

# Encountering the World of Islam

ENCOUNTERING  
THE WORLD OF  
ISLAM

Embracing Muslims with the Love of Christ

Theological Issues

# Comparisons of Christianity and Islamic doctrine

Core differences between Islam and Christianity:

1. View of God
2. View of Man and His relationship to God
3. View of Christ and Salvation
4. View of the Holy Spirit
5. Revelation and The Scriptures
6. Society and the Church
7. Angels and Satan
8. Eschatology

# View of God

## between Christianity & Islam

**God is Absolutely Other (or Transcendent)**

***God is uniquely One (Tawhid)***

**God relates to the World only by His creative Word**

**God is absolutely free**

### **CONFLICTS:**

- **God is unknown and unknowable**
- **God is not Personal, or Spiritual**
- **God is not active in History, neither does He "come down" or enter History**
- **God is not Holy or Righteous in the sense of loathing and separating Himself from sin.**
- **God has no feelings or affections for any creature**
- **God is not thought of as binding Himself by covenant to do certain things for man**
- **God is not Triune in nature**

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

- ***This view cuts man off from a personal relationship with, and knowledge of, God.***
- ***This view cuts man off from true rationality.***
- ***Finally this view cuts man off from morality***

# Views of Man and His relationship to God

## between Christianity & Islam

- **Man is the high point of God's creation**
- ***Man's relation to God is basically that of a servant "abd" to his Master or Lord.***
- ***Man was created as he now is - good but "weak" (da`if) (4:32) and inconstant.***
- ***Man breaks his relationship with God by "unbelief" (kufr, godlessness), which includes "associating someone with God" (shirk)***
- **Man is endowed with 'natural religion'**

### CONFLICTS:

- ***Man is not made in the "Image of God," in the sense of the moral and spiritual likeness of God***
- ***Man is not sinful by nature, neither is he separated from God or under His wrath because of guilt***
- ***Man's basic problem is ignorance, rather than sin***
- ***Man does not need salvation from sin's guilt or power, since he is not a sinner by nature***

# Views of Christ and Salvation

## between Christianity & Islam

- **The Islamic Doctrine of Christ.** Christ was merely a human prophet who announced God's message, performed miracles "by God's permission"
- ***Islam's Concept of Salvation.*** In Islam the idea of salvation is expressed in the Arabic word `falah' which means "well-being," "welfare," "prosperity."

### CONFLICTS:

- **Islam's doctrine of Christ contradicts the Biblical record**
  - Denial of Deity
  - Denial of Death
- ***The Islamic view of Faith* opposes real trust in Christ. Faith is seen as *doing* rather than *resting* upon One who has done all**
- ***The Islamic view of Repentance* differs radically from the Biblical view**
- ***The Islamic view of Salvation* likewise *differs radically* from that of the Bible**
- ***Various Islamic concepts* hinder Muslim inquirers from seeking a personal relationship with Christ as "sons of God."**

# View of The Holy Spirit

## between Christianity & Islam

- **Islamic Ideas on the Holy Spirit**
- **The Muslims concept of God conflicts with the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit**
- **The Muslims view of man**
- **No close communion with God**
- **The Islamic claim to find a prophecy of Muhammad in Jesus' Teaching on the Holy Spirit**
  - **Comforter at John 14:16,26**

# Views of Revelation and the Scriptures

## between Christianity & Islam

- **The Process of Revelation is that of Tanzil ("Sending down"): God "sends down" information and commands to His prophets for mankind**
- *The Nature of Scripture: Scripture is of the nature of religious law (shari`a).*
- *Messengers and Inspired Books*
- *Muslims believe that each Messenger and his book is superseded (or "abrogated").*
- *The Qur'an summarizes (collects) and replaces all the previous books*

### CONFLICTS:

Concepts of Revelation

Biblical terms not understood

# Views of Society and the Church

## between Christianity & Islam

- The ideal of the Islamic "Umma" (Religious Community)
- The Islamic concept of the superiority of the Umma

### CONFLICTS:

- *Muslims think of Christianity as intending also to be such an exclusive religio-political community*
- *Muslims think of the church as being inferior to Islam*
- *Muslims interpret Christian practices in the same magical way as they interpret Muslim practices*



# Views of Society and the Church

## between Christianity & Islam

- **Environment of Supernatural beings**
- **Highly elaborated Angels**
- **Shaitan or Iblis (Satan)**
- **The Evil Eye**

# Views of Eschatology

## between Christianity & Islam

- **The signs preceding the Last Day**
- **The Resurrection**
- **The Judgment**
- **The Garden**
- **Hell, the "Fire"**

### **CONFLICTS:**

- *The Second Coming of Christ*
- *The Resurrection and Heaven*
- *The ideas concerning Judgment*

# Bibliography

- [Theological and Apologetical Dimension of Muslim Evangelization](#) by Samuel Schlorff
- [Muslim Ideology and Christian Apologetics](#) by Samuel Schlorff