

How to Share with a Cussing Muslim

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have (1 Peter 3:15^b)

Before becoming a believer at the age 20, I cussed all the time; so I had to ask the Lord to cleanse my dirty mouth! Ironically, the fact that I was a cusser comes in handy at times in evangelism! No, I don't cuss when evangelizing but my deliverance from it gives me a nice story to tell to those who do cuss.

When I was pastoring a church in Orange, California, when my car needed an oil change, I would leave it at a nearby garage and walked back to my office. On one occasion, I took my car there about 15 minutes before the shop opened, figuring that I would have some time to talk to the new owner Mike who was an Iranian Muslim in his 40s. When speaking to people of other religions, normally it wouldn't be a good idea to start the conversation with, "Say Mike, do you know Jesus Christ?" Instead, it may be better to begin with something that the person can relate. Since I knew that this shop had several owners before, I said to him, "You know, the previous owner wasn't very trustworthy." He agreed by saying that he had been hearing the same complaint from others, but that he was committed in providing the most ethical and trustworthy services. Then he mentioned how he just fired this crooked mechanic (using expletives like the F-word and the S-words for emphasis) who cheated on unsuspecting customers. Seeing it as an opportunity to endear myself to him, I said to him with a smile: "You know I used to cuss like that but not anymore because after I came to know Jesus, there was no longer a need for that. I am so glad since I now have kids. Mike, do you have kids?" Mike grinned uncomfortably, not really knowing what to say.

Having nicely cornered him, I asked, "So are you a good Muslim or just nominal?" He responded with a little smirk, "Good," but I wasn't convinced (since it was unlikely that this Americanized Iranian would drop everything in the middle of the day to pray several times, like what a serious Muslim would do). Because I was pressed for time, I went straight to the point, introducing the topic of Jesus. So I asked him, "What do you think about Jesus Christ." "I believe he was a great prophet," he said, adding, "but Muhammad was the last and the greatest prophet." Upon hearing this, I said, "Oh yeah, there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet." With a look of incredulity, he was impressed by my ability to recite the most important Islamic creed. Well, the cordial conversation went on for a few more minutes in which I was able say things like, "How come your Koran says that Jesus, who is supposed to be the lesser prophet, is faultless while the greater prophet Mohammed is in need of forgiveness" (Sura 40:55). I also mentioned, "Allah was the name for God that the Jews and Christians were using before the time of Muhammad."

I didn't win him to the Lord that day. When his customers began to show up, I knew my time

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was up. But I told Mike, “Jesus Christ is the Son of Allah and no one goes to Allah except through Jesus Christ” (the term Allah was used in its pre-Muhammadan sense and I knew that he heard that one loud and clear!) Later when I returned to retrieve my car, I paid him, along with a book on prayer. That was a good deal for him! It was also a good deal for me since I had the opportunity to share about Christ, as well as a Christian book, which he promised that he will read.

Folks, it is good to witness, but it helps to know what unbelievers and people of other religions believe. The Apostle Paul was like that, being able to converse naturally with the Athenians, effortlessly citing their famous poets (e.g., Acts 17:28) as a contextualized effort to win them to the Lord. So after reading and studying the Bible, read some good books that will help you be a better witness for Christ. Take the course on Apologetics! Also, when you converse with them, use anything in your personal life (particularly those things that have been redeemed, like cussing in my case) that can help the other person to connect with you. This New Year, commit yourself to prepare and share the faith!

Further Reflection

1. Read Acts 18:16-34 and observe the way in which Paul attempted to evangelize the
2. Read 1 Peter 3:15-16 & 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 and ask this question: What is involved in

Bible Reading

Monday	Proverbs 22-23 & Judges 19
Tuesday	Proverbs 24-25 & Judges 20