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# DISCIPLESHIP IN ISLAMIC SOCIETY

BY S.P. SCHLORFF



**DISCIPLESHIP**  
**IN**  
**ISLAMIC SOCIETY**

**Edited by**

**Samuel P. Schlorff**

**NORTH AFRICA MISSION**

To  
FREDERICA,  
whose sacrifice and encouragement  
made possible  
my participation in this project

and to  
THE MANY COLLEAGUES,  
whose help in this project  
and whose dedicated service  
are an inspiration to all

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Numbers thus <sup>4</sup> above the line of text refer to the notes at the end of the book.

The number 3, as used here, represents the Arabic letter ayn, a guttural sound usually accompanied by the vowel 'ah'.

The diacritical marks usually used to accurately represent Arabic long vowels and sounds for which there is no English equivalent have been omitted to simplify typesetting.

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## PREFACE

Sociologist Peter Berger has pointed out that a cognitive minority can maintain its unpopular ideas only if it has a strong community structure. Should that minority be Christian and in an Islamic society, its viability will be determined to a great degree by the strength of the followers of Christ that compose the group. A disciple may be defined as a convinced follower of Jesus Christ. He is one who is committed to wholeheartedly applying through the Holy Spirit the principles of his faith to every part of his life. Or he could fit the two-fold definition of Ephesians 3, that of being strengthened through the power of His Spirit in the inner man so that Christ dwells in his heart through faith, and that of knowing the love of Christ in all its dimensions.

An Islamic society usually responds to Christians in their midst by either squelching their witness, or as in Egypt, isolating them to a great degree from the main stream of society. A faithful disciple, however, is one who learns to overcome this, and thus, by the very nature of things, becomes a serious challenge to Islam. The disciple will seek to use the avenues open to him, and, in love, work to change the opinions, values, and behaviour of his compatriots, and direct them to a living relationship with the triune God.

This book seeks to face the question head on: «How do you produce men and women devoted to Christ in an Islamic society, who will not only stand their ground, but will also begin a movement of spiritual reproduction that produces a truly biblical community, maintaining its position as well as reaching out for further growth?» It is obvious from the very minimal success of planting churches in such a society that missions have not been very successful in finding the key to producing disciples. The book begins with a clear objective of identifying those qualities to be developed in a Muslim-convert church, and from there, moves on to an examination of the major obstacles which lie in the way. A third section then gives us a fairly complete overview of what a church could be like in such a society.



## *Preface*

Sam Schlorff, from direct involvement in North Africa, and from years of grappling with these issues, is well qualified, both theologically and experientially, to write on the subject. This book which he has put together offers no fast, easy route to success in disciple-making. It is, however, significant, I believe, to point out that some of the theological issues which are often relegated to the cultural sphere in other studies are here faced on their ground. This gives this work particular value.

We in the North Africa Mission believe that God has determined that there should be disciples also in the 50 or so Islamic nations now existing on the globe. We do not believe the task to be fruitless, but are constantly challenged by our Lord's own words when He said, «Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go forth, and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain.» If God desires to use me or you to fulfill His purpose for the Islamic nations, it may well be asked of us whether or not our own discipleship is equal to the challenge. May these pages encourage and inspire as well as inform and instruct all who read them.

A. J. Wiebe  
General Director  
North Africa Mission

## INTRODUCTION

«As the Father has sent me, I am sending you» (John 20:21)

«Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age» (Matthew 28:19,20)

After the resurrection, Christ commissioned His followers to make disciples from among all «nations.» Disciple-making among the unreached peoples of the world is a very demanding task; I will mention just three of its requirements. The first requirement is the faithful preaching of the Word of God (Acts 20:32); this is the key to raising up mature national churches. A well-known missiologist has written, «The Church is both created and preserved by the Word . . . The secret of Nevius' system<sup>1</sup> lay in recognizing and using the functional nature of the Word and of the Church . . . The young Church (in Korea) grew because of the Word, not because of some inherent spiritual faculty which developed through its own natural power.»<sup>2</sup> This is the educational dimension of disciple-making.

Considerable attention must also be given to gathering the new believers together and to helping them become responsible self-sustaining churches; «national» (or indigenous) local churches in some form are required in order to conserve the fruit of evangelism. It has been well said that «the Church is the barn into which the grain is gathered, but it is also the granary from which the seed is to be taken and sown into the field.»<sup>3</sup> This is the social dimension of disciple-making.

Finally, if the young national Church is to be rooted *both* in the Word of God *and* in the society of which it is a part, the Word must be taught in such a way as to clearly distinguish Biblical doctrine from ideologies and cultural practices in that society which are inimical to true discipleship. Another missiologist writes:

## 2 Introduction

It must be clear that if conversion is to come about, and if there is to be a conscious and intelligent rejection of the old, and an acceptance of the new, then to really be able to make the change, what is new must be portrayed in such a way that it is possible to compare it at every point with the old. It is only then that something new is awakened in the human heart. Only then is there really good ground to hope for a new theological development, in which the young Christians will bear witness, on the basis of the gospel, against religious conceptions to which their world has been bound for centuries.<sup>4</sup>

This is the cultural and ideological dimension of disciple-making.

In view of these exacting requirements, ten years ago the North Africa Mission's Field Council initiated a project for developing Christian education materials for use in Church establishment in Islamic North Africa. This book is a result of that project. It represents the collective efforts of a number of people who have contributed to its content, or whose constructive criticisms have helped to shape its present form. However, the editor, as manager of that project, is alone responsible for the finished product, except for Section III as explained below.

A simple, three-part process was followed in developing the materials.

- Step 1 - Define the objectives of disciple-making in an Islamic context in terms of discipleship qualities to be developed in Muslim-convert churches of North Africa.
- Step 2 - Identify and analyze the principle obstacles to discipleship in an Islamic context and define the theological and apologetical dimensions of the task.
- Step 3 - Present basic Biblical doctrine in terms which clarify the requirements of Christian discipleship in this Islamic context.

These three steps correspond to the three sections of the present book. Section I contains material adapted from Field papers written between 1970 and 1978. Section II was drafted by the editor in 1970, and then was set aside uncompleted so that Section III, the ultimate objective of the project, could be completed and published. This second section was not revised and readied for publication until late 1978; it was then published in the *Westminster Theological Journal* Spring 1980 issue (Vol. XLII No. 2), and is here

reprinted by permission. Section III was prepared by a two-man committee appointed by the North Africa Mission Field Council, using a draft written by the editor as a basis. Elements of the Prologue and of Part Two (concerned with Church life) were adapted from the «Standard of Doctrine and Practice» which is appended to the book *THE INDIGENOUS CHURCH* by Melvin Hodges<sup>5</sup>; otherwise the Section III is original. It was translated and published in trial editions in French (1972) and in Arabic (1973) under the title, *GUIDE TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND LIFE FOR EVANGELICAL CHURCHES*. It has been used extensively to disciple and train North African Christians to take their place in the nascent North African churches. The English text was published in the *BULLETIN OF CHURCH DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH AFRICA* (Vol. III, No. 3, 1971), and has long been out of print. The present edition of the *GUIDE* incorporates a number of corrections and several changes that have intervened, and is published by permission of the North Africa Mission Field Council.

Believing that these collected papers present a coherent approach to the «contextualization» of the Christian faith in Islamic society, the North Africa Mission is pleased to make them available to the Church in book form. We have sought to make the presentation of Christian doctrine in Section III representative of a cross-section of evangelical Christianity by eliminating narrow, sectarian distinctives. Above all, we have sought to make the needs and interests of the North African churches our first priority. We are under no illusions that we have fully attained our lofty goals and trust that our failures will meet with forgiveness and with constructive feedback on the part of our readers.

It has often been said that the task of expressing the Christian faith in terms which set it off from the religious conceptions of Islam actually belongs to Muslim-convert churches, and not to Westerners. We heartily agree. But this is a very demanding theological task which requires thorough preparation. We therefore believe it to be our responsibility to do the spadework and to prepare the young Church to accomplish this task. This is what the present book is seeking to do. If it succeeds in making a contribution to preparing North African churches to undertake this task, it will have achieved its objective. Above all, as we consider all that has transpired during these ten years, including the very fact that these materials are ready for publication, we can only join in the song of redeemed creation:

«To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise  
and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever.» (Revelation 5:13)  
for it is He that has brought it all about. Amen.

Samuel P. Schlorff  
Upper Darby, PA  
September 15, 1980

## **Section I**

### **THE OBJECTIVES**

**Discipleship Qualities to be Developed  
in Muslim Convert Churches**

## Discipleship Qualities to be Developed in Muslim-Convert Churches

It is significant that Jesus defines disciple-making in terms of two parallel activities: setting apart the would-be disciples unto the name of the Triune God (literally, «baptizing them unto the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit»), and teaching them to *obey* Jesus' commands. This means that Jesus defines discipleship in terms of *identification* with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through baptism, and *obedience* to the commands of Christ, who is «God manifested in the flesh» (I Timothy 3:16). Both of these are repeatedly stressed by Christ and the Apostles in the New Testament (e.g. Acts 2:38; John 14:15,21; Romans 1:5).

Jesus' definition of discipleship implies that faith involves much more than giving mental assent to doctrine. Such is the non-Christian view of faith. Genuine faith is identical with discipleship; it involves giving our total allegiance to God as to a personal being, and showing our allegiance by obeying the commands of Christ. True faith is, of course, based on a knowledge of elementary Biblical doctrine. However, if doctrine does not lead the believer to act in obedience to Christ, it falls short of the objective, which is to make disciples. Jesus said: «If anyone would come after me he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me» (Luke 9:23). «Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple» (Luke 14:33).

## A. OBJECTIVES ON THE LEVEL OF THE INDIVIDUAL DISCIPLE

As we sought to define the objectives of disciple-making as reflected in the Bible, we did so primarily in terms of the discipleship qualities to be formed in the life of the believer. Discipleship does not depend on the believer's intellectual ability, nor on his understanding of the Word of God, nor even on his spiritual gifts, but rather on his will to obey Christ. Here are the qualities which Christian workers in North Africa felt should represent the *PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES OF DISCIPLE-MAKING*.

1. The disciple manifests his allegiance to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit through:
  - (a) committing himself to serve God and to fulfill His will for his life (Matthew 6:28-34)
  - (b) submitting to Christ's rule over every area of life: marriage, friends, time, reputation, studies, money, family, work, recreation (Luke 9:23-25)
  - (c) submitting to the Holy Spirit's work of cleansing sin from his life, renewing him spiritually, and empowering him for service (Romans 8:9-17; Acts 1:8)
  - (d) being baptized as a sign of his allegiance (Acts 2:38; Ephesians 5:22-24; 6:1-2)
2. The disciple demonstrates a thirst for God through daily fellowship with Him in prayer (Psalm 55:17; Daniel 6:10; Acts 2:42; Philippians 4:6).
3. The disciple demonstrates a desire to study the Word of God, the Bible, and is faithful in reading, studying, and reflecting on the Word and in living by its requirements (Joshua 1:7-8; 2 Timothy 2:15; Matthew 28:19).
4. The disciple manifests a burden for the salvation of others and a special sense of responsibility for reaching his own family for Christ.
5. The disciple seeks opportunities to increase his skill in communicating the message of Christ to those who are lost (1 Peter 3:15,16).
6. The disciple manifests his commitment to the Body of Christ by participating regularly in the local fellowship of believers, by partaking of the Lord's Supper, by exercising his spiritual gifts and assuming his share of the work and the spiritual ministry. He also demonstrates his love, unity, and loyalty to the fellowship (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24,25; Romans 12:4-8).
7. The disciple demonstrates a servant heart in sincerely ministering to those in need (Philippians 2:3-5).

## 8 *The Objectives*

8. The disciple is able to discern those ideals and practices of non-Christian society which are contrary to Biblical teaching, and he abstains from participating in cultural practices which are sinful, which have an unbiblical religious significance, or which would cause his brother to stumble (Acts 19:18,19,26,27; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; Romans 14:13,21).
9. The disciple endures persecution for the name of Christ (Philippians 1:29; 1 Peter 2:19-21).
10. The disciple demonstrates the attitude of a learner; he is open to exhortation and to correction, and is willing to be taught (Matthew 18:3,4; Ephesians 5:21; 1 Peter 5:5,6).
11. The disciple applies to his life the teachings of the Word concerning proper relationships with his spouse, children, parents, the opposite sex, and with society.

After reading this list, it may seem to some that if one must possess all these qualities in order to be a disciple, discipleship is beyond their reach. Some of you may be discouraged and disheartened, wondering if you ever were, or even can be, a disciple at all. Such a feeling is not unusual.

We must never, though, confuse discipleship with being perfect or sinless. No disciple can claim to be perfect or sinless, nor will we ever be such until at the resurrection God gives us a new body free from the power of sin and death. Did not the Apostle Paul himself confess:

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus . . .

Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body (Philippians 3:12-14,20,21).

Being a disciple means, then, not that I am perfect, but rather that I am pressing on to perfection because God is faithful and keeps His promises; I can take courage in the certainty that one day I will be perfect like Christ. In sum, discipleship is possible; it is the joyful privilege of every believer, not because of my faithfulness but because GOD is faithful (Lamentations 3:22-23).



Consider now some of the other *BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES OF THE DISCIPLE*:

1. The disciple is not left to fend for himself as an orphan, but, as Jesus promised, the Holy Spirit Himself comes into his life as «Counselor» to teach, guide, and encourage him, and to strengthen him with His supernatural power (John 14:16-17,26; 16:7ff).
2. The disciple enjoys peace with God, forgiveness of sin, and the cleansing of his conscience (Romans 5:1; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:14; 1 John 1:7-9).
3. The disciple «bears fruit» in his life, the «fruit of the Spirit» (John 15:1-8; Galatians 5:22-24).
4. The disciple is a «fellow-worker» with Christ, sharing in Christ's ministry to the world in fulfillment of His divine mission (John 20:21; 1 Corinthians 3:9).
5. Finally, as already indicated, the disciple will share in the resurrection of the redeemed and will receive his Lord's commendation: «Well done, good and faithful servant!» (1 Corinthians 15:35-37; Matthew 25:23).

## B. OBJECTIVES ON THE LEVEL OF LOCAL FELLOWSHIP OF DISCIPLES

So far we have only mentioned the qualities essential to discipleship on the level of the individual Christian. There is, however, another dimension which is also important: the corporate and social dimension. By this is meant the corporate responsibility toward God which rests on disciples as a group within the society (locality, tribe, people, or nation) of their origin.

We have already seen that discipleship involves identification with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through baptism. Indeed, baptism signifies that the disciple is united to the Triune God through the Holy Spirit who lives in him. An important and necessary consequence of the disciple's union with the Triune God is his union with the «Body of Christ,» the Church. In 1 Corinthians 12:13 we read, «We are all baptized by one Spirit into one body» (literally, «into one Spirit we all were baptized unto one Body,» i.e. so as to form one Body).<sup>6</sup> In other words, when the disciple gives his allegiance to the Triune God, as expressed in baptism, he is identified (or united) with God by faith; at that moment the Holy Spirit takes up His

abode in that disciple, thereby making him a member of the Body of Christ. Commitment to the Triune God therefore implies commitment to Christ's Church, and involves participating in the life of the local fellowship of believers and taking one's share of the responsibility for the Church. This is the corporate and social dimension of discipleship.

Fulfilling this corporate responsibility of discipleship is relatively simple when there is an indigenous local church (i.e. a self-sustaining local Christian community rooted in the society of its origin) in which one might participate. When such a mature Church does not yet exist within a society, fulfilling this responsibility is difficult for the average disciple; it is no longer a matter of participating in something that already exists, but rather in helping to create something that does not yet exist. It is especially difficult to do this in the Muslim world where few, if any, Christian communities have ever been permitted to take root in Islamic society itself; Christians in Islamic society have always been segregated into isolated sub-cultures separate from, and subject to, Islamic society. This constitutes an extra obstacle to be overcome.

A part of the difficulty also resides in the fact that, although the «Church» is indeed present spiritually in every society in which there are disciples, this does not automatically make those disciples an «indigenous» church. An indigenous church is very much like a human being, whether we are thinking of the local Church or the national Church. It is indeed created when people respond to the call of God and give their allegiance to Jesus Christ. But after its birth, it needs time (which will vary from group to group) to become mature enough to assume responsibility for itself and to establish itself in the society of its origin. Until it does this, its continuance will be uncertain, and it cannot be considered self-sustaining or rooted in that society. In sum, then, to be a disciple in Islamic society means doing one's part to ensure that the fellowship of disciples of which one is a part becomes a self-sustaining Christian community rooted in Islamic society.

What is it that is needed for a group of disciples to become such a self-sustaining indigenous community? To begin with, let us mention the «Marks of a True Church» as defined by evangelical theologians. These are generally three:

1. The preaching of the Word of God
2. The administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper
3. The faithful exercise of discipline of the members in maintaining purity of doctrine and holiness of life — all of this in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ.

While these marks are important, they deal primarily with the question of how to distinguish genuine churches from those which are churches in name only. They tell us what qualities are necessary for a group to be truly Christian. However, we also need to know those qualities which are necessary for it to be rooted in its society and self-sustaining.

Recently, Christian workers in North Africa studied this question carefully and listed the following five marks of an «established indigenous church.» These are:

1. Baptized national Christians
2. Recognized national elders
3. Christian families (i.e. both spouses are national Christians)
4. Regular meetings for ministry of the Word, in a place not provided by foreigners
5. Group responsibility for its own finances, spiritual activity, discipline, administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and witness.

These are the qualities, then, which they feel should be manifest for a church to be considered sufficiently rooted in society and sufficiently responsible to be able to continue on its own. If a majority of the members of the group are foreigners who will one day return to their homeland, or if few national believers have identified themselves with Christ through baptism, the group is not yet an «established» indigenous church; likewise, if the leadership of the group is not in the hands of national Christians, the possibilities of its continuing in that society as a national church after the foreign elders have left are slim. National Christian families are another stabilizing element. If all the national Christians in a group are single, this indicates that the church will not be stable enough to continue on its own. Also, if the church does not meet regularly — at least once a week — for worship and the teaching of the Word of God, the possibility of its continuity is again reduced. Finally, if the group, through its national leaders, does not have full responsibility for itself (i.e. for its members, its finances, its ministries, and its place of meeting); that is, if any of these are under the control of non-national leaders, it is not yet fully established in that society. Consequently, if any one of these marks is lacking, the church is not yet an established indigenous church.

We should mention another mark of an «established indigenous church,» which is no doubt obvious but nevertheless needs stating. It is harder to define because it is more intangible and subjective, but it is no less important

than the others. It is this quality which makes the new church truly «indigenous» to the society of origin. We shall define it as a general continuity of customs and social practices between the new church and its society of origin. Without this socio-cultural continuity, the new church will be viewed by the society of origin as being «foreign» and out of place; i.e. if the new Christians abandon most or all of their social customs and adopt the «foreign» customs of those who brought them the Gospel, the society of origin will no longer consider them to «belong» to it.

Achieving this socio-cultural continuity involves many complex issues which we cannot discuss. We should note, however, that there is as much danger in retaining social customs uncritically as there is in abandoning them too hastily. The fact is that the practices of non-Christian society may be sinful or may carry religious meanings antithetical to the Bible; yet because they frequently serve some useful social function, to abandon them outright would create a void. Thus the church often finds itself in a dilemma, not knowing the proper course of action to take concerning these practices. Guidance for solving this dilemma is found in Part Two of Section III of this book, which states: «The Church, in submission to the teachings of the Bible and to the direction of the Holy Spirit, shall decide the best way to replace such customs with others which have a Christian significance» (See III, Part Two, B 5, page 72)

In brief, the mature indigenous church can neither uncritically follow nor reject such local customs. It should instead subject all customs and practices to the scrutiny of the Word of God, and should only adopt them, or else adapt or replace them, in such a way as to remain faithful to the teachings of the Bible.

To conclude, these qualities of the mature disciple and of the mature church are the specific objectives of disciple-making in an Islamic context.

## **Section II**

### **THE OBSTACLES TO DISCIPLESHIP IN AN ISLAMIC CONTEXT**

**Theological and Apologetical Dimensions  
of Muslim Evangelization**

## THE CHALLENGE FACING US

One of the challenges facing those engaged in Muslim evangelization is to initiate the development of what Harvie Conn has called «a new kind of apologetic for reaching Islam.»<sup>7</sup> For far too long evangelical missions have been limping along without an effective apologetic to Islam. Since the demise of the nineteenth-century polemical method, known as «The Mohammedan Controversy,» no significant Christian apologetical work for Muslims has been written.

The nineteenth-century polemic, epitomized in, and inspired by, Karl Pfander's *Balance of Truth*<sup>8</sup> still followed very closely the theological method of Thomas Aquinas, who argued that in dealing with Muslims and pagans who do not accept the authority of Scripture «we must . . . have recourse to the natural reason, to which all men are forced to give their assent.»<sup>9</sup> From the supposedly neutral standpoint of the natural reason, they undertook a rigorous comparison of Islam and Christianity so as to prove the «inferiority» of the former to the latter as concerns doctrine, morals, etc. The object of this vast polemical literature was to bring Islam «crashing to the ground» and to build from the rubble a new Christian edifice using selectively the «Partial Truths» of Islam, salvaged and cleansed of Islamic untruth.

When that literature was quietly withdrawn from the market about fifty years ago, the old polemical method had quietly undergone an inner transformation. In place of works for Muslims in their various languages, works were now published in English on how to reach Muslims and deal with their hang-ups.

In some circles, the theme was changed from «Bring Islam crashing to the ground» to «Fulfillment, not Destruction.» However, the arguments used to cause buds of truth in Islam to flower into the full Christian Truth suspiciously resembled those of the older polemicists, except for the aggressive attack of the latter. After all, what essential difference is there

between the method of the natural reason and the fulfillment method; both build on some extra-biblical «common ground» of Truth available to the autonomous man, to which both sides are thought to give assent, and, in fact, both of these themes are found in the earlier polemicists.

In this new situation, evangelicals, for the most part, have concentrated on the positive presentation of the Gospel and avoided «the stale polemics of the past» except when pressed. In that case, they have judiciously used the old standard polemical works or simply reworked their arguments (e.g. Pfander's *Balance of Truth* and Tisdall's *Sources of Islam*<sup>10</sup> were recently reprinted in Arabic and English). Stymied by the sterility of the old polemics, many evangelicals seem to have concluded that all apologetics are out of place in Muslim evangelization.

The thesis of this book is that what is really needed is the «new kind of apologetic,» called for by Harvie Conn which «will address the whole man as covenant creature standing now in rebellion before God. . . .»<sup>11</sup> Is not the real problem the polemical method which has been so widely used rather than apologetics *per se*? After having assumed the autonomy of man standing upon some «common ground» of Truth, how is it possible thereafter to call him to account for what he has done with God and His revelation? Furthermore, because the supposed neutrality of the natural reason is really a fiction, the old polemic has more often stimulated in Muslims a defensive reaction against unjust comparisons than it has repentance from sin and unbelief. While the positive presentation of the Gospel is certainly needed, its effectiveness will be minimal unless there is a vigorous challenge to Islam on the theological level. Such a confrontation on theological issues is necessary to undergird both the evangelization of Muslims and the contextualization of the new church and its theology.

Can we afford to vacate the intellectual arena in a day when Islam is mounting a polemical counter-attack? One of the Moroccan Theological Education by Extension students recently made a strong plea for help in the area of apologetics in response to a questionnaire from the Theological Education by Extension Center for North Africa. He concluded his plea thus: «I will never accept that the Center flee its duty under the pretext that it is only concerned with teaching the Bible and not with confronting other religions. Any country at war which does not have sufficient arms against those of another country is exposed to defeat; its army may even go over to the other side!»

In this study I shall attempt to measure the theological and apologetical dimensions of Muslim evangelization, and, in doing so, to indicate the general lines of the new kind of apologetic which I feel is needed.

As concerns apologetic method, I have completely broken with that of the old polemic and that of the newer fulfillment school, although some of their arguments and insights are still valid (e.g. Pfander's defense of the integrity of the Bible against the Muslims' charge of corruption<sup>12</sup>). Rather than attempt a comparative study from a supposedly neutral standpoint, I have sought to bring the judgment of the Word of God directly to bear on Islamic doctrine and ideology. And instead of focusing on «common ground» in Qur'anic data which is supposedly capable of a «Christian» interpretation, I have sought to discern, beneath surface similarities, the Spirit (Ideology) of Islam which animates the Body (Islamic society). Contrary to popular misconceptions about such «common ground,» the ideology of Islam runs counter to that of Biblical Christianity. The theological assumptions which underlie this book can be termed evangelical and Reformed, in that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are held to possess infallible authority as the divinely inspired, inerrant, and unique Word of God, and to be the final arbiter of the validity of every system of Biblical hermeneutics.

One final word about the key issue separating Islam and Christianity. The earlier polemicists considered this to be the question as to whether the Bible (or the Qur'an) is the one true revelation. While this is indeed a key issue, it is really part of a larger question and cannot be dealt with properly without reference to the larger context. I believe that the key issue is the question of the nature of God and how He relates to His creation; Islam and Christianity are, despite formal similarities, worlds apart on that question; practically all their other disagreements are but different aspects of that one basic difference of viewpoint. Hence my discussion starts with the Islamic doctrine of God.<sup>13</sup>

The subject matter is organized under the heading of the Islamic views on God, man and his relationship to God, Christ and Salvation, the Holy Spirit, Revelation and the Scriptures, Society and the Church, Angels and Satan, and finally, Eschatology. Under each heading I focus first on the basic Islamic assumptions concerned, then on the points of conflict with the Biblical position, and finally, on the consequences of the Islamic view and the general lines of a Biblical approach.

## A. THE ISLAMIC VIEW OF GOD

### 1. BASIC ISLAMIC ASSUMPTIONS

- (a) *God is Absolutely Other (or Transcendent)*. Islam holds that Allah is different from any created thing, including man, and



holds Himself absolutely aloof from the realm of history. Transcendence (*Tanzih*) implies that language used in describing God has no positive connotation whatsoever; there is absolutely no relationship (or analogy) between the connotation of a word when predicated of God and its connotation when predicated of men. For example, we cannot understand God's mercy by the analogy of mercy in man; God's mercy and that of man are completely dissimilar. Thus, Islam has a negative theology: it cannot say what God *is*, but only what He *is not*. Transcendence also implies for the Muslim that God can never be really present in the world, or active in person, in the process of history; this would contradict His transcendence. He can only act upon the world from a distance by means of His creative word.<sup>14</sup>

- (b) *God is Uniquely One (Tawhid)*. Islam insists on the absolute Oneness of God; it is unitarian in theology. God is not differentiated in any sense of the term. As «The One,» He is the «Causer of Causes» and «Source of the Many.» His oneness is completely different from creaturely «oneness» because of His absolute transcendence.<sup>15</sup>
- (c) *God relates to the World only by His Creative Word*. By His word, He *created* all things out of nothing. According to Asharite doctrine, His creation is continuous and not once for all. Indeed, He creates men's acts in their limbs as they do them. Thus, by His creative word He determines (*taqdir*) or brings to pass all of man's acts and his destiny which has been eternally «written down» (*maktub*). (Thus «creation» for Islam includes the idea of «providence.») Finally, by «sending down» (*tanzil*) His eternal Word upon His prophets, He *reveals* to man what he needs to know, and He *ratifies* the prophets' message by signs. Their role is to transcribe it and announce it to men, victorious in His power and protection. All of this guarantees that God is absolutely transcendent and removed from His creation.<sup>16</sup>
- (d) *God is Absolutely Free* and unrestricted, even in the realm of truth and morality. He is free to «abrogate» the truth or obligations of earlier revelations by subsequently revealed truths and obligations. He is free to judge the same act to be «good» in one circumstance and «evil» in another according to the situation; although, in principle, acts are «good» or «evil» according to whether they are commanded or forbidden in the Qur'an.

The criteria by which God judges and assigns man his destiny are unknowable by man. He is free to forgive the sinner or to condemn him. He is free to do opposites as He pleases.<sup>17</sup>

2. POINTS OF CONFLICT WITH THE BIBLICAL VIEW

- (a) *God is Unknown and Unknowable* to man, both in this life and in the next. Apart from *tanzil* (sending down revelation) man can know nothing about God or His requirements of man. Transcendence, for Islam, means it is impossible to know anything positive about God. There is an uncrossable gulf between man and God which makes a personal knowledge of God a metaphysical impossibility.<sup>18</sup> This conflicts with the Biblical teaching that man has an intuitive knowledge of God and His law, and of his own guilt (Romans 1 & 2), because he is made in God's image (general revelation). The Bible does teach a Creator-creature distinction which will never be erased, but does not carry this to the extent of complete dissimilarity or unknowability. Islam makes this distinction to mean that God is completely unknowable to man.
- (b) *God is not Personal, or Spiritual.* To the Muslim mind, the idea that God is a person (or spirit) collides with the doctrine of His transcendence. Personality would imply a likeness to man, and is therefore rejected.<sup>19</sup>
- (c) *God is not Active in History, neither does He «come down» or enter History.* The Incarnation is impossible as it contradicts the Islamic doctrine of «Absolute Transcendence.» Neither can God be personally active and reveal Himself in the process of history as the Bible indicates. Transcendence requires that He work upon history by predestination (*Taqdir*) and that He «send down» revelation. The Islamic view of history is that history is not significant; it reveals nothing to us about God. This contrasts with the Biblical view which pictures God as being Immanent as well as Transcendent, working in history, howbeit in ways which man cannot fully fathom, «coming down» in person in Jesus Christ, and thus revealing Himself through history.<sup>20</sup>
- (d) *God is not Holy or Righteous in the sense of loathing and separating Himself from sin.* In Islam, the moral attributes of holiness and righteousness are not applicable to God; this would imply likeness to man, and, again, would compromise God's transcendence. For Islam, God is only separated from man because He is totally different from him, not because He is holy

and man is sinful (a moral separation). Hence, man's separation from God, which, according to the Bible, is abnormal and intended to be temporary, is considered by Islam to be normal, absolute, and eternal.<sup>21</sup>

- (e) *God has no feelings or affections* for any creature; He does not love or value man in the Biblical sense. Although His beautiful names include «the Compassionate, the Merciful,» and «the Lover,» etc., these attributes do not mean what they would mean when predicated of man. Were God to display emotions, this would make Him like men and would be a weakness. While He gives wealth and health to some, and poverty, starvation, hell, etc., to others, this represents a sovereign act of His will. He gains nothing from our obedience and loses nothing from our rebellion. All this, of course, contrasts with the Biblical view, which says that God «loves» mankind in the most absolute sense of the word. In the Biblical perspective, man's love is an imperfect analogy, marred by sin, of God's perfect and self-giving love.<sup>22</sup>
- (f) *God is not thought of as binding Himself by covenant* to do certain things for man. This apparently would contradict His freedom to do «as He wills.» The Bible, in contrast, declares Him to be a Covenant-making and Covenant-keeping God. He can be counted on to keep His covenant.<sup>23</sup>
- (g) *God is not Triune in nature.* The doctrine of the Trinity contradicts the Islamic concept of the Absolute Oneness of God. God is stripped (*Tanzih*) of personality and every knowable attribute to become an abstract metaphysical Unity; the concept of a Trinity in Unity is judged on rationalistic grounds to be impossible.

### 3. OTHER RELEVANT ISLAMIC IDEAS AND ATTITUDES

- (a) *Muslims tend to understand religious language in a material and literal sense.* This is because of their view of transcendence which assumes that things on earth or historical events (e.g. the institutions and history of God's people in the Old Testament) cannot be analogies or types of spiritual realities. The metaphorical use of language to symbolize spiritual realities is a procedure which is foreign to the Muslim way of thinking. They take everything literally and materialistically. Thus the doctrine of the Trinity is uniformly understood as tritheism, and the Biblical teaching that Christ is the Son of God is taken to mean

a physical paternity after the manner of the grossest polytheistic conceptions of Deity. Even «Spirit» is understood by some to be a very fine invisible substance; consequently to say that «God is Spirit» suggests materiality – an impossibility. Whenever a concrete term is used metaphorically, this must be specifically stated, and the typical value of the history of Ancient Israel must be explained carefully, if it is referred to at all.

- (b) *The Islamic view of Faith* corresponds to its view of God. For the Muslim, God stands aloof above the world and is unknowable and nonpersonal. Hence, faith involves simply an intellectual acceptance and verbal confession of truth, and action in accordance with the commands of the Islamic law. Faith is essentially equivalent to Islam, i.e. submission to the truth and obligations which God has «sent down.» It means submitting to the true religion (Islam) and to the fate God has decreed for one's self; it does not involve entrusting or committing one's self to God as to a person. It involves a vague hope in God's mercy upon condition of adherence to Islam. Since God is free and not covenantal, it does not have the idea of taking God at His Word to keep His promises. It is thus a mental acceptance of a *concept* of God rather than a moral response to a personal—moral Being, active in history, who can be known in a personal relationship (the Biblical view of faith).<sup>24</sup>

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

- (a) *Consequences of the Islamic View*
- (i) This view *cuts man off from a personal relationship with, and knowledge of, God.* Its view of transcendence makes such a relationship not only undesirable but also impossible in the nature of things.
  - (ii) This view *cuts man off from true rationality.* Since God is unknown and unknowable, man has no transcendent point of reference by which to understand himself or the universe in which he lives. His existence has no meaning; it is impossible and useless for man to try to find any meaning. He need only submit to fate.
  - (iii) Finally this view *cuts man off from morality.* Since God is absolutely free and unbound by moral absolutes, man has also no transcendent standard for morality. In sum, truth and morality are relativistic.
- (b) *A Biblical evaluation and approach:* From the Biblical perspective, as elaborated in Romans 1 and 2, the Islamic doctrine of God represents a thoroughgoing repression of the Truth and the

substitution of a false concept of God in its place.<sup>25</sup> It thereby cuts the Muslim off from his God-given knowledge of God, God's law, and his own guilt, although he possesses this knowledge by virtue of his very existence. The Biblical view of God is eliminated *a priori*; Islam makes the Creator—creature distinction and man's temporary separation from God because of sin into an absolute permanent separation, and then claims the Biblical view of God to be «against reason.» Converts have generally assimilated this Islamic attitude and are affected by it. Our task in teaching them about God will therefore be to lay a solid basis for the Biblical doctrine of God. We must show in a simple way from the Bible that if God appears to be so distant, unknowable, and impersonal, and a Trinity in Unity impossible, it is because man has repressed the Truth about God and has substituted for it an untruth. We must highlight the truth that man knows about God intuitively but will not admit (i.e. general revelation) and take them on to the full Biblical teaching about God. The new Christian needs to be taught the Biblical teaching about God in such a way that he acknowledges and abandons any residual un-Biblical attitudes and is prepared to effectively present the Gospel to his Muslim neighbours.

## B. THE ISLAMIC VIEW OF MAN AND HIS RELATION TO GOD

We have already touched upon this in the previous section but will now consider it in more detail.

### 1. BASIC ISLAMIC ASSUMPTIONS AND ATTITUDES

- (a) *Man is the high point of God's creation.* God commanded the Angels to bow down before man (Qur'an 7:11) and made man his viceroy (*Khalifa*) on earth (Qur'an 2:30).<sup>26</sup>
- (b) *Man's relation to God* is basically that of a *servant* (*3abd*) to his Master or Lord. This relationship is expressed by serving God, doing His commands, and abstaining from His prohibitions. This kind of God—man relationship follows from the absolute transcendence of God. The conditions of this relationship are laid down in the religious law, or *Shari3a*.
- (c) *Man* was created as he now is — good but «weak» (*da3if*) (Qur'an 4:32) and inconstant. While in the Garden, he «forgot» God's command, listened to Satan's advice, and consequently «fell» (physically) from the Garden to the earth. God's present

distance (transcendence) would appear to be related to this «Fall,» but it involves only a metaphysical distance and not a moral one. If man follows God's guidance in this life, he will still regain the Garden in the hereafter, «if God wills» (Qur'an 2:35-38 and other verses).

- (d) *Man breaks his relationship with God by «unbelief» (kufr, godlessness), which includes «associating someone with God» (shirk), a transgression against His transcendence, and doing that which God has declared forbidden (haram) or by not doing what He has declared obligatory (fard) in the religious law. Popularly speaking, sin is forsaking what God has ordered, or doing what He has declared to be haram. Man does this because he is weak, forgetful, ignorant; hence sin, at bottom, is just a «mistake,» not depravity.<sup>27</sup>*
- (e) *Man is endowed with «natural religion»: Allah has endowed man with a kind of innate knowledge or «disposition» (fitra) which corresponds to Islam (Qur'an 30:30). This disposition is neutral but can either be reinforced or thwarted by education. «Every child is born naturally disposed (i.e. to Islam); it is his parents who make him a Jew or a Christian or a Parsee» (a tradition). Islam therefore addresses its summons (da'wa) to man, calling him to return to that which is innate in him.<sup>28</sup> It gives him all the knowledge he needs in the Religious Law.*

## 2. POINTS OF CONFLICT WITH THE CHRISTIAN VIEW

- (a) *Man is not made in the «Image of God,» in the sense of the moral and spiritual likeness of God. The Islamic concept of man as God's khalifa, who exercises dominion over creation in His place, parallels the Imago Dei idea only in part. The idea that there should be some God-likeness in man runs strictly counter to Islam's doctrine of absolute transcendence. «There is nothing like unto Him» (Qur'an 42:11). It is inconceivable to the Muslim that man should, through spiritual renewal, «become partaker of the divine nature» (2 Peter 1:4) or be renewed after the image of God (Colossians 3:10) and experience a personal relationship with Him.<sup>29</sup>*
- (b) *Man is not sinful by nature; neither is he separated from God or under His wrath because of guilt. According to Islam, man's present state is not sinful; his «separation» is due to God's transcendence, not to a moral fall or to depravity. He is not helpless nor is he incapable of doing good works pleasing to God. Islam denies the Biblical concept of original sin.<sup>30</sup>*

- (c) *Man's basic problem is ignorance*, rather than sin. Although he has an innate natural religion, which represents for Muslims a kind of awareness of Deity, that is all that man possesses innately. Islam does not recognize the innate knowledge man has of God's law nor of his own sin. Man's problem is not basically moral but a lack of knowledge of God's law. This knowledge is supplied by the Qur'an, the absolute standard of Truth.
- (d) *Man does not need salvation* from sin's guilt or power, since he is not a sinner by nature. He will need to be «saved» from hell when the judgment takes place at the last day, but this salvation is gained by following the right religious law, i.e. that of Islam. Man's basic need is for *knowledge* of the law, for sin is basically erring from the true religious law.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

- (a) *Consequences of the Islamic view.* Both man's separation from God and his present condition are traced back to God Himself, not to man, and are thus made normative. Man is considered to be capable of following the good, even though he is «weak.» Relate this to the idea that no act or attitude is inherently sinful (e.g. lying, stealing, licentiousness), but is only sinful in circumstances in which it is declared to be *haram* (forbidden) in the religious law, while it may not be sinful in other circumstances. As a consequence, the voice of God in man's conscience is effectively stifled. Muslims thus tend to have very little consciousness of their sinfulness, their depravity and guilt, nor of their helplessness to save themselves. In addition, by denying that man is made in the «Image of God,» Muslims are cut off from desiring and establishing a personal relationship with God.
- (b) *A Biblical evaluation and approach.* The Islamic doctrine of man is a corollary to its doctrine of God, and vividly demonstrates the mechanism of repression and substitution. By denying the moral nature of man's problem and by substituting for it a mere problem of cognition, it cuts off the Muslim from a consciousness of sin and of his need for salvation. Likewise, inquirers and converts are deeply affected and tempted by this refusal of society to face Truth. Our task is to unmask the sinful repression inherent in the Islamic doctrine of man,<sup>31</sup> and to highlight God's purpose in creating man in His image. This lays the groundwork for a fruitful relationship with God.

## C. THE ISLAMIC VIEW OF CHRIST AND SALVATION

### 1. BASIC ISLAMIC TEACHINGS

(a) *The Islamic Doctrine of Christ.* Christ was merely a human prophet who announced God's message, performed miracles «by God's permission,» was saved by God from being crucified, and was transported alive to heaven, from which he will return to embrace Islam and judge the world according to its tenets (Qur'an 2:81,254; 3:37-52; 4:155-6,169; 5:19,50-51,76-79, 112-117; 19:16-36; 23:52; 47:57-64; 57:26-27).<sup>32</sup>

(b) *Islam's Concept of Salvation.* In Islam the idea of salvation is expressed in the Arabic word *falah* which means «well-being,» «welfare,» «prosperity.»<sup>33</sup> The idea of *falah* is that salvation is accomplished within history in the Islamic nation or *Umma* (See F 2, page 34 and H 2, page 38). Salvation was accomplished by God's «sending down» His revelation and establishing His true religious community. It is granted to a person when he joins that community and lives according to the «religious law.» Religious, political, and social action is seen as God's saving work. Salvation is only consummated when, at the judgment, God forgives a man his sins on the basis of deeds he performed according to the law, and of his reliance on God.<sup>34</sup>

### 2. POINTS OF CONTRAST WITH THE BIBLICAL VIEW

(a) *Islam's doctrine of Christ contradicts the Biblical record.* It claims to believe in and honor Christ, but it denies the two most important teachings of the Bible on Christ — His deity and His death.<sup>35</sup>

(i) *Denial of His deity:* To the Muslim, the term «Son of God» implies physical paternity, which is blasphemy. Thus, Muslims consistently misinterpret the term to mean something which Christians never mean by it. The younger generation may not always object to the term «Son of God,» but even then they generally understand it to denote nearness to God and greatness as a prophet rather than deity. Moreover, Islam's emphasis on the absolute unity of God makes it difficult for Muslims to grasp the idea that Christ and the Father are One, and yet have separate identities.

(ii) *Denial of His death:* Islam cannot conceive of a crucified Christ, for one of the most basic criteria of the true «Messenger» is that he is politically victorious in the institution of the true religion. Christ had to be politically victorious over the Jews to be proven God's «Messenger.»



- (b) *The Islamic view of Faith* opposes real trust in Christ. Islam has little idea of trust (or faith), in the Christian sense of the term. The inquirer from Islam will therefore likely understand «faith in Christ» to mean acceptance of His teachings and following them to the best of one's abilities, i.e. to change from one religious law to another. Faith is seen as *doing* rather than *resting* upon One who has done all.<sup>36</sup>
- (c) *The Islamic view of Repentance* differs radically from the Biblical view. As an aspect of piety, apparently equivalent to «remorse,» repentance seems to be a meritorious «good work.» It carries nothing of the Biblical idea of loathing and turning from one's sin and throwing one's self on the mercy of God for salvation. Since sin consists in mere forgetfulness, or acts of disobedience to the law of Islam, such as eating pork or drinking wine, but not in a sinful nature (original sin) which proliferates sins, the Muslim conscience is dulled to a sense of sin. Being unconscious of his hopeless condition, the Muslim feels no need of repenting in the Biblical sense.<sup>37</sup>
- (d) *The Islamic view of Salvation* likewise differs radically from that of the Bible. This is seen in the use of the word *falah* meaning «well-being» rather than the Arabic word *Khalas* meaning «payment,» «deliverance,» «liberation,» the usual word used to express the Biblical idea of salvation, or *fada* which signifies «redemption.» As we saw previously, Islam denies that man needs to be saved in the Biblical sense of salvation from sin's guilt or power. Hence, the key elements of the Biblical doctrine of salvation are excluded from the Islamic idea.
- (e) *Various Islamic concepts* hinder Muslim inquirers from seeking a personal relationship with Christ as «sons of God.» Islam views God as being wholly other, and as such, He cannot be known or approached by man. In its concept of *paradise*, the Qur'an places the emphasis on material comfort and sensual pleasure rather than on fellowship with God, unbroken by sin. The *place of man* as «servant» (not son) is to honor God by acts of worship, and obey His laws, but not to enjoy fellowship with Him. The idea of seeking and maintaining personal fellowship with God is completely foreign to Islam. Muslims may speak of having a relationship to God, but they do not mean by this a relationship between persons. This kind of relationship is not possible, for God to them is not person (spirit). Sufis may seem to approach such a relationship in their efforts to experience the

«Divine presence,» but their goal is to experience a kind of union with God in which the worshipper is absorbed into God, no longer to exist as a separate entity. This goal of absorption (*fana*) is just as foreign and inimical to the Gospel message as is orthodox Islam.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

- (a) *Consequences of the Islamic View.* These concepts and attitudes place a great stumbling block in the way of Muslims who would entrust themselves to Christ as Lord and Saviour. Even when a person is converted, he is greatly affected by these pre-suppositions and attitudes which are unconsciously assimilated from Islamic culture.

The refusal of Islam to accept the possibility of Christ's deity and the incarnation, and its depersonalization of the meaning of faith and repentance, derives directly from its insistence on the absolute transcendence of God. This is another consequence of Islam's effort to «hold under the truth» of God.

The Islamic denial of the crucifixion derives directly from a «this-worldly» view of the «kingdom of God» and of salvation. The kind of «kingdom» which God's Messengers are sent to establish is understood to be a religio-political community (*Umma*) which works out its own salvation by action according to the law. This is why Muslims feel that the true prophet must be politically victorious. The crucifixion is denied by Muslims because they understand the kingdom Christ came to establish in terms of the community their prophet established.

The Islamic doctrines of salvation by works and of absolute predestination conflict with one another and hinder the development of assurance of salvation in the heart of the new believer. If one's works must be weighed in the balances at the last judgment, how can one know whether or not one is saved prior to that time? And if God saves whom He will and condemns whom He will, one can never know whether one is saved or not, for God's will is inscrutable.

- (b) *The Biblical evaluation and approach.* Our basic task, then, must be to show how the Islamic rejection of Christ constitutes an attempt to suppress the truth about God, a flight from the God of the Bible. Likewise, we must show that the Kingdom which Christ came to establish is spiritual, and that the salva-

tion He brought to us involves a moral, spiritual, physical, and cosmic transformation. Seen in this light, Christ's crucifixion is not really a defeat (although from the worldly, political standpoint it may seem to be such). His crucifixion is rather the first tactical step towards a cosmic victory over sin, death, and Satan, assured by His resurrection from the dead. When this fact has been thoroughly grasped, the ground is prepared for genuine repentance of sin and genuine faith in Christ.

#### D. THE ISLAMIC VIEW OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. *ISLAMIC IDEAS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT.* The Qur'an speaks of «the Spirit,» and even the «Holy Spirit» (*ruh al-quds*, Qur'an 2:87) and the «Faithful Spirit» (*al-ruh al-amin*, Qur'an 26:193). At the creation, Allah breathed into Adam His Spirit (Qur'an 15:29). Jesus is referred to as «a Spirit from Allah» (Qur'an 4:171), and so Muslims frequently call him «the Spirit of Allah.» However, almost without exception, Muslims identify «the Holy Spirit» and «the Faithful Spirit» with Gabriel, the Angel of revelation. When the Qur'an states that Jesus, Muhammad, and others were strengthened by the Holy Spirit, it is clearly referring to the Angel Gabriel in the process of revelation. Thus, the «Holy Spirit» spoken of in the Bible is unknown in Islam (John 14:19).<sup>38</sup> There may be a parallel between these Islamic ideas and several references in the New Testament to angels as agents of revelation (Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2), but these are not central to the New Testament doctrine of revelation, and may be simply a reflection of a doctrine of Judaism.
  
2. *OTHER ISLAMIC IDEAS WHICH CONFLICT WITH THE BIBLICAL VIEW*
  - (a) *The Muslim's concept of God* conflicts with the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit (cf. A 2, page 19).
    - (i) The concept of the *absolute unity* of God precludes the possibility of the Holy Spirit being God.
    - (ii) The personality of the Holy Spirit, and indeed the possibility of knowing God in a personal way through the indwelling Holy Spirit, is incompatible with the Muslim's concept of Allah's *absolute transcendence*.
  
  - (b) *The Muslim's view of man* also conflicts with the Biblical teaching. Since man is weak, but not depraved, he needs

neither the Holy Spirit's work of regenerating, sanctifying, and guiding, nor His work of producing the fruits of righteousness. He sees no need to become a new creation. He can pull himself up by his own bootstraps. Following the true religious law is sufficient for perfecting man.

Since *man is a servant* (3abd) of Allah, he does not look for a close communion with God through the Spirit of adoption. The very idea that the Spirit indwells the believer is incompatible with Islamic ideology. Far be it from Allah that we should be associated with Him as children, or that He should make His abode in our hearts. Only the Sufis (mystics) aim at union with God, but for them this is achieved by man's striving upward, and not by the coming down of the Holy Spirit to dwell in their hearts.

- (c) *The Muslim's claim to find a prophecy of Muhammad in Jesus' teaching on the Holy Spirit conflicts with Gospel Truth.* The Qur'an states that Jesus prophesied the coming of another «Messenger» whose name is «The Praised One» (*Ahmad*, Qur'an 61:6). The name *Ahmad* is said to be one of Muhammad's names. Muslim polemicists have frequently claimed to find this prophecy still intact in the «Comforter» passages in John's Gospel (John 14:16,26, etc.). The usual argument is that the word *paraklétos* (Advocate, comforter) found in the present Greek texts has been corrupted from the original reading *périklytos* (famous, glorious, roughly equivalent to *Ahmad*) in the original Greek text. And in any case, some say, even if the word *paraklétos* were original, it would still refer to Muhammad. The lack of any concrete manuscript evidence whatsoever to prove this view does not seem to bother them.<sup>39</sup>

3. **CONSEQUENCES AND CONCLUSIONS.** Various teachings of the Qur'an, and the Islamic concepts of God and of man converge to hinder an understanding of the Biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit. In the early days of a new Christian's conversion, these may cause some misunderstanding.

However, when a person admits his need both of redemption and the new birth, and so comes to Christ, the main obstacles to understanding the Biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit have been overcome. The Christian worker should lay the ground work for the Muslim's

conversion by dealing with the presuppositions which lie behind his rejection of the Biblical teaching. As the teaching on the Holy Spirit is then presented in a positive way, its distinction from these Islamic teachings will be clear. The most convincing proof of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is a Christian who is himself filled with the Spirit.

## E. THE ISLAMIC VIEW OF REVELATION AND THE SCRIPTURES

### 1. BASIC ISLAMIC PRESUPPOSITIONS AND TEACHINGS

- (a) *The Process of Revelation* is that of *Tanzil* (sending down). God «sends down» information and commands to His prophets for mankind. He does this by *wahy*: the angel Gabriel comes down and whispers or «suggests» the information to the prophet. The revealed Scripture also is called *Tanzil*; it is heavenly and eternal in origin, not earthly.
- (b) *The Nature of Scripture*. Scripture is of the nature of religious law (*shariʿa*): it comprises information as to what man is to believe and do in order to please God and thus secure his well-being in this life and in the hereafter.
- (c) *Messengers and Inspired Books*. God sent down successive revelations on successive prophets. The *Taurat* (Torah) of Moses, the *Zabur* (Psalms) of David, and the *Injil* of Jesus are mentioned in the Qurʿan as being three of these revealed books. Note that the first two terms correspond loosely to two parts of the three-fold Hebrew division of the Old Testament — the Law, Prophets, and Books (or Psalms) — the «Prophets» being omitted, whereas the term *Injil* represents to Muslims a book transmitted by Jesus rather than one about Him. Apologists often use these Qurʿanic terms in speaking of the Old and New Testaments.
- (d) Muslims believe that each *Messenger and his book is superseded* (or «abrogated») and replaced by the succeeding prophet and his book, except for Muhammad, who was the «seal» or last of the Prophets. Jesus superseded Moses, and was in turn superseded and replaced by Muhammad and the Qurʿan. Note that the Qurʿan itself never speaks of the previous Books being abrogated. There, «abrogation» (*naskh*) applies only to Qurʿanic verses which are said to abrogate other verses (cf. Qurʿan 2:106). Many polemicists have tried to argue from this that abrogation was never meant to apply to the Hebrew-Christian Scriptures.

This argument is questionable. While the Qur'an never explicitly says that these are abrogated, it does teach abrogation as a principle. It also accords to Muhammad and his book the very highest place in the succession of Scriptures, calling him «the seal of the prophets» (Qur'an 33:40). Hence, it would be fair to say that the intent to supplant the Bible is *implicit* in the Qur'an.

- (e) *The Qur'an summarizes* (collects) and *replaces* all the previous books. It is the final and perfect revelation. (This idea, too, is implicit in the claims of the Qur'an.) The form of the Qur'an (rhymed prose, supposedly written by an illiterate prophet) is perhaps stressed more than the content. Its literary excellence is said to make it a «miracle» and constitutes proof that it was «sent down» directly from God. It is a literary miracle in the line of the nature miracles of Moses and the healing miracles of Jesus.
- (f) Because *the Bible* frequently conflicts with many Qur'anic conceptions, details, and teachings, Muslims claim further that the present Biblical text has been «corrupted» (changed) from the original, and is no longer reliable, e.g. prophecies of Muhammad have been deleted. Moreover, the Bible's form and style do not coincide with what it should theoretically be as *Tanzil*; e.g. the Old Testament historical books, the Gospels, and Acts read like history rather than like *Tanzil*.<sup>40</sup>

## 2. POINTS OF CONFLICT WITH THE BIBLICAL VIEW

- (a) *The concepts of revelation* in Islam and in Christianity differ radically, although both Islam and evangelical Christianity speak of revelation as being verbal and conceptual. These differences stem ultimately from their differing conceptions of God and of His relationship to the world. In the Islamic view, which sees God as being absolutely transcendent and non-personal, the only kind of revelation possible is the vertical movement of transcendent information «from above» down to the level of man. We might term this view «Transcendental Revelation» (of Law). Practically speaking, Islam does not make a distinction between «revelation» and «inspiration»; in fact, Muslims generally use the two terms interchangeably. The idea that God should reveal *Himself* is not found in Islam; that would contradict His transcendence. Indeed, Muslims vehemently deny that God reveals Himself.<sup>41</sup>

In contrast, the Evangelical view, derived from the Old and New Testaments, is that God is personally active from within history, so much so that, at a particular point in time, God «became flesh» in the person of Jesus Christ. History, then, is the first medium of God's self-revelation. The second medium is language. Evangelical theology distinguishes two phases in the revelation process: there is first the divine action from within history, and especially in the Incarnation; and then there is the inspiration of holy men to inerrantly record and interpret these events in the Bible. This inscripturization of revelation does not involve a vertical «sending down,» but takes place entirely within the horizontal realm of history, in spite of the fact that its source and cause transcends history. The Bible, then, for the Evangelical, *is* revelation, but not in the sense of *Tanzil*. Rather, it is revelation in the sense that it is the Holy Spirit inspired record and explanation of God's self-revelatory acts in history. Indeed, historical revelation and Biblical revelation are inseparable and one. To set it off from Transcendental Revelation, we might term this view «Historical–Inspirational Revelation.» These two concepts of revelation differ radically, both as to the nature of revelation, as well as to the process of revelation.<sup>42</sup>

- (b) *Terms used* in the Bible are used by Islam with a radically different meaning, e.g. prayer, sin, righteousness, etc.
- (c) *Biblical events and stories* of Biblical personages are related in the Qur'an with un-Biblical apocryphal additions and corruptions.
- (d) *Major Bible doctrines* are misinterpreted and emphatically denied, e.g. the Trinity, the deity, and the death of Christ.
- (e) *An Islamic hermeneutic of the Bible.* In response to the old method which sought to read Christian meanings into Qur'anic verses having a «Christian potential,» Muslim writers have developed an Islamic hermeneutic of the Bible, interpreting it from an Islamic perspective. Biblical statements that they cannot reinterpret Islamically are set aside by use of statements from modern, liberal, Bible critics.<sup>43</sup>

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

- (a) *The Muslim feels no need to read the Bible* because he feels he has the complete and final truth which contains all that is of

value in the Bible. If he should read it, he compares and judges it by what he finds in the Qur'an. A new Christian approaching the Bible will generally take with him Islamic assumptions and what he has learned from the Qur'an. Sometimes he will be consciously troubled by the contrast. Often, however, he will unconsciously impose Islamic meaning onto Biblical terms and teachings. He may have problems with the form of the Bible — for example, its casualness or the personality of the writer which is evident in some passages.

- (b) *The Biblical approach.* In leading new Christians towards an understanding of the Bible and a sound attitude towards it, the missionary should lay a good foundation. He should, first of all, declare the Biblical view of God, and then present the Biblical teachings about the Bible. At the same time, he should consciously divest the new Christians' minds of misleading and false Islamic conceptions. The Bible is not *tanzil* — another religious law — but, being inspired, it is God's self-revelation. Moreover, no one can be saved by keeping any religious law. The New Testament does not abrogate the Old Testament, but completes it by telling us about the Christ who was announced in the Old Testament, and who alone makes it understandable. Because they give the complete story of redemption, the Old and New Testaments are the complete and final Word of God, our infallible rule of faith and practice.

As concerns our apologetic, may it not be argued that the transcendental or non-historical nature of *Tanzil* renders it incapable of authentication. All arguments that Muslims use to prove that the Qur'an is true revelation are circular arguments; they assume what they try to prove. This renders suspect the authenticity of *Tanzil* revelation. By contrast, is not the historical nature of the Biblical revelation its strong point? True, this renders it subject to historical criticism and the «vicissitudes of history,» and makes the apologetic task much more complex and difficult. But the very fact that the Biblical revelation is inextricably tied to history, coupled with the convincing witness of the Holy Spirit, makes the Bible self-authenticating.

## F. THE ISLAMIC VIEW OF SOCIETY AND THE CHURCH

### 1. BASIC ISLAMIC CONCEPTS

- (a) *The ideal of the Islamic «Umma»* (Religious Community). In Islam the religious community is considered to be religio-



political in nature (*Umma* means nation, community) and tied to a particular cultural tradition and language. In this scheme, Muslims comprise an Islamic *Umma*, which is a religio-political (or theocratic) community, founded on and governed according to the *Shariʿa* (Islamic law). Religious affiliation, in the Muslim's mind, is, therefore, essentially equivalent to nationality, and to political and cultural affiliation. Although the Islamic world is actually broken up into a number of independent Islamic states, the concept of One Islamic *Umma* (roughly equivalent to «the Arabic *Umma*») is still seen as a vivid ideal to be attained, if not a semi-reality. Therefore, other religious groups such as «Christians» and «Jews» are also treated as religio-political communities. To achieve the ideal of an Islamic state governed by Islamic law, the Jewish and Christian minorities in Islamic lands were constituted as separate *Millets* within the State, i.e. communities whose members only enjoy a second-rate citizenship status as *ahl al-dhimma* (people of the obligation). They exercised limited self-government under their own religious leaders. This structure is implicit to the thinking of all Muslims concerning converts from Islam and Christian churches in Muslim lands, even when these lands have Western-type constitutions.<sup>44</sup>

- (b) *The Islamic concept of the superiority of the «Umma»* which is ruled according to Islamic religious law. Muslims feel that when the Islamic law is applied in a nation, it elevates that nation above others. This is because right thinking and right acting (as defined in the law) are thought to purify the individual's moral character, i.e. they have a kind of sacramental value in that they confer divine grace or merit to the individual. Religious, political, and social action according to the religious law involve the community in God's saving acts within history. Thus, the nation governed according to the *Shariʿa* is thought to be superior to other communities, because no other religion has such a well-calculated law.<sup>45</sup>

## 2. POINTS OF CONFLICT WITH THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF SOCIETY AND THE CHURCH

- (a) *Muslims think of Christianity as intending also to be such an exclusive religio-political community* (identified with Western «Christian» countries). The Biblical idea of the Church is completely foreign to their thinking. In the Bible, the Church is seen as an apolitical, supracultural, spiritual, eschatological fellowship, acting somewhat as a leaven upon society, but never

being, or attempting to become, identified with society. However, Islam's false concept of the Church has all too often been strengthened by Christians and missionaries of the past, who too readily identified Christianity with Western civilization. In modern times, this concept has been further strengthened by those Christians who conceive of the Church as a kind of institution for world revolution to bring in social justice, rather than as being basically spiritual and eschatological in nature. As with Islam, this modernistic view of the Church, propagated by some theologians and missionaries, is based on an un-Biblical, optimistic view of man.

- (b) *Muslims think of Christianity as being inferior to Islam* since it has no religious law comparable to the *Shari3a* as a basis for society.
- (c) *Muslims interpret Christian practices in the same magical way* that they interpret Muslim practices. The rites of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are considered as kinds of sacramental acts which turn one into a Christian. Some tend to view the Lord's Prayer as a kind of «password» which one repeats to become a Christian, much as one repeats the *Shahada* to become a Muslim.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS AND CHRISTIAN APPROACH

Here again, we see in the Islamic ideal of the *Umma* another facet of Islam's effort to «hold under the truth» of man's sinfulness. In order to maintain its identity, it cannot admit the truth that works performed according to law have never been able to elevate man's nature one whit. The conception of the *Umma* concerning the relation between faith and culture raises expectations which no religious community is able to fulfill, and finally leads to further illusions and injustices. These conceptions have made it particularly difficult for indigenous Christian churches of converts from Islam to take root in Islamic society and maintain a normal, healthy relationship to that society. Islam's concept of the *Umma* has led it unjustly to isolate Christians into ghetto societies.

Our task, therefore, is to show that just as there is no religious law which can make perfect, so there is no perfect society; all need redemption. We must therefore show from the Bible that God never intended to create such a superior religio-political society on earth. As concerns the Church, God's purpose is to create an apolitical,

supracultural fellowship of believers in Christ, who have repented and have been reconciled to Him by faith in Christ and have been renewed inwardly by the Holy Spirit. Only in this repentance, reconciliation, and regeneration of individuals is there hope for a fruitful and profound improvement of human relations in society. Therefore, while Christians may, yea, must, continue to work to transform the unjust structures of society and promote peace, they must not nurture any illusions that their efforts will effect any radical change; that will only come when Christ intervenes at His second advent, establishing at that time a perfect society.

## G. THE ISLAMIC VIEW OF ANGELS, SATAN, AND THE OCCULT

### 1. BASIC ISLAMIC BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

- (a) The Muslim lives in an *environment of supernatural beings* and powers which are situated between Allah and man in the hierarchy of being.
- (b) *Angels* are viewed much as in the Bible, which describes them as ministering to believers (Hebrews 2:14). However, the Islamic doctrine of angels is highly elaborated; many angels are named and their functions described (Qur'an 2:97,98,102; 35:1; 82:10-12).
- (c) Muslims fear *Shaitan*, or *Iblis* (Satan), the wicked angel who opposes God and whispers evil suggestions in men's hearts. They also fear *Shayatin* (demons or evil spirits) and *djinn*, spirit beings between angels and men. The pious Muslim's basic way of opposing them is to say «I take refuge in Allah» and to repeat the name of Allah (*dhikr*). This act represents a reliance on a «magic formula,» repeated to ward off evil powers, rather than a faith appeal for divine power for victory (cf. Qur'an 15:26-43; 114:1-6).
- (d) Many Muslims fear the «evil eye.» This is a belief that some people have eyes with a magical power to harm others.
- (e) *Sorcery*. A kind of magical act using power gained from the assistance, or control, of evil spirits is used by many Muslims to obtain supernatural powers or gain power over other people.

## 2. CONSEQUENCES AND CONCLUSIONS

Deprived of the immediate presence and help of God by the Islamic doctrine of absolute transcendence, Muslims see themselves at the mercy of supernatural beings and powers which they know to be present all around them. Although they repeat «I take refuge in Allah» and repeat the name *Allah*, they have no consciousness of a divine power available to them which can make them victorious over these evil forces. Many get involved in sorcery, even though Islam officially forbids it. In this situation, our great responsibility is to make known the Biblical teaching that Christ conquered Satan and all forces of evil in His death and resurrection, that in Christ's power the Christian is able to overcome these evil forces (Satan, sorcery, evil spirits, and the evil eye), and that he must therefore «resist Satan» in the name of Christ.

## H. THE ISLAMIC VIEW OF ESCHATOLOGY

### 1. BASIC ISLAMIC CONCEPTS

- (a) *The signs preceding the Last Day.* It is believed that before that day the Antichrist (*Dajjal*) will appear, and faith will decay. Then *3Isa* (Jesus) will return, kill Antichrist, and re-establish faith (*Islam*).
- (b) *The Resurrection.* At the first blast of the trumpet, all living things will die; after an interval the second blast will bring all to life before the judgment place (Qur'an 39:68).
- (c) *The Judgment.* Allah will question each individual and judge him by what is in his book — his good deeds being literally weighed against his bad deeds. Those who have done good according to the law pass over «the bridge» (*sirat*); those who have done evil fall off the bridge into the «fire.»
- (d) *The Garden (al-Janna),* Heaven, represents essentially the Garden of Eden from which Adam «fell» (cf. B 1, page 22), a physical, sensual paradise. There the believers enjoy an eternal extension of the physical existence of this life.
- (e) *Hell, the «Fire» (al-Nar, Jehannam),* represents an extension and amplification of all the worst physical horrors imaginable in this life. There the unbelievers will suffer physically forever. While

believers may fall into the fire, they will be delivered through Muhammad's intercession and go to the Garden.

## 2. POINTS OF CONFLICT WITH THE BIBLICAL VIEW

- (a) *The Second Coming of Christ* is reduced in importance to correspond to the Muslim view of Christ. Christ, rather than being the key figure, is but a «sign» of the end. In the Bible, Christ's coming represents the unveiling of Deity, whose glorious intervention in history alone will establish eternal justice and righteousness. In the Islamic view, true justice and righteousness come in when and where, in this life, the Islamic religious law is fully applied; an apocalyptic divine intervention is, therefore, not needed.
- (b) *The Resurrection and Heaven* are likewise viewed differently in Islam than they are in the Bible. In the Bible, the resurrection of the redeemed involves a moral as well as a physical transformation. The work of salvation, or redemption, is consummated when the person redeemed receives a transformed body, free of sin and corruption, and lives forever with Christ. This is part of the Christian's hope and expectation. In Islam this expectation of a transformed existence is notably absent. Islam's view of man does not admit man's need for redemption from sin (cf. B 2, page 24); moreover, it believes that man's basic need is met sufficiently by the application of the religious law in the community. Therefore, the radical transformation described in the Bible is not anticipated; Heaven, for the Muslim, is basically the same kind of life as this one, except that it is eternal.
- (c) *The Ideas concerning Judgment* also differ considerably. In Islam, men are judged according to their works and are assigned to Heaven or hell according to whether their good deeds or their evil deeds predominate. This accords with the Islamic view of man, which sees him as capable of earning merit. According to the Bible, when men are judged by their works, they are inevitably condemned – none are pardoned – for when judging on the basis of works, God requires perfect obedience. Man's only hope lies in repenting and accepting the redemption God offers in Christ, and in receiving the «down payment» of that redemption already in this life. Only by facing his Judge beforehand, can the individual bypass the last judgment.

### 3. CONSEQUENCES AND CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that these Islamic ideas concerning the hereafter are closely related to the Islamic view of man and of religion. Because of Islam's refusal to admit the truth about man and about God, it does not envisage the need for divine intervention and for the radical renewal of man (regeneration and resurrection to incorruptibility). The Muslim is thus lulled into complacency, has no assurance of the hereafter, and rejects Christ.

The Christian convert unconsciously inherits many of these assumptions. Our task, therefore, is to ground him in the truth about man as revealed in the Bible, and lead him to look to Christ as man's only hope, not only for his personal salvation, but also for bringing in universal justice and righteousness.

### CONCLUSION

In the light of the Bible, Islam represents a thoroughgoing *repression* of the knowledge man has, via general revelation, of God and His requirements of man, and of man's guilt and his impotence to save himself. Along with repression, Islam has also denied or radically reinterpreted many themes of Biblical revelation. It has *substituted* a humanistic ideology which affirms the absolute transcendence of Deity, and proclaims a Transcendental Revelation claiming to perfect man and society. The call is, therefore, for a new apologetic which will lovingly expose this rebellion against God for what it really is — repression of the Truth. This new apologetic must be hammered out in the context of the proclamation of the good news of the grace of God which has been revealed to us in Jesus, Who is both Christ and Lord.

**Section III**

**CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE  
IN AN ISLAMIC CONTEXT**

**The Guide to the Christian Faith and Life  
for Evangelical Churches**

## PROLOGUE

(To be read before studying this Guide)

### A. WHAT IS AN EVANGELICAL CHURCH?

An evangelical church (or assembly) is distinguished by the fact that the Bible is the only source and authority for its doctrine and its life. This is what makes evangelical churches unique and makes them differ from:

1. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, which give the same authority to their traditions as to the Bible;
2. Liberal circles within Protestantism, which deny the full inspiration of the Bible and instead give authority to human reason, subjective experience, or the sciences;
3. Sects which claim to be based on the Bible, but which accept other books in addition to it or advance teachings contrary to it (e.g. the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormans);
4. Judaism, which bases itself on the traditions of the Jewish fathers (the *Talmud*) in addition to the Old Testament, and rejects Christ and the New Testament;
5. The other non-Christian religions which accept other books or principles in place of the Bible.

Evangelical churches gladly welcome into their fellowship those who likewise recognize the supreme authority of the Bible. But they do not accept those who reject it or who seek to unite with churches or sects which make void the Word of God by their traditions while claiming to be «Christian» (Mark 7:1–13).



**B. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE AND VALUE OF THIS GUIDE?**

The purpose of this Guide is to set forth the doctrines of the Bible and the principles of the Christian life which are the basis of the faith and life of the Church. It contains a synopsis of these doctrines followed by an exposition with Bible references; the synopsis gives Bible verses to be learned by heart. This Guide will explain to the new believer the new relationship which he now enjoys with other believers, and how he should behave in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ. It will therefore be useful for teaching the Christian faith and life to those who wish to be members of a local church. It is at the disposition of every church which desires to use it.

Every Christian and member of a local church can profit from using this Guide:

1. To help him explain his faith to unbelievers (1 Peter 3:15).
2. To study the Bible subject by subject. In this way, the Christian will better understand the teaching of the Bible on these subjects.
3. For family worship. Read a part of the Guide, look up the Bible passages indicated, then pray together.
4. To learn Bible verses by heart. Memorize several of the verses indicated for each subject.
5. For preaching. Elders and pastors may profitably use this Guide point by point as a basis for their preaching during a certain period.
6. To protect the Church against false teachings which have no basis in the Bible. This Guide can help to recognize and avert false teachings.

This Guide will also be useful for training Church elders in the principles and practices of organizing and leading a local church.

## THE SYNOPSIS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

The faith of every evangelical church is based on the teachings of the Bible. In this synopsis we declare what we believe to be its essential principles, which each believer needs to know and understand. Each church member should be able to explain these teachings, and should learn by heart a verse for each subject.

A. WE BELIEVE IN ONLY ONE GOD, CALLED FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT. God exists eternally and reveals Himself in three persons – the Trinity – Who have only one nature and one purpose for man.

Turn to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth;  
for I am God, and there is no other. Isaiah 45:22.  
(See Isaiah 45:18; Matthew 28:19.)

B. WE BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST, SON AND REDEEMER, WHO IS GOD MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH. He existed from all eternity, but He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Himself without sin, He died on the Cross in the place of sinners; the third day He rose again, victorious over death; He ascended into Heaven, where He sits at the right hand of the Father interceding for the redeemed. He is able, therefore, to save unto the uttermost those who come unto God by Him.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:1,14. (See Philippians 2:6–11; Colossians 2:9.)

C. WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT THE DIVINE COMFORTER. Equal in essence to the Father and the Son, He causes the believer to be

born again, and dwells in him to transform his life and help him. He animates the Church and distributes in it His spiritual gifts.

And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, Who lives in you. Romans 8:11. (See John 14:16,17; Acts 2:38,39.)

D. WE BELIEVE THAT THE BIBLE IS THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD, THE ONLY RULE OF FAITH AND OF LIFE. It is, in its entirety, inspired by God, for the Holy Spirit moved the prophets and apostles inerrantly to record the revelation of God. It ever penetrates and works in men's hearts, for the Holy Spirit speaks to us through it.

For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:21. (See 2 Timothy 3:16,17; Hebrews 4:12.)

E. WE BELIEVE IN THE FALL OF MAN. God created man in His own image, but, because of his disobedience, man has been separated from God, became sinful, and, consequently, subject to the wrath of God and to death. He is in no way able to merit his salvation by his own efforts.

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned. Romans 5:12. (See Genesis 1:27; Ephesians 2:1-3.)

F. WE BELIEVE THAT THE REDEMPTION (OR SALVATION) OF MAN IS THE WORK OF GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST ALONE. It was accomplished by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; it is granted only to the repentant sinner who entrusts himself to Him; it comprises the forgiveness of sins and the renewal of life by the work of the Holy Spirit; and it will be completed at the return of Jesus Christ by the liberation of the redeemed from every consequence of the Fall.

For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit. 1 Peter 3:18. (See 2 Corinthians 5:21; John 3:16; Philippians 3:20,21.)

G. WE BELIEVE IN THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST, THE UNIVERSAL COMMUNITY OF THE REDEEMED. All the redeemed form one body (the Universal Church), whose Head is Christ and whose animator is the Holy Spirit. Its calling is to present Christ to the world in act and in word. It becomes a concrete reality wherever the redeemed come together in local churches in order to fulfill this calling.

And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way. Ephesians 1:22,23. (See Romans 12:5; 1 Peter 2:9; Hebrews 10:24,25.)

H. WE BELIEVE THAT ANGELS, SATAN, AND DEMONS ARE SPIRITUAL CREATURES WHICH ACT IN THE WORLD. The Angels of God exercise a ministry on behalf of the redeemed; Satan (the Devil) and his demons oppose them, but the redeemed can resist and conquer them in the name of the resurrected Christ.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Ephesians 6:12. (See Hebrews 1:14; 1 Peter 5:8,9; 1 John 3:8.)

I. WE BELIEVE IN THE PERSONAL RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST WHO WILL RESURRECT THE DEAD AND RE-ESTABLISH JUSTICE AND PEACE. At the end of the age, He will take up the redeemed, He will condemn the wicked to hell along with the Devil and his demons, and our earth will be destroyed. He will reign forever with the redeemed in a new Heaven and a new earth where there will be no more evil.

For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with His angels, and then He will reward each person according to what he has done. Matthew 16:27. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.)

J. WE BELIEVE THAT LIVING FOR CHRIST IS THE FRUIT OF REDEMPTION. Every one who has been redeemed wants to and indeed must live for Christ his Redeemer, not in order to be redeemed, but because he has been redeemed.

And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again. 2 Corinthians 5:15. (See Colossians 3:17; Ephesians 2 : 8-10.)

**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, abbreviated**  
(See Exodus 20:3–17.)

1. Thou shalt have no other gods but me.
2. Thou shalt not worship any graven image.
3. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God thoughtlessly.
4. Remember to keep holy the day of sabbath rest.
5. Honor thy father and thy mother.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.
10. Thou shalt not covet anything belonging to thy neighbour.

**THE SUMMARY OF THE LAW, according to Jesus Christ.**  
(Matthew 22:37–40.)

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

**THE LORD'S MODEL PRAYER**  
(Matthew 6:9–13.)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

# THE BIBLICAL EXPOSITION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND LIFE

## Part One – The Faith of Evangelical Churches

Since the faith of an evangelical church is based on the Bible, we explain below what the Bible teaches concerning the doctrines outlined in the preceding Synopsis.

### A. THE ONE GOD

1. *THERE IS BUT ONE GOD*, the Creator and Sustainer of all things (Isaiah 45:18,19; Genesis 1:1; Exodus 20:11a; Acts 17:24,25).
2. God has revealed *HIS ATTRIBUTES* in His deeds and His words. These constitute the basis for man's existence and the moral norm for his life.

God is:

- (a) Eternal (Psalm 90:2; Hebrews 1:10–12)
- (b) Self-existent (John 5:26; 1 Timothy 6:16)
- (c) A Spiritual Being (John 4:24)
- (d) Almighty (1 Chronicles 29:11,12)
- (e) All-knowing (Psalm 139:1–6)
- (f) Perfect (Matthew 5:48)
- (g) Holy and Intolerant of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; Leviticus 19:1,2)
- (h) Just (Deuteronomy 10:17,18; 32:4)
- (i) Loving and Merciful (Exodus 34:6; 1 John 4:7,8)
- (j) Unchanging and Faithful (Deuteronomy 7:9; Lamentations 3:22–23; James 1:17)
- (k) True (Romans 3:4; Exodus 34:6)

3. *GOD REVEALS HIMSELF* to mankind. The Bible teaches us that God is not content to simply «send down» information and laws while He Himself remains aloof and unknown; He seeks to reveal Himself.

(a) God reveals Himself and His law *in a general way* in nature (Psalm 19:1–4; Romans 1:18–20), and in man’s conscience (Romans 2:15).

(b) God reveals Himself and His law also *in a special way*

(i) by speaking and acting in the world so as to make Himself known (Deuteronomy 11:2–7; 1 Samuel 3:21; 12:6,7)

(ii) by moving holy men to write and explain His words and deeds in the Bible for the benefit of mankind (2 Peter 1:21; 1 Corinthians 10:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25–27), and

(iii) above all, by «coming down» personally and revealing Himself fully to man in Jesus Christ (John 1:18; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Hebrews 1:1–3).

No one can approach or know God except through Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Matthew 11:27).

4. *GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF*, in the Bible, to be *ONE GOD IN THREE PERSONS*: Father, Son (Jesus Christ), and Holy Spirit. The Bible nowhere teaches or implies that the three persons of the Trinity are three gods. They are *ONE* as concerns their nature (John 4:24; 10:30; 1 Corinthians 2:11; Romans 8:9) and their name (Matthew 28:19), as well as their purpose and work for mankind (John 4:34; 6:38; 10:37,38; Romans 8:27). The three persons know and love each other perfectly (John 3:35; 17:25,26) and work together to accomplish man’s redemption (2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2; Jude 20,21).

*NOTE: The full truth about the Triune God is a mystery which surpasses the capacity of man’s understanding. It can neither be proven nor disproven by reason. Our affirmation of this truth is based on the teaching of the Bible. We endeavour to understand this teaching so as to fully benefit from the ministry of the Trinity in our Christian lives.*

B. JESUS CHRIST

1. **JESUS CHRIST WAS BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY**, whom God had caused to conceive through the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:35).
2. Jesus Christ is **GOD BECOME MAN**. He is at the same time true God and true man (John 1:14; Philippians 2:6,7; Colossians 2:9; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 John 5:20).
  - (a) The *Deity of Christ* is shown by the following:
    - (i) God the Father spoke audibly from Heaven, calling Him «My Beloved Son» (Matthew 3:16,17; 17:5; 2 Peter 1:17,18)
    - (ii) Jesus Himself called God His «Father,» Himself «the Son» or «The Son of God,» and claimed to be equal with God; that is, to be God in person (John 5:17,18; 10:30–32,36; 14:9)
    - (iii) Jesus claimed and exhibited divine powers: the power to judge (John 5:22,27,30; Acts 17:31), to give life (John 5:26; 10:28; 11:25), to forgive sin (Luke 5:20–24).
  - (b) *NOTE: The term «Son of God» in the Bible never means that God took a wife and begat a son; such an idolatrous concept is foreign and contrary to the Bible and abhorrent to all true Christians. Jesus used the term «Son of God» in a spiritual, not a physical, sense, to indicate that He is indeed God, to distinguish Himself from God the Father, and to indicate the perfect fellowship existing between Himself and the Father.*
3. Jesus Christ is therefore **THE PERFECT REVELATION OF GOD** (John 1:18; 14:7–9).
4. Jesus Christ became man **TO REDEEM MAN BY HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION**.
  - (a) His redemptive death was *decreed by God beforehand* and foretold in the Old Testament (Psalm 22:16–18; Isaiah 53:4–12; Acts 2:23; 4:27,28; Hebrews 9:9–12; 10:1).
  - (b) To die was *the purpose for which Jesus had come*. He spoke of it to His disciples many times beforehand (e.g. Luke 9:22; Mark 10:45; John 10:17,18), and after His resurrection He reminded them of this (Luke 24:44–46).



- (c) *Jesus actually died on the cross, was buried, and rose again the third day* (Matthew 27:33–36, 50; John 19:32–34; Mark 15:43–46; Matthew 28:1,2,5,6; Luke 24:36–43).
- (d) *Jesus Christ thus conquered Death itself, as well as sin and Satan* (1 Corinthians 15:57; 2 Timothy 1:10b – To be treated more fully in F, page 56).
- (e) *Jesus later ascended to Heaven; He sits at the right hand of the Father, interceding for the redeemed and answering their prayers* (Mark 16:19; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24; 1 John 5:14,15). *Because He ever lives, He is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him* (Hebrews 7:25).

C. THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. *THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD, THE COMFORTER.* He is called God and Lord in the Bible (Acts 5:3,4; 2 Corinthians 3:18); He is ascribed divine attributes (Hebrews 9:14; 1 Corinthians 2:10).

*NOTE: The «Holy Spirit» should not be confused with the angel Gabriel or Jesus Christ. In the Bible this title always indicates the third person in the Trinity.*

2. *THE PROMISE AND COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.*

- (a) God had *promised through His prophets* to give His Holy Spirit to men in the latter days (Joel 2:28,29; cf. Acts 2:16–18; Isaiah 44:3; John 1:32,33), and Jesus taught His disciples that following His ascension, this promise would be fulfilled (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7–14; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,5).

- (b) On the following *Day of Pentecost*, the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus' disciples, and the Church of Christ was founded (Acts 2:1–4).

- (c) *Since that day*, all who truly repent and entrust themselves to Christ receive the promised Holy Spirit. They thus become members of Christ's body, the Church (Acts 2:38,39; 1 Corinthians 12:13).

3. *THE WORK AND MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.*

- (a) *He convinces men* of their sin, of Christ's righteousness, and of coming judgment (John 16:8–11).

- (b) *He indwells the believer* (John 14:16,17),

- (i) giving him new life (Romans 8:9–11)

- (ii) enabling him to put to death sin in his life (Romans 8:13)

- (iii) producing spiritual fruit in his life (Galatians 5:22,23)

- (iv) assuring him that he is God's child (Galatians 4:6,7)

- (v) helping him pray (Romans 8:26)

- (vi) teaching and guiding him (John 16:13; Romans 8:14)

- (vii) and empowering him to witness (Acts 1:8).

- (c) *He distributes spiritual gifts* to the believers, enabling each to do his part in building up the body of Christ, the Church (1 Corinthians 12:4–11; Romans 12:4–8).

D. THE BIBLE

1. *THE BIBLE IS THE ONLY WORD OF GOD* because it is *COMPLETELY INSPIRED* by Him (2 Timothy 3:16). «Inspiration» does not mean that God «sent down» information upon His prophets, but that He breathed His Holy Spirit into holy men, moving them to record and explain His revelation accurately and inerrantly (2 Peter 1:21 – We saw in A 3, page 50, how God reveals Himself).
2. The Bible has *TWO PARTS: THE OLD AND THE NEW TESTA- MENTS*. Together they contain 66 books which relate the story of Redemption and reveal God working in the world from its creation to the consummation of all things at Christ's second coming.
  - (a) The *Old Testament* contains 39 books. It concerns the covenant which God made with the children of Israel in ancient times when He redeemed them from slavery in Egypt and established them as His people (Exodus 19:3–6). The purpose of this covenant was to manifest the true nature and effects of sin, and to prepare mankind for the coming of Christ Jesus, who was to usher in the New and perfect Covenant and raise up a spiritual people of God (Jeremiah 31:31–34; Galatians 3:19,20; Romans 3:19; 4:15; 5:20; 7:5; Galatians 3:23,24; Romans 10:4; Luke 24:44).
  - (b) The *New Testament* contains 27 books. It concerns the Gospel (literally the «Good News») of the New Covenant, which God established with all the redeemed through the redemptive work of Christ, establishing them as His spiritual people, the Church (Hebrews 9:14,15).
3. Although the Bible was written down over a period of 1,500 years by the hand of at least 40 writers from all walks of life, it exhibits *AN AMAZING UNITY* which testifies to the fact that it is divinely inspired.
4. The Bible is ever active and penetrates the hearts of men (Hebrews 4:12), because it is *THE «SWORD» THE HOLY SPIRIT USES* (Ephesians 6:17) to convict unbelievers and to teach, reprove, correct, and train the redeemed, and give them hope (2 Timothy 3:16; Romans 15:4). It is their infallible rule of faith and life to guide them in this life and lead them to glory (2 Timothy 3:15).

E. THE FALL OF MAN

1. *GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS IMAGE* (Genesis 1:26,27). This means that man is a spiritual and moral being, responsible to God and capable of knowing Him personally (1 Chronicles 28:9; Daniel 11:32; John 17:3).
2. *ADAM*, the first man, *REBELLED AGAINST GOD* and disobeyed Him when tempted by Satan (Genesis 2:16,17; 3:1–6).

*NOTE: This act is often referred to as «the Fall of Man.» The term should not be understood to mean that man «fell from heaven to earth,» an idea which is totally unbiblical, but that man fell from a state of sinlessness into his state of sin and death, and was consequently excluded from God's presence.*

3. *THE CONSEQUENCES OF ADAM'S DISOBEDIENCE*

- (a) God is now *distant and unknown* personally to man (Isaiah 59:2).
  - (b) Man fears, and seeks to hide from God (Genesis 3:8,10), preferring to live in *the darkness of sin* and ignorance rather than to acknowledge his own guilt and the truth about God (John 3:19,20; Romans 1:18,21,22; Ephesians 4:18).
  - (c) Man is at *enmity with God* and under His wrath (Ephesians 5:6; Romans 8:7; Colossians 1:21).
  - (d) This separation from God because of sin is *spiritual death* (Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1–3).
  - (e) Spiritual death entails *spiritual and moral corruption* (or sins) (Galatians 5:19–21; Romans 1:29–31) so that man has become a slave of sin (John 8:34; 2 Peter 2:19).
  - (f) Sin results in *physical death* (James 1:15) as well as *eternal death* (the punishment of the unredeemed) (Revelation 21:8).
4. Man is therefore *UNABLE* by his own efforts *TO MERIT HIS SALVATION*, either:
- (a) by keeping the ordinances of religious law (Romans 8:3,7,8; Galatians 3:21,22; Hebrews 10:1; James 2:10), or
  - (b) by doing good works (Ephesians 2:8,9).

## F. REDEMPTION (or SALVATION)

1. *THE REDEMPTION OF MAN IS THE WORK OF GOD ALONE.* It has three aspects: past, present, and future.

(a) *PAST: God accomplished man's redemption* by the death and resurrection of Christ (John 19:30; Romans 4:25).

(i) Christ gave Himself as a *perfect, sinless sacrifice* for sin, redeeming man from sin's penalty (1 Peter 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:24,25).

(ii) Christ *conquered sin, death, and Satan*, redeeming us from their power (1 Peter 1:18,19; Romans 6:4–14; 8:2; Hebrews 2:14,15).

(iii) Christ became *the Mediator of the New Covenant* established between God and His redeemed people by His shed blood (Hebrews 9:15; Matthew 26:28 – See also D 2 b, page 54).

(b) *PRESENT: God accepts repentant sinners* on the basis of Christ's finished work of Redemption.

(i) *He forgives their sins* (Ephesians 1:7), imputing to them Christ's righteousness and thus reconciling them to Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19,21; Colossians 1:21,22).

(ii) *He works in the redeemed* through the Holy Spirit, renewing them inwardly and purifying them of sin (Philippians 2:13; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 12:6,10,11 – Treated more fully under C, page 53).

(iii) Following are *some of the marks of the redeemed*:

– they are no longer slaves of sin (Romans 6:17,18)

– but are continually cleansed by Christ (1John 1:7-9)

– and are enabled to overcome temptation

(1 Corinthians 10:13)

– they keep Christ's commandments (1 John 2:3)

– they do not love the world but overcome it (1 John 2:15,16; 5:4,5 – «world» signifies the way of life of the unconverted)

– they love the brethren (John 13:34,35; 1 John 3:14)

– they persevere in the faith (Colossians 1:21–23; Hebrews 10:23; 2 John 8)

– and have perfect assurance that they have eternal life (1 John 5:11–13).

(c) *FUTURE: God will complete His work of redemption* at the return of Christ by liberating the redeemed from all the consequences of the Fall. He will resurrect them with a body free from the stain and power of sin and of death (Philippians 3:20,21; 1 Corinthians 15:53–57).

2. **REDEMPTION IS GRANTED TO THE PERSON** who acknowledges and **REPENTS** of his sin, and **ENTRUSTS** himself to Christ for his salvation.
- (a) *True repentance* is not merely regret for one's sins, but it is a deliberate turning from Sin itself (2 Corinthians 7:10; Proverbs 28:13).
  - (b) *True faith* accompanies true repentance. Faith is not the acceptance of revealed doctrine nor the confession of that doctrine by word and deeds. It is, in actual fact,
    - (i) an assurance or confidence that God really works and intervenes in the world as the Bible says He does
    - (ii) trust in God to fulfill what He promised in the Bible concerning our salvation and its blessings (Romans 4:20–22)
    - (iii) a total commitment of oneself to Jesus Christ and an open confession of His name before men (Romans 10:9,10; 12:1; Luke 12:8,9).

## G. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. *THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST IS THE SPIRITUAL AND UNIVERSAL COMMUNITY OF THE REDEEMED*, which transcends time, race, sex, and culture. (NOTE: In the Bible, the word «church» never signifies the Christian's place of worship; it always signifies the community of believers.) This is shown by the following:

(a) *The illustrations the Bible uses to describe the Church. It is called:*

- (i) *A «spiritual house» or temple.* Christ is the «cornerstone» or «Rock» (1 Peter 2:4–8; Matthew 16:16–18). On Him is built the spiritual temple; its «Foundation» is the teaching of the apostles and prophets; its «stones,» the redeemed (Ephesians 2:20–22). This shows us that the Church is founded upon Christ and is God's dwelling, through the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:11,16,17).
- (ii) *The Body of Christ* (1 Corinthians 12:27). Christ Himself, not someone on earth, is its unique Head (Ephesians 1:22,23; 5:23). All the redeemed are its members and hence are one with Christ and with one another, united and animated by one Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:12–27; Romans 12:5). It carries out the work of Christ on the earth (Ephesians 4:11–16). The Church should demonstrate its unity in its life (Philippians 2:1,2).
- (iii) *The People or Family of God.* The redeemed are «adopted» into God's family or «household» (Galatians 4:4–6; Ephesians 2:19). They become «children of God» (1 John 3:1; John 1:12), and all the redeemed are their «brothers» (Romans 8:29; 1 Thessalonians 5:25,26). Their mission is to announce Christ to the world (1 Peter 2:9,10). All true believers should recognize one another as brothers and seek to accomplish their mission faithfully in God's family (1 John 3:14).
- (iv) *The «bride» awaiting the coming of the bridegroom, Christ* (2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:7–9; 21:2,9,10; 22:17). The redeemed are «pilgrims» anticipating the homeland, Heaven (Hebrews 11:13–16; 1 Peter 2:11). These illustrations show us that the Church is «in the world» but «not of the world» (John 17:11,14). She recognizes that perfect peace and justice will only be realized by God's direct intervention at Christ's second coming (Acts 17:30,31 – To be developed more fully in

I, page 62). It does, however, contribute to peace and justice in the world in that it incites men by word and deed to be reconciled with God and with one another (2 Corinthians 5:19,20).

- (b) *Baptism and the Lord's Supper*. Jesus Christ commanded His Church to practise Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Matthew 28.19; 26:26–29). Their purpose is not to make one a Christian or to grant merit through their practice, for that is impossible (See E 4 a, page 55). Their main purpose is to symbolize the spiritual unity and fraternal fellowship which exist between all the members of the Church and between the Church and Christ.

- (i) *Baptism* is the rite in which the believer expresses openly his commitment to Jesus Christ, and in which the Church recognizes him to be a member of the body of Christ. The word *baptize* used in the New Testament means «to immerse» or «to wash.» This Biblical concept has been expressed in the Church by different modes of baptism, such as total immersion in water, or the pouring or sprinkling of water on the believer to be baptized.

Some Christians understand the Bible to teach that their faith in the Scriptural promise of God for the salvation of their children is properly expressed in the baptism of these children as infants.

Baptism symbolizes the fact that the believer is «in Christ,» that is, united to Christ by faith and living by His life (Galatians 3:27). It follows that:

- just as Christ died for sin and rose from the dead, breaking the power of sin and of death, so the believer has died with Christ to sin and must therefore walk in newness of life, no longer enslaved to sin (Romans 6:3,4; Colossians 2:12), and that
  - the believer has become a member of Christ's body, the Church (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- (ii) *The Lord's Supper* is the rite in which the community of the redeemed partakes of the bread and cup, symbols of Christ's body and of His blood – the blood of the New Covenant – to commemorate and proclaim His death (1 Corinthians 11:23–26). Their participation in this rite symbolizes the fact that all the redeemed form one body, the Body of Christ, which is the Church (1 Corinthians 10:16,17).



2. *THIS UNIVERSAL CHURCH MUST BE MADE A CONCRETE VISIBLE REALITY* through the forming of local churches (or assemblies) of God's redeemed people everywhere upon the earth.
  - (a) *Jesus commanded* His followers to make disciples everywhere, baptizing them in the name of the Triune God and teaching them to obey His commands (Matthew 28:19). After the day of Pentecost, believers were baptized and came together to form local churches (Acts 2:41,42,47; 11:20–26, etc.).
  - (b) *All true believers* living in any place are *responsible* to join other true Christians living in that place to form a local church (Hebrews 10:24,25; Matthew 18:20).

H. ANGELS, SATAN, AND HIS DEMONS

1. The *ANGELS* of God are spiritual beings sent by God to serve the redeemed (Hebrews 1:13,14; Psalm 34:7).
2. *SATAN (the devil) AND HIS ANGELS* are evil spiritual beings. Satan disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14), though he is the author of lies and murder (John 8:44; Revelation 12:9). He blinds men's minds to the truth of the Gospel (2 Corinthians 4:4; Matthew 13:19) and ensnares men to do his will (2 Timothy 2:26). His evil spirits may enter certain persons to possess their mind and will and even cause sickness (Mark 5:2,3; Luke 22:3). Satan opposes the redeemed in their walk and witness (1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:10). His destiny, and that of his angels, will be hell (Matthew 25:41), for Christ's victory has already ensured their ultimate defeat and destruction (1 John 3:8; Revelation 12:9–12, 20:10).
3. *SORCERERS, SOOTHSAYERS, ASTROLOGISTS*, and the like, are people who are under the control of Satan, who uses them to turn people from the Gospel (Acts 13:8–10; 16:16–18). Their destiny, also, will be hell (Revelation 21:8).
4. The redeemed should *RESIST AND COMBAT SATAN* and his emissaries (1 Peter 5:8,9; James 4:7) because:
  - (a) They can be confident that *God is in control*, limiting Satan and permitting his attacks only for their spiritual benefit and instruction (Job 19–12; 2:6; 42:2; Luke 22:31,32).
  - (b) They can be confident in *God's power to enable them to withstand* and to turn others from the power of Satan unto God (Ephesians 6:10,11; 1 John 4:4; 2 Corinthians 10:4,5).
  - (c) *God forbids believers to have anything to do with sorcery*. They should confess this sin, cut all ties with these influences and practices, and combat them in the name of the resurrected Christ (Deuteronomy 18:10–12; 2 Corinthians 10:3–5).

## I. THE RETURN OF CHRIST (HIS SECOND COMING)

At the end of the age, God will gloriously intervene in the world with the personal return of Christ. A number of events will then take place, the principle of which are these:

1. *THE RAPTURE OF THE REDEEMED.* Christ will return in His glory at a time we know not, to take His church to be with Him. All the redeemed, the dead first and then the living, will be caught up to meet Christ in the air to be forever with Him (Matthew 24:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17). This is the blessed hope of all true believers. We should be prepared and occupied in His service until He comes (Titus 2:13; 1 John 3:2,3; Matthew 24:44; Luke 19:13; 2 Peter 3:11,14).
2. *THE ULTIMATE AND TOTAL VICTORY OF CHRIST.* Christ will establish His universal reign of justice and peace (Daniel 2:44; Isaiah 9:5,6; 11:1–10; Revelation 11:15–17; 20:4–6). He will destroy Satan and his forces, throwing them into the lake of fire (hell) to remain there forever (Revelation 20:7–10). He will resurrect and judge the wicked according to their works, condemning them also to hell (Revelation 20:11–15; 2 Thessalonians 1:8,9), and the earth will be destroyed (Revelation 20:11; 2 Peter 3:10–12).
3. *THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH.* Christ will reign forever and ever with the redeemed in the new Heaven and the new earth where there will be no more evil (Revelation 21:1–4; 2 Peter 3:13).

*NOTE: We find that sincere Christians differ in their understanding of some of the Biblical passages mentioned above because none of these events has yet happened. Christians should unite in affirming all truths about which there is no uncertainty without separating over questions of secondary importance. It is sufficient that each sincerely seek to interpret the Bible in full subjection to its supreme authority.*

## J. LIVING FOR CHRIST

The redeemed live for Christ, obeying His commandments and doing good works for the following reasons:

1. *IT IS THEIR DUTY.* Because they have been bought at the price of Christ's blood, they must no longer live for themselves but for their Redeemer. They do not live for Him in order to be redeemed, but because they have been redeemed (1 Corinthians 6:19,20; 2 Corinthians 5:15).
2. *IT IS THEIR DESIRE.* They live for Christ as an expression of their love and of their gratitude to their Redeemer (2 Corinthians 5:14; Colossians 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; 1 John 4:10,19).
3. *IT IS THEIR TESTIMONY.* They were redeemed to glorify Christ in the world by their lives (Ephesians 1:12; Philippians 1:10,11).

# THE BIBLICAL EXPOSITION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND LIFE

## Part Two – The Life of Evangelical Churches

### A. THE PERSONAL CHRISTIAN LIFE OF THEIR MEMBERS

Living for Christ involves:

1. **BIBLE READING AND STUDY.** Since the Bible is God's Word, every Christian should read and study it constantly, seeking to understand its meaning, and teach it to his children (Deuteronomy 6:6,7; Psalm 119:11; 2 Timothy 2:15).
2. **PRAYER.** Prayer, according to the Bible, is neither ritual worship, nor an obligation, nor a means for gaining merit; therefore, it follows no prescribed form or ritual (Matthew 6:5–8).  
Prayer is seeking God's face in Jesus' name, confessing our sins, giving thanks, worshipping, requesting what we need, and interceding on behalf of others (John 14:13,14; 16:24; Matthew 6:9–15; Ephesians 6:16).  
Christians should set aside a daily time for prayer (1 Timothy 2:8; Philippians 4:6).  
Fasting, when and as the Holy Spirit leads, can be an aid to more effective prayer, but likewise gives no merit (Matthew 16:16–18; Acts 13:2,3; 14:23).
3. Living **A LIFE VICTORIOUS OVER SIN**, consecrated unto God, and filled with the Spirit (Romans 6:12,13; 12:1,2; Ephesians 5:18).
4. Maintaining **INTER-PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS** in accord with Biblical teaching (Exodus 20:13,15–17; Matthew 5:22–24, 44,45, 48; 7:12; 18:21,22; 6:14,15; Romans 12:19; 1 Peter 3:9,13,14, 16, 17; 4:15,16).

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5. Maintaining *SEXUAL PURITY AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS* in accord with Biblical teaching (Exodus 20:12,14; 1 Corinthians 7:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; Ephesians 5:22,23,25; 6:1-4; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1,3-7).
6. Being a *GOOD AND LOYAL CITIZEN* of one's country and a productive member of society (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-16; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12; 1 Corinthians 7:17-24).
7. Accepting *SUFFERING FOR CHRIST*. Living and witnessing openly for Christ will unquestionably bring persecution (2 Timothy 3:12; John 15:18-21; Philippians 1:29; 1 Peter 2:19-21; 3:13-17; 4:12-16,19).

## B. THE CORPORATE CHRISTIAN LIFE AS A CHURCH.

Living for Christ means that all believers in a given locality should unite in a local church. In doing so, they should remember that Jesus Christ is their Head, the Holy Spirit is their Counsellor and Instructor, and the New Testament is their pattern. Subject to these guidelines, each church is free to organize itself as it deems best so as to fulfill its ministry and calling as effectively as possible. In what follows, we shall study some Biblical guidelines for the local church.

### 1. The *PURPOSE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH* is as follows.

- (a) *To worship God* collectively in spirit and in truth (John 4:24; Psalm 117).
- (b) *To edify all members* through the study and exhortation of the Bible that they might be conformed to Christ's image. Each member should contribute to this mutual edification (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 3:16-19; 4:11-16).
- (c) *To have true fellowship* with one another for mutual encouragement and for strengthening the unity of the Body (Acts 2:42; 1 John 1:3). It should be in the household of God, the Church, as in a family, where each member can find encouragement, counsel, and help in time of need.
- (d) *To work for the growth of the Church* through the testimony of an exemplary life, preaching the Word of God and making disciples (Luke 24:47,48; Acts 1:8; Matthew 5:14-16).
- (e) *To restore any members who stray from the Biblical standard* of doctrine and practice (Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 1 John 4:1-3), and to separate from all who persist in sin or error (Romans 16:17,18; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6,10-15).

*NOTE: The elders are responsible to ensure the proper fulfilling of these ministries.*

### 2. *THE MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH*

- (a) *Requirements for membership.* The member must:
  - (i) Have experienced redemption through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, and have manifested a desire to follow Christ all the days of his life (Acts 2:38; Romans 10:9,10).

- (ii) Have received sufficient instruction in what the local church considers to be the basic Biblical teaching on the Christian faith and life (Acts 16:30–33).
- (iii) Have been baptized (Acts 2:41). NOTE: A believer may also be received by presenting a letter of recommendation from the council of the church where he was previously a member, along with his testimony of faith.

Those who ask to become members of a church are examined by the Council of Elders as to their *faithfulness* to the Lord and their *understanding* of Christian doctrine. Those who give sufficient evidence of having met the church's requirements for membership are baptized and become «active members.» (Except that a person who has already been baptized in another church will not be required to be re-baptized.) In case there is not sufficient evidence of the *sincerity* of a candidate, he will not be received as an active member, but he should, nevertheless, be invited to attend the ordinary activities of the church. His case will be reconsidered at the time of the next reception of new members.

- (b) The *responsibilities and duties* of active members.
  - (i) To *progress constantly in the knowledge of the Bible* and live a life consecrated to God in accordance with its teachings. This implies a separation from all which conflicts with these teachings (Romans 12:1,2; 2 Corinthians 6:17).
  - (ii) To recognize and *exercise their spiritual gifts*, so fulfilling their part in the church's ministry of winning the lost and edifying the Body (Romans 12:6–8).
  - (iii) To *honor, respect, and pray for the elders* and any others with responsibility (1 Thessalonians 5:12,13; Hebrews 13:7). To seek God's guidance for every decision of the church (James 1:5).
  - (iv) To *contribute to the support* of the work of the church with tithes and offerings (Malachi 3:10; 1 Corinthians 16:2).
  - (v) To *attend regularly* the worship and other meetings of the church, and to dedicate Sunday, «the Lord's Day,» to the Lord. In the Ten Commandments God commanded us to dedicate one day in seven to Him (Exodus 20:8–11; Leviticus 23:2,3). Christians commemorate Jesus' resurrection by worshipping on Sunday, the day when Jesus rose from the dead (Acts 20:7).



- (vi) To be, as members of Christ's body, of all possible *help to other members* of the local church (1 Thessalonians 5:14,15; Hebrews 12:12-14; James 1:27; 1 John 5:16; Matthew 25:35-40).

3. THE ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP OF THE LOCAL CHURCH.

- (a) The church is governed by a *Council of Elders* appointed from among the most mature members (Acts 14:23). The number on this council will depend on the number of members and the number of men who qualify for becoming elders.
- (b) *The elders* should be, in accordance with 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, men of spiritual fitness and consecration and active members for a long enough time to satisfactorily demonstrate these qualities. Elders should have a thorough knowledge of the Bible and should live up to its teachings (Titus 1:9; 2 Timothy 1:13).
- (c) There is no Scriptural directive as to how the Council of Elders should be organized. If deemed expedient to its smooth functioning, officers may be named (such as chairman, secretary, and treasurer). Many churches have found the periodic election or re-election of elders to be useful.
- (d) *The Council of Elders shall be responsible:*
  - (i) To *set the example* for the church in all areas of Christian life (1 Peter 5:3).
  - (ii) To *oversee the various ministries* of the church in accordance with 1 Peter 5:1-3; 2 Timothy 4:1,2, and Acts 20:28; and to visit the members of the church.
  - (iii) To *provide for a place or places of meeting* for the church with any necessary equipment. Notice that the local churches of the New Testament period met most commonly in private homes (Acts 2:46; Romans 16:3-5, 23; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15; Philemon 2).
  - (iv) To *meet as frequently as necessary* to solve the problems of the church. Decisions should be recorded and presented to the church for approval.
  - (v) To *oversee the establishing of new centers for worship and preaching or teaching* in the surrounding area, and to ensure the ministry of the Word in these places until such time as elders can be appointed (Titus 1:5).

**NOTE: CONCERNING PASTORS AND DEACONS OR DEACONESSES**

*Pastors:* The Bible indicates a plurality of persons responsible for oversight, and makes no distinction between «bishops» (overseers), «elders,» and «pastors and teachers» (see e.g. Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5,7; 1 Peter 5:1–3). Many churches of the world have found it advisable, after a period of growth, to appoint an elder (or elders) to special teaching responsibilities requiring much or all of his time. Such persons are commonly called «pastors,» receive special training to equip them for their task, and are often remunerated in proportion to the amount of their time given to such ministry (1 Timothy 5:17,18). If this practice is adopted, the following mistakes should be avoided:

- delegating all responsibility for ministry to the pastor. Ministry is the responsibility of every member (see 2 b (ii), page 68).
- delegating all responsibility for oversight to the pastor. The oversight is the responsibility of all the elders; the pastor is but one member of the Council of Elders.

*Deacons or Deaconesses:* These may be named by the church when the situation requires that others assist the elders in oversight of the material side of the ministry (Acts 6:2–3).

4. **THE CORPORATE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH.** The church meets regularly to worship God and to edify one another (Hebrews 10:25; 1 Corinthians 14:3,26–35,40). Here are the principle elements of corporate worship.
- (a) Prayer and thanksgiving (1 Timothy 2:1,2,8).
  - (b) The ministry of the Word of God: preaching, teaching, exhortation, etc. (1 Corinthians 14:3,26; Colossians 3:16; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:2).
  - (c) Singing hymns and spiritual songs (1 Corinthians 14:26; Colossians 3:16).
  - (d) Giving tithes and offerings (1 Corinthians 16:2).
  - (e) The baptism of new converts and the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

**EXPLANATORY NOTES:**

*Baptism:* When new converts are received as members into a church, they are baptized after giving their testimony of faith before the church.

*The Lord's Supper:* It should be regularly celebrated in commemoration of Christ's death and in recognition of the Body of Christ in the assembled believers. Before partaking, believers should examine themselves and confess to God any sin or wrong they have committed, making restitution where necessary. An elder, pastor, or other delegated person, shall remind the church of the meaning of the supper, and shall invite all believers to partake and all unbelievers to refrain (1 Corinthians 11:23–32).

*The Giving of Tithes and Offerings:* «You are not your own, for you are bought with a price» (1 Corinthians 6:19,20). All we have is God's; He has given it to us in stewardship. The people of the Old Covenant were required by the Law to give a tenth of their income, called the «tithe,» back to God. That which was given over and above the tithe was an «offering» (Leviticus 27:30; Malachi 3:8–10). The people of the New Covenant (Christians) are also to give liberally in proportion to what God has entrusted to them (1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6,7). In the New Testament giving is not an obligation or a means of gaining merit (2 Corinthians 9:7), but it is an expression of love, gratitude, and worship for God's great gift to us (2 Corinthians 8:9; 9:10–15. Read 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 in their entirety).

Tithes and offerings are normally received during the meeting of worship and are administered under the oversight of the elders who give account of their use to the church. The Bible mentions the support of those who work for God (1 Corinthians 9:13,14; 1 Timothy 5:17,18) and help to the poor and needy (Acts 11:27–30; Romans 15:25,26) as among those expenses for which the funds thus collected are used.

## 5. SPECIAL MEETINGS AND PRACTICES

- (a) *The dedication of children to the Lord.* Christian parents may bring their children before the church at an early age to dedicate them publicly to the Lord and pray for His blessing and help in rearing them (Mark 10:13–16; Acts 2:39).
- (b) *The dedication and blessing of Christian marriages.* When Christians are married, they may publicly pledge fidelity to one another before God and the church, and receive its blessing (Mark 10:6–9; Proverbs 18:22; Ruth 4:11).

- (c) *The burial of the Christian dead.* When a Christian dies, the elders or pastor may lead a special meeting in memory of the departed one (Acts 8:2), to encourage the family and remind them of the Christian hope in the resurrection and eternal life, and to witness to non-believers of this blessed hope. Relevant Bible passages would be read, followed by a brief message, and by prayer for the family. (Here are some helpful passages: Psalm 23; John 11:25,26; 14:1-6,18-20,27; 2 Corinthians 5:1-5; 1 Corinthians 15:20-26,42-58; Philippians 3:20,21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; Titus 2:13; 1 John 3:2,3; Revelation 21:3,4.)

*NOTE ON OTHER LOCAL CUSTOMS:* Members of the church must beware of practising customs or rites which have a non-Christian religious significance. The church, in submission to the teachings of the Bible and to the direction of the Holy Spirit, shall decide the best way to replace such customs with others which have a Christian significance, e.g. a celebration for the dedication of a child in place of a circumcision celebration. Note that it is the circumcision ceremony and the meaning behind it which is at issue, and not circumcision itself, which in itself is useful and may even be necessary for sanitary or medical reasons. (Therefore, call in the doctor to perform the circumcision, and not the *faqih*.)

6. *DISCIPLINE IN THE CHURCH.* When a member is accused of a fault which affects the life of the church, he should first be *dealt with privately* according to the principles of Galatians 6:1; James 5:19,20, and Matthew 18:15,16. If the accused fails to respond favorably to this, he shall be *called before the Council of Elders* (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 6:1-5). If the case so requires, one or two other members of the church may be added to hear the case along with the Council (Matthew 18:15-18; 2 Corinthians 13:1).
- (a) The *purpose* of discipline is:
- (i) To restore the offender (Galatians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11).
  - (ii) To preserve the Biblical standard of the Christian faith and life, and the good testimony of the church (1 Timothy 3:7; Titus 1:10,11).
  - (iii) To protect other members from falling into the same sin (1 Corinthians 5:6,7).
- (b) The *procedure* of the Disciplinary Council.
- (i) The Council shall meet and call in the accused as soon as possible after the matter has been brought to their attention.

- (ii) If the accused denies his guilt, he must not be judged guilty unless his guilt is proven by several trustworthy witnesses (2 Corinthians 13:1).
- (iii) If the accused declines to appear when called, then he shall be judged after the testimony of the witnesses has been heard.
- (iv) The Council shall endeavor to arrive at the real truth in the case, and if the accused is found guilty, should endeavor, with love, to lead him to a sincere repentance in order that he may be restored (Galatians 6:1).
- (v) If, when found guilty, the accused humbles himself in true repentance, asking pardon of the church in public, he shall be pardoned and restored to fellowship (Matthew 6:14,15; 2 Corinthians 2:7,8).
- (vi) A time of observation may be deemed necessary in exceptional cases before the member to be restored is permitted to exercise all the privileges of membership. This would be primarily for the purpose of giving other members of the church opportunity to observe the sincerity of his repentance. Such action should not be considered punishment.
- (vii) The recommendation of the Council shall be made public at the next meeting of the church for its approval.
- (viii) If the offender does not manifest a spirit of humility and repentance, this shall be sufficient reason for putting him out of the fellowship of the church (1 Corinthians 5:13).
- (ix) When such a person desires to be readmitted, he should present his petition to the Council of Elders of the church.
- (x) A member who intentionally stays away from the meetings and who withdraws his support is liable to be removed from membership.

## **A MEMBERSHIP COVENANT FOR LOCAL CHURCHES**

The church may wish that a covenant such as the following be made publicly by a believer at the time of reception into membership.

1. By the Grace of God, I will endeavor always to be true to the Bible and to Jesus Christ my Saviour (Revelation 2:10b; John 14:15,21, 23,24).
2. I will endeavor to be a good and loyal citizen of my country, assuming my civic responsibilities in accordance with the teachings of the Bible (Romans 13:1-7).
3. I will endeavor, in unity and harmony, to be loyal to my church, in accordance with the Word of God (Romans 16:17-18).

## NOTES

1. John L. Nevius, *Planting and Development of Missionary Churches* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1958), 92pp.
2. Peter Beyerhaus & Henry Lefever, *The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), pp. 126,127.
3. Melvin L. Hodges, in *Church Growth and Christian Mission*, Ed. Donald A. McGavran (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 117.
4. John H. Baynck, *An Introduction to the Science of Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 149.
5. Melvin L. Hodges, *The Indigenous Church* (Springfield, MO.: Gospel Publishing House), pp. 140–157.
6. A. Robertson and A. Plummer, *I Corinthians* (2nd Ed; «The International Critical Commentary»; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1953), p. 272.
7. Harvie M. Conn, «Missionary Myths About Islam,» *Muslim World Pulse*, VI (September 1977), p. 9.
8. Karl G. Pfander, *The Mizanu'l Haqq (Balance of Truth)*, revised & enlarged by W. St. C. Tisdall (London: Religious Tract Society, 1910), 370 pp.
9. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles, Book I*, translated by A. C. Pegis (Garden City, N. Y.: Image Books, 1955), p. 62.
10. William St. C. Tisdall, *The Sources of Islam*, translated & abridged by Sir Wm. Muir (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1910, reprint undated), 102 pp.
11. *Loc. cit.*
12. Pfander, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 101–125.
13. H. Spencer, *Islam and the Gospel of God* (Madras, etc: S.P.C.K., 1956), p. ix.
14. Mohamed F. Jamali, *Letters On Islam* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 31ff.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
16. See also Musa al-Sadre, «Truth, Revelation and Obedience,» *Christian-Muslim Dialogue* (Geneva: W.C.C.:Publications, 1973), pp. 44–46.
17. Spencer, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 2,16,38ff.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

20. Newell S. Booth, «The Historical and the Non-Historical in Islam,» *The Muslim World*, LX (April 1970), pp. 114–116.
21. cf. J. H. Bavinck, *The Church Between Temple and Mosque* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), pp. 130,143.
22. Spencer, *Loc. Cit.*
23. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 76–82.
25. Bavinck, *The Church Between Temple and Mosque*, pp.118–129.
26. Isma3il R. al-Faruqi, «On the Nature of Islamic Da3wah,» *International Review of Missions*, LXV (October 1976), pp. 392ff.
27. I. R. al-Faruqi, «A Comparison of the Islamic and Christian Approaches to Hebrew Scripture,» *Journal of Bible and Religion*, XXXI (1963), p. 291.
28. Al-Faruqi, «On the Nature of Islamic Da3wah,» *I.R.M.*, LXV (October, 1976), pp. 395.
29. Al-Faruqi, «A Comparison of the Islamic and Christian Approaches to Hebrew Scripture,» *J.B.R.*, XXXI (1963), pp. 291–292.
30. Mohamed al-Nowaihi, «The Religion of Islam,» *International Review of Missions*, LXV (April 1976), p. 217.  
Also Al-Faruqi, «On the Nature of Islamic Da3ah,» *I.R.M.*, LXV (October 1976), pp. 399–405.
31. Bavinck, *Introduction to the Science of Missions*, p.222.
32. Sulaiman Mufassir, *Jesus in the Qur'an* (Plainfield, IN; Muslim Students Association, 1972), pp. 2–11.
33. Kenneth Cragg, *The Call of the Minaret*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 33,140–144.
34. Al-Faruqi, «On the Nature of Islamic Da3wah,» *I.R.M.*, LXV (October 1976), pp. 393,398ff.
35. Al-Nowaihi, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 216ff.
36. Spencer, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 76–82.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 67–74.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 7ff.



39. See Pfander, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 246–249 for a refutation.
40. Arthur Jeffery, *Islam: Muhammad and His Religion*. (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1958), pp. 126–128.
41. Al-Faruqi *et al.*, «On the Nature of Islamic Daʿwah,» *I.R.M.*, LXV (October, 1976), pp. 405–409.
42. Al-Faruqi, «A Comparison of the Islamic and Christian Approaches to Hebrew Scripture,» *J.B.R.*, XXXI (1963), pp. 285–287, 290n. 20.
- Al-Faruqi's distinction between the Christian and Muslim views of revelation is similar to that given here, but with a significant difference in the interpretation of the Christian view. According to him, in Christianity, revelation is an «event,» whereas in Islam it is an «idea.» This difference derives from the fact that the «Christian» view he presents and with which he is dialoguing, is really that of Modern theology, which rejects the identification of the Bible with revelation. On the other hand, Evangelical theology insists that revelation is both event and idea, both historical and scriptural, the latter being the divinely inspired record and interpretation of the former. The terms used here were chosen to reflect the difference between the two views, both as concerns the nature and the mode of revelation. This difference is also reflected in the Arabic words used in the two communities to express the idea «Word of God»; Muslims use the concrete noun *kalām* – the «speaking» or the «utterance» of God; Christians use the abstract noun *kalimah* – the «Word» in the sense of the «message» of God.
43. Besides the articles of al-Faruqi cited above, see e.g. Amir Ali, «Christianity From the Islamic Standpoint,» *Christianity: Some Non-Christian Appraisals*, Ed. by D. W. McKain (New York: McGraw Hill, 1964), pp. 225–241.
44. See Muhammad Rasjidi *et al.*, «Christian Mission in the Muslim World: Indonesia,» *International Review of Missions*, LXV (October 1976), pp. 435–438, 444–447.
45. Abd-al-Rahman Azzam, *The Eternal Message of Muhammad*, translated by C. E. Farah (New York: Mentor Books, 1964), pp. 56–81.

