

Coming Soon Islam, Terrorism & A Biblical Worldview

She's been called the "Anne Frank of Pakistan." Her name is Malala Yousafzai, a 15-year-old girl who lives in a Taliban-dominated area called the Swat Province. Since age 11, Malala has been an advocate for the education and the equality of women in the Muslim world, writing in a blog sponsored by the BBC. She's won great international acclaim for speaking out, even while her school was destroyed by the Taliban, which runs roughshod in her village like an occupying gang. Clearly the Taliban was terrified by this teenage girl. How else can one explain how, on Tuesday, October 9th, Taliban gunmen boarded the bus she was on, asked for her by name, and then shot her in the head? To protect her from another assassination attempt, she's been airlifted to England for medical treatment.

One of the reasons that Malala's story is so compelling is that it puts a whole new meaning on the overused phrase "War on Women." It was former First Lady, Laura Bush, who compared Malala to Anne Frank, the Jewish girl whose diary written while hiding in an attic in Amsterdam during the Nazi occupation became a searing document of the human cost of World War II. Malala's "diary" is a modern blog that made her thoughts available in real time throughout the world.

Just as the Nazis made Anne Frank immortal by causing her to die in a concentration camp, the Taliban have made Malala Yousafzai immortal by attempting to murder her. The Taliban also proved that in the end that they're nothing but cowards, little boys with guns. Only cowardly little boys would be so terrified of a girl with a book that they'd be driven to try to murder her.

We're continually told, often with our leaders bending over backwards to convince us, that Islam is a religion of peace. *If it is, where's the evidence?*

While the attack on Malala was radical Islam attacking a moderate Islam, from our perspective, terrorism and attacks on Christians are not new. Please turn in your Bible to Acts 9:1-8 (p. 917). And just as Saul allowed an extremist religion to keep him from a relationship with the Jesus, six hundred years later Islam's prophet Muhammad counterfeited the Judeo-Christian tradition to create a new religious system, a new cult which bypassed a relationship with the Savior. It's interesting that Paul and Muhammad were both confronted with Christianity at an early age and both, while on the road to Syria in route to Damascus, were directed to a new path. Paul responded to a relationship with Christ while Muhammad's path led him to found a false cult. As Proverbs 14:12 says, *"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death."*

We tend to think of Islam as a completely different religious system, like Hinduism, Buddhism or Shintoism. Yet, in many ways, Islam is nothing more than an aberration of 8000 years of history of God's work among Jews and Christians. Six centuries after the resurrection of Christ, Muhammad re-interpreted Biblical facts – the life story of Abraham, the battle between Isaac and Ishmael, the promise of the Gospel of Jesus – to make a new religion based on his own way of seeing things.

It is hard to believe that it's already been eleven years. On September 11, 2001 our nation and world were changed forever. Our whole worldview was shattered as Islamic fundamentalism found it's way inside our borders and attacked us at the very heart of

our economy and government. We've been on high alert since then with periodic terrorist attacks throughout the globe. And we continually wait anxiously for the next bomb to go off.

CNN ran a statement made by the father of the ringleader who led the 911 attacks, Mohammad Atta, who said of his terrorist son, *"My son is a living hero in the eyes of the great prophet Mohammad. History will record that it was my son that lit the fire that started the destruction of the infidels, the Jews and the Christians."* One U.S. Senator said, *"For centuries we believed the two great oceans of the world secured our safety from our enemies but that is no longer the case. Our enemies now live in our own neighbourhoods, waiting for the order to strike."* After the 911 attacks, Chuck Colson commented, *"The truth is that Bin Laden and his followers did not hijack Islam; they simply took it seriously."* Melanie Phillips writing in the *Times of London* describes Muslims as *"an army within, waiting for an opportunity to destroy the society that sustains them."*

Yet, repeatedly we're told that Islam is a gentle, peace-loving religion that should be welcomed by all. They say that terrorist's acts represent only a tiny fringe of radical Islam. While the evidence just doesn't hold up, anyone who dares to say otherwise is labelled as intolerant and hateful. Many Americans, many Christians don't know what to believe because they really don't know anything about Islam.

Look at the history of terrorist acts, nearly all of them were perpetrated by those who were Islamic with the majority of them from the Middle East. To put it another way, none of the 911 hijackers were from Norway or Sweden or Argentina or even China. They are all from the Middle East and the Middle East is the land of the Bible. I want to give you a few reasons why I believe 911 happened and why terrorism is a major part of our world today.

As we continue our series, **Coming Soon**, it'd be difficult in today's world to fail to at least consider Islam's place in Bible prophecy. That's why we're working through **Islam, Terrorism & A Biblical Worldview**. What can we learn then? What does all of this tell us from a biblical worldview?

1. People are much more evil than we think they are. Please understand, I'm not saying that all people are as bad as they could be. None of us are as bad as we could be. But I am saying that when humanists, sociologists and psychologists tell us all people are born basically good, that's not correct. People are not born with an innate, strong capacity to do good over evil.

Maurice Sendak died earlier this year, back in May. At first glance, it wouldn't seem that Maurice Sendak would have much to teach Christians. After all, he was an atheist with a cynical outlook and a foul mouth. But underneath all of that, I think, Sendak saw something of the fallen glory of the universe that we followers of Jesus sometimes ignore.

Sendak's most famous work, of course, is his children's book, *Where the Wild Things Are*. It's about a boy named Max, who's sent to his room for telling his mother he'll eat her up. If you discuss this book with those who grew up with it, you'll find that this book struck a particular resonance with at least two generations of American children, no matter what their racial, social, economic, or religious backgrounds. Maurice Sendak

said that the “wild things” originated with his fear and loathing of his grownup extended family, trying to hug and kiss him and “eat him up.” Yet, I think there’s more to it than that, more that causes this story to persist.

If, as both ancient and contemporary wisdom tells us, stories exist to help us categorize our fears and aspirations, then “wild” children’s stories remind us of what we see everywhere in human art, from cave paintings to country music to the Cannes Film Festival. We’re afraid of the wildness “out there” in the scary universe around us. Whether we fear saber-toothed tigers or Wall Street collapse or AIDS or our parent’s impending divorce, there are frightening, threatening forces out there that seem outside of our control.

But Maurice Sendak also, at least in his artistic imagination, recognized something the Bible tells us clearly. Worse than what’s “out there” is the uncontrollable “wildness” inside each of us, those passions, desires, rages, longings and sorrows within our psyches that seem to be even scarier because they’re so hidden, so close, and so much at the core of who we are. The wildness within us never seems to end, either. It just morphs throughout our lives from toddler-age tantrums to teenage hormones to midlife crises to, frequently a lonely, cynical, angry elderly person facing impending death.

Maurice Sendak was right. There’s a wildness in each of us. That’s what the Bible teaches. And if you don’t agree with me, then you don’t agree with the Bible. Jeremiah 17:9 *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?”* God’s own verdict on the human race, Genesis 8:21 *“every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood.”* Romans 3, *“None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one”* (vss. 10-12). **People are much more evil than we think they are.**

In the history of humanity there’s a chronicle of bloodbaths. Humanity is filled with bloody messes and atrocities. The inhumane treatment of one person to another person. We can be cruel and vicious. We can be mean. We say things, and we think things and we do things. Killing and violence is rampant throughout the whole human race. We’re worse than we think. We have these inner impulses inside that will probably produce pain in the life of someone else, be it verbal or physical. There’s the potential for violence and murder in all of us. If we don’t get our way, we will make others miserable...until we do get our way. And that starts when we are really little.

Now I’m not saying that all of us are murderers or should be in jail. But I am saying that, but for the grace of God, all of us are capable of horrible thoughts and acts. It’s true. It’s what the Bible says.

So as we get a perspective Islamic terrorism, we need to be honest and confess – “there but for the grace of God, go I.” We are not nice people. And we need to know where the human race comes from and where it’s headed. We need divine assistance and intervention or we’re in trouble. It’s not just the Taliban or Islam. It’s us. The Bible clearly teaches that **People are much more evil than we think they are.**

2. The Bible gives us historical reasons for why we’re at where we’re at today. God’s Word gives us a whole background on the wars in the Middle East, wars

in Iraq and Afghanistan, and everything that's going on in that part of the world. What I'm teaching you today are some of the most profound and compelling reasons (and there're lots of other reasons) on why I study the Bible, why I know the Bible is true, that there is a God, and that His Son's name is Jesus Christ. That's what I'm going to teach you today.

The modern Middle East is an ancient culture that has long had a history of strife, war and bloodshed. If you were ever reading the book of Genesis and you came to chapters like Genesis chapter 10. I'm 100% sure that you did what I did when you came to Genesis chapter 10. You look at it, and you go, "I don't get this." It's all of this genealogy stuff.

We're working through Genesis in Crossroads. The other night we were studying Genesis 4 & 5 and we take turns reading. One girl volunteered not knowing she was going to get stuck reading a genealogy with strange names she'd never heard of and didn't have a clue on how to pronounce them.

Don't skip Genesis 10 and please don't skip Genesis 10:1, "*These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood.*" Noah's family is the beginning of civilization. These are the three primary people along with their wives and families who repopulated the earth after the Flood, after God had wiped out the whole earth. And you can trace human history back to these three sons of Noah.

Japheth was the oldest son. Many, many Bible scholars believe Japheth and his family are responsible for populating the land all the way through India, and Europe, including Russia. They were probably the first Americans, coming across the Bering Straits and populating North and South America.

Ham settled in Africa and the far East, including Asia and some regions of the Middle East.

And Shem populated the Semitic people. Shem's offspring included Jewish people and Arab people. This is where a common mistake is made. Most of us are familiar with the term anti-Semitism. It's used to refer to someone who is anti-Jewish or hates Jews but the fact is that both Jews and Arabs are Semites, so to be anti-Semitic would be to hate both.

And this all came around the center of civilization and the cradle of civilization known as Mesopotamia, part of what we know as the Fertile Crescent. **Here's a map of it (Show map).** Remember the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. This is now modern day Iraq, Syria, Israel, Jordan, Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia. That's all the countries of that world. When we refer to the Middle East, that's exactly what we're talking about. And those are the very nations that are talked about in Genesis chapter 10. It was from this particular part of the world that the whole world begins and it's that part of the world where one day the whole world will end as we know it – right there! You're looking at it! This is where Eden was. This is where the Tower of Babel was and Babylon. This is the center of the Arabic Muslim world today. It's this very region of the world that God chose a man and made a promise to a man and his name is Abraham.

a. God made a promise to Abraham, Genesis 12:1-4 (p. 8). That he's going to give a massive portion of land to Abraham and that he's going to make Abraham a great nation, and blessing Him. In Genesis 15:18 God summarizes His promise to

Abraham, *“On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, ‘To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.’”*

Abraham was born in modern day Kuwait. That’s where the Ur of the Chaldees was. He lived in Haran. That’s modern day Iraq. Do you understand? All of the places of Abraham and the origination of all of the nations of all the people of the world, all started in Mesopotamia and in the Middle East. In the land where our Bible was written.

God said very clearly in Revelation 16 and 17, this is where it’s all going to end. The blood is going to flow in the Valley of Megiddo or what we know as Armageddon. Jesus will return and will triumph. and will win a final war. But it’s a powder keg in the Middle East. It’s building and it’s building, and it’s going to explode there one day. And Jesus Christ is going to come in and going to win the victory. He’s going to rescue Israel and proclaim Himself to be their promised Messiah. He’ll give Israel all of their land back and it will be sweeter than the Packers winning the Super Bowl, the Brewers winning the World Series and Badgers winning the NCCA Basketball championship all rolled into one. A Packer win is fun; this will be final!

The Middle East, rich in minerals, timber, oil, not just what is modern day Israel, was all promised to Abraham. And someday God’s promise will be fulfilled.

Do you like waiting? I was at Sam’s the other day and they’ve already got the Christmas decorations out...they’re not waiting. Remember when you were a kid and you thought that you were going to die before Christmas finally arrived. Or, maybe you waited for school to get out and could hardly stand waiting for summer vacation. Most of us hate waiting.

God had promised Abraham that He was going to make Abraham a great nation...and Abraham waited and waited and waited.

b. Abraham decides to help God out, Genesis 16. Have you ever done that? Have you ever decided to help God out? How did that work out for you? Maybe you’ve got some serious financial pressure and instead of praying and trusting, you rack up the credit cards. Maybe you’re worried about your children or you’re mate doesn’t know the Lord. God doesn’t seem to be working in their lives so you keep trying to help God out.

Abraham and Sarah had waited ten years and still no baby. They’re not getting any younger so Sarah comes up with this plan, which was totally socially and culturally acceptable in that day – it was just wrong. Please mark it down. Just because something is “right” as far as the world goes, doesn’t mean that it’s right. Back then though custom allowed for concubine wives.

If you were infertile, you could take a slave or what today would be a personal assistant and give her to your husband to have children for you BUT the children would be true heirs. And that’s what Sarah does. She has Abraham sleep with her maid, Hagar and Hagar gets pregnant, has a baby. And what was that baby’s name? Ishmael! Every Arab is a descendant of Ishmael. Remember, too, that God had promised to bless the son of Abraham. Isn’t Ishmael his son? In fact, Abraham even asked God to bless Ishmael (Genesis 17:18).

c. God always keeps His promises. Things are rocking along. Abraham is now 100, Sarah is 90. I’m not a doctor and certainly not a medical expert but I don’t go see many new babies in senior citizen homes. But God did a miracle and Genesis 21:1-2 records, *“The Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did to Sarah as He had*

promised. And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him.” And we all know that son’s name was Isaac.

Sometimes we have to wait **but** God always keeps His promises. Our problem is that God’s time table is not on our schedule. If we don’t want problems down the road, we must learn to trust God and wait.

d. The Middle East conflict is a family feud. No one seems to fight as well as family. You may have a family feud on your feet today. Two of the world's most renowned shoe companies were birthed after a bout of bad blood between brothers. In the 1920s, German brothers Adolf and Rudolf Dassler launched a shoe company together. Their business boomed after Dassler shoes adorned the feet of gold-medal-winning Olympians in the 1930’s. But as sales spiked, so did the tension between the two brothers. World War II was the breaking point in their relationship. By the war's end, the brothers had split the company and waged a war of their own — in the business arena. Adolf, who preferred to be called Adi, named his business *Adidas*, combining his first and last names; Rudolf tried the same with his firm called Ruda, though he later changed it to *Puma*. The brothers never spoke again, and their bitter rivalry even divided the town of where they built their competing shoe factories on the opposite banks of the town's river. If you own a pair of *Pumas* or a pair of *Adidas*, you’re part of a family feud.

Do your children fight? What about children in blended families or half-brothers and sisters? The tension became so bad that Abraham, though it broke his heart, eventually sent Ishmael and his mother, Hagar away. We know that both Isaac and Ishmael buried Abraham together when he died but the tension between the two families never died. That’s where the conflict in the Middle East first started. Isaac gave birth to Jews and Ishmael gave birth to Arabs. Basically those two families have been fighting ever since.

Tragically, the Jews disobeyed God and finally God had had enough, and they lost the land. If you disobey God, it always costs you. Essentially, the nation of Israel ceased to exist in the first century...until 1948. After the Holocaust, the Jews came home and the Arabs promised to drive them into the sea...and they’ve been fighting ever since.

Today there are about six million Jews living in the nation of Israel and they’re surrounded by some 250 million Arabs. Do you see a problem? How do the Jews survive? The only explanation is God. And all of this is the background of 911. This is the background of Islamic terrorism. It’s the warring of two groups of people.

Now I’m not saying that everything that Israel and the Jews have done has been right. I’m not saying that Arab people are wrong and all that they have done is wrong. I do know that the Bible promises to bless those who bless Israel, so it’s a foolish thing to attack Israel or become anti-Jewish. Yet, just because I am pro-Israel that does not mean that I am or that we should be anti-Arab. They’re both sinners and guilty and capable of horrendous atrocities against each other.

3. Most Arabs began following a new religion called Islam. In 570 AD, a man named Muhammad was born. Until Muhammad most Arabs were polytheists and worshipped many gods.

The symbol for Christianity is a cross. The Buddhist symbol is an eight spoked wheel. What’s the symbol of Islam? A crescent moon. And the moon god was also referred to

as "*al-ilah*". This is not a proper name of a single specific god, but a generic reference meaning "the god". Each local pagan Arab tribe would refer to their own local tribal pagan god as "*al-ilah*". And "*Al-ilah*" was shortened to *Allah*. Muhammad also retained almost all the pagan rituals of polytheistic Arabs but he redefined them in monotheistic terms. Regardless of the specifics of the facts, it's clear that Islam is derived from paganism that once worshiped a moon-god. Though Islam is today a monotheist religion, its roots are in paganism.

We don't have a lot of time today and I'm not an expert on Islam. But I've done a lot of reading and research, and I'd encourage you to do the same.

The fastest growing religion in the world today is Islam. If you don't know a Muslim, chances are that you will. And in our pluralistic world, we need to know about other world religions, particularly those that have such a direct impact on us. Add to that Jesus commanded us to take the Gospel to all people. You can't reach people that you don't understand or know. In fact, on the bottom of your sermon notes, I've given you two suggested books that will help you better reach out to Muslims.

One of the most heretical and frightening statements that you will sometimes hear, goes something like this: "*All roads lead to God.*" Or, "*All religions are basically the same.*" Those are lies! Jesus said, "*I am THE way,*" not "*a*" way (John 14:6).

Islam, which means "*surrender*" or "*submission*," began about 600 years after Christ was born. That's key word for every Muslim. What would you say is the key word for every Christian? It's true submission is part of it but we begin with *Jesus*, we begin with a *Cross*. For the Muslim it's *submission*.

Let me highlight some of problems with Islam that you need to be aware of.

a. Islam is based on idolatry and demonism. You need to understand that Muhammad was illiterate. None of Islam's writings were written by him.

Muhammad adopted the practice of praying alone for several weeks every year in a cave near Mecca. During one of his visits to Mount Hira, he said that the angel Gabriel appeared to him and began to talk to him. At first though, Muhammad wondered if he were demon possessed and if a demon was talking to him. Now we know that it wasn't Gabriel because Islam contradicts the Bible. It's very interesting, too, that Muhammad's experience of an angel appearing to him is very similar to another cult that's in the news a lot these days, Mormonism. Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism said that the angel Moroni appeared to him and gave him the book of Mormon. 2 Corinthians 4 tells us that Satan appears as an angel of light. We know too that if an angel is not one of God's angels, then he's one of Satan's angels. We have another term for those angels. We call them demons. Islam is not of God. It's evil. This wasn't Gabriel. It was one of Satan's angels or some demon.

b. Islam has no basis of objective and historical truth. Islam has a total disregard for all recorded world history, archaeology and of course, the Bible. Muslims exist in a type of historical vacuum when they propose a completely different version of history which contradicts archeology, simply because the Koran taught such in the 7th century. In other words, if the Koran makes a historical claim that contradicts thousands of historical documents that are several millennia old and the entire knowledge base of archeology, Muslims believe the Koran. They disregard all the evidence and blindly accept on faith their own mythical version of history.

For example, Holocaust denial now regularly occurs throughout the Middle East—in speeches and pronouncements by Islamic leaders. While some voices oppose this deliberate distortion of the historical record, the main tenet of Holocaust denial—that Jews invented the Holocaust story in an attempt to advance their own interests—is an increasingly accepted belief for large numbers of people in Arab and Muslim states.

Can you imagine if I published a book which stated that Mother Teresa was actually a Buddhist, or that the Holocaust never happened? I'd rightly encounter severe criticism. Yet Islam teaches that Jesus Christ was really a Muslim, and that God caused someone who "looked like Jesus" to die on the cross. To suggest that Jesus never died on the cross is not only contrary to all known world knowledge, it's blasphemy. It's also utterly destructive to Christianity, which is founded upon the historic fact of Christ's crucifixion.

All this underscores that Islam and Christianity are not compatible religions, as some misguided church leaders teach. As the Apostle Paul said, *"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures"* (1 Cor. 15:3).

c. The Koran is not sufficient. As Christians, we believe that in the Bible we have all that God wants and needs for us to know. In other words, the Bible is sufficient. 2 Timothy 3:16-17, *"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."* The Bible is cohesive and non-contradictory. Whereas the Qu'ran is a self-contradicting book.

Remember, Mohammad could neither read nor write, so the sayings were translated and collected from the memories of those who heard them. Unlike the Bible, the Koran is not all sufficient by itself, but needs the Hadith (extra Islamic writings).

For example, only in the Hadith do we learn that Muslims are to pray five times a day. The Qur'an by itself, is like a Lamborghini without an engine. The seller strokes it, extols its virtues, but when you sit behind the wheel and turn the key it won't start! It is only after considerable confusion (which the Pakistani scholar Maududi acknowledged) that you realize that the Qur'an cannot drive the Koran without the Hadith. Thus, Muslim scholars say the Qur'an and Hadith MUST both be preserved.

Although Muslims and Christians both teach that the New Testament was inspired by God, Muslims claim that most of the text has been lost, altered and corrupted. Yet, that's not what Mohammad taught. It would surprise most Muslims to learn that the first Muslim to trash the Bible was Ibn-Khazem, in 1064 AD.

I'd encourage you though to read the Qur'an. It's much shorter than the Bible and will help you reach out to Muslims with the Gospel.

d. Islam denies that Jesus died on the Cross. Muslims know the real battle is over the cross. No crucifixion, no Christianity. The death of Jesus on the cross is the center of all Christian theology. All Christian statements about God, about creation, about sin and death have their focal point in the crucified Christ. All Christian statements about history, about the church, about faith and sanctification, about the future and about hope stem from the crucified Christ.

According to Muslims, it wasn't Christ who died on the cross, but rather Simon of Cyrene, who was constrained to carry the cross for Jesus, and mistakenly crucified in Christ's place. Simon having received Jesus' form. Some even gone so far as to suggest that it may have even been Judas.

e. Islam believes in a works salvation. Muslims claim the whole concept of blood atonement and substitutionary death is a forgery and a fraud, and not from God. Since they reject inherited sin, Muslims will emphasize passages like Ezek 18:20 where each man will pay for his own sin.

Muslims love to use the illustration of the speeding ticket. They say, "Why should I have to pay for someone else's speeding ticket? That's why the idea of Jesus dying on the cross for our sins is wrong." Yet, Muhammad had simply not thought through his theology very well because it has not dawned on Muslims that when they say that when Simon or Judas were made to die in Jesus place, so he could escape death, this man paid the speeding ticket on behalf of Christ. Hence Muslim Theology is completely contradictory, for since Qur'an 4:157 says that God made someone take on the physical appearance of Jesus and died in his place, they not only have someone paying for a speeding ticket they did not deserve, they also have substitutionary death, it's just not Jesus.

The Qur'an says *"Do the five pillars and when you die if Allah is in a good mood that day you might get into paradise."* That's not grace. Galatians 2:16: *"Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified."* On Islam, we can put a big giant billboard with flashing lights to draw attention to each one who passes by saying: *"We try harder. We really try harder. We will keep on trying harder until the day we die...but in the end we're not sure."* God's grace is free and it's a gift from God (Eph. 2:8-9).

Conclusion: There was a bumper sticker out there right after 911 that was very convicting. It simply said, *"Have You Prayed for Osama Bin Laden Today?"* Wow! I don't know about you but I know that I need to be reminded to pray for those in the Islamic world, particularly those who'd love to blow us to bits. Peter reminds us, *"The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that **any** should perish, but that all should reach repentance"* (2 Peter 3:9).

I'm certain that the "any" of this verse includes Muslims, even terrorists. We may find it hard to pray for our avowed enemies who threaten destruction, but one of the characteristics of Christlikeness given by Jesus Himself is to *"love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you, and persecute you"* (Matthew 5:44). That includes radical Islamics and terrorists.

And we have good evidence that such prayers are effective. God is at work in the Islamic world. There are reports that many Muslims are being confronted with the gospel in their dreams. Here's the testimony of one Saudi Arabian who was born close to Mecca and grew up going to the mosque five times a day. For many nights he had a terrifying nightmare in which he was being taken down into hell. This dream, always vivid and horrifying, destroyed the man's peace night after night. Suddenly one evening, Jesus appeared in his dream and said, "Son, I am the way, the truth, and the life. And if you would give your life to Me, I would save you from the hell that you have seen."

This young man knew something of Jesus from the distorted teachings of the Qu'ran, but he didn't know the Jesus of the New Testament. So he began searching for a Christian who could help him. Since Christianity is banned in Saudi Arabia, and a Christian caught witnessing to a Muslim can be beheaded, the young man's search took time. But the Lord eventually led him to an Egyptian Christian who gave him a Bible. He began reading, and when he got into the New Testament, he was moved to give his life totally to Jesus Christ.

Soon afterward, an opponent of the young man discovered his conversion and accused him of being a Christian. The authorities arrested and imprisoned him. In jail, he was tortured and eventually sentenced to death by beheading. But on the morning of his scheduled execution, no one showed up to escort him from the cell. Two days later the authorities threw open his cell door and screamed at him: "You demon! Get out of this place! " It was only later that this Arab Christian learned that his execution had not taken place because on the very day he was to be beheaded, the son of his accuser had mysteriously died. The new Christian is now quietly working to bring other Muslims to faith in Christ.

In that true story we have the key to the Christian response to this threat. As Abraham Lincoln said, *"The best way to destroy an enemy is to make him a friend."* The best way to counter the threat of Islam is to make Christians out of Muslims.

Do you want to stop terrorism? Then, support missionaries to Muslims. Now I don't claim that this will turn away prophecies of events sure to come, but it does give you and I a role in the drama to be played.

Our prayers, our testimonies, our love and care for our Islamic neighbors may not turn the inevitable tide for the world, but they can turn the tide for individuals and allow them to escape the wrath to come. And that is definitely worth doing.

And today, if you don't know Jesus, you're in no better shape than a Muslim who worships Allah and denies the Bible. If you don't know Christ, please come to Him today, come to the Cross and trust Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.