



How to Pray for Muslims

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Because every Muslim is unique and wonderful in God's eyes, we should be careful not to stereotype them or presume that all Muslims are the same. Even so, there are some important issues to consider in helping us pray more effectively.

One of the most important issues in praying for Muslims is to begin with a right heart attitude concerning them. Every Muslim is someone whom God loves, and one for whom Christ died. Many of us have not prayed for Muslims because of our own misunderstanding of their culture. Often we have held back from praying because of our own prejudices or fears, so we need to begin in prayer by asking God to give us a heart filled with love and compassion towards them. We also need to pray in faith and confidence that God will hear us and move powerfully in answer to our prayers (John 14:12-14).

Muslims believe in the uniqueness of an all-powerful and supreme God. Similar to Christians and Jews, they believe that God is creative and eternal. But Muslims also believe that God is unknowable, making a personal relationship with Him impossible. According to Islam, God holds himself apart from mankind; we need to pray that Muslims will have a full revelation of God's character and desire for relationship. The Muslim worldview is strongly influenced by an awareness of the supernatural and the presence of good and evil spirits known as Jinn, which are greatly feared and often thought to be responsible for illnesses and misfortune. Superstition controls many aspects of Muslims' everyday lives and results in great fearfulness. This fear reveals a felt need that can be met in the person and authority of Jesus as we pray against the fear that influences many Muslims (1 John 4:18).

Islam means "submission," a concept familiar to Muslims who understand that they are a servant of God. Through Islam, a Muslim can only relate to God from the position of being a servant or slave, fully submitted to God. While submission is a Biblical concept, the Muslim understanding is incomplete. Christians believe that through Jesus, people can move from being servants to becoming sons and daughters (Galatians 4:7). Because this idea is so foreign to them, pray that Muslims will come to understand God's desire for them to relate to Him as children and not as slaves (Matthew 18:3).

Islam teaches that for a person to enter paradise, he must do enough good deeds in life to outweigh the bad. Even then there is no guarantee of salvation. It is difficult for Muslims to understand the concept of grace as articulated in Ephesians 2:8-9, and the concepts of repentance and forgiveness are distorted. The Bible teaches that all people must walk in humility and repentance in order to enter heaven (1 Peter 5:6), and that without extending forgiveness, God cannot forgive them. (Matthew 6:14-15). Pray that Muslims will learn true repentance and experience real forgiveness.

Never underestimate the work of the Holy Spirit as you pray for Muslims. Allow God to teach you how to pray (Romans 8:26) and to feel His heart. Vast numbers of Muslims have come to Christ as a result of supernatural encounters, and many have dreams and visions of Jesus. It is only God who can open blind eyes and soften hearts. Only God (John 16:8) can bring true conviction of sin and create new life.