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CHRISTIAN VIEW OF ATONEMENT AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR
EVANGELIZATION IN MUSLIM CONTEXT

BY

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ABSTRACT

This project is centred on atonement. The research topic is *Christian View of Atonement and Its Significance in Muslim Evangelism Context*. The approach is purely a library work. The sources contacted included books, journals, and internet. The focus of the research is to bring about the understanding of Christian atonement, and to highlight Muslims view. This is to lead to effective presentation of the gospel to the Muslim. Salvation in Islam as discovered is based on good works not on atonement. This is contrary to the Christian faith which is based on the substitutional death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The most important need of man is salvation. The focus and challenges for evangelization of Muslims is faced with problems. Most Muslims perceive Christianity as foreign. They also believe that the present Bible is a perversion with variances of the original one. It is hard to convince the Muslim to the contrary. There is usually a threat to the life of any Muslim convert. Many are confused about some basic doctrines of Christianity like Jesus being the Son of God. These coupled with the noticeable moral and spiritual laxity among some professed Christians along with other problems are responsible for the difficulties in Muslims accepting the Christian faith. Past Christian Muslim hostilities did not help matters. This work has proposed some practical solutions to the identified problems. The church need to raise awareness concerning the need to evangelize the Muslims based on meaningful strategies. It should teach its members the bible though this may not solve the doctrinal variances. People from difference professions should be involved in bivocational ministry to the Muslims. Christians need to understand the Muslim pride and culture to avert opposition. There is need to overcome social barriers, among others put across as methods and solutions. Very importantly, there is need for revival Christians should earnestly pray for this. This work has called for love unity and sacrifice among Christians, and compassion towards the Muslims. This work is addressed to all Christians especially all who desire to reach Muslims with the gospel. It will also be of benefit to Christian missionaries in particular who are working among the Muslim communities to be more informed. The information will also benefit students of theology and missions to have better perspective of atonement. Muslims who read this work will have more knowledge of the Christian faith so as to be able to informed decision for Christ.

5.2 Conclusion

The Christian view of atonement is God initiated God promised to redeem mankind when He told Adam that the seed of the woman shall crush the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15) Jesus Christ, born of a virgin is the only one that was qualified to fulfil this promise. Jesus fulfilled Old Testament promises concerning the promised Messiah. Muslims must have this understanding to be saved. Therefore since there is no assured salvation in Islam, Muslims need the gospel to be saved. This is the great challenge that Christians should carry the message of the Great Commission to them. It is wrong to have this knowledge and doing nothing about it.

This researcher advocated that since the Islamic teachings do not have the true message of salvation based on atonement, the need to reach out to the Muslims with

the gospel it is paramount. The Christians should take urgent step to preach, obey the Great Commission with Muslims in view. The method used should be varied and contextual.

5.3 Recommendations

One of the purposes of this research is to pass across the biblical teachings on atonement. It examined the Muslim perspective, in order to educate Christians so as to bring about commitment to Muslim evangelization. In order to achieve effective Muslim evangelization the followings are recommended.

Every Christian, every church, every Christian denomination should evolve concerted programme to reach out to the Muslim communities. The programmes should be motivated by love and compassions. Individual Christians should boldly meet the Muslims around him or her with the gospel.

The Christians must strive to live in righteousness and be true examples to others. Many Muslims are strict adherents to the Quranic teachings and of high moral standards. Without living a life of holiness the Muslims will not be able to see our light before them and “glorify our father who is in heaven.” Contextualization in the presentation of the gospel as a solution to some of this barriers to Muslim evangelism has been highlighted. This can be done without lapsing to syncretism or compromising the truth.

The use of the media such as Radio – Television broadcasts especially in the local languages, even in Arabic by churches should be an effective avenue in reaching out to the Muslims. Distribution of relevant Christian literature and publications of short articles in the print medium is another good way that can be exploited. Christian denominations should have their own Radio and Television stations. Gladly enough, the Nigerian Baptist Convention is in the process of going into satellite

broadcasting. Some of the programmes through the mission board should be designed to reach the Muslim audience.

Christian institutions providing social services such as schools and hospitals have been known to admit Muslims. The primary concern should be to see the gospel presented to those coming to these institutions. Evangelism should not be compromised. Many who had attended Christian schools or hospitals have had opportunity to hear the gospel and have been saved. This can be intensified. It is recommended that every Christian or church must become an agent of revival through prayers of intercession. God is able to bring great harvest of souls, even in the Muslim communities that is looking impenetrable. Informal presentation of the gospel in person to person engagements is known to be one of the most effective way of reaching others for Christ. This can be done through friendship cultivation with Muslims, through approaching neighbours, colleagues and others as one come across them. Jesus employed this method. He also sent out the Apostles two by two to go to the house of Israel to preach. We can intensify in this area. Our missionaries sent to Muslim dominated areas should be greatly supported and encouraged. Many of them lack basic necessities of life and equipment to function effectively.

Finally, every Christian to be involved in Muslim evangelization should have sound teaching in major Christian doctrines especially in Christian atonement; such Christians should also be knowledgeable of what the Muslims believe and practice in order to be effective witnesses. Many Muslim scholars are very versed in biblical teachings but use the knowledge to attack the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. As such one cannot afford to be ignorant or run foul of Muslim cherished values while living in their midst. Christians who desire to share the gospel with

Muslims should respect their moral values. He or she should not live in isolation within the Muslim communities. He should rather be friendly and loving.