

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Continuing Education
Springfield, Missouri
July 29-August 2, 2002

MSSE 639 APPROACHES TO ISLAM

Dr. Phil Parshall

Summer 2002

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The focus of this course is:

- (1) to give the student a brief contextual overview of the history and basic doctrines of Islam;
- (2) to survey issues relevant to contextualization;
- (3) to emphasize how sensitive cross-cultural and contextual methodology can be utilized in presenting Christ to Muslims. Bangladesh will be extensively referred to as a case study in contextual evangelism among Muslims.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student should:

1. Be able to place Islam in contextual perspective.
2. Be motivated and equipped to be a more effective communicator of the Christian message to Muslims.
3. Become aware of the tension between contextualization and syncretism issues relating to theology and evangelistic methodology. The student should then be able to make distinctions between what is acceptable and what is to be rejected.

TEXTBOOKS

Required Reading:

Parshall, Phil. *The Cross and the Crescent*. Gabriel, 2002.

_____. *The Last Great Frontier*. Open Doors, 2000.

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Woodberry, J. Dudley. *Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road*. Monrovia, CA, MARC, 1989.

Extra Credit Reading:

Katterega and Shenk. *Islam and Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.

Marsh, Charles R. *Share Your Faith With a Muslim*. Chicago: Moody, 1975.

Matheny, Tim. *Reaching the Arabs: A Felt Need Approach*. Pasadena, CA: Wm. Carey, 1981.

McCurry, Don, ed. *The Gospel and Islam*. Monrovia, CA: MARC, World Vision, 1978.

Parshall, Phil. *Bridges to Islam*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983.

Parshall, Phil. *Inside the Community*. Baker Book House, 1994.

_____. *New Paths In Muslim Evangelism*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980.

_____. *Divine Threads Within A Human Tapestry*. William Carey, 2001.

BASIC OUTLINE

The teaching will focus on seeking to evaluate Islam in its historical and contemporary setting as well as deal with contextual methodology in Muslim evangelism.

METHODOLOGY

There will be an interplay between lectures and student interaction with the professor. On the last day of class a debate on the Trinity will take place. Also, a brief contextualized worship service will be participated in by all students.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Pre-Session

Students are to read, in total, the two required books. If they have already been read, then substitute any books of comparable length from the “extra credit reading” list.

B. Session

1. On July 29, at the commencement of class, hand in a note telling what books you have read in fulfillment of the pre-session requirement.
2. Prepare for participation in the following debate: **Resolved:** “It is irrational, unthinkable, and totally impossible for God to have a son.” On Friday, August 2, we will have a debate between class members on the above resolution. The class will be divided into affirming and contrary positions. Time segments will be as follows:

First 20 minutes: Each person on the affirming team makes a brief presentation (Muslim Team).

Second 20 minutes: Each person on the contrary team makes a brief presentation (Christian Team).

Last 20 minutes: Free-wheeling rebuttal (moderated by Parshall).

Each person is to be assigned one segment of the initial presentation. This short speech should be lucid, succinct, well-researched, authoritative, and, if possible, indisputable. You must keep within your team’s assigned time limits. It is expected that the most academic and articulate team will prevail—whether or not their position is “ultimate truth”.

3. A take home exam will be given on Thursday, August 1. It will contain 5 essay questions and the response should be a double-spaced 12 page typed paper. It is due on September 2, 2002.
4. Credit students will give a 10 minute oral report on an assigned Islamic country.

C. Post Session

Prepare a 18-20 page, double spaced paper with a minimum of ten books or articles in your bibliography. This paper could deal with a strategy to reach a Muslim peoples group. Seek to incorporate contextualization principles as much as possible. OR you may choose a topic relevant to your ministry concerns among Muslims.

DUE DATE: This paper should be mailed to the seminary and postmarked no later than October 30, 2002. List any extra credit reading you have done.

GRADING PROCEDURE

Reading assignments	30 %
Debate participation	10 %
Classroom participation	10 %
Paper	50 %

(Plus extra credit for recommended reading done for this course)

NOTE: Work received after the post-session due date will result in a change of grade fee (\$15.00) being charged, even when an extension has been granted by the instructor.

SPECIFIC DATA

Syllabus prepared by Phil Parshall, February 2, 2002.