

Dear Friend,

Deceptive ecumenical outreaches in the Christian world have been persistent in the last forty years. An Islamic outreach to that Christian world is quite unique, however. Because this Islamic overture to peace is so clever and has been so well received by some major players, it is extremely important to analyze it. The Papacy is involved in what is happening, as ecumenism with Islam has been her official stand since Vatican Council II.

Knowing that the truth of the Lord transcends all deception, the article gives a biblical response.

We ask that you respond in prayer and forward the article to others. We request also, if possible, that you post it on your Webpage.

Yours in the Sovereign all-powerful Savior,
Richard Bennett
Virgil Dunbar.

Islam's New Tactic Impacts Christianity

By Richard Bennett and Virgil Dunbar

On October 11, 2007, one hundred and thirty-eight Grand Muftis—members of the major branches of Islam, Sunni, Shi'ite, and Sufi Islam—proclaimed a call for peace and understanding between Islam and Christianity. The Roman Pontiff and many world-recognized Christian leaders have responded positively.

Throughout its history, Islam has been known as absolutely intolerant to any diversity of beliefs. Neither criticism of nor opposition to Islam is tolerated. In some Islamic lands, if an individual is not a Muslim, he or she may be killed for refusing to submit¹ to conversion, since it is held that such individuals are an enemy to Islam. Islam has always been militant; however, its present-day aggressive belligerency is rightly called “Islamofascism.” Islamic fascism is a descriptive name that highlights Islam's contempt for all democratic human rights and free speech. Like fascism and communism in the past, its goals are the utter destruction of other ways of life in favor of establishing its own religion and culture as the only one, unmixed with any other religion and culture. Islamofascists are not interested in peaceful coexistence with non-Muslims, whether Jewish or Christian. However, they have adopted a new tactic which is engaged in creating a façade of recognition of Christianity in pursuance of its objectives. This is a classic case study of what the prophet of old proclaimed, “*Peace, peace; when there is no peace.*”²

Actual Argument Proposed by Islam

It is noteworthy that the outreach came from a whole spectrum of Islamic positions. The signatories are prominent Muslim personalities from a large number of countries and several continents. The call spells out what it says is “the basis for this peace” with Jews and Christians.

¹ “Communists would take you prisoner. The Muslims kill you.” What “Brother Andrew” told *World Magazine* (Dec. 8, 2007; <http://www.worldmag.com/articles/13572>). In the past, Brother Andrew smuggled Bibles into Communist countries; now he has turned his attention to Islam.

² Jeremiah 6:14

“It [the basis for peace] is part of the very foundational principles of both faiths: love of the One God, and love of the neighbour. These principles are found over and over again in the sacred texts of Islam and Christianity. The Unity of God, the necessity of love for Him, and the necessity of love of the neighbour is thus the common ground between Islam and Christianity.”³

The document admits that Islam and Christianity are obviously different religions, yet it proposes that “whilst there is no minimising some of their formal differences—it is clear that the Two Greatest Commandments are an area of common ground and a link between the Qur’an, the Torah, and the New Testament.” The document’s strongest entreaty is expressed as follows, “If Muslims and Christians are not at peace, the world cannot be at peace. With the terrible weaponry of the modern world; with Muslims and Christians intertwined everywhere as never before, no side can unilaterally win a conflict between more than half of the world’s inhabitants. Thus our common future is at stake. The very survival of the world itself is perhaps at stake.” The communiqué closes with a head-on challenge, “So let our differences not cause hatred and strife between us. Let us vie with each other only in righteousness and good works. Let us respect each other, be fair, just and kind to another and live in sincere peace, harmony and mutual goodwill.”

This is the same tactic that the Roman Catholic Church has employed in its false ecumenism with Evangelical Christians. One of the first major documents, “Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium” (ECT), published in March of 1994, held as its premise that because the world forces against Christianity were so strong and evil, it is necessary for Catholics and Evangelicals to band together to fight humanism, etc., and leave sorting out of doctrinal issues to another time. Nevertheless, other Catholic documents show that ECT was simply a deceptive outreach to Evangelicals to bring them eventually into the Catholic fold.⁴ Islamic leaders appear to have taken a page out of the Catholic manual. As the Catholic evangelization of Evangelicals has been successful, so also Islamic outreach to Catholics and liberal Protestants seems to be meeting with some success.

Basis of Equality in Teaching and Practice Does Not Exist

The whole appeal presupposes that there is equality between the Qur’an (Koran), the Torah, and the New Testament on the two greatest Commandments: love of God and love of one’s neighbour. This is a blatant lie. First, in the Qur’an, Allah consistently orders fighting, war, and punishment by murder, crucifixion, and amputation. The following is a sample of the primary concept of fighting that the Qur’an requires:

“And kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out from whence they drove you out, and persecution is severer than slaughter, and do not fight with them at the Sacred Mosque

³ This quotation and those that follow are taken from the text of the document, “A Common Word Between Us and You”, at <http://www.acommonword.com/index.php?lang=en&page=option1>, the official (Islamic) website for “A Common Word”.

⁴ Vatican Council II Document No. 32, *Unitatis Redintegratio* (Decree on Ecumenism) 21 Nov 1964, *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Austin Flannery, Gen. Ed. (Northport, NY: Costello Publ. Co., 1975) Vol. I, p. 540-541.

until they fight with you in it, but if they do fight you, then slay them; such is the recompense of the unbelievers.” (Surah 2.191)⁵

“...And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion should be only for Allah, but if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors.” (Surah 2.193)

Second, there is no parallel in practice between peace and tolerance as lived out in Christian nations and Christian life lived in the Muslim nations. The violence inflicted by Muslims on Christians in Muslim lands is constant and horrific. Islamic persecution regularly occurs in Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippine Islands, Sudan, and across the Islamic world through torture and death, fire-bombings, vandalism, and destruction.⁶ By contrast, in Christian countries the Muslim communities live in peace and tranquility.

Further, there are terrorist attacks upon the United States and other nations of the world. These have been purposeful and cruelly done with intention to kill and destroy. The larger purpose is to create constant fear and respect for Islam as a world power spread over many nations. Terrorism means the use of violence and intimidation to compel peoples and governments to make certain policy decisions. The purposes of groups such as Al Qaeda are quite clear. They seek to harm and remove power from the United States and the West. They seek to secure jurisdiction over the Middle East and its supplies of oil. They desire to force the withdrawal of Western military forces and silence all Christian influences. By undermining Western institutions and furthering the ascendancy of radical Islam, they are determined to establish Islam as the dominant worldwide force. These objectives have been clearly articulated in the published writings and recorded statements of the movement’s leaders.

The Response to the Muslim Letter

At the time of this writing, from the “Christian” world there are thirty-four positive responses to Islam’s “Common Word” letter posted on the letter’s official Islamic website.⁷ Affirmative letters are posted from Roman Catholics, Anglicans, World Council of Churches, National Council of Churches, the National Association of Evangelicals, and many other Catholic and Evangelical leaders and groups. From the Catholic Church, Pope Benedict responded through his Secretary of State,

“The Pope has asked me to convey his gratitude to Your Royal Highness and to all who signed the letter. He also wishes to express his deep appreciation for this gesture, for the positive spirit which inspired the text and for the call for a common commitment to promoting peace in the world. ...Mindful of the content of his Encyclical Letter *Deus Caritas Est* (‘God is Love’), His Holiness was particularly impressed by the attention given in the letter to the twofold commandment to love God and one’s neighbour.”⁸

⁵ This and the following Qur’an references may be found here: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/quran/>. At this site, three English translations are found, one after the other, for each reference. Select “Qur’an”; then select a chapter, then scroll down to the reference number and see the three translations.

⁶ For documentation of the persecution of Christians in the Islamic world see: “Documenting the Persecution of Christians in the Islamic World” at <http://www.domini.org/openbook/home.htm>.

⁷ <http://www.acommonword.com>

⁸ <http://www.acommonword.com/index.php?lang=en&page=option1> (at the “Christian Responses” link)

Yale University also issued a supportive reply to the Muslim letter.⁹ Four professors at Yale Divinity School issued the letter, and significantly, it was signed by about three hundred persons of influence in churches in the United States and around the world. As we might expect, some prominent ecumenists were included. Motivated primarily by fear Leith Anderson¹⁰ (President, National Association of Evangelicals) signed it, explaining that if he did not sign it, some Christians in Muslim lands might suffer retaliation. Other signers included David Neff, (Editor in Chief of Christianity Today Media Group); Richard Mouw (President, Fuller Theological Seminary); Timothy George (of the Gospel-denying ‘Evangelicals and Catholics Together’ movement); and Tony Jones (Emergent Church movement). Later, as expected also, purpose-driven Rick Warren added his name. The Yale letter went on to apologize to Muslims in the following words,

“...we want to begin by acknowledging that in the past (e.g. in the Crusades) and in the present (e.g. in excesses of the ‘war on terror’) many Christians have been guilty of sinning against our Muslim neighbors. Before we ‘shake your hand’ in responding to your letter, we ask forgiveness of the All-Merciful One and of the Muslim community around the world.”¹¹

Politically the Same Scenario

While Iran, a militant Islamic nation, threatens to annihilate Israel, an American intelligence agency released a report in November 2007 stating they believe Iran halted its nuclear weapons program in 2003.¹² However, it is common knowledge that Iran was enriching uranium to make nuclear weapons, and has the manufacturing capability plus scientific expertise to produce nuclear arms, not to mention the capital to cover the cost. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Iranian president, is well known for his repeated desire to annihilate Israel. Because his nation trains many terrorist organizations across the world, it is of great importance to him to obtain nuclear weapons capability. It is common sense to conclude that with genocide possible, Iran is a growing threat to world security.

Nonetheless, an increasing thirst for “peace in our day” continues to be the foundational mindset for much of the media and some leaders of Christianity. This unrealistic mindset appears very reminiscent of British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain’s famous “peace in our day” speech in 1938 after he had agreed to the so-called Munich settlement with Adolf Hitler. The purpose of Islam is to yoke, through dialogue or weaponry, the entire world under the rule of fundamentalist Muslims. They are rising to their vision by implementing practical and innovative ways to replace the authority of democratically elected governments with Qur’anic rule. In the Islamic mind, our esteemed freedoms should be replaced with Shari’a law, and democratically elected leaders should be replaced with imams. In the light of these facts, “The Common

⁹ Yale Divinity School’s Center for Faith and Culture: www.yale.edu/faith

¹⁰ Anderson’s hesitant response said he signed partly out of fear that if he didn’t sign there would be retaliation against Christians living and ministering in Muslim lands: “I sought the counsel of other evangelical leaders, especially those more knowledgeable of Islam than I. Thinkers I respected told me that they were giving their support and encouraged me to do the same. They told me that signing the statement would be especially helpful to Christians who live and minister in Muslim-majority countries and cultures. In fact, some suggested that not signing could be damaging to these Christian brothers and sisters who live among Muslims.”

¹¹ <http://www.yale.edu/faith/>

¹² http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/reports/2007/nie_iran-nuclear_20071203.htm

Or in PDF format: “Iran: Nuclear Intentions and Capabilities”, National Intelligence Council, November 2007 report, page 6 at: http://graphics8.nytimes.com/packages/pdf/international/20071203_release.pdf

Word” peace plea appears quite similar to the method by which many people prior to World War II were deceived.

To the its own detriment, the West may pretend that the “Common Word” letter is only rhetoric, but in the whole course of Islamic history, Muslim leaders have not been above implementing deceptive speech when it suited their purpose. Ultimately, they have been faithful to follow the word of their Qur’an. Since Islam constantly explains its ultimate intentions openly and unapologetically, the Muslim letter must be evaluated in the light of the Qur’an and Islam’s stated ultimate goal. For the most part, Christians do almost nothing to expose Muslim duplicity. Despite the fact that the one hundred thirty-eight Muslims who issued the letter surely must desire peace in the face of growing pressures on their religion, there is no indication that they are abandoning goals for Islamic world dominion. Even the title of the “Common Word Between Us and You” letter comes from a Qur’anic text that instructs Muslims what they are to say to Christians. The exact words of Surah 3:64 are,

“O People of the Book! come to common terms as between us and you: That we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, Lords and patrons other than Allah.” If then they turn back, say ye: ‘Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to Allah’s Will).’”¹³

It is “Allah’s will” that drives Muslims even to deceive with “common terms” those that they consistently call “People of the Book.” Thus, the letter cunningly tries to yoke the Bible and the Qur’an together through false dialogue.

New Tactics for an Islamic Encroachment

We need to be aware of the acknowledged facts on the Islamic advance in Europe and the USA. It has been shown that Islam can invade Europe “without swords, without guns, without conquests.” It is estimated the fifty million Muslims of Europe can make it an Islamic continent within a few decades. The most salient factor is the Islamic increase by their higher birth rate. The 37.2 million Muslims of Europe are only 5.09 % of the population, but especially in large cities their numbers are rapidly growing. Canada, Europe, the USA, and nations such as Japan and Russia are experiencing a startling new change in fertility rates. For example, the America fertility rate is only 2.1 per family, in Italy 1.2, and in Spain 1.1. Women in Western Europe are producing an average of 1.4 children, while Islamic women in the same nations are bearing an average of 3.5 children. Again and again on websites across the world it is stated that, “the number of Muslims is expanding like mosquitoes.” Forty years ago the UK had only a few thousand followers of Islam, now there are at least two million Muslims. Islamic mosques in the UK have increased from about thirty to more than two thousand. Over and above the seven hundred mosques in London there are twelve hundred Qur’anic schools. Most of London’s universities and technical institutes have active Islamic societies openly propagating Islam. More than a million of the twelve million residents of the city are Muslims.¹⁴ Having more mosques than any other Western city, some people now call London the “Muslim capital of Europe.” It is likely in the future that the city of London will have the largest mosque apart from the Middle East. A video from an Islamic website shows what will be called the London Markaz. It is a seventeen acre Islamic worship center for as many as 70,000 Muslims. It is planned to be the focal point of

¹³ <http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/quran/003.qmt.html#003.064> 12/11/2007

¹⁴ Article by Mark Steyn on: www.macleans.ca/article.jsp?content=20061023_134898_134898&source and such websites as: www.two-fot.org/calltoprayer.htm

an Islamic quarter for the 2012 London Olympics. As designed, it will make many of Britain's cathedrals look small by contrast.

Muslim mosques are increasing at a rapid rate in the United States. The increase is second only to mega churches.¹⁵ Islamic mosques and centers are being built all over the United States and Canada. These developments range from small prefab structures to monumental buildings. At the present time there are two thousand mosques in the United States. Some are built using traditional Islamic prototypes, while others are adapted to the American environment using innovative forms. Islamic websites give lists of mosques in California, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington. Exact locations are given with all the relevant information to draw more and more interested Americans to these mosques. The Greater Chicago area has over eighty Islamic organizations and most of them are attached to an Islamic center or a mosque. The estimated population of Muslims in Cook County and nearby counties is 350,000. That is almost 5% of the total population of that region. The Islamic expansion in Western Washington is part of a national trend. Aided by immigration and high conversion rates, Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in the United States, where it is estimated there are six million Muslims. With more than one billion Islamic people worldwide, Islam is nearly commensurate with Roman Catholicism.

What is of greatest significance, however, is the fact that both of these religions have pledged to work together. The Vatican speaks officially of the Roman Catholic Church having the same God and faith of Abraham as the Muslims.¹⁶ Since the time of Pope John Paul II, Rome has undertaken to work together with Islam.¹⁷ The present outreach of Islam is its executive response. The Papacy and Islam united even in pretense is a formidable force.

The Biblical Response to Islam's Outreach

The only way one can understand the deceptiveness of the Islamic outreach and Islamofascism is in the light of the nature of the one true God and the truth of His written Word. He is the High and Holy One who inhabits eternity.¹⁸ He is perfect, immutable, and omnipotent.¹⁹ As Sovereign, He is the final authority and the Ruler over all the affairs of the world, "*Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.*"²⁰ Thus, we proclaim in praise and thanksgiving, "*Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*"²¹ The Scripture clearly states, "*the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits....*"²² Those that rebel against the knowledge of the sovereignty of God can expect to perish in their own darkness. God's absolute supremacy and unlimited sovereignty naturally flow from His omnipotence and from the fact that He is the origin and support of all things. As the Lord God, He is all good and perfect in wisdom. He will

¹⁵ See such websites as: http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/quick_question20.html
<http://libraries.mit.edu/guides/subjects/islamicarchitecture/visual/usamosques.html>
<http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/83805.aspx>
<http://www.islamfortoday.com/chicago2.htm>

¹⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Ignatius Press, 1994) Para. 841

¹⁷ Documented in our newsletter, "The Papacy and Islam", November 2001. www.bereanbeacon.org

¹⁸ Isaiah 57:15.

¹⁹ Job 42:2 "*I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.*"

²⁰ Ephesians 1:11.

²¹ Revelation 19:6

²² Daniel 10:32.

not and cannot err.²³ Being perfect in holiness He always acts in accordance with the principles of His holiness, justice, truth, and wisdom.”²⁴

The wisdom that we need in order to understand Islamic behavior is found in Christ Jesus alone, “*in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*”²⁵ All might and power and wisdom are in Christ Jesus as ruling King of kings and Lord of lords. The Lord Himself declared, “*All things are delivered unto me of my Father,*”²⁶ and “*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*”²⁷ In days of testing, deceit, and uncertainty, the good news is that repentance and grace come from Him, for “*Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*”²⁸ The persecution, terrorism, and duplicity of Islam appear to be for the Lord’s purification of His people and the drawing of souls unto Himself. In the words of Scripture, “*for the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?*”²⁹ For the unbelieving world, the Scriptures portray Christ Jesus as the Ruler and Judge of the nations, and also the One who intercedes for them, “*Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*”³⁰ The Lord’s office as Savior of the world includes His role as Mediator to intercede for the heathen nations. Having died as the atoning sacrifice, and rising again from the dead, He has made intercession for mankind. On account of what He did and suffered, He has the nations for His inheritance, the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. He is now the Supreme Lord. Consequently, He sends His people throughout the globe to preach the Gospel to every man—including the Muslims. “*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*”³¹

A Personal Word for the Muslim

To those who are Muslims, we set before you the choice between life and death, good and evil. You know from experience, and the situation of your life, that you live in a state of misery and are condemned and enslaved by the very religion that you serve. The Islamic declaration of having a perfectly preserved Qur’an; and that the Bible is a corruption of God’s earlier revelation is an insult to God’s perfect justice and infinite power. For an explanation of the inconsistencies of Islamic faith and Christian truth please read the documented facts on the website: <http://www.Answering-Islam.org>.³²

The testimony of the Bible and history is that man by his own resources and research cannot adequately understand God.³³ The depths and riches of His wisdom are past human com-

²³ Isaiah 45:7.

²⁴ Isaiah 33:5-6

²⁵ Colossians 2:3

²⁶ Matthew 11:27.

²⁷ Matthew 28:18.

²⁸ Acts 5:31.

²⁹ I Peter 4:17.

³⁰ Psalm.2: 6-9.

³¹ Mark 16:15

³² <http://www.answering-islam.org/index.html> 12/12/2007

³³ Job 9:10, 11:7.

prehension.³⁴ The Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed the means by which a person is to know who God is and how He acts. He said, *“sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”* God’s written word, the Bible, not only contains the truth, but rather, it is truth itself. As descendants of Adam, we are sinful creatures, separated from our holy Creator. By ourselves, we have no way to be right with God. From the beginning, God’s word made it clear that even one act of disobedience would produce death. Death means separation. Mankind is spiritually dead, separated from the Source of life—the Lord God. *“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”*³⁵ The Lord God is all pure and all holy. As sinful human beings we cannot have a relationship with Him, as He cannot tolerate sin. Thus, a person must die and face God’s righteous judgment. Of ourselves we are helpless sinners, *“the soul that sinneth, it shall die.”*³⁶ No amount of prayer, fasting, or good deeds can give us a relationship with the Lord God. In Christ Jesus alone we behold the answer to our spiritual position. God’s grace was planned before it was imparted, as the Scripture says, *“before the foundation of the world”* that we should be *“accepted in the beloved”*³⁷ The purpose and design of God from all eternity was that all gifts should come to sinful man in and through Christ Jesus. Definitely, grace in its most proper and authentic sense is free, as the Scripture says, *“being justified freely by His grace.”*³⁸ Then, finally, grace is supreme because God bestows it upon whom He pleases. The reign of sin and false religion is overcome by the reign of God’s grace, as the Scripture says, *“even so might grace reign!”*³⁹ The abundance of grace far surpasses the evils of sin. Once a believing sinner accepts Christ Jesus as his only surety before the all-holy God, he finds himself not only freed from his sins, but made to *“reign in life.”*⁴⁰ Those who receive the abundant grace given by Christ are not only redeemed from the dominion of death, they live and reign with Him as they are sanctified daily through His Word by the Holy Spirit, and by constant fellowship with Him. With Him they shall forever live and reign, world without end. Through Christ Jesus, grace reigns with sovereign freedom, power, and bounty! *“Blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.”*⁴¹ ♦

Richard Bennett of “Berean Beacon” WebPage: <http://www.bereanbeacon.org>

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³⁴ Romans 11:33; Isaiah 40:28; Ecclesiastes 3:11.

³⁵ Romans 5:12

³⁶ Ezekiel 18:4

³⁷ Ephesians 1:4, 6

³⁸ Romans 3:24

³⁹ Romans 5:21

⁴⁰ Romans 5:17

⁴¹ Psalm 72:19