

Inviting Non-Muslims to the Right Path (part 2 of 3): Tawheed First

Description: Call people to the Oneness of Allah by searching for common ground.

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Objectives:

- To understand that *Tawheed* is the basis of Islam and thus the foundation stone of *dawah*.

Arabic Terms:

- *Tawheed* - The Oneness and Uniqueness of Allah with respect to His Lordship, His Names and Attributes and in His right to be worshipped.
- *Sahabah* - the plural form of *Sahabi*, which translates to Companions. A *sahabi*, as the word is commonly used today, is someone who saw Prophet Muhammad, believed in him and died as a Muslim.
- *Surah* - chapter of the Quran.
- *Sunnah* - The word *Sunnah* has several meanings depending on the area of study however the meaning is generally accepted to be, whatever was reported that the Prophet said, did, or approved.
- *Dawah* - sometimes spelt *Da'wah*. It means to call or invite others to Islam.
- *Deen* - the way of life based on Islamic revelation; the sum total of a Muslim's faith and practice. *Deen* is often used to mean faith, or the religion of Islam.

When explaining the message of Islam the most important thing to remember is *Tawheed*. It must form the basis of any explanation we give about any topic related to the *deen*. *Tawheed* is the basis of Islam and without a doubt our discussions must emanate from this important principle.



Quran emphasizes that every messenger sent by Allah began by inviting his people to *Tawheed*.

oeAnd We sent a messenger to every nation (proclaiming): ‘Worship Allah and shun false deities!’...” (Quran 16:36)

oeAnd We never sent any messenger before you, except that we revealed to him that ‘There is no deity worthy of worship except Me, so worship Me’oe (Quran 21:25)

oeIndeed, We sent Noah to his people, and he said, ‘O my people! Worship Allah! You have no other deity other than Him. Certainly, I fear for you the torment of a Great Day!’” (Quran 7:59)

According to learned people both past and present, any call to Islam that does not begin with *Tawheed* is doomed to failure. Prophet Muhammad instructed the *sahabah* to preach *Tawheed* when sending them to various communities. To those who went to Yemen he said, *oeYou are going to the People of the Book, so let the first thing that you invite them to be the Tawheed of Allah”.*[\[1\]](#)

The title ‘People of the Book’ refers to the Jews and the Christians, those given scriptures for guidance before the Quran was revealed. It is often easier to start a conversation about Islam with Christians and Jews because they already believe in God. Quran is filled with references, and stories that can be easily related to and to which they already have their own versions. For instance mentioning the *surahs* of Quran that are named after easily recognisable people such as *surah 19 " Maryam (Mary), surah 14 - Ibrahim (Abraham) or surah 12 " Yusuf (Joseph).*

Quran beseeches Prophet Muhammad to call the People of the Book to Islam. And Prophet Muhammad in his *Sunnah* made clear the relationship between all of the prophets and messengers of Allah.

oeSay O Muhammad ‘O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but God (Alone), and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides God.’” (Quran 3:64)

oeAnd argue not with the People of the Scripture unless it be in (a way) that is better, save with such of them as do wrong; and say, ‘We believe in that which has been revealed unto us and revealed unto you; our God and your God is One, and to Him we have submitted’”. (Quran 29:46)

oeI am the nearest of all the people to the son of Mary, and all the prophets are brothers and there is none between me and him (i.e. there is no other prophet between me and Jesus).” [\[2\]](#)

oeIf a man believes in Jesus and then believes in me he will get double reward.”[\[3\]](#)

People who have no understanding of any of the three monotheistic religions, such as Buddhists require different guidelines. It is the responsibility of the person giving *dawah* to have a basic understanding of the beliefs of the non-believers they are calling to.

Buddhism for instance is a way of life, but not in the same sense as Islam. Put simply Buddhism, as well as many eastern religions have a concept by which the person who does good actions will eventually attain Godlike qualities. On the other hand Hindus believe in one Supreme God among many, and some of the more obscure religions such as Zoroastrianism and Baha'i do include the concept of One Supreme God. However, you do not want to speak down to anyone as if you know more about their belief system than they do themselves. This is important whether that is the case or not. Remember, you do not want to offend anybody or inadvertently start an argument. More information about other religious beliefs can be found on our other website www.islamreligion.com.

If a person has a strong belief in God or even a nameless Supreme Being responsible for the creation, it is possible to teach them that the God we call Allah is the same God that they call by other names such as Elohim or Yahweh. However at the same time it is important to clarify to them that we consider Him to be Alone without any partners and we do not give any of His attributes to creation. We believe that there is a clear line between the Creator and the creation and everything besides God Himself, is His creation.

It is imperative for people to understand that the religion of Islam was revealed for all of humankind, not just one ethnic group or race. Often people want to know the purpose of their lives and Islam gives an unambiguous answer to this question. We have been created to recognize God and worship Him alone, that is, to obey Him in all matters.

oeAnd I did not create the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me.” (Quran 51:56)

One who believes in any sort of God is a theist but those who do not, are called atheists. The two beliefs are polar opposites; atheists do not believe in any supreme being of any description. They do however believe that the world is a better place if governed by man-made ideologies such as capitalism or communism. Thus there is no ideological common ground from which to begin a discussion about the religion of Islam. Try to remember that the starting point and the basis of *dawah* is calling a person to belief in One God " Allah. Just as Prophet Muhammad did we start with the call to *Tawheed* and we do so by appealing to reason.

We are able to clearly observe and thus point out that everything in the universe runs meticulously and in a beautifully crafted way; the rising and setting of the sun, the changing of the seasons, and the delicately balanced order that is birth, growth and then decay. Uniformity in the laws of the universe point to the existence of a Creator and interestingly atheists that come to accept the message often start with a belief in a Creator God or Supreme Being. Convincing people that the Creator God is worthy of worship would be the next step.

In the final and third lesson we will look at delivering the message to specific people, particularly members of your own family.

Endnotes:

[1] Saheeh Bukhari

[2] Saheeh Bukhari

[3] Saheeh Bukhari

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