

How NOT To Convert Muslims To Christianity

On August 5th, an explosive device was detonated at a suburban Minneapolis mosque as people were preparing for morning prayers. Although the windows of the imam's office were shattered, fortunately, no one was killed or injured.

Various news outlets that reported this attack also cited an increasing number of such incidents targeting Muslims.

"We came to this country for the same reason everyone else came here: freedom to worship," Yasir Abdalrahman, a worshiper at the mosque, told the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

Since the perpetrator of this crime has not been caught, it's impossible to know the motive behind the attack. However, it's apparent over the past number of years some people feel justified in attacking Muslims either because of 9/11 or the threat of terrorism by radical groups like ISIS.

First of Christians should reject, renounce and repudiate all such attacks. Furthermore, it's good to be reminded that we will not convert Muslims or change the hearts of people through threats, intimidation, or physical assaults.

The Bible says, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

The gospel is designed to change people's minds and hearts through preaching the message of God's grace, love, and mercy (Ephesians 2:1-10). It also teaches God's punishment on the ungodly and those who fail to accept His message (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9) Through the gospel, as Paul put it, "we persuade men" (2 Corinthians 5:11).

Conversion is something that occurs by choice, not by force. Those who heard the first gospel sermon on Pentecost were "cut to the heart" when they were convicted of their sins. Peter said they were guilty of rejecting Jesus who was declared to be the Son of God by virtue of His birth, life, death, and resurrection. As a result, 3,000 "gladly received the Word" and were baptized into Christ (Acts 2:41).

While we firmly believe that Muslims worship the wrong God, Allah, revere a false prophet, Mohammad, and appeal an untrue source, the Quran, the way to convert them is NOT through violence. Nor is it by pejorative rhetoric or a blanket indictment of all Muslims because of the actions of a fringe group.

I know of Muslims who have been converted. But that conversion was affected by teaching the true nature of Jehovah God, the mission of Jesus Christ to save people from their sins, and by appealing to the authority of the Bible, the Word of God.

May we in our interaction with Muslims, and all unbelievers follow this biblical admonition: “Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone” (Colossians 4:5-6).

In the final analysis, Muslims will be converted in the same way everyone is — by the gospel. “The power of God to salvation” (Romans 1:16).

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