



Episode 25: Reaching our Muslim Friends and Neighbours Show Notes

Randy Hoffman has served as a missionary overseas in Europe, Pakistan, India and the Philippines. Since 1994, Randy and his wife Margo have served in Canada recruiting and training missionaries to the Muslim world. Randy is also the founder and former chairman of the Canadian Network of Ministries to Muslims, an organization that seeks to mobilize the church to reach Muslims across Canada.

Tell us a little bit about yourself and how you came to be passionate about missions?

- I came to Christ in University. Following University, I went to Bible school. At Bible School someone who had been working with Muslims in Turkey shared about their work there. This really impacted me and brought my attention to the Muslim world.
- God used prayer times and praying through [Operation World](#) to give me his heart and passion for the Muslim world.

What are some of the key differences between Christianity and Islam?

- A helpful way to start is to think of Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses and how they take terms from the Bible and give them new meaning. Islam also takes words and terms from the Bible and gives them new meanings. This can make communication difficult.
- Muslims believe in Jesus but they don't believe in the Jesus of the Bible. They believe that he was born of the virgin Mary and that he preached the gospel and worked miracles. They believe that he was taken up to heaven and that he'll return to judge the world.
- But they don't believe that Jesus is the Son of God and they don't believe that he died on the cross and rose again. They believe they are honouring God by saying that God didn't die on the cross.
- They honour God by saying that he is all powerful and he protected Jesus. By showing them that Jesus chose to die on the cross because he loves us, we are honouring God.
- They also believe that they are saved by doing good works. God weighs our good works versus our bad works. One is saved by praying 5 times a day, going on the Haj, fasting for Ramadan and giving money to the poor. They believe they must earn their salvation.

What are some of the hurdles that Muslims face when it comes to accepting Christ as their Savior?

- Three basic areas:
 - *Theological problems* – such as the Trinity, Jesus being called the Son of God and Jesus dying on the cross



- *Perception of the West* – Christians in their view are synonymous westerners. As they look at the West they equate them all as Christians and see their sin – their immodesty, their immorality – and proclaim that they don't want to be like the West.
- *Power of Community* – many are from a shame and honour cultures and they are very community-oriented. The fear of condemnation from one's community will hold Muslims back from turning to Christ.
- We can break through using prayer, love and the work of God's Holy Spirit.

What are some of the barriers for Christ followers that keep them from engaging with Muslims?

- We need to overcome our prejudices and understand what makes people truly clean or unclean.
- Terrorism and bombings around the world are things that the enemy is using to stop Christians from reaching out to Muslims, when these are great opportunities for Christians to reach out and show the love of God in these times of fear and turmoil.
- We are left here on earth to share the gospel message – to everyone, including Muslims.
- We see that God is moving in the Muslim world like never before. In the last 30 years we have seen approximately 3 million Muslims come to Christ. Previously to this, the number of Muslims turning to faith was almost non-existent.
- We welcome them into our homes, we do hospitality, we love them, we listen to them, we hug them. We help them with their lives and we pray with them. 90% of the time when we first meet a new Muslim friend, we will pray with them in the name of Jesus.
- It isn't difficult to talk about religion with Muslims the way it is with Westerners. They come from a religious background and are eager to talk about it.
- We need to reach out boldly and courageously with God's love.

What advice would you have for Christians who would like to reach out and befriend their Muslim neighbours?

- Greet them when you see them.
- Invite them for coffee or tea or into your apartment.
- Bring cookies to their house. They will reciprocate and respond to that.
- As you begin to interact, share your phone number with them.
- As they see you opening up your life to them, they will open up with you. They are open to relationships.
- Listen to them and pray for them and their needs.
- We offer a one-week summer outreach here in Vancouver to help people and train them in reaching Muslims.

What books or resources do you recommend to those wanting to learn more about Islam and reaching Muslims for Jesus?

- Answering-Islam.org
- [The Centre for Ministry to Muslims - Global Initiative](#)



- [Ishmael My Brother – Anne Cooper](#)
- [Summer outreach and internship program available in Vancouver – The Vancouver Muslim Challenge](#)

If there is a Muslim listening to this program, what would you want to say to them?

- God loves you. You can experience that love of God through faith in Jesus. God wants to be close to you and have a relationship with you. I'd be happy to talk to you more if you wanted to.

How might people contact you?

- bcinternship@shaw.ca

