembered Kareem and went to his home. Again, his parents welcomed us in, gave us Arabic sweets, and listened to our songs. We discovered that Kareem was fighting cancer in a hospital in our town an hour away.

I was blessed to visit Kareem three times in that hospital, the first time with a cancer survivor who understood what he was going through and could bring unique encouragement. On my second visit, it was readily apparent that Kareem's organs were shutting down and that, apart from a miracle, he didn't have long to live. I prayed and shared the loving words of Jesus from Revelation 3:20 with Kareem:

*“Look! I stand at the door and knock.  
If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in,  
and we will share a meal together as friends.”*

REVELATION 3:20, NLT

I told Kareem that I felt Jesus was knocking on the door of his heart and encouraged him to invite Jesus into his heart. His response? He said in a very weak and tender voice that I will never forget:

*“Jesus, come into my heart.”*

That was Friday. I saw him one more time before he died on the following Tuesday.

On that Tuesday, I was able to share the Revelation 3:20 “God-story” with several of Kareem's Muslim relatives and friends in a hospital waiting room.

They treated me like family.

---

God is moving in the Muslim world.

*He really, really is.*

Yes, more Muslims have become followers of Jesus in the last fifteen years than in all the previous fourteen centuries of Islam . . . *combined!*

But you won't hear this on the nightly news, or even in churches.

Most Christians *don't hear* about how our awesome and glorious God is

reaching Muslim people around the globe with His redeeming love through avenues such as seeing Christian satellite TV and websites, reading the Bible in one's own language, receiving an answer to a prayer offered by a Christian, finding practical help from believers in a time of need, and most of all—enjoying a relationship with a genuine follower of Jesus.

Most Christians *don't know* a Muslim person. In thirteen years of ministry to Muslims in the US—and traveling to nine different Muslim majority countries—we have met so many Muslims who are a whole lot like us: they just want to make a living, raise children and grandchildren, and live in peace. They are generally kind, hospitable, decent people like Kareem's family. But so many Christians don't know this.

Most Christians *have never met* former Muslims (BMBs—believers from a Muslim background), as we have. We have been blessed to meet Syrian refugees who have abandoned everything to gain Jesus and whose stories sound like something from the book of Acts in the Bible: dreams and visions of Jesus; healings; food multiplying; money appearing; and yes, persecution.

There is so much good news happening in the Muslim world. If only Christians could hear about it! Perhaps then we wouldn't be hearing comments such as these:

- *“I don't want to hear anything about Muslims in our church.”*
- *“I don't think we need to assimilate to Muslims; they need to assimilate to us.”*
- *“If I see a Muslim woman in the mall, I'm not going to speak to her unless she speaks to me first.”*
- *“I don't want to visit a mosque with you, even for evangelism. I don't want to be spiritually contaminated.”*
- *“I don't want to eat their food or visit their restaurants with you.”*
- *“They want to take away our rights, our Constitution. They want to put in Sharia law.”*
- *“I have a duty to be concerned about my grandchildren and their safety.”*
- *“I wish we would just nuke the whole Middle East and be done with it.”*

The fact is that Muslim people have come to North America—to big cities, and even to smaller towns. They come as immigrants who pay their own way to find a better life. They come as international students to our college campuses for a better education. And they come as refugees attempting to es-

cape real, horrific, life-threatening danger from extremists. We need to think about how we are going to respond to these Muslim people who come here:

*Will we be like Jonah?  
Will we run, . . . hide, . . . and hate as he did?*

Sadly, so many Christians in our churches are much like Jonah: either angry or afraid of Muslims, especially since 9/11, and also since the rise of ISIS. We have all turned on our televisions and seen news about radical Islam and terrorist attacks. These stories are not coming just from the Middle East. They originate in places like Australia, France, Denmark, Canada, and within the US. These events trigger *fear* and *anger* as our natural responses to Muslims. They can even create in our minds unfair and untrue stereotypes of *all* Muslims as terrorists.

As followers of Jesus, we must ask ourselves:

*As Muslims come to North America, will we be like Jonah,  
or will we be like Jesus?*

*Will we be like the One who came to seek and to save the lost?*

We believe we must be prepared to be a light to the Muslim people who are coming to our lands. Many of them have lived in the terrible darkness of war, disease, poverty, starvation, and incomprehensible loss. We also need to be somewhat informed about their religion (Islam), their prophet (Muhammad), and their book (the Qur'an).

In this book, *Loving Your Muslim Neighbor*, we have two primary goals:

1. *Attitude:* We want to share our journey with you of how God has grown a love in our hearts for Muslim people—how He has changed our attitudes toward them. When you have *God's* heart for Muslims, it changes everything. We hope and pray that reading this book will help you love Muslim people as well, and to move from being even the least bit angry or afraid of Muslims to being compassionate and confident witnesses to them.
2. *Action:* In this book we provide some practical evangelistic tools and strategies for you to reach out to Muslim people with the good news of Jesus. Attitude change is vital, but we invite you to

take action steps as well—however large or small—in loving your Muslim neighbor.

Our sincere desire is that this book of God-stories of our experiences with Muslim people—and our accompanying teaching points and questions to ponder—will help to accomplish these two goals.

Each of our stories reveals how God sovereignly put us—a very unlikely couple—in places and situations with Muslims in ways that have beautifully changed our lives. These stories about real people and real events—from the Midwest to the Middle East—have given us just a tiny glimpse into God’s John 3:16 love for Muslim people.

We invite you to prayerfully open your heart and mind as you read our stories—and learn from what God has taught us—in the pages of this book.

Let’s grow together in *loving our Muslim neighbor*.

---

## QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- When you hear the word *Muslim*, what are the first words that come to your mind?
- When Jesus, our Good Shepherd, hears the word *Muslim*, what words do you think are the first to come to His mind?

*“I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold.*

*I must bring them also.*

*They will listen to my voice,*

*and there will be one flock with one shepherd.”*

JESUS IN JOHN 10:16, NLT

*“And people will come from all over the world—*

*from east and west, north and south—*

*to take their places in the Kingdom of God.”*

JESUS IN LUKE 13:29, NLT

*“Dear brothers and sisters,*

*the longing of my heart and my prayer to God is for [Muslims] to be saved.*

*I know what enthusiasm they have for God, but it is misdirected zeal.*

*For they don't understand God's way of making people right with himself.*

PAUL IN ROMANS 10:1-3A, NLT

(WITH OUR SUBSTITUTION OF THE WORD "MUSLIMS")

## CHAPTER 1



# Why Muslims?—The *Call*

*“Oh No! A Mid-Life Crisis!”*

---

I was a very burnt out pastor in 2006.

The calling to get into evangelism or missions full time was bursting inside me. I felt like a missionary trapped inside a pastor’s body—and I couldn’t get out!

We were pastoring a lovely group of people, but I just had to get out of the four walls of the church and be with unbelievers—first and foremost, unbelievers from other cultures. Every mission trip to Mexico, Haiti, the Ukraine, Russia, or Sri Lanka that I went on just confirmed this calling more and more.

Also, every book I read about vision, gifting, and ministry passion was another confirmation of the “arrowhead”—the direction—toward evangelism and missions that I had received in college in 1977. There had, however, been a big problem: God would not release me to that calling! For almost thirty years He simply would not give us a firm leading, along with an inner peace, about leaving pastoral ministry. There were no specifics to grab hold of from Him: no people group, no country, no organization. There was no defined tip to the arrowhead of this strong evangelism and missions calling.

I don’t get depressed very often, but I was depressed. It became increas-

ingly difficult to get out of bed and go into my church office every day, and Miriam had to help me do that. I had no energy, and there was nothing in pastoral ministry that excited me or gave me life except for preaching.

I asked my elders at our small church for a ten-week sabbatical to figure things out. I had been there as their pastor for over twelve years, and they kindly granted it to me. A few weeks before that sabbatical started, a piece of mail came across my desk at the church that caught my eye . . . and then compelled my heart. There was a seminar coming to Dearborn, Michigan, about reaching out to Muslims with the gospel. When I saw that brochure, somehow, I knew—I *knew*—I *had* to be at that seminar.

The four-day seminar in June of 2006 was called “Legacy,” and it totally changed our lives. In that long weekend God supernaturally planted a love for Muslim people in my heart. I couldn’t explain it then, and I can’t explain it now. God used every speaker to touch me and call me to outreach to Muslim people. Muslims were not really “on our radar” at that time, but in that seminar they became front and center.

As Miriam and I drove around Dearborn those four days, I couldn’t help but notice all the Arab Muslim people sitting on their porches in the early evenings with their children or grandchildren playing in the front yard. I yearned to know them. There was something about them that drew me. There was something fascinating about them and their culture (I am not speaking of Islam but of the Arab culture). Even then, I began to long for these Muslim people from Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen to come to know the Jesus of the Bible.

For dinners during the Legacy seminar, we went out to local Middle Eastern restaurants and ate mostly Lebanese food. We absolutely loved that food and felt so comfortable with the Arab Muslim servers and clientele. I was getting more and more “hooked” on reaching Muslims for Jesus! (Can God use *food* to alter the course of your life? In our case, the answer was a resounding *yes*—especially if it is Lebanese food!).

At the seminar on Thursday, we were told that on Friday night we would have several options to choose from: attend the yearly Arab Festival, take a tour of a local mosque, or go out to eat at a Middle Eastern restaurant. But there was one more option. A man named Mike, who goes door-to-door every Saturday in Dearborn sharing the gospel, stood up and asked if anyone would like to come with him on Friday night to do that. There were about two hundred people at that seminar on reaching Muslims for Jesus. I figured that the majority of them would want to go talk to Muslim people about

Jesus! But to my utter surprise, only two of us raised our hands to go door-to-door to share the good news with them.

Nevertheless, on Friday night only Mike and I went into the Muslim neighborhoods of Dearborn to share Jesus (I'm not sure what happened to the other guy who raised his hand, but he didn't show up!). We knocked on several doors, but people did not come to the door or were not at home. As we kept walking, we saw a large Arab man, Abdul, sitting on his front porch. He invited us into his home, and what happened next astounded me. After a time of conversation about the good news, Abdul—a Lebanese American Muslim—prayed to receive Jesus!

Yes, God had a plan. He knew just how to “hook” me into Muslim ministry that long summer weekend in 2006: through a compelling seminar, a large Muslim man named Abdul, delicious food, and a beautiful people I had never met before—Arab Muslims.

I went home at the end of that seminar and told Miriam:

*“This is it. I found it!  
I found the tip of the arrowhead of missions and evangelism  
that I have been looking for all these years.  
It’s Muslims!”*

Of course, Miriam was elated. Wouldn't any wife be excited if her husband came home and said he was leaving his job to reach out to Muslims? On the contrary, my dear wife responded with:

*“Oh no! A mid-life crisis!”*

But to her everlasting credit, Miriam started on that journey with me, and I can never thank her enough. Within a year we resigned from pastoring that beloved little church and launched full time into simultaneously raising support and reaching out to Muslim people.

I was ecstatic about this new change in our lives and the fulfillment of a vision I had had for nearly thirty years to reach the nations. Miriam was who she has always been—an impressively strong and solid woman who has joined me in ministry wherever God has called us.

This was no exception.

---

## QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- If someone were to ask you to define your ministry vision or calling in life right now, how would you answer?
- If you could do anything for the Lord and His kingdom and were not limited by time or money, what would you do?
- Why do you think God sometimes gives a person a vision and calling but then waits so long to fulfill it?

*“For still the vision awaits its appointed time;  
it hastens to the end—it will not lie.  
If it seems slow, wait for it;  
it will surely come; it will not delay.”*

HABAKKUK 2:3