

INVITING NON-MUSLIMS TO THE RIGHT PATH (PART 1 OF 3): DELIVER THE MESSAGE IN THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE

Rating:

Description: An introductory discussion about our responsibility to convey the message of Islam.

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Objectives:

- To understand the role of a person who calls others to the path of Islam.

Arabic Terms:

- Shariah*- Islamic Law
- Rabb* - literally means, lord, owner, master, or leader. Islamically it is mostly used to refer to Allah - the Owner, the Master, the One who takes care of, sustains, nourishes, and takes care of everything.
- Dawah* - sometimes spelt *Da'wah*. It means to call or invite others to Islam.
- InshaAllah* – God willing, if God wills it to be so. It is a reminder and acknowledgment that nothing happens except by the will of Allah.

The thing about knowing the truth, understanding the purpose of life and knowing the answer to that age old question of why am I here, is that it is exciting; jumping out of your skin exciting. Thus on discovery, the first thing you want to do is tell other people, and sometimes just blurting out one of life's universal truths can be a little bit confronting. Some might think you are crazy or deluded, but that is not the problem, because that



puts you in such noble company as Prophet Muhammad or Prophet Noah. The problem is that when we invite people to the truth of Islam we want them to listen and understand just what it is we are trying to say. Therefore for the benefit of those jumping out of their skin we will discuss a few tips for inviting others to the right path.

First off let us get our definitions in sync. The verb, *invite*, means to request the presence or participation of in a kindly, courteous, or complimentary way.^[1] *Shariah* literally means 'a path to water,' the source of all life, thus Islamically *Shariah* is the

straight path to Allah, the Giver and Originator of all life. Allah tells us to:

“Invite (call) to the way of your Rabb with wisdom and beautiful preaching and argue with them in a way that is better...” (Qur’an 16:125)

Whenever we invite a person to Islam, to the right path, we are presenting them with the attractions and allurements of Islam. Our job is to deliver the message in the best way possible according to our knowledge and abilities. Acceptance or rejection of the message is up to the person concerned; there is no compulsion in religion and moreover it is Allah who bestows guidance. We are not converting or reverting them because it is Allah, and Allah only that truly does that. Our role is only to assist others on their journey or to plant a seed that will one day, *InshaAllah*, grow into a tree of Islam.

“Let there be no compulsion in religion. Truth has been made clear from error...” (Quran 2:256)

“...Say, ‘To Allah belongs the east and the west. He guides whom He wills to a straight path.’” (Quran 2:142)

It is important to remember however that conveying the message and calling people to Islam or giving *dawah*, as many like to call it, is an obligation upon all Muslims. Of course we are not all expected to work in the field of *dawah* but we are expected to be aware at all times that our behaviour, words and actions, are *dawah*. Those not familiar with Islam look to Muslims to see just what this religion is all about. Prophet Muhammad said, “Convey from me, even if it is one verse”^[2] Quran also reiterates the same message.

“... And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allah and does righteousness and says, ‘Indeed, I am of the Muslims.’” (Quran 41:33)

It all sounds very easy doesn't it? We all love Allah and His Messenger Muhammad and without a doubt we hope that all people will one day feel the same way. However love for Islam and all it entails is not quite enough. When one accepts the challenge to convey the message one needs to be prepared. No longer can we scowl at the shopkeeper when prices rise. No longer can we react with anger when somebody mumbles an insult as we walk by. A person delivering the message of Islam must be prepared to accept insults, be patient, make sacrifices, and listen to ideas and ideologies that are far from the truth of Islam. Prophet Muhammad said that, “The believer who mixes with people and bears their insults with patience is better than the one who does not mix with people or bear their insults with patience.”^[3]

Anyone who is recognisably Muslim is conveying the message every time they appear in public or mix with non-believers, therefore our words should always be kind and gentle, and our temper must be completely under control so that harsh words never

leave our mouths. One of Prophet Muhammad’s companions said, “We smile at people even if in our hearts we are cursing their words or behaviour”.^[4] Moreover a Muslim makes things easy for others. This is what Allah expects and Prophet Muhammad encouraged when he said, “Teach and make things easy, do not make them difficult. If any of you becomes angry, let him keep silent.”^[5]

“... Allah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you...” (Quran 2:185)

Prophet Muhammad understood human weaknesses and at the same time understood human potential for excellence. His *dawah* methods were perfect; we have only to follow his example to be sure that we fulfill our obligation to convey the message far and wide. He always chose the easier option for himself and others. However he made sure that the easier option was within the framework of the *shariah*.

In the next lesson we will look more carefully at ways to spread the message.

Footnotes:

[1] <http://dictionary.reference.com>

[2] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari*

[3] *Ibid*

[4] *Ibid*

[5] *Ibid*

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