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EDITOR: BRUCE J. NICHOLLS



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8. The servant of the Lord brings glory to God. The fourth song begins, 'See my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted' ([52:13](#)). The song ends, 'Therefore I will give him a portion among the great and he will divide the spoils among the strong because he poured out his life unto death and was numbered with the transgressors' ([53:12](#)). In the resurrection God has given him the name that is above every name and at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow ... and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father' ([Philp. 2:10f](#)). The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead silences all objections to the incarnation and the cross. Christ is alive and he reigns forever. The final chapters of Isaiah ([54-66](#)) are a crescendo of praise to the triumph of God's servant king whose coming kingdom on earth is one of judgement and hope.

CONCLUSION

[Isaiah 40-66](#) is the moving announcement and enactment of God's establishing his kingly reign over the affairs of mankind through his suffering servant, who is none other than the King himself. This is Good News indeed. God redeems at great price his covenanted people, he restores the land, rebuilds Jerusalem and brings forth justice among the nations. In the fulness of time the Lord promises, 'Behold I create new [P. 177](#) heavens and a new earth' ([65:17](#)), to which Peter adds, 'the home of righteousness' ([2 Pet. 3:13](#)). God will answer before his people call and 'The wolf and the lamb will feed together and the lion will eat straw like the ox' ([65:24f](#)). In the person of Jesus Christ the kingdom came ([Mk. 1:14f](#)), the church as the sign of the kingdom is being built ([Mt. 16:18](#)), the powers and authorities of darkness were exposed and defeated by the cross ([Col. 2:15](#)) and on the Final Day all will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory ([Mt. 24:30](#)).

Only when the believer confesses his sins, puts his trust in Christ as Saviour and Lord and is born from above by the Spirit of God, will the windows of heaven open and he be filled with the love of God. As a new believer he discovers that God is just and God is love and 'we love him because he first loved us' ([1 Jn. 4:19](#)).

Rev Dr Bruce J. Nicholls worked in India 1955-1992 and is now engaged in New Zealand with Church ministries and overseas with the Asia Theological Association and the Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship. [p. 178](#)

Theological Principles for Evangelizing Muslims

Chawkat Georges Moucarray

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As the messenger of the gospel, Jesus Christ was the Evangelist par excellence. His example should hold our attention ahead of that of Paul or Peter. Moreover, we have four gospels dealing with Jesus while we only have the book of Acts for his two famous apostles.

Jesus' mission was essentially to the Jewish people. Judaism at the time was shot through with very varied threads (asceticism, nationalism, legalism and so on). This form of Judaism had some characteristics that we find in contemporary Islam: extreme monotheism, political messianism, Holy Scriptures codified by a secular tradition, the centrality of the Law, etc. This similarity makes the example of Jesus that much more relevant for all who seek to proclaim the gospel to Muslims. The gospels of Matthew and Mark, which appear to have been written by Semitic authors for Semitic readers, merit closer attention than the other two.

The following principles bring out some lessons that we can draw from evangelism as practised by Jesus. Of course this is not an exhaustive list. The relative importance of any of these principles may vary according to the situation and the people concerned.

1. THE REVELATION OF GOD AS FATHER IS AT THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL

From start to finish of his earthly ministry, Jesus affirms that God is a Father. He is a Father to all men, but especially to Jesus' disciples and in a unique way to Jesus himself.

The two characteristics of the fatherhood of God that stand out the most are on the one hand authority and on the other goodness. If the authority of God seems obvious, his goodness as shown by Jesus is not so self-evident.

Jesus demonstrated the goodness of God in many ways: he *served* men, notably by healing their diseases; he showed his love for his disciples by *giving* his life for them (cf. [Jn. 13:1](#); [15:13](#)); he offered men [p. 179](#) *forgiveness* for their sins, the greatest service he rendered them, by the gift of his life.

Jesus used human fatherhood to speak about divine fatherhood, notably in several of his parables. This analogy is valid, however, only up to a certain point, because of the sin which characterizes human nature (cf. [7:11](#)). In Arab culture, for example, goodness is more a maternal than a paternal quality. Moreover we can see the Quran's vehement opposition to the concept of Jesus as Son of God, notably on the grounds of the connotations of human sonship that this raises.

2. THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF THE LAW IS TO LAY BARE THE HEART OF MAN

In the Sermon on the Mount in particular, Jesus gives the Law a spiritual interpretation which is designed to expose man's sin. Jesus adopts the same attitude towards human traditions associated with the Law, for example the rules relating to purity (cf. [Mk. 7:1-23](#)).

Without ever questioning the value of God's Law (cf. [Mt. 5:17](#)), Jesus constantly denounces a superficial understanding and outward obedience to this Law. The dangers of legalism are many: hypocrisy, pride, activism, ritualism, a desire to justify oneself before God, among others. If the Law is good yet legalism exists, it must be the one who practises the Law who is evil!

Thus man cannot secure his own salvation, by obedience to the Law, by his own efforts to please God. It is precisely in order to help him to become aware of this inability that the

Law was given. Without understanding this, he will never be able to grasp the message of the gospel.

3. THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL IS INSEPARABLE FROM ITS OUTWORKING

Mark's gospel often shows us Jesus in action, but all the gospels recount numerous miracles performed by Jesus (cf. [Jn. 20:30](#)). In other words, Jesus was not content to preach the gospel; he accompanied his preaching with deeds illustrating the gospel (cf. [Mt. 11:5](#)).

It is John's gospel that most clearly establishes the relationship between Jesus' words and deeds. The latter are referred to as 'signs' whose meaning is made clear by Jesus' words. He says that he is the light of the world before he gives the man blind from birth back his sight ([Jn. 9](#)). He feeds the crowd before declaring that he is the bread of life ([Jn. 6](#)). He states that he is the resurrection and the life before bringing his friend Lazarus back to life ([Jn. 11](#)).

In the synoptic gospels, the miracles of Jesus are rarely preceded or followed by any commentary. Thus, deeds don't necessarily need words to explain them; they speak for themselves. Conversely, preaching doesn't always need deeds to confirm it; the power of the Spirit is sufficient. However, seen as a whole, Jesus' mission consisted in proclaiming the gospel and in putting it into practice in order to demonstrate its truth. p. 180

4. DIALOGUE IS THE PREFERRED MEANS OF EVANGELISM

All the gospels show Jesus in dialogue with his contemporaries. This is obvious in his personal encounters with Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, Simon the Pharisee and others, but it is also true of his discourses. In the rare discourses recorded for us by the gospels, Jesus' teaching is related to his listeners' religion, to their experiences as human beings or to their individual interests. He responds to their preoccupations and takes their objections into account, even if it is in a way that may be disconcerting at times.

5. PARABOLIC LANGUAGE IS PARTICULARLY SUITABLE FOR EXPRESSING CERTAIN TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL

In the synoptic gospels in particular, Jesus often has recourse to parables to proclaim the gospel. His disciples were struck by this and asked why. Jesus' reply was one of his most disconcerting (cf. [Mt. 13:10-17](#)). In his frequent use of parables Jesus has two goals which are apparently (but only apparently) contradictory: to make the gospel easier to grasp for those who are open to it and more difficult for those who have decided not to accept it. To the first group, the gospel in fact becomes clearer when it is compared to the events of everyday life. By contrast, the second group will always find additional reasons to reject it in such comparisons.

In John's gospel, Jesus explains his use of parables by the fact that the Holy Spirit has not yet come down on the disciples to give them the ability to understand certain truths (cf. [Jn. 16:12](#), [25](#), [29](#)). Chronologically, we are in the post-Pentecost era, but aren't those who don't believe in Jesus Christ in the same situation as prior to the day of Pentecost? This is why parabolic discourse is particularly appropriate to evangelism.

6. THE DEATH AND DIVINITY OF CHRIST WHICH ARE AT THE CENTRE OF THE GOSPEL ARE IMPLICIT IN EVANGELISM

Jesus' divinity and the necessity of his death for the salvation of men are among the truths which are at the heart of the gospel. But they are also truths which are no easier for today's Muslims to accept than they once were for Jesus' own disciples.

It is surprising to see that Jesus started to speak to his disciples about his death only quite late, when they had already discovered that he really was the Messiah (cf. [Mt. 16:13-23](#)). In spite of their discovery, or because of it, his disciples struggled greatly with this idea. Jesus returned to this subject only twice, and his disciples still had the same difficulty imagining that their master could be nailed to a cross.

In the same way, Jesus' disciples probably didn't have a very precise idea about his divinity. The title 'Son of God' that they used for him on several occasions was a messianic title and it quite possibly had no other significance for them. Moreover Jesus was as discreet about his divinity as about his being the Messiah.

However, Jesus acted and spoke in a way that made his contemporaries think. Neither Moses nor Abraham [p. 181](#) dared to do as Jesus did. This roundabout fashion of revealing who he was shows Jesus' humility, but it also demonstrates his teaching methods, since he didn't want a head-on confrontation with the passionate monotheism of his fellow Jews. Even his enemies managed to understand that Jesus implicitly claimed divine status, which motivated the sentence they passed against him.

7. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST TESTIFIES TO HIS DIVINITY AND TO HIS SUPERIORITY OVER ALL THE PROPHETS

With the crucifixion of Jesus, all the hopes and dreams of his disciples collapse in ruins. They are in complete confusion until they discover that, contrary to all expectations, his tomb is empty. Their encounter with the risen Christ fills them with joy but, more especially, it gives them a new understanding of the Scriptures. Thus, the reality of the living Christ on one hand and the testimony of the Scriptures on the other combine to reveal the mystery of Christ to the disciples. From now on, and especially from the day of Pentecost onwards, all the events of Jesus' life, as well as his death, make sense in the light of this event, unprecedented in history: his resurrection. He is the promised Messiah who fulfils the hope of Israel, and the eternal Only Son sent by God to bring man back from death to life.

Dr Chawkat Georges Moucarry of Iraq teaches at All Nations Christian College, Easneye, Ware, England. [p. 182](#)

How a Maulvi Found Peace

K.M. Usman