

ISLAM-submission or surrender to God
MUSLIM-one who submits to God
By Vivienne Stacey

1. **Belief in God:** God is one and has not equals or partners
2. **Belief in the Holy Books-** including the Law of Moses (Torah), the Psalms of David (Zabur), the Gospels of Jesus (Injil) and the Quran of Mohammad ads the complete and final revelation of God.
3. **Belief in the prophets of God:** There have been many prophets including Jesus but Mohammad is the last and the greatest.
4. **Belief in Angels**
5. **Belief in the Day of Judgment:** Paradise is achieved by one's good deeds outweighing one's bad deeds; otherwise the result is hell.
6. **Belief in the decrees of God:** God is sovereign and is responsible for and wills everything that happens, whether good or evil.

God is unknowable and unreachable; man is basically good- not sinful but weak- and can satisfy God's demands and get to heaven on his merits; Jesus is not God's son (God is one and has no children), nor was he crucified (there was no need for him to be and it would be too shameful for one of God's prophets to die that way); the Bible, specially those parts mentioned above is the word of God but has been changed by Christians.

Practices:

Known as the Pillars of Islam, the five (or six) practices of Islam are of utmost importance as they are the means of accumulating good deeds.

1. **Recitation of the creed (Shahada in Arabic):** "There is no God but Allah (God) and Mohammad is his prophet".
2. **Duty of prayers (salaat):** Traditionally prayers are done five times a day. A Muslim must remove his shoes, wash ritually, face towards Mecca and kneel sp as to be able to touch his head to the ground while reciting the prayers.
3. **Alms giving (zakaat):** Two and one half percent of a Muslim's income is given voluntarily to the poor and for religious causes.
4. **Fasting:** During Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, nothing is to pass one's lips or be swallowed from sunrise to sunset.
5. **Pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj):** If at all possible a Muslim is expected to make a pilgrimage once in his lifetime to the Kaaba shrine in Mecca.
6. **Exhortation on behalf of God:** This includes holy war (jihad) Shi'ites only.

Varieties:

As with Christianity the actual practice of Islam is very diverse:

- **Orthodox:** Take the Quran literally and follow the traditions closely.
- **Conservative:** Try to conserve as much as possible from Orthodox Islam while making adjustments for life as it now is.
- **Mystic:** Many theological variants including Sufism; in practice seeks some kind one oneness with God.
- **Syncretist/Animist:** Blends Islamic beliefs with many local superstitions that are anti-Islamic including astrology, charms, curses, palm reading, evil, etc.
- **Communist/Socialist:** Usually Marxist or Maoist in economic philosophy, generally identifies self as a Muslim for expediency

Islam is divided into two major groups- the Sunni who form a majority of 60-70% of Muslims and the Shiite. There are also many small sects within each division. In practice perhaps the majority of Muslims outside the Middle East are also influenced by animism.

Who are the Muslims?

Frequently the term Muslim or Islam conjure an Arab image. While Islam is centered on the Arab world and the Quran is written in Arabic, Arabs are only 28% of the nearly 900 million Muslims who comprise Dar-ul-Islam- the House of Islam. Who are the rest? Muslims nations from an almost unbroken chain for 9000 miles from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

The twelve countries with the largest Islamic population are:

Indonesia	140,592,000 87%	Egypt (Arabic)	44,180,000 94%
Pakistan	94,381,000 97%	Iran	43,362,000 98%
Bangladesh	93,664,000 84%	Nigeria	38,323,500 43.5%
India	82,104,000 11%	Morocco (Arabic)	23,293,000 98.7%
Turkey	49,698,000 99%	Algeria (Arabic)	21,186,000 99%
USSR	46,580,000 17%	China	20,690,000 2%

The Soviet Union is 17% Islamic; few of these people speak any Russian. China's Western Provinces have a significant Muslim minority. Most black African countries have a Muslim population of at least 5%; many 50% or more. The Muslim Maranao tribe is the largest cultural minority in the Philippines.

Muslims and the “Christian West”:

Eight million Muslim immigrants and “guest workers” live in Western Europe with millions more passing through each year as students, tourists and business people (an equal number is resident in Eastern Europe) and a growing flood of refugees from places like Iran and Lebanon is finding its way to the West. The vast majority are from countries which tolerate neither verbal witness nor the publication or distribution of materials about Christ.

Consequently almost none of them will have encountered the gospel in a clear appealing way. TIME magazine reported the following numbers of North African Arab immigrants alone to Europe.

FRANCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moroccans 492,000 • Algerians 805,000 • <u>Tunisians 212,900</u> Total Arabs 899,300	WEST GERMANY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moroccans 44,200 • Tunisians 25,300 • <u>Others 18,000</u> Total Arabs 87,500
BELGIUM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moroccans 105,000 • Algerians 10,800 • Tunisians 6,900 • <u>Others 4,000</u> Total Arabs 126,700	HOLLAND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moroccans 100,000 UNITED KINGDOM 150,000 SWEDEN 20,000

Such communities tend to concentrate near the major population centers, such as Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, Frankfurt, London, Lyon, Marseilles, Paris, Vienna and so on. They are here to stay and are forming political and religious pressure groups and, under the guidance of the Islamic Council of Europe, hope to see Europe Islamized over the next generation. Islam is one of the official religions of Austria and has a regular evangelistic program on state-run television. In most countries of Catholic Europe there are more Muslims than evangelical Christians. In Britain, Islam is the fastest growing religion.

Even from a population growth perspective the outlook for Islam in Europe is startling. In a report on immigrant youth, French state demographers predict that within 15 years over half of those under the age of 25 in France will be from a home where at least one of the parents is an immigrant, most likely an Arab. Foreigners will make up 40% of Brussels’s population by the year 2000.

The Church of Christ must recognize what an opportunity God is placing before us in Europe and Am Erica and mobilize to meet it. Less than 2% of North America’s 53,000 missionaries are working among the world’s 900

million Muslims- one for every million Muslims. There are more missionaries serving Alaska's 400,000 people than are working in all of Islam! The need is for believers who will locate and befriend Muslims, become informed of their culture and beliefs; obtain and distribute evangelistic materials in the context of relationships and will persevere in prayer and Christ's love and power until Muslims are brought into fellowship with Christ.

What do you know about Muslim people in the US?

- Ten years ago there were half a million Muslims in the US. Today there are 3-5 million with an increase of 25% each year.
- There are more than 300 mosques or teaching centers of Islam in the US
- Muslims Student Association chapters are established at more than 150 universities in the US.
- One of the English-language Muslim magazines has a monthly circulation of 750,000 in the US.
- Islam is pushing all countries with a Muslim community to give Islam official recognition so it may be practiced according to the Quran.
- Copies of the Quran are being distributed free throughout the US , Canada and Europe.
- One of every five people in the world is Muslim.