

## **March 1 Topic: Islamic Extremism**

Homework Feb. 2 - 7 (for discussion on March 8)

To view the Islamic Extremism lecture online:

<http://www.tlc.org/tuesday-morning-bible-study/>

This week we will focus on what should be our Christian response to everything that is going on in our world today as a result of Islamic Extremism.

### **Day 1: Resist prejudice.**

When we hear or read about terrorism activities around the world and in our own country, a natural response is to try to identify who is out to do us harm. And since Islamic Extremists claim to be acting in the name of Islam, it's easy to assume all Muslims think the way extremists think and will act the way extremists act, if given the chance. But this response is not biblical, and has led to suspicion, anger, and some pretty unbiblical attitudes toward Muslims.

#### **1. Read Titus 3:2 and Matthew 15:19**

Your bible may use the word slander, malign, or even blaspheme, in these two verses. What does it mean to slander someone, or malign them? Why do you think Jesus puts slander in a list of evils that includes murder and adultery?

According to Titus 3:2, what attitudes do we need to develop?

#### **2. Read Colossians 4:5-6**

How could our prejudicial or slanderous views about Muslims impede opportunities for the gospel message? How can we speak about truth, and differences in theology, without resorting to prejudicial attitudes toward Muslims?

#### **3. Read Isaiah 58:6-7, 9b-11**

In this passage, the LORD instructs his people to do away with "the finger pointing and malicious talk", and get on with the business of helping the oppressed, providing the poor wanderer with shelter, and feeding the hungry. Do you think this relates to our attitude toward Muslim refugees coming into this country? What has been your attitude about that?

*Prayer: Ask God to help you stop pre-judging Muslims, and instead concentrate on being prepared to share the Gospel! Ask him to help you change your attitude toward refugees.*

**Day 2: Reject fear.**

When the Bible tells us (over 100 times!) to “fear not”, its not because there’s nothing to fear in the world, but it’s because God is trying to teach us that he is bigger than anything we fear!

**1. I Peter 3:14-17**

Peter doesn’t deny that there are scary things in the world—like the possibility of unjust suffering at the hands of people. But in place of fear about these things, what are we to do, according to this passage?

**2. Read Psalm 56:3-4**

David’s life was being threatened by the Philistines when he wrote this psalm. How does it help you also reject fear?

**3. Read John 16:33**

This should really be every Christian’s life verse! What does Jesus guarantee we will have in this life? Despite this, why should we reject fear?

*Prayer: Tell God about your fears regarding terrorism and everything else going on in our world. Then ask him to carry them for you! Ask him to help you remember he is the sovereign Lord who has overcome!*

**Day 3: Remember the bigger story****1. Read Ephesians 6:10-12**

What is the bigger picture Paul paints about what is going on in the world?

## **2. Read 2 Corinthians 4:4 and 10:3-5**

What's the difference between the Christian's "war" and the world's war? What can our "spiritual" weapons accomplish? Why is this important to remember when we think about Islamic Extremism?

## **3. Read Psalm 20:7**

When you consider the bigger story, why is it important not to place our ultimate trust in military strategies to combat ISIS and other extremism?

*Prayer: Ask God to help you remember that there are bigger battles going on than the ones you read about in the newspaper. Thank him for promising that he will ultimately triumph over all evil!*

## **Day 4: Really practice love.**

Love your neighbor as yourself. Easy to say, hard to do!

### **1. Matthew 9:36 and 2 Corinthians 5:16**

Jesus looked on people with compassion, not hate. What did he see that we sometimes don't see? What does it mean to view people from a "worldly" or "human" point of view? What should be a godly point of view? How will this help us love Muslims as Jesus loved?

### **2 Read Romans 12:9 & 14-21**

Paul gives some very practical advice for how to live a life of love. List the instructions he gives. How can these principles guide us in the way we talk about and relate to Muslims?

### **3. Matthew 25:34-40 and Leviticus 19:34**

Jesus told his followers that they would be known by their love. In this passage, Jesus speaks about inviting in the stranger. The theme of “aliens” and “strangers” being welcomed and cared for is a repeated theme in the Bible. How does Jesus’ story and the verse in Leviticus change your view of Muslim refugees and how God wants a Christian to view them?

Maybe you don’t know any Muslim refugees, but there are there other ways you can show love, by supporting the Christians ministries that are helping them. Check out <http://worldrelief.org/us-offices>

*Prayer: Ask the Lord to let his love for people to fill your heart. Ask him what he would have you do to show love to Muslims.*

### **Day 5: Raise your voice.**

#### **1. Read 1 Timothy 2:1-3**

vs. 2 Who are we instructed to pray for? Who would this be in our American context? What about our global context? What should we be praying for?

#### **2. 2 Thessalonians 3:1-3a**

What does Paul request prayer for in this passage?

*Prayer: Today, spend a little more time in prayer than you usually do. Pray for our national leaders who have to make military (and other) decisions about how do deal with terrorism. Pray for world leaders. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6). Pray for our brothers and sisters who are suffering under Islamic extremism. Pray they would be faithful witnesses and imitators of Christ, and that they would be strengthened in their inner spirit by the Holy Spirit. Pray for Bob and Suzanne, and Jamal, who are ministering to refugees in Jordan—for physical and emotional stamina and for resources. Pray that God will use all the upheaval in the world to further his Gospel message, and that more Muslims than ever would hear the good news about Jesus.*

**Day 6: Reignite hope.**

God is on the move in the world, even if it sometimes feels like things are getting more dire by the day!

**1. Read Isaiah 55:6-11**

In this passage, God invites even the wicked, evil person to turn to him.

vs. 7 What does the Lord say he will do?

vs. 8-9 This verse is often taken out of its context—but it connects directly to vs. 7! What does this say about God? (Look up Ezekiel 18:23 for some additional insight!) How does this make you more hopeful?

vs. 10-11 Why should these verses help us reignite hope and make us eager to continue to share the Gospel with Muslims and support ministries in the Muslim world? How might the internet be a part of God's plan to reach Muslims?

**2. Read Acts 9:1-5**

Paul had a dramatic change in direction due to an encounter with the Lord Jesus. Countless Muslims are telling stories of similar encounters. Despite the difficulty of proclaiming the gospel in “closed” countries, how do these stories help us reignite hope?

***Prayer: Thank God that he loves Muslims and is moving in the Muslim world! Ask him to send more dreams and visions to seeking Muslims, so they can know Jesus and the good news he brings! Pray for those believers who are quietly working in the Muslim world, for their safety and the success of their ministries.***