

God's Heart for the Nations
Redefining Our Future
Engagement with Muslims

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The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)
World Missions Congress

Thank you for your warm greeting. I am humbled and honored to present to this historic gathering. I want to specifically express my gratitude to your grace Primate, his Archbishops and bishops, both those present with us and those leading Christ's flock of Anglicans around the world.

Our difficult topic in this session is our future engagement with Muslims. This topic remains challenging because of the excessive trauma we are experiencing at the hands of violent Muslims. Our great commission to share the love of Christ with Muslims is a difficult choice for us because these Muslims have gravely abused us. Just as they have abused and killed many Muslims. Yet, we are accountable to behave like Christ rather than respond in the manner of this evil world.

I would prefer to hear your experiences, weep with you, and give gentle words of comfort to you. However, and I have been tasked to present to you how we must redefine our future engagement with Muslims. To do this we must be rooted in our biblical hope, and the redemptive plan of Christ for the Nations. So, I apologize for my directness and request that you NOT listen for what is wrong in Islam but listen carefully for Christ's call to extend his mercy and salvation to Muslims as he has extended it to us.

We did not deserve his love. No sinner does. Yet God would send not just his

own son, but us as well, to died in order that others, even Muslims, might know our heavenly Father and live.



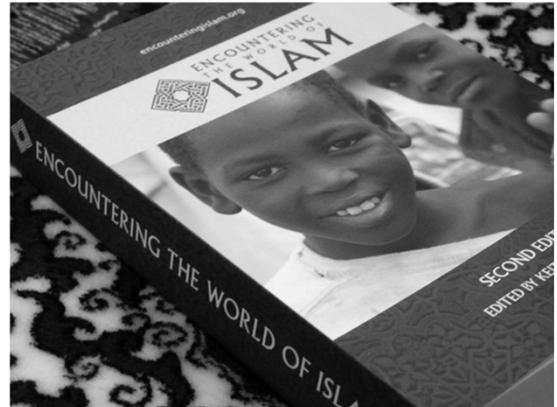
But why me? Who am I? Why have I been selected of all people to speak to this issue for us at this congress. I am a husband and a father, a church elder and missions mobilization leader. I bring you greetings from my wife and daughters, my church and my global missions family of PIONEERS.

For 42 years I have been sharing Christ's love with Muslims and helping Christians around the world demonstrate, at great cost, the love of Christ to Muslims. I have had the privilege to be used in this capacity in 33 countries. Like you I have see friends beating, kidnapped and martyred. I bear witness to riots and destruction of homes, villages, school and churches. Even so, I hope to earn your respect as I present the hope of the gospel for Muslims. I believe the congress delegates have been given two resources that bear my name.

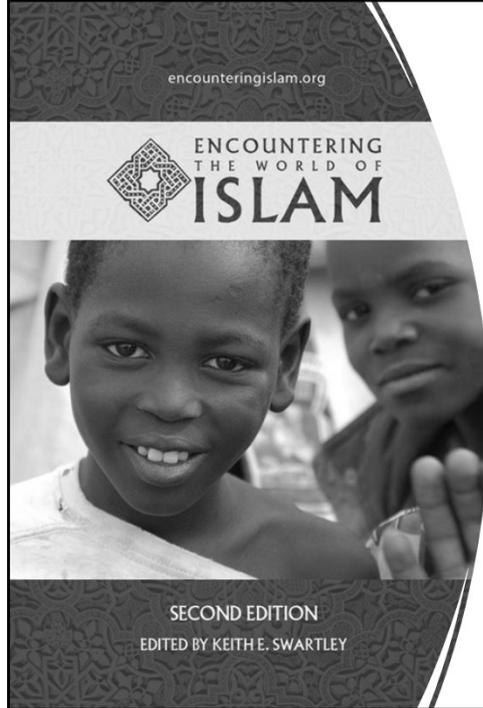
Embracing Muslims with the Love of Christ

- 12 Lesson Robust Course.
- Over 50,000 participants.
- In 6 Languages.
- Since 1992.
- Sister course to Perspectives and Kairos.

- Learn more at:
encounteringmuslims.org



The first resource is the textbook for a robust course, titled *Encountering the World of Islam*. This is the textbook for a mobilization course, a sister course to Perspectives on the World Christian Movement and the Kairos course. This course has equipped 50,000 Christians in the U.S., U.K., Korea, China, Russia, across Latin and South America as well as here in Africa: In Egypt, Kenya, Ethiopia, and since 2009 here in Nigeria in partnership with the Nigerian Evangelical Missions Association and El Rehoboth Global Leadership Foundation. I have been to Nigeria, I have been not just to Lagos or Abuja, but to Niger, Kaduna, Bauchi and Plateau states. I have seen with my own eyes the situation you have been suffering.



Empower a Bold Generation to Reach Muslims

- Encountering Muslims equips churches to embrace Muslims with the love of Christ.
- Apathy, fear and hate are keeping Christians paralyzed.

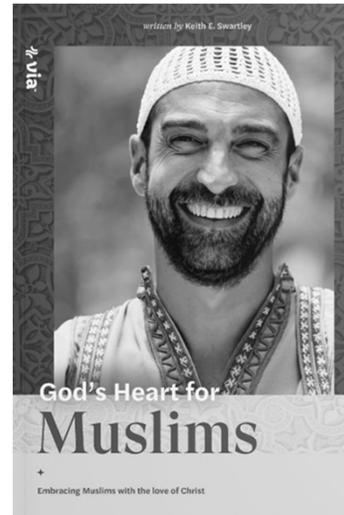
Most Christians around the world are trapped in apathy, fear or anger which saps the church's strength and paralyzes Christians from sharing Christ love with Muslim.

So, as the apostle Paul records in Romans 10, how can they call upon Christ if they do not believe, and how can they believe if they have not heard, and how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

This is my passion. Encountering the World of Islam is empowering a bold generation to bring the GOOD NEWS of Christ to Muslims.

God's Heart for Muslims 8 Lesson Bible Study

- vianations.org/heartformuslims
- 17 languages.
- Available in English, French, and coming in 2026 in Hausa.



In addition, the second resource delegates have been given is my bible study, God's Heart for Muslims. God's Heart for Muslims Bible Study is designed for any Christian: To kindle in them Christ's love for Muslims directly from our bible. Both these resources are published and available here in Nigeria in English. And God's Heart for Muslims in also available French and a number of other languages and with Christ's provision, next year we will also have God's Heart for Muslims published here in Nigeria in the Hausa language.



Demonstrating Christ's love is a choice of obedience which is rooted in our biblical hope.

So, as I speak to you my brother and sisters hold in one hand our pain, suffering, trauma and loss. But my fellow heirs of Christ's redemption, we must hold in our other hand the hope of the gospel. Do you have hope? We MUST hold on to our future hope. We know what will happen in the end and as a result, we can not react in apathy, fear and anger. Even fear of our earthly death. In the words of 1 Corinthians 15, death no longer has any victory or sting for those of us who are in Christ. The risen Christ has paid our sin debt, assuaged the wrath of God, and defeated death itself. Our hope is not in this earthly life of famine, disease, and violence. We know this hope from God's word:

Our Future Hope

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from **every nation, tribe, people, and language**, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice:

“Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”

Revelation 7:9-10

This is our future hope. After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from **every nation, tribe, people, and language**, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” Revelation 7:9-10

We know this WILL happen, just as it is recorded in the Bible. We will be there; we will sing these words. We will wear these white robes and hold these palm branches. AMEN.

And with us, side by side, who else will be there? A great multitude that cannot be counted. We will be side by side, front and back, surrounded, welcomed, embraced, kisses and loved by people from every language, nation and tribe. Christ will unite us in worship at the foot of his throne. There will be no more enemies, no more hate, no more war. Our wounds will be healed and

our debts forgiven. No authority, power, ruler, or dominion, will ever force us away from Christ's united kingdom of all the peoples praising him.

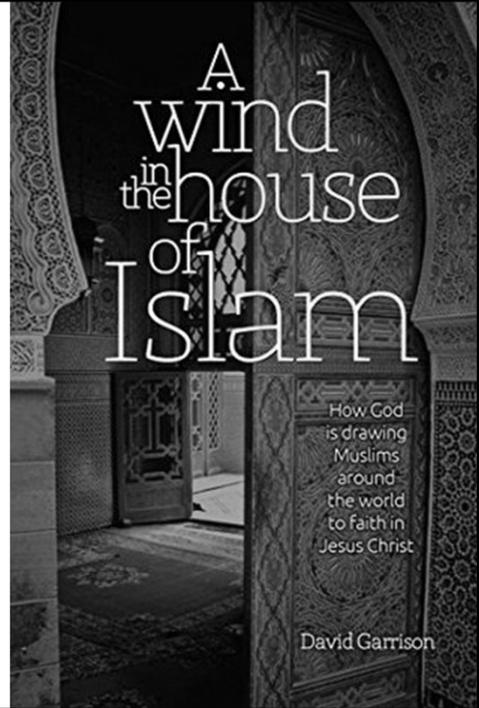
My friends, we must hold on to this hopeful vision as the anchor of our soul. This vision must again and again guide us through our earthly troubles and traumas. This vision must draw us away from our doubts and fears. Away from our anger and hate. This is our vision and rally cry: Every people, worshipping Christ.

Further more, Christ says to us, I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have tribulation. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

If this is our future hope, what do we see now? What is Christ doing today? Is this hope a long off and far away wish? Are the militants and bandits defeating Christ? Or is our sure hope and anchor a rapidly approaching reality in our day right now. Well, I have GOOD NEWS! Amazing news. Wonderful joyous news.

More Muslims have followed Christ in the last 25 years than the previous 1350 years of Islam COMBINED!

- 69 church planting movements of at least 1,000 Muslims from 2000-2014.
- Estimate of 3 to 7 million Muslims coming to Christ.
- David Garrison (International Mission Board).
- <https://wigtake.org/>



More Muslims have followed Christ in the last 25 years than the previous 1350 years of Islam COMBINED!

Do you know this? Can you believe it? Will you open your heart and mind to this as I share this with you?

Dr. David Garrison of the International Mission Board, published his research on movements of Muslims to Christ in 2014. And the results of his research were shocking! Prior to 1980, in all the 1300-year history of Islam, he could only find three movements of Muslims to Christ. For the purposes of his research, he defined a movement as more than 1,000 Muslims turning to Christ over a 20-year period. Looking at the next period from 1980-1999, Dr. Garrison was able to visit and document eleven more movements to Christ among Muslims. That was encouraging growth: From 3 in 1300 years to 11 in 20 years. But what was completely unexpected was that from 2000 to 2014, Dr. Garrison's research documented 69 more movements to Christ with an estimate of

3 to 7 million Muslims who has turned to Christ.

Muslims are Coming to Christ



Significant responses are being seen among:

Afghans, Albanians, Algerians, Bengalis, Bulgarians, Egyptians, Indonesians, Iranians, Iraqis, Kazakhs, Kurds, Kyrgyz, Syrians, Turks, Uzbeks.

Widespread in at least 29 countries.

9

These movements were not isolated rumors. These movements were widespread, found in 29 countries in every part of the Muslims world. Found among, Afghans, Albanians, Algerians, Bengalis, Bulgarians, Egyptians, Indonesians, Iraqis, Kazakhs, Kurds, Kyrgyz, Syrians, Turks, Uzbeks and many other people groups. Dr. Garrison travelled over 250,000 miles over 3 years to visit these movements, conduct interviews, and verify their validity with skeptical and through examination. He confirmed that these movements were REAL!

Muslims are Coming to Christ

- By 1000s, 10,000s, 100,000s, millions.
- 35 to 50 million BMB in 450 movements averaging 100,000 now following Christ. (2025)
- Even among Saudi Arabians – Ahmed Joktan, Mecca to Christ, <https://meccatochrist.org>
- beyond.org, 2414now.net, movements.net



Justin Long,
missionfrontiers.org,
Nov/Dec 2020.

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Furthermore, many of these movements were not just 1000 believers, but thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands and in a few cases more than a million believers in Christ. Dr. Garrison research has been re-checked and expanded on since 2014 so that today in 2025 the estimates are that there are now as many as 35 to 50 million believers from a Muslim background in about 450 movements averaging 100,000 disciples of Christ in each movement!

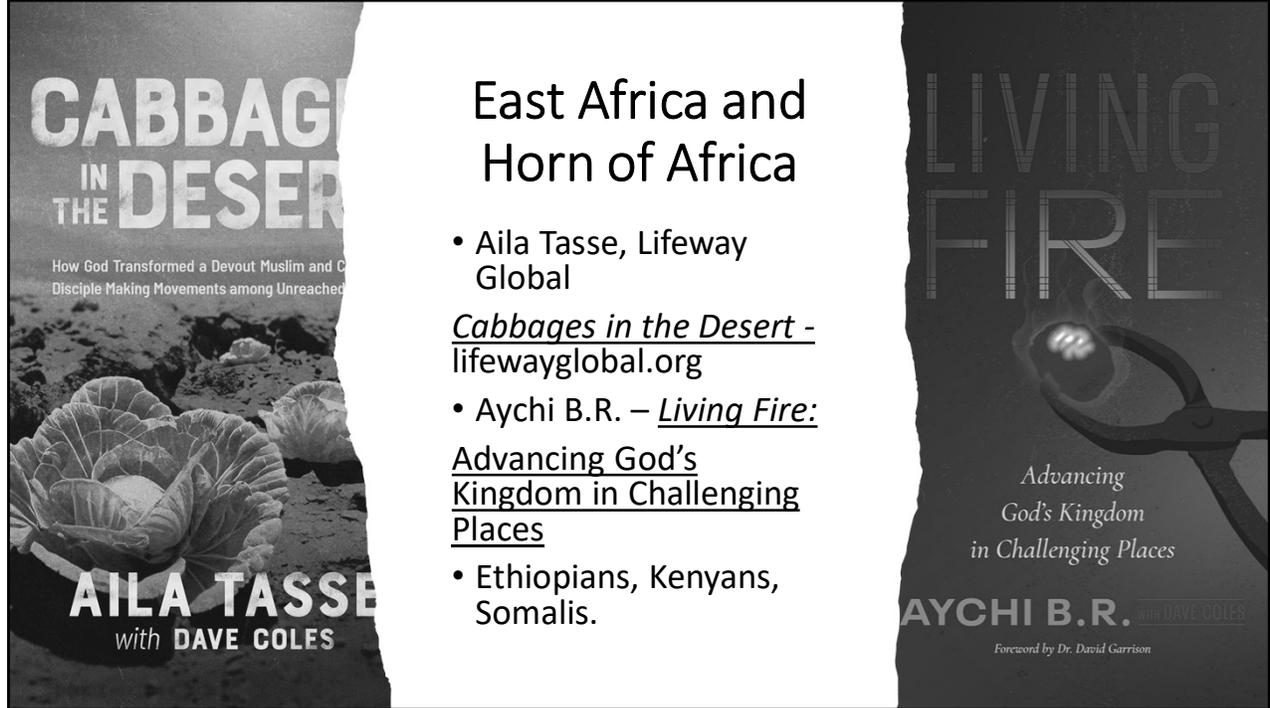
Today, the country with the fastest Christian growth since 1980 is IRAN. Does this surprise you? Would it surprise you further to know there is followers of Christ among Saudis. The son of a mufti of Mecca has come to Christ, I have met him. You can corroborate these facts yourself. Read your Meccan brother in Christ's testimony. Dig through the articles and case studies on these websites. Search the internet for "Iranian baptism" see the photos Iranians have openly posted online.



I am a witness to this myself. When I first visited Turkey in 1986 there were less than 50 known believers from a Muslims background. Today JoshuaProject.net reports there are up to 60 thousand.

A few years ago, in talking to an Iranian pastor, the interviewer was told, "Don't pray for the Islamic regime to change in Iran, pray that people in Iran would come to Christ." That is a powerful, radical, unexpected Biblical perspective.

Do you hear the Iranian pastors well rooted Biblical hope, that empowers him to focused not on his oppressive government, his imprisonment or his persecution, or his fear of death but on glorifying the risen Lamb of God who sits on the throne of heaven.



Well, what about here in Sub-Saharan Africa? What is going on here? Is there GOOD NEWS here? These two books will encourage you. Both authors are former Muslims. Both lead ministries sharing Christ among Muslims. Both these ministries and independent research like that of Dr. Garrison, verify that 10's of thousands of Ethiopian, Kenyan and Somali Muslims are coming to Christ. And thousands of house churches have been started, and these often small, hidden and heavily persecuted house churches are replicating, multiplying, experiencing growth not only of numbers but of generations. Generations where one church births not just another church, but multiples of daughter, granddaughter, great granddaughter, and great great grand daughter churches and beyond. So much so that the missiologists researching these movements have added a measurement criteria of at least 4+ generations of multiplication to their studies of these movements.

Côte d'Ivoire
Côte d'Ivoire
Côte d'Ivoire

West Africa

- Sierra Leone – New Harvest Ministries.
Shodankeh Johnson
newharvest.org
- Côte d'Ivoire – New Generations.
(formerly CitiTeams)
Younoussa Djao
newgenerations.org



Let's move a step closer. What about in West Africa? While there are many movements to Christ in West Africa, I will highlight two which you can read about. The first I have seen for myself in Sierra Leone. In February of this year, I was in Sierra Leone, and we trained 120 rural pastors from every province of Sierra Leone. Most of these pastors were former Muslims. One ministry you can follow is that of Dr. Shodankeh Johnson and New Harvest Ministries which reports 3,000 churches.

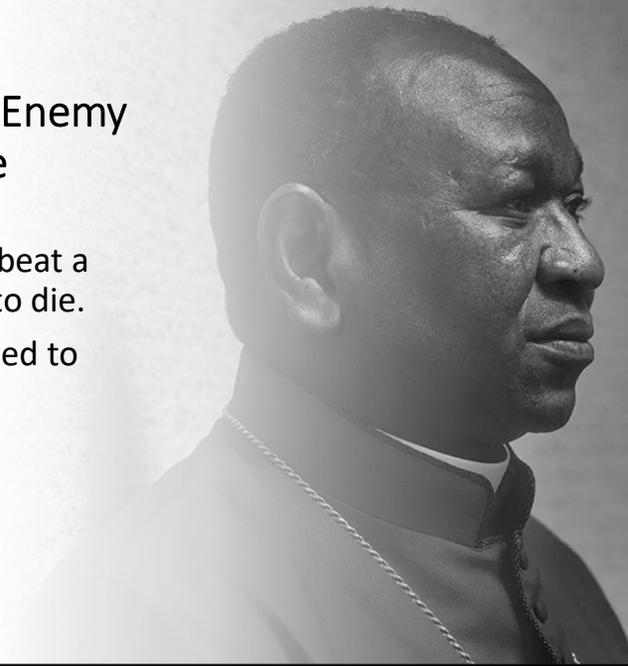
Another movement you can learn about is going today in Cote d'Ivoire and you can learn about it from NewGenerations.org.

Many of these movements in Africa follow a discovery bible study or disciple making movement approach of seeking out Muslims who are willing to gather together as a small group to study the Bible in their heart language. Maybe you have heard about DMM or DBS trainings here in Nigeria as well.

Yassir Eric - I Was the Enemy Jesus Told You to Love

“As an extremist Muslim, I beat a
Christian boy and left him to die.
His faithful prayers for me led to
my salvation.”

ChristianityToday.com
September/October 2025
Anglican bishop in Sudan.



Christianity Today in this month's issue, has an article on an Anglican bishop in Sudan who is a convert from Islam and is now leading non-geographic diocese specifically for believers from a Muslim background.

Nigeria – JoshuaProject.net

- Nigeria is the largest protestant church in the world.
- 51% Christian.
- Vision5015+ over 4000 Nigerian missionaries to the Sahel, North Africa, and Middle East.
- Nigerian Missionaries in China, Indonesia, Pakistan.



So, what about here in Nigeria. Is this surprising movement of Muslims to Christ happening here as well?

First of all, your country is home to the largest Protestant community in the world! JoshuaProject.net estimates that Nigeria is 51% Christian! Furthermore, Nigeria has sent over 4000 missionaries outside of Nigeria to other parts of the Sahel, North Africa and the Middle East.

I have also met Nigerian missionaries who are witnessing for Christ in China, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.

God has blessed his church in Nigeria. While you may feel oppressed politically, culturally, socially, economically, you are strong and growing in Christ.



Reaching Fulani Using Media

- David Ayuba Azzaman
- 457,000 Facebook followers.
- TikTok, Instagram, YouTube.
- 1 Peter 3:15 Be prepared to give an answer for the hope in us, when asked, but with gentleness and respect.

Azzaman Azzaman

Let me give you a couple examples from here in Nigeria. David Azzaman boldly, without shame or fear shared Christ despite opposition and threats using Facebook, TikTok, Instagram and YouTube. Others have followed his example. His Facebook has 457,000 followers including many Fulani.

Not all of these media evangelists are in my opinion helpful. Let me give you my criteria: Is the witness for Christ following 1 Peter 3:15? Do Muslims hear them giving hope filled answers that are Good News or just loud noise. Do their media posts demonstrate love? Is their witness gentle and respectful of Muslims. Is it their preaching edifying? Or does it antagonistically bait Muslims with insults and shaming which is unbecoming of a disciple of Christ?

Often our preaching even in our churches is not wholesome, winsome, patience, or kind. If a Muslim listened in your church, would he or she

feel welcomed, blessed, honored. Would she feel prayed for and lifted up? Or would they feel cursed, damned and rejected. If the gospel is Good News for the poor, the spiritually blind, those oppressed and trapped in Islam, those held captive in spiritual darkness, then does our witness, our evangelism appear as a welcome invitation to meet Christ?



Among Hausa Muslims

Global Glorious Mission,
Kaduna.

GloriousMissions.org.ng

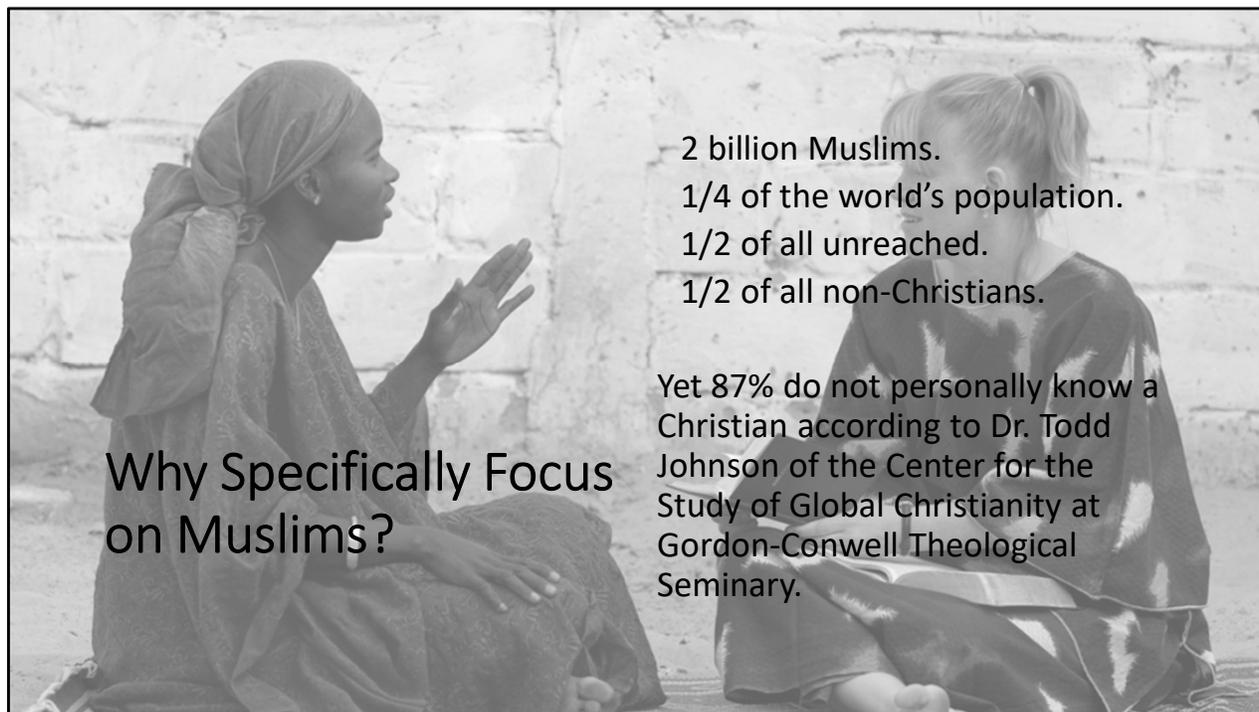
Would a Muslim seeking
Christ feel welcome in your
church?

Do know believers in Christ
from Muslim families in your
church?

What about among the Hausa? There are many examples of Hausa Muslims coming to Christ. I will mention one I know personally. Global Glorious Mission in Kaduna, where I, myself, have been. This work was initiated by two men, I, myself, know. I was just with both of them in Kenya at the African Mission Association Conference last week. Maybe you know of others who are loving Hausa Muslims to Christ.

You ought to even look around your own churches and gently inquire, “Are there any here who grew up in Muslim families? And when you see them, welcome them, receive them in love and without suspicion. Hear they stories, comfort them, help them, protect and defend them.

Disciple them in Christ. Encourage them, despite opposition and persecution to continue loving and bearing witness to their families and communities.



In our mission congress, in our churches, dioceses, ecclesiastical provinces, why should outreach to Muslims specifically be prominent?

Redefining Our Engagement with Muslims is a strategic priority because:

There are 2 billion Muslims in our world today.
1/4 of the world's population is Muslim.
1/2 of all unreached are Muslims.
1/2 of all non-Christians are Muslim.

Yet 87% do not personally know a Christian according to Dr. Todd Johnson of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

How will Muslims believe unless we know them and invite them to Christ?

Why are Muslims Coming to Christ?

- Extraordinary diligence in prayer and fasting FOR Muslims.
- Boldness in gentle, respectful witness – 1 Peter 3:15.
- Withstanding suffering and persecution.
- Multiplying Underground House Churches – DBS, DMM.
- Bible in Muslim heart language, in their hands, read for themselves.

So Why are Muslims Coming to Christ?

According to the same research as I mentioned on movements to Christ there tends to be several common factors.

Extraordinary diligence in prayer and fasting FOR Muslims. The specific focus on the unreached since the Lausanne Congress in 1974 and the global prayer movement of prayer for Muslims during the month of Ramadan each year.

A turning away from preaching focused primarily on polemics attacks to prove Muslims wrong towards a courageous witness which is still bold but speaks edifying gentle, respectful testimonies to Christ's mercy and love and willing to withstand suffering and persecution as a further testimony to the validity of our hope in Christ.

The Multiplying of underground House Churches through DBS, DMM methods rather than street preaching.

An the translation of the bible in Muslim heart language, putting in their hands, having them read for themselves.



Satan has no defense
against:

- Our Prayers
- And Our Love

Our true enemy is Satan. And Satan has NO defense against our supernaturally empowered twin ministries of prayer and Love. Only Christ can open hearts, only Christ can change minds, only Christ can change our destiny. So, we ask him to. We persist in begging him to accomplish his will to rule over our lives and the lives and destiny of Muslims. He is waiting for us to ask him, invite him, plead with his to build his family of all Muslim peoples, tribes and languages. To build his global fellowship of all peoples in heaven.

How did you come to Christ? What happened in your life. I'll tell you, my story. I think it is your story as well. I was being prayed for, not prayed against. But for. That I would turn from my rebellion, yes, but more than that, that I would receive Christ love. What else was occurring, although I was argumentative, suborn, even though I lied, cheated, stole, hid, complained, whined, people showed me love that I did not deserve.

Every Muslims that I have met who has come to Christ this is true as well. Most have not been convinced of the trinity, or that the bible is authoritative

before they came to Christ. But they have been prayed for by Christians, and these Christians have been demonstrating undeserved love. And God has opened their hearts and minds to seek Christ. And later, after they have accepted Christ, after they have been baptized, after they have been discipled and read the bible for themselves in their heart language. Then and only then, with the in dwelling of the holy spirit, have their doubts about Christ death and resurrection, and the deity of Christ been corrected. After conversion not before.

What should we pray?

- For Christ to send laborers to Muslims.
Luke 10:2
- For Christ to draw Muslims to himself.
Titus 3:5
- For Christ to open doors for Good News in Muslim hearts.
Colossians 4:3
- For Christ to raise up persons of peace within the Muslim community. Luke 10:5
- For Christ to break the strongholds and lies of Satan Acts 26:18, 2 Corinthians 10:4
- For boldness, miracles, healing, dreams, visions, provision, protection and multiplication. Acts 4:29-30, James 5:16, Acts 2:17-18, Psalm 5:11, Matthew 13:8-9.



So, What should we be praying for Muslims? In our pain, some are praying Muslims will go away? Others are tempted to pray even more vile things. Here are a few helpful suggestions of what to pray that hopefully will match God's heart as well.

For Christ to send laborers to Muslims.

For Christ to draw Muslims to himself.

For Christ to open doors for Good News in Muslim hearts.

For Christ to raise up persons of peace within the Muslim community.

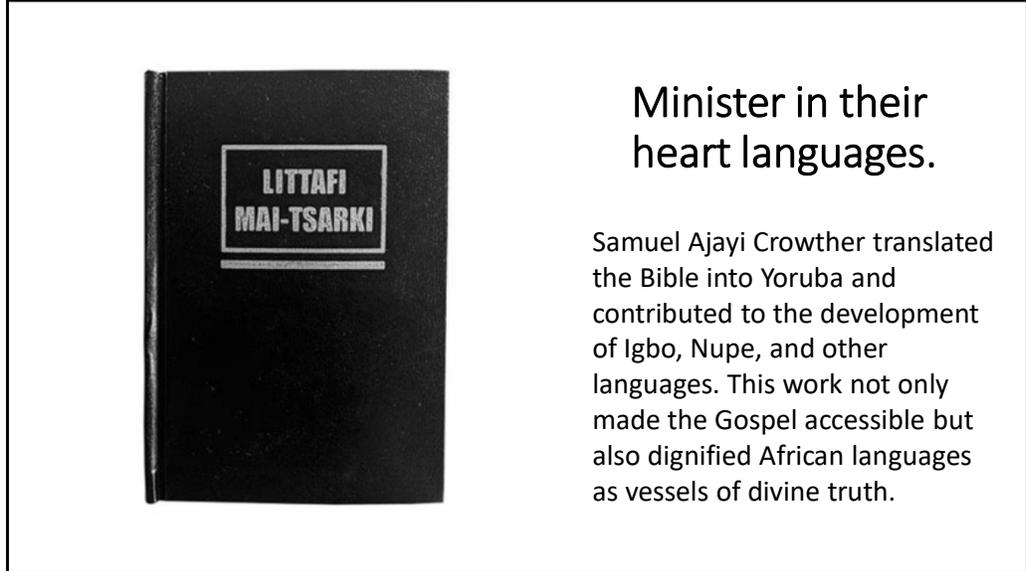
For Christ to break the strongholds and lies of Satan wherever these lies are found whether in my own heart or in the heart of Muslims

For Muslims to experience Christ in miracles, healing, dreams, and visions

For provision, protection and multiplication of our brothers and sisters in Christ from Muslim backgrounds.



Historically and today most churches are small, meet in people's dwellings, are led by lay elders. This is true in the amazing movements to Christ among Muslims today as well. A challenge then for us, is how can we support and encourage these house churches so as to not harm their multiplying growth but augment it out of the strength of our public churches, denominations and missions organizations.



We have often kept worship, teaching and bible reading in the ecclesiastical language of our denominations. When I was growing up, the Catholic church in my neighborhood still insisted upon mass in Latin. But as protestants, we recognize that periodically the church needs to be reformed as the cultural traditions we add to how we practice our faith get in the way of the clear expression of the gospel and faith in Christ. You and I are comfortable in the King's English even though both our countries fought England for our independence from the crown. However, if we retain pride and resist bringing the word of God to all people in their heart language, we undo Pentecost and behave like Muslims. In Islam, prayer and their holy book can only be authoritative in Quranic Arabic.

Gambian scholar who was the Professor of Missions and World Christianity at Yale Divinity School, Lamin Sanneh said in his book, *Translating the Message*, "Christianity seems unique in being the only world religion that is transmitted without the language or originating culture of its founder." and in his book, *Whose Religion is Christianity*, "No culture is so advanced and so superior that it can claim exclusive access or advantage to the truth of God, and none so marginal or inferior that it can be excluded. All have

merit; none is indispensable.”

A major part of Samuel Ajayi Crowther legacy was *Bible translation*. He translated the Scriptures into Yoruba and contributed to the development of Igbo, Nupe, and other languages. This work not only made the Gospel accessible but also dignified African languages as vessels of divine truth.

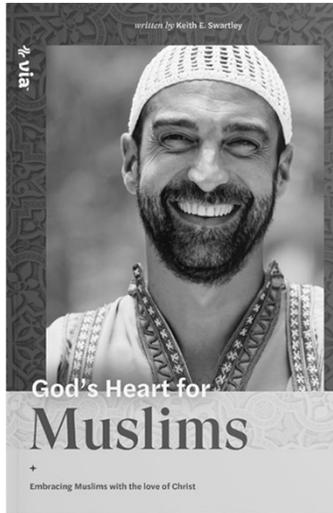
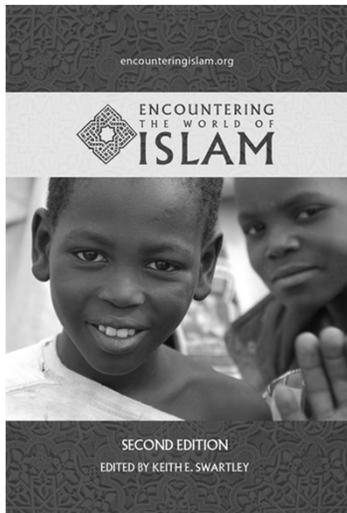
So, we need to encourage worship, liturgies, prayers, teaching, and especially bible literacy in Muslims heart language so that the Kanuri, Fulani and Hausa will lift the name of Christ in each of their dialects. I enjoy the old hymns and King James Language. Although they speak to me, they may create a barrier for Muslims that Christ came to abolish.



...As surely as I live,
declares the
Sovereign LORD,
I take no pleasure
in the death of the
wicked, but rather
that they turn from
their ways and live.
Ezekiel 33:11a (NIV)

We still hold in our hand our traumatic suffering at the hands of many Muslims. For them retribution is permitted. They operate on the debased human expectation revenge. I hope this presentation has been helpful to you. Rooted you in hope. For in our mission our sovereign Lord, declares in Ezekiel 33, As surely as I live, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live.

Let our response to Muslims be an invitation to live in Christ.



Let's Connect

We are glad to come work together to develop our gospel engagement with Muslims.

info@encounteringmuslims.org

So, please utilize these resources. We have Nigerian trainers and seminars to help you as leaders. We are glad to work together with you to redefine our gospel engagement with Muslims. Seek out El Rehoboth Leadership Foundation and the STEM workshop (Strategic Training on Engaging Muslims).

Amen

Thank you and the Lord be with you.