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Christian Apologetics & Islamic Duplicity

This newsletter is the second in a trilogy which addresses the three-pronged approach Truth For Muslims takes in confronting the challenge of Islam. It follows part 1, “Muslim Evangelism,” in which John Marion discussed the need of all mankind for the Truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and specifically how to witness to Muslims. In this issue, he and Ben Adams explain what is meant by “Apologetics” and how it responds Biblically to the theological challenge of Islam. Part 3, “Accountability,” will discuss political Islam and the 2008 Presidential election.

What Is Apologetics?

A good question deserves a good answer. The first task is to introduce the idea of apologetics to those who are unfamiliar with it, and to define it as Scripturally as possible. The best place to begin is where the word is actually used by the Bible, in I Peter 3:15. But first, some context:

But if indeed you suffer because of righteousness, you are blessed.

I Peter 3:14a

Therefore apologetics is not primarily a way to avoid persecution or counter derision.

And do not fear the fear of them, and do not be troubled; but sanctify [set apart] Christ as Lord in your hearts—always being ready to give an **answer** [ἀπολογία] to every one asking you for a **reason** [λογός] concerning the hope that is in you;

I Peter 3:14b-15

So neither is apologetics the response of *fear*, i.e., giving an answer because of threats or terror. It is not “apologetic” in the sense of being self-deprecating or weak-kneed, nor is it begging forgiveness for having given offense—“apologizing” for the Crusades,

intolerance, etc. Repentance and reconciliation are good, but they are not apologetics.

Giving an Answer

So the preceding context of this verse tells us what apologetics is *not*. The word itself tells us what it *is*. The term “answer” (or “defense”) in verse 15 is the Greek ἀπολογία (*apologia*), from the preposition ἀπο (*apo*) “against, contra, opposed to” + the noun λογός (*logos*) “word, reason, story, argument, logic.”¹

Apologetics, then, is literally a “counter-argument”: a reasoned, logical, carefully argued *answer*—an answer not to mockery or threats or derision,² but rather a strong, polite answer to a genuine question from a skeptic or seeker. It is not admitting wrongdoing, but rather defending what is right. It is argument, but it is not quarreling. It may sometimes take the form of debate, but it is not an attempt to destroy an opponent, nor is it a mere intellectual exercise. The next verse gives us the purpose of apologetics, and thus the way in which it should be carried out:

—yet do this with gentleness and fear, having a good conscience, in order that while you are spoken against, the ones abusing you may be shamed by your good conduct in Christ.

I Peter 3:16

Here for a third time is the word fear, φόβος (*phobos*)—but a new kind of fear, a fear now sanctified by the Lordship of Christ and by “the hope that is in you.” This is not the same fear of verse 14: it

¹ Incidentally, this is the same *logos* with which John begins his Gospel: “In the beginning was the Word.” The meaning of *logos* is somewhat different in ἀπολογία, but the Greek shows the vast richness that John hints at when he identifies Jesus as *the Word* of God.

² Proverbs says much about the futility of trying to correct a mocker.

Truth For Muslims is bringing a comprehensive, biblical response to Islam in America

Evangelism – Apologetics – Accountability

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is a fear that does not fear persecution; a righteous and courageous fear; a holy dread of the majesty of God and a recognition of the awesome responsibility of speaking *persuasively* to the nonbeliever.

The Reason for the Reason

And why ought we do this? “*In order that the ones abusing you may be put to shame by your good conduct in Christ.*” There is no room left here for spiteful language or contentiousness, shabby straw-man arguments, or Bible-thumping. Indeed apologetics rightly practiced is a form of doing good to our enemies, and thereby heaping burning coals of shame on their heads.³ The task—the very difficult task—is to hold an irrefutable argument, and present it with such love and grace that the opponent is shamed, persuaded, and ultimately drawn at least one step nearer to God.

Apologetics is answering the critics, meaning those outside the faith. It is not about intramural debates over interpretations, but about defending the core doctrines of Christianity: the fundamentals.

The Rational and the Personal

The process of persuasion and conversion occurs on many levels inside the mind and soul, and apologetics does not address those which are emotional or instinctive. One can be argued into a position, but not into an entire upheaval of one’s worldview and belief system. Instead, apologetics addresses the rational parts of the soul and provides arguments why Christianity is *reasonable*, or why it is a better way to live than some other faith—or maybe

³ See Matt. 5:43-45 and Rom. 12:19-21.

it simply tears down the bad reasons people have for *not* following Christ. It strengthens the faith of those Christians who hear it, and it frequently plays a necessary part in the evangelism process for those who are yet unsaved.

We know Jesus Christ, the Person Who Is the Truth. Truth is more than merely rational or factual because it starts as *personal*. Our task is to convey the fullness of Christ to everyone who needs Him, and part of that lies within the realm of rational discourse.

However, knowing the truth is not the same as having an argument for it, and having an argument is not the same as having an answer, and having an answer is not the same as understanding the question.

Apologetics demands of us all these things. It begins with Christ, and ends by pointing to Him, but like the rest of the Christian life, it is quite a lot of hard work along the way.

A Different Doctrine

Apologetics in response to Islam requires some unique strategies (which will be discussed below), but it often begins from the standard arguments that have to be made against basic atheism or the cults. The facts that Jesus is the Son of God and that He died on the cross and rose from the dead are at odds with Islamic teaching. Muslims often aggressively attack these key doctrines of the Christian faith.

This refusal to accept the biblical view of Jesus is clearly stated in Islam’s theological texts. Over the centuries, Muslims have developed various arguments to attack Christian doctrine, especially the historical beliefs of the Church about Christ.

The clearest example of this attack is the rejection of the death and resurrection of Christ. One Quranic verse which is especially used by Muslim theologians when denying the crucifixion is Surah 4:157:

...they [the Jews] said (in boast),
“We killed Christ Jesus
The son of Mary,
The Messenger of Allah”;—
But they killed him not,
Nor crucified him.
Only a likeness of that
Was shown to them.⁴

⁴ *The Holy Qur-ān* (Al-Madinah: Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur-ān), 267.

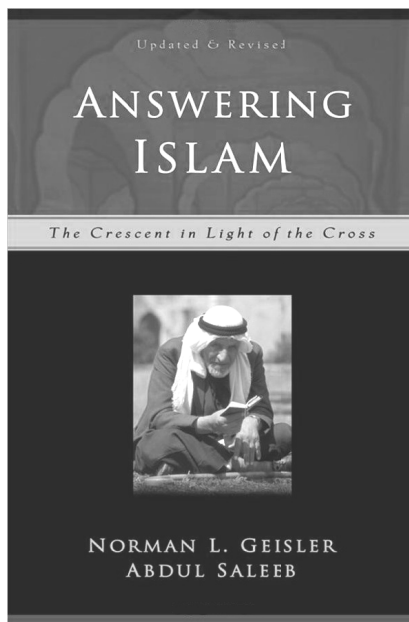
PRACTICAL TOOLS

Many Christian apologetic resources are readily available.

One good book is *Faith Has Its Reasons: An Apologetics Handbook*, by Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman Jr.

For apologetics against the claims of Islam, the best source is always answering-islam.org.

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An excellent basic primer is Norman Geisler & Abdul Saleeb’s book, *Answering Islam: The Crescent in Light of the Cross*. It is available from Truth For Muslims.

The commentary on this verse by the Saudi editors of the Quran plainly states both the Christian and Islamic positions on the death of Christ.

The Orthodox Christian Churches make it a cardinal point of their doctrine that his life was taken on the Cross, that he died and was buried, that on the third day he rose in the body with his wounds intact, and walked about and conversed, and ate with his disciples, and was afterwards taken up bodily to heaven. This is necessary for the theological doctrine of blood sacrifice and vicarious atonement for sins, which is rejected by Islam.⁵

Thus Islamic teaching recognizes *and denies unambiguously* this most crucial and central of Christian doctrines: the substitutionary death and bodily resurrection of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Instead, someone else was made to look like Jesus and “miraculously” substituted in *His* place.

History and Prophecy

The Muslim denial of Christ’s death and resurrection can easily be answered with historical facts. Jesus Christ is not a mythical character but a historical figure who actually lived and died and rose from the dead. The circumstances of his life and death are verified by historical record. The 1st-century historian Josephus documented the account of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, but the clearest historical account is found in the New Testament, recorded by those *who were there*—men like the Apostle Peter, who wrote:

We did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory: “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased”—and we ourselves heard this utterance being borne out of heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic word made more certain, to which you do well to take heed, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever

⁵ *The Holy Qur-ān*, 267-8.

borne by the will of man; but men borne along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you....

II Peter 1:16-2:1

We know Christ lived, died, and rose again because of the testimony of hundreds of eyewitnesses—many of whom accepted death rather than deny what they had seen.⁶ We know it also because of the thousands of Old Testament prophecies which He fulfilled during His life and by His death—prophecies which cannot be made to apply to Mohammed or any other historical figure.

But while every Biblical prophet points to Christ Jesus, Islam seeks to set up a new prophet who points to *himself*.⁷ He reinterprets holy Scripture as he wills, and sets up a new teaching to supersede it. He did not claim to be “borne along by the Holy Spirit,” but rather to receive dictation from an angel. Here is what Scripture says to that:

But even if we or an angel out of heaven should preach to you a gospel besides what we have preached to you, let him be accursed!

Galatians 1:8

Islam, however, attempts to slither past this condemnation as well.

Changing the Text

When confronted with the clear words of Scripture, Islamic doctrine counters the New Testament evidence of Christ’s death and resurrection by claiming that Christians have changed the Bible to fit their own doctrine!

Although conservative Bible scholars have answered the claims of liberal critics, Muslim debaters point toward the old works of liberal scholars as “proof” that the Bible has been changed, or they twist the meanings of conservative scholars by taking their words out of context.

For example, the *Index of Quranic Topics* quotes the Encyclopædia Britannica,

Yet as a matter of fact, every book of the New Testament with the exception of the four great epistles of St. Paul is at present,

⁶ In fact, the word “martyr” comes from the Greek for “witness.”

⁷ Richard Braun has developed this point and presents it in his class on Mohammed. Contact Truth For Muslims for more information about that class and others available for churches and Christian schools.

more or less the subject of controversy, and interpolations are asserted even in them.⁸

The Muslim theologian or apologist is not interested in getting to the bottom of the scholarly debate, but only in bolstering his own position. So intent is he on driving home the point of “even the Christians admit the Bible has been changed,” that he will use any available source, good or bad, current or dated. Evidence which contradicts his predetermined position is dismissed—usually by changing the subject and appealing to other arguments.

Shameful Truth and Noble Lie

One such dodge to avoid the actual historical evidence for Christ’s death and resurrection is to evoke sympathy toward the Islamic position. The Muslims claim that they honor Jesus more than the Christians! It is the Christians, the argument goes, who bring dishonor to Jesus by claiming that he died a shameful death; while the Muslims honor Jesus by claiming that Allah saved Him from being crucified.

It is important to remember that honor and shame are extremely important in the Islamic world-view. Within this mind-set, truth is much less important than honor.⁹ In a sense, *honor*—rather than facts—establishes truth. Therefore, since it is honorable to say that Allah saved Jesus from a shameful death, it must be true. In other words, any fact which is perceived as shameful should not be believed, stated, or tolerated.

So while Muslims do “honor” Christ in a way, they make the mistake of doing it *on their own terms*—on their “own interpretation”—and therefore they make Him out to be a liar. In the process of “honoring” Jesus (by sparing him the shame of death), they even flout God Himself, who says of Christ,

“This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; *listen to Him!*”

Matthew 17:5

Islam fails to realize that it was *essential* for Christ to die a shameful death, precisely so our shame could be taken away forever. This is the confusion that arises when a false prophet speaks by his own human will, and ignores the Word of God.

⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 12th Ed., vol. 34, p. 643, quoted in *Index of Quranic Topics*, comp. Ashfaque Ullah Syed (Washington, D.C.: IFTA Office, 1998), 32.

⁹ This is why cartoons (and teddy bears named “Mohammed”) cause riots, and why any criticism can be called “hate speech.”

Indeed, the entire Muslim world-view fosters deception. The Muslim community perpetrates the lie—meanwhile reinforcing the “group-think” mentality—and eventually pushes it outward onto non-Muslims because that which is most honorable to say is better than that which is true. So while Islamic theology actually removes Jesus from the high position recorded in the Bible, Muslims say—and really believe—that they are honoring Jesus with their claims about him from the Quran.

Dismantling the Deception

The perfect example of pseudo-honor mixed with deception is the reprinted newspaper ad by CAIR shown on the next page. (Observe the picture closely: it’s from Jerusalem.)

This well-crafted ad carefully selects a verse from the Qur’an which speaks well of Jesus, and then says that Muslims *respect and revere* him. Note that it does *not* say they “believe in him” or that they believe in the Christian Scriptures. Note also that while it calls Jesus a “prophet” and “messenger” from God (both true), he is not the “Son of God,” nor is he the *greatest*: he is “one of the greatest” (because Mohammed is the last and greatest prophet). The Quranic verse says “Jesus is one of those brought near to God”; but the Bible says that we, ourselves, draw near to God—through Christ.

...we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.... Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace....

Hebrews 4:14, 16

But Islam has no basis upon which a Muslim can approach Allah with confidence. Islam has no room in its doctrine for grace. Islam has no High Priest, no mediator between God and man. And this is where the outright lying begins. Note the last paragraph, about Jesus’ teachings of “love, peace, and forgiveness.” This is no more than telling the vaguely Christian American audience what it wants to hear. The *truth* is that the only “peace” in Islam comes when the whole world is under the thumb of Islam—peace is not a state of the heart, but a social circumstance. The *truth* is that “Allah the merciful” only loves and forgives those who have already submitted to him—there is nothing in Islam that can say “love your enemies” or “forgive those who trespass against you.” And CAIR knows it.

Do Islam and Christianity have things in common? Of course. Unlike the atheists, we both believe and

assert that God exists. Unlike the polytheists, we assert that there is only one God. But the purpose of an ad like this is not to point out legitimate commonalities; rather, it seeks to persuade the reader to believe that “Islam is another one of the world’s great religions—just like Christianity or Judaism.” It does not seek to convince us that “Muslims are people too” (which is true); rather, it seeks to convince us of the falsehood which says that Islam is compatible with Christianity.

A Comprehensive Problem

To the western mind, these kinds of tactics look like duplicity. It seems like a cheat, like shabby argumentation, to jump from religion to sociology, or from logic to emotion, or from politics to violence. But the eastern mind does not make these distinctions. Accordingly, Islam is more than a religion: it is a wholistic system, a totalizing and comprehensive way of life. Thus the Islamic argument against Christianity is never limited to theology.

Samuel Zwemer, a Christian missionary to Muslims in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (who has been called the “Apostle to Islam”) wrote, “The strength of Islam is its composite character.”¹⁰

Muslim leaders therefore are able to use theological arguments not only against Christianity but also against social problems, modes of dress, forms of government, or anything they label un-Islamic. They are able to switch the form of debate easily and seamlessly from religion to sociology to politics to anything else to advance the cause of Islam.

The American mind tends to categorize and separate topics. This works to the Muslim’s advantage. When the Muslim promotes an idea that the American perceives as a political issue, and then disagrees, the Muslim can easily shift it into a

MORE IN COMMON THAN YOU THINK...



The old city of Jerusalem

“Behold (O Mary!)’ The Angel said, ‘God has chosen you, and purified you, and chosen you above the women of all nations. O Mary, God gives you good news of a word from Him, whose name shall be the Christ (Masih or Messiah), **Jesus** son of Mary, honored in this world and in the hereafter, and one of those brought near to God.”
(Holy Qur’an, 3:45)

JESUS

Like Christians, Muslims respect and revere Jesus. Islam teaches that Jesus is one of the greatest of God’s prophets and messengers to humankind.

Like Christians, every day, over 1.3 billion Muslims strive to live by his teachings of love, peace, and forgiveness. Those teachings which have become universal values remind us that all of us, Christians, Muslims, Jews, and all others have more in common than we think.



CAIR, America’s largest Islamic civil liberties group, is nationally headquartered in Washington D.C. and has 25 regional chapters nationwide and in Canada, including Anaheim, California

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religious and theological topic. This puts the American at a disadvantage because of his self-imposed reluctance to attack other religions or his total ignorance of religious and spiritual issues.

Thus it’s extremely important for not only Christians *but also non-Christians* to understand Apologetics, especially those who are working on national security against Islamic terrorism. One cannot understand Muslim terrorists without understanding Islam as a comprehensive system, including how that religion truly compares to Christian and Jewish beliefs.

Apologetics is Not Enough

Since Islam is more than a religion, Apologetics is not an adequate response on its own. However,

¹⁰ Zwemer, Samuel M., *The Influence of Animism on Islam: An Account of Popular Superstitions*. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1920), 1.

Christianity is also more than just a religion, and it is relevant as far more than merely a set of doctrinal facts.

The last issue of *Truth Messenger* explained the Evangelism component of the 3-fold response. While Evangelism is a practical effort to give Muslims the truth by reaching out to them with the love of Christ, Evangelism combined with Apologetics is still not enough. The two alone offer very little in response to the political & social threat of Islam. There is no “salt” to purify or preserve the culture.

The next issue of *Truth Messenger* will explain the public “Accountability” component of the 3-fold response. Accountability is also crucial, but neither it nor Apologetics can offer Muslims love—or a way to escape the trap of Islam. That takes Evangelism.

Evangelism and Accountability provide plenty of opportunity for Christians and Muslims to talk openly, either in interfaith dialogue or political and social dialogue. But without Apologetics, they are left with an anemic and assailable theology: easy prey for shrewd Islamic apologists.

What is needed to fight the comprehensive system of Islam is a comprehensive, Biblical response.

A Comprehensive Response

Islam is confronting American law & society, Church doctrine, and all of Western civilization with its 1,400-year-old, well-developed, subtle ideology. It is a robust system, and cannot be countered by the West’s current pluralistic, post-modern hodge-podge of disassociated and contradictory beliefs and practices. Only a system equally comprehensive, but *more* robust and *more* coherent, will survive in the face of Islam. This system will have to be either a better lie... or the truth.

Jesus Christ is the Truth. Biblical Christianity is the truth about Him. When extended through a whole worldview and lived out faithfully by the Church, this truth carries the power to defeat Islam, because it carries the power of Christ.

Apologetics is a piece of the solution, but the solution itself is the Gospel. The three parts of the Comprehensive, Biblical Response *are* the Gospel,

applied against Islam in three distinct ways. This is why each of the three areas of the response is utterly essential. Each is biblical, and each has a unique role to play. *Together*, they offer a truly comprehensive answer to the “composite character” of Islam which Zwemer recognized 100 years ago.

Quick Tips: Using Apologetics

Most Muslims, like many Christians, are not theologians and often have a superficial knowledge of their own faith. Therefore it should not be assumed that their statements are deliberate and reasoned attacks on Christianity; nor should apologetics be used to attack Muslims as people. But here are some ways it can and should be employed.

- Education. Apologetics is useful to train people in the differences between Islam and Christianity.
- A Clear Stand. A good apologetic argument should be a strong, uncompromising, bold defense of our faith. It is not inflammatory or offensive, but there is no room for nuanced dialogue. Committed Muslims often respect Christians who stand up for their faith, even if they still disagree.
- Limitations. Apologetics can be used effectively with knowledgeable Muslims who attack Christianity. Additionally the truth can be presented to individuals who are seeking the truth because they are ready to listen and they expect answers to their genuine questions. However, the effectiveness of apologetics can be marginal with Muslims who simply want to argue.
- Dangers. Apologetics wrongly applied on cultural Muslims who aren’t theologians could lead to “winning an argument but losing the soul.” Therefore it’s best to use apologetics in genuine debate with knowledgeable Muslims or honest seekers of truth. Because Muslims value honor so highly, humiliating and defeating them with superior logic can make them more determined Muslims rather than leading them to the truth.

The Role of TFM

One of the major tasks of Truth For Muslims is to help teach and train the Church in contra-Islamic apologetics. TFM has approximately 12 hours of PowerPoint training seminars available to churches or other groups. Please visit truthformuslims.com/classes.htm for detailed information, or write to request a brochure. A partial listing of these classes includes: *Islam 101* (beliefs & practices of Muslims; the Five Pillars of Islam), *A Comprehensive, Biblical Response to Islam in America* (3 critical areas), *The Challenge of Islam*, *Jesus in the Qur’an*, *Mohammed*, *Shari’ah*, *Divisions Within Islam*, and several *Practical Evangelism* classes and workshops.

A Story

When I first started dialoging with Muslims during the Reagan administration, I decided to set up a book table on campus. I stocked the table with Bibles and Christian literature in Muslim languages. This attracted Muslim students to talk and sometimes argue with me.

One day a Muslim girl saw a Bible in her own language. She excitedly picked it up and told me that Muslims and Christians believe the same things about Jesus. I *ought* to have asked “What do you mean by that?” She was telling me that she believed Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead!

But I knew this was contrary to the teachings of Islam, and so—instead of leading her further toward the truth about how Christ can save her from her sins—I argued with her. I tried to convince her that Islam rejected the death and resurrection of Christ.

She argued back and told me that I was wrong: she believed Jesus died and rose again. I persisted in my argument to the point where she eventually became very agitated, put the Bible back down on the table... and walked away.

I had proven my point and won the argument but it was at the cost of not getting the Bible into her hands so she could read it in her own language. She was ignorant of her own religion and open to the Gospel, but my arguments shut the door of opportunity for her to discover and fully embrace the truth.

I have promised never to make this mistake again.

– John Marion

The Danger to Christendom When Christians Respond in Ignorance

For the past several months, Truth For Muslims has been monitoring an important situation in which many Christian leaders have been divided by Islam. The fallout has now taken a definite enough shape that it can be reported on. The following introduction (slightly edited) is taken from Answering-Islam.org:

On September 12, 2006, Pope Benedict XVI delivered a speech at the University of Regensburg in Germany which also contained some comments on Islam that elicited protests by Muslims from around the world.¹¹ It is no surprise

¹¹ See [Benedict XVI's Speech on Faith and Reason](#), *Truth Messenger*, Vol. 2, No. 3, Fall 2006. Article available at:

that Muslim leaders came to the conviction that public critique of Islam from such a high-ranking and influential person needed a public response. On October 12, 2006, 38 top Muslim scholars and clerics published an *Open Letter to the Pope*.¹²

A year later, on October 11, 2007, a larger group of 138 Muslim scholars, clerics and intellectuals sent another open letter, entitled *A Common Word Between Us and You*, to Pope Benedict and the leaders of other Christian denominations.

This latter declaration has received responses from many people and institutions. The most highly publicized response was written by a group of four academics from the University of Yale, entitled *Loving God and Neighbor Together*. This response has been endorsed by over 300 Christian leaders from around the world. But it has also received a good measure of critique.

The Muslim letter, *A Common Word Between Us and You*, is a carefully crafted document, containing subtlety that is not easily detected, and some statements may mean something different than they appear to say at first glance. It is a large document which cannot be evaluated in only a few paragraphs.¹³

Some of the 300+ Christian leaders who endorsed the Yale letter are well-known evangelicals. The letter accepts the invitation from the Muslims for “interfaith dialogue” but in itself offers no apologetic of Christian faith in response to the Islamic apologetic.

The Muslims boldly proclaim the prophethood of Mohammed in their document, but the Yale response offers nothing of substance about Christian doctrine. The Christian document even makes the dire error of acknowledging the Islamic position by referring to Mohammed as the “Prophet”! To a Western Christian this may seem like just a courteous use of a title, but to the Muslim mind it is viewed as capitulation and as weakness.

Among the Christian signatories are a host of well-known names:

Pastors:

- Rick Warren
- Bill Hybels

www.truthformuslims.com/articles/braun_marion%202006_10_benedict_xvi_speech_on_faith_and_reason.htm

¹² Cf. Answering-Islam’s response, to which John Marion contributed, available at: www.answering-islam.org/Letters/letter_to_pope_by_38.htm

¹³ From www.answering-islam.org/Letters/common_word.htm

- Brian D. McLaren

Leaders of Christian organizations:

- Leith Anderson (President of the National Association of Evangelicals)
- George Verwer (Operation Mobilization)
- Rick Love (Frontiers International)

Representatives from many schools:

- Wheaton College
- Biola University
- Catholic Theological Union
- Fuller Theological Seminary
- Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley
- Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
- Princeton Theological Seminary
- Columbia International University
- Yale, Harvard, & Georgetown

and:

- Former congressman Mark Siljander, who was recently indicted on charges of helping channel money to Islamic charities with terrorist ties.

On the other side, there are a number of Christian leaders who have spoken out about the unwise decision of those who signed the letter. Among the critics are people like:

- Pastor John Piper
- Chuck Colson (founder of Prison Fellowship and BreakPoint ministries)
- Theologian William Lane Craig
- Dr. Patrick Sookhdeo (a former Muslim and Anglican priest who specializes in persecuted church issues in the Muslim world)
- Anglican Bishop Dr. Michael Nazir-Ali
- Arab Bible scholar Rev. Bassam M. Madany

In the wake of the backlash, two signatories from Wheaton and several others have removed their names from the “Common Word” document.

The purpose of pointing out this controversy is not to condemn those who signed the letter, but to show the trouble that can be caused when the good motives of peacemaking and “interfaith dialogue” fail to be integrated with all three components of the comprehensive, biblical response. Many of these men and institutions have a robust theology and a clear understanding of Christian doctrine; but their failure to develop and implement a comprehensive response to Islam has led them to be involved with something that could actually put future generations of Christians at a disadvantage. They have not ceded victory, but they have unnecessarily and unwisely consented to play on the enemy’s turf.

It should also be noted that some of the evangelicals who signed the letter are not ignorant of Islam and its methods to neutralize opponents. Their strategy is unclear. In some cases it appears that they

are hoping “dialogue” will ease the pressure off of persecuted Christians in Islamic countries.

But what is certain is this: every time it has sought peace and security by downplaying the uniqueness and divine supremacy of Jesus Christ, the Church has lost the power it sought to influence culture. By the grace of God, that will not be the result in this case.

2008 Presidential Voter Guide

Truth For Muslims is currently researching what the presidential candidates have said about Islam. The research will demonstrate the extent to which each of the candidates understands how Islam impacts a variety of important issues, such as immigration and homeland security.

The results will be published in a voter guide later this year which will be available by mail and also online at www.truthformuslims.com.

What’s Next

The Summer issue of *TM* will address the third part of the Comprehensive Response: Accountability, speaking out in the public forum to hold leaders accountable for their words about Islam. The Fall issue will deal with the presidential election and the connection between Barack Obama and Islam.

Newsletter Survey

We value your feedback about the *Truth Messenger* newsletter. Please fill out a survey about this newsletter at: truthformuslims.com/surveys.htm. We want to know how we can improve the quality of this publication.

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