

## CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM: WHAT OUR LEADERS ARE NOT TELLING US

“We do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord” (2 Corinthians 4:5).

There has been great controversy over the past several days because of some remarks that were made at our National Prayer Breakfast. As I read the remarks, as they are, there is nothing wrong with the remarks. Yet there is something wrong with it. And that is what I want to talk about today.

Here is the deal. As a Christian I have to stand up for Jesus. I have to defend Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is without sin. The Lord Jesus Christ has never harmed anybody. The Lord Jesus Christ has a perfect record. If I lift up Christ, I have no fear at all of being contradicted. No one can charge Christ with sin.

Even when he drove the money changers out of the temple, there is no evidence whatsoever that he ever struck any human being. He cracked a whip to get attention. He didn't crack the whip on somebody's head or back. He overturned the tables of the money changers, but he didn't pick up the coins and hit people in the head with them. The Lord was, as we will see in a moment in Philippians chapter two, a person who lived for others and who died for others.

So we do not preach ourselves. Let me say that it is vital that we not preach and defend Western Civilization as if everything that happened in it is somehow or another good. Western Civilization is rooted in four basic things: the thinking of the Greeks, the thinking of the Romans, the thinking of the Jewish people and the thinking of Christians—four basic pillars. Western Civilization is not the embodiment of the Christian faith. Terrible things have been done under our civilization, and so I stand in full support with the President's statement in that regard.

How do we as people of faith reconcile these realities? The profound good, the strength, the tenacity, the compassion and love that can flow from our faith, operating alongside those who seek to hijack religions for their own murderous sins.

Humanity has been grappling with these things, these questions, throughout human history. And lest we get on our high horse and think this is unique to

some other place, remember that during the Crusades and the Inquisition, people committed terrible deeds in the name of Christ. In our own country, slavery and Jim Crow, all too often, were justified in the name of Christ. That statement is true. And you know it is true.

But there is something missing, and that is what I want to look at with you. What is missing?

**What is missing is there is a profound and radical difference between Mohammed and Jesus.** And let me give you the heart of where I am going with this before I go.

The problem in the world is that Christians are NOT more like Jesus. The problem in the world today is that many people name the name of Christ and do horrible things in his name. The problem is that there are many people, who are members of churches, who have never been born again, who know nothing of a personal relationship with Christ, who know nothing of the daily struggle to take up the Cross and follow Christ.

What the world needs now are more people who imitate Christ. What the world needs now are more people who truly trust in Christ and him alone for salvation.

Now, what about Islam?

I have been in North Africa. I have been in the Middle East. I have been in the United States. I have never been mistreated by a Muslim. I have had Muslims in my home. I have been in their homes.

Muslims are like Methodists and Presbyterians and Baptists, who don't know the Lord. You know, it is possible to be a Presbyterian, a Methodist, a Baptist and not know the Lord. Good old folks, by and large—honest, treat you right, not going to cheat you. But you don't want ever to divide an estate with somebody like that. But, by and large, they are going to be honest people. And I am going to say that is the way it is with Muslims in my experience.

And what the world needs is for Muslims to distance themselves from the life and the teachings of Mohammed. That is the crux of the difference. And if we don't put that out before people, we end up basically propagating a lie,

as if all religions are essentially the same—they are not—as if all religions are the same, and some crazy wackos hijacked them.

I am going to say something. It is in your printed form. If you look at the statement there on the second page, ISIS, ISIL, IS (in its evolving names) is an authentic attempt to follow the life and teachings of the prophet Mohammed. I want to say that. I first studied Islam in 1963, before I became a Christian. I bought books. I studied. I know something about the topic. The focus of my doctorate was Islam. So I know whereof I speak.

ISIS, ISIL, IS is **an**—notice I used an indefinite article, not the definite article—is **an** authentic attempt to follow the life and teachings of the prophet Mohammed as they are revealed in the Quran and the Hadith. IS, ISIL, ISIS holds to the same understanding of Islam as does the leadership of Saudi Arabia.

I'll say that again. They hold to the same understanding of Islam as does the leadership of Saudi Arabia. The fundamental difference in the two is that ISIS is in the house of war while Saudi Arabia is in the house of peace.

Shiite Islam is less radical than both, but it, too, is **an** authentic attempt to follow the life and teachings of the prophet Mohammed.

Now, I am going to give you something, and I am getting ready to get to the Scriptures, which is what we are here about, to hear a sermon from God's Word. This is very critical. How do you make sense of the Quran?

The Quran is a very different book than the Old Testament and the New Testament. For one thing, it is not arranged chronologically.

The Quran is arranged—with the exception of the very first chapter, which is the shortest—it is arranged according to the longest chapter first, then the second longest, then the third longest and on down to the shortest.

So it isn't arranged chronologically; it is arranged according to the length of the chapters.

It would be like opening your Bible to Genesis chapter one and discovering there, Psalm 117, which is the shortest of the Psalms. And then you go to Genesis two, and you find Psalm 119, and so on.

So what I want you to understand is that the Quran is not chronologically arranged, and that then leads to difficulty in trying to understand its meaning, because there are two radical events in Islam that you must understand are there. And if you don't, you will never get it.

Why am I talking about this? I am talking about this because Islam is on the move as it has been ever since the end of World War II, and it is making great strides. You need to understand it.

Islam can be divided, really, the whole of Muslim history can be divided into before an event, the *Hijra*, and after the *Hijra*. You see, the calendar of Islam doesn't begin with the birth of Mohammed. It doesn't even begin with the revelation of the Quran to Mohammed in the caves outside Mecca. It doesn't even begin with Mohammed preaching in Mecca.

The message that Mohammed preached in Mecca was essentially a good message. It was against oppression. It was against idolatry. It was about treating people fairly. It was about honesty. And so if you look at the message of Mohammed as he preached in Mecca, it is essentially a good message. It is not the Christian message, but it is essentially a positive message about justice.

But the Muslim calendar doesn't begin with his birth, his conversion to Islam or his preaching Islam. It begins with the *Hijra*.

What is the *Hijra*? Mohammed was persecuted severely, and his followers were persecuted severely by the people of Mecca. And the end result was that he and they fled, and he was invited to come to a city to help settle the problems in that city. That is the *Hijra*. It occurred in AD 622.

When he came there, the city was renamed Medina, the city of the prophet. And Mohammed became the political leader of that city state. In other words, Mohammed was the chief legal authority, the chief civil authority. He was the head of the military. He ordered this; he ordered that. He oversaw who would live, who would die.

And so it is interesting, if you date Islam according to the Muslim calendar, real Islam cannot exist except as a political force. I want you to understand that.

Real Islam is never simply a religion. It is never simply a system of beliefs or practices of the individual. Real Islam is about political force enforcing the Muslim view of the law of God.

And so there are radical changes because many people had lost their property to the Meccans. They sought to get property back from the Meccans. And so they went on raiding parties.

When they went on a raiding party, here was what happened. If you were an individual soldier, and you died in battle, Mohammed promised you that you would go to heaven.

Under Islam, nobody can know he is going to heaven but one way, to die for the cause of Islam. That is the only way to know for sure. You never know if you have been good enough. You never know if you have been too bad. You can only know you are going to heaven if you die in the cause of Islam.

And so from that point on, Islam comes really to exist. That is Year One of Islam because in that year Islam begins—because it cannot be divorced from politics; it cannot be divorced from the state.

And so, as you begin to sort out things in the Quran, you have to try to figure out was this prophecy given before Mohammed became the political leader, that is, before Islam began? Or did this prophecy come about after he became a political leader?

There is another thing there, and that is this:

Under Islamic teaching, if you had to kill someone in battle, everything that he had was yours as an individual, as long as you paid a double tithe on it: his women, his property, his slaves, his gold, his silver, his house, whatever it is. And, you see, there is a great incentive, therefore, to engage in that form of *jihad*.

*Jihad* can mean the struggle an individual has with his sinful nature, but *jihad* comes to mean, in the course of time, very much, waging war to force other people to submit.

Now, you have got to understand something. Our nation has not suddenly become pro Muslim with Mr. Obama. Mr. Obama is on the same path as Mr. Bush. Mr. Bush is the one who said that the meaning of the word, Islam, was peace. That is simply a lie. And he was either ignorant, or he was lying.

Why would he lie? Why he would lie is that ever since 1971, when President Nixon disconnected the value of the dollar from gold and connected it with oil, we have been beholden to the Gulf Oil States, particularly Saudi Arabia. You don't want to cross them. They even own a significant part of Fox News.

So what I want you to understand is that our nation has been very careful, our politicians and our people on television, has to be careful not to say things overly critical about Islam.

But Islam spread because when you converted to Islam, you could become one of the *mujahideen*, you could become a warrior. And when you were a warrior, and you engaged in warfare and defeated an enemy, you took his wife. She could be your slave or another wife. You could sell her as a slave and so on.

So what I want you to understand is that all of this stuff that is going on with ISIS today is nothing new. Please understand it. It is nothing new. It is conquest. Eighty percent is mine—20 percent, I have to give to the mosque, or the *Ummah*.

Look at that, at the end of the piece on the Crusades, Quran chapter eight, or Sura eight, verse 41:

“And know that out of all the booty that you may acquire in war, a fifth share is assigned to Allah and to the apostle and to near relatives, orphans and the needy and the wayfarer. If you do believe in Allah and in the revelation we sent down to our servant on that day of testing, the day of the meeting of the two forces. For Allah hath power over all things.”

Do you see what he is saying? A fifth share, or a double tithe, is given to charity, but you get to keep 80 percent.

Now, that is very important. If you look at the personality of the prophet, you see that the personality of the prophet Mohammed—as I have it written

out there—is profoundly different from the personality of Jesus, as we will see in a moment.

Look at the second paragraph that I have there which is a quote from the *Hadith*. The *Hadith* are the traditions that are accepted by 90 percent of the Muslims in the world as authoritative understandings of the way of life and teaching of Mohammed. Listen to what he says:

“Allah’s Messenger said, ‘The Hour will not be established until you fight against the Jews, and the stone behind which a Jew will be hiding will say, ‘O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, so kill him’”” (Al-Bukhari 1997, 4:113).

Anti-Jewish thinking does not simply come from the founding of the Israeli state in 1948. What were the first two nations in the world to recognize the modern Israeli state in 1948? The first one was the United States. What was the second one? Iran. Wow!

The first two nations in the world to recognize the state of Israel were the United States and Iran.

But this anti-Semitic thread goes back to the time of Mohammed himself. And as we read this account of Islamic history—early Islamic history at the time of Mohammed—we see there with regard to this particular Jewish tribe in Medina:

“The Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him, sat with his Companions, and they were brought in small groups. Their heads were struck off. They were between six hundred and seven hundred in number” (Ibn Sa’d 1993, 286).

Ibn Sa’d adds that Muhammad took a Jewish woman whose husband had just been killed as part of his spoils:

“The Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him, chose Rayhanah Bint ‘Amr for himself and ordered the booty to be collected. One-fifth portion of the goods and captives were separated and the remainder was sold to the highest bidder” (*Ibid.*)

I want you to understand who Mohammed is. You see, if President Bush and President Obama would have told you the whole truth . . . This is not a

problem with Democrats or Republicans. It is a problem that we owe our soul to the company store. And the company store is deeply in hock to Saudi Arabia and deeply dependent on their supporting the price of the dollar, the price of oil.

So listen to this. As you skip down there, look at the revelation in the Quran regarding Mohammed's adopted son's wife. Think about it. Mohammed saw her. He liked her. He wanted her. So look at Quran, Sura 33, verses 37 and 38. Read it this afternoon and examine it and then look at the four observations I make about it there.

(1) The first is that Zaynab is the Prophet Muhammad's daughter-in-law, married to his legally adopted son, Zayd.

(2) Secondly, at the time of these events, other people were scandalized by the action of the Prophet Muhammad because they saw such a marriage as incestuous.

(3) Thirdly, fear of their reaction caused the Prophet Muhammad to delay doing what he wanted to do.

(4) Fourthly, in a profound example of *deus ex machina*, the eternally written Quran provided the Prophet Muhammad with the solution: his son Zayd must divorce his wife, and Muhammad is ordered to marry her.

Now, I am simply giving you quotations, authentic, true quotations from authentic, true, recognized Muslim sources. And you have to look at that, and you have to ask, "Who is Mohammed?"

And you have to compare Mohammed with Jesus Christ, and you have to say, "**There is no comparison whatsoever.**"

And if you begin to talk about atrocities being committed in the name of Christ, that is valid.

But if you fail to realize that the root cause of that is that people are imitating Mohammed; whereas, when people do atrocities in the name of Christ, it is because they are turning their back on Christ. That is essential, and that is fundamental. And may God almighty grant that every one of us understands that.



When atrocities are done in the name of Islam, those atrocities are in keeping with the life and the teachings of the prophet Mohammed. When people commit atrocities—as they have throughout human history—in the name of Christ—it is because they are substituting something else for the gospel of Christ.

Well, let's look at what it is to be a Christian for a moment, because as we look at that, and we contrast it, we see how profoundly true this is.

Let's look at Philippians chapter two, with that rather lengthy introduction, but an introduction that is vital for you to have.

You are not going to get the truth from the government of the United States, whether you have got a Republican or a Democrat, or from the news media, because we owe our economic security to Saudi Arabia among others. It goes back, again, to 1971, and President Nixon disconnecting the dollar from gold and tying it to oil. You cannot bite the hand that feeds you. And the dollar is bolstered by OPEC. Are we going to cross them? No.

That is why President Bush lied to you. I can't believe he is that stupid. He has too many intelligent security advisors to be stupid when he told you that the meaning of Islam is "peace." That is simply a lie. Trust me. It is a lie. When he said it, and I heard it, I knew it was a lie. I studied Islam a long time ago. It means "submission." That is what Islam means.

And so if you are a Christian or a Jew, and the armies of Islam come your way, as they came to Jerusalem, as they came to Damascus, you are allowed to be a Christian and be a Jew, but first you have to submit to the Muslim state, and you must enter into a pact, a nonaggression pact. And you promise you will not try to share your faith with a Muslim, and other things, and pay a special tax.

I want you to see this radical difference. What is the standard of Christianity? Philippians 2:5:

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bond servant and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled

himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”

What are we told here? We are told here that Jesus is God: he came “in the form of God.” That means, in Greek, that every attribute of God the Father was an attribute of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is truly God.

We are also told here that he became a true and authentic human being, just like you and me, except he never sinned. But then we are told something else about Jesus, and it stands in radical distinction from Mohammed.

And what is it that we are told about Jesus?

“He humbled himself.” He put your welfare, your rights, your needs ahead of his own welfare, rights and needs. He abandoned himself, so that you and I would never be abandoned. He went to hell for you and me on the Cross in order that we would never go to hell.

He left the glory of heaven because he loved you more than he loved himself, because he valued your needs above his own needs. That is who Jesus is. He came into this world and gave up everything for you and me.

He emptied himself—not in the sense that he ceased being God—he emptied himself in that he put aside his own needs. He put aside his own rights. He put aside his own feelings. He put aside all of those things, and he filled himself with fulfilling the Father’s purpose, and that is to put you ahead of himself.

Now, notice that the model of the Christian life isn’t the Ten Commandments.

Does that mean that we are indifferent about the Ten Commandments or flabby about the Ten Commandments? No.

The Ten Commandments are a good summary of the way of life that God wants us to live. But you can keep the Ten Commandments and be a heathen, if you keep them externally. And people are capable of keeping the Ten Commandments externally.

You can keep the Ten Commandments externally and know nothing of Christ. But I want to tell you the essence of the Christian life is, what?

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5).

It means that whether you are dealing with a Muslim or a Jew or a professing Christian or your mother-in-law, you have got to put that person ahead of yourself.

That means when your wife insults you or your husband insults you, you have got to put them ahead of yourself. That means when somebody has knifed you in the back by lying about you, you’ve got to pray for them. You’ve got to plead with God for them. You have got to bless them rather than curse them.

You have to understand, then, that the Christian life is modeled on the life of Jesus, and anything that is done that isn’t like Jesus is anti Christian. Even if people happen to be keeping the Ten Commandments externally, if it is not a life of self-denial of the sake of Christ, it isn’t Christian.

You see, it is interesting, in Calvin’s *Institutes*, there is a section called “The Golden Book of the True Christian Life.” And what is “The Golden Book of the True Christian Life” about?

It is about self-denial. Self-denial is the essence of the Christian life. It is not denying yourself in the sense of “I don’t think I will have another piece of lemon meringue pie.” It may include that, of course, but the core of it is when you have the right to take revenge on your enemy, you show them mercy and kindness. That is the essence of Christianity.

Now, I want you to realize that once you come to grips with the truth of that in Philippians two—that the standard of conduct for Christians is to imitate Christ in his kindness, in his gentleness, in his forgiving others, his loving his enemies, his literally turning the other cheek, his doing all those things—that is the life of Christ—that is what you and I are called to do. That is what you and I are called to imitate. Notice how he puts it down in verse 12 and 13:

“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation.”

What is it to work out your own salvation? Well, the moment you put your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are saved. The moment you repent of your sins and cast yourself on God's mercy in Christ, you are on your way to heaven. But that is justification. It means that God has declared you—not only not guilty—but declared you righteous in Christ—for Christ's sake.

But sanctification begins with the new birth, and it continues on till you go to heaven. And sanctification is about putting other people ahead of yourself. It is about having no rights compared to the needs of others, especially your wife, especially your children.

And here is my confidence, verse 13 assures me that if I am a believer, God is working in my life to make me more like Jesus. So I can say in light of verse 13: "It is God who works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

I am not who I used to be. I am not who I am going to be. But I sure still have a long way to go. And every week of my life—I won't say every day, because I am still blind to things about myself—but every week, I have some wake up call reminder that says: "Bob, you are just a self-centered hypocrite."

And I am serious. At least once a week, I have some reminder that comes home to me that says: "Bob, you are just a self-centered hypocrite. You are self-absorbed. You are the focus of your life. It is all about you."

Now, come on. I am not alone here. And so, while my goal is to become like Christ—which is to make it all about you for the sake of Christ—yet the reality of my life is that I keep coming back to that thing about myself being the heart of the matter. But God is at work in me, changing me, verse 13.

But when I really come to grips with the call of the Christian life—look at chapter three—when I really come to grips with what is the standard of the Christian, when I really come to grips with the fact that God really doesn't care if you smoke or drink or chew or go with girls who do . . . And while I am being silly there, I am simply saying: People amazingly focus on silly stuff, stuff that is not even spelled out in Scriptures.

Should you try to be healthier? Of course. That is why I am always flabbergasted at obese people who condemn people who drink an occasional glass of wine.

What is far more important than what you eat and drink and put on and all of that?

What is more important than even the Ten Commandments?

It is dying to yourself and living for others. And that is what nails my hide to the wall, again and again and again, because **I love me**, and **you love you**. And I put myself ahead of you. And that is the great driving force.

But when I become aware, then I become convicted of it, then I become profoundly aware of another truth, chapter three. And that is I am on my way to hell, except for one thing and one thing only: God's grace in Jesus Christ.

I am a bad person, folks, if I measure my life by Jesus Christ. I am talking—not now hyperbolically—I am talking about who I really am. When I measure myself by Jesus, I come so short that I have no hope of heaven.

But look at chapter three, and he says in verse seven, having described all of his religious zeal, Philippians 3:7, he says:

“But what things were gain to me these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet, indeed, I also count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish.” (a grossly anemic translation. It refers to excrement and waste, and he used the equivalent of four letter word in Greek of that time, skybalon, σκύβαλον.)

“That I may gain Christ and be found in him.”

Notice verse nine: “Not having my own righteousness which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God.”

Look at verse nine. The person who says I am a Christian and trusts that he has got something that can get him into heaven, is a fool. You don't know Christ, if you don't have a deep sense that "I don't deserve to make it."

That is the bottom line. You see, when I really understand the demand of the standard of Christ on me, as one who names his name, I realize I have been weighed in the scales and found wanting. I've got no hope. That is why, when I look at Revelation 20 and the great white throne judgment, where the books are all opened, every single person whose life is revealed there, is cast into the Lake of Fire except for one group of people, those whose names are written in the Book of Life.

That is my only hope. My only hope is written in the Book of Life. And if my name is in the Book of Life, then I know this: Christ died for my sins according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3).

Look how Paul puts it in verse nine:

"And be found in him not having my own righteousness."

What is wrong with my own righteousness?

Well, it is like this robe. My parents bought this robe for me 40 years ago, and if you look carefully, if I were to not wear a black shirt underneath, you would see there are moth holes in the back. And it is frayed. Esther and Burley pointed it out one day; they said: "Look at that thing, it needs repairs." But the moth holes are worse. It is frayed. It is riddled with faults. The moths have eaten the back out. That is the trouble with my righteousness. It is flawed. It is riddled with failure. It is riddled with selfishness and sin.

But, you know, Paul knew he was going to heaven. Why?

Because he knew he had an alien righteousness; he had the righteousness of somebody else put to his account. Verse nine: "Be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which was from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith."

He goes on. He talks about the Christian life. In verses 12 and 13 he said: You know, I look at my life as a believer, and I am babe.

You mean the apostle Paul viewed himself as a babe? Yes. He viewed himself as a novice. He recognized that he was coming short. He recognized, in spite of all of the progress of grace, he still didn't measure up: "I haven't achieved it yet."

Now, I want you to see something. What is it that makes you a Christian—if you are a Christian? It is knowing Christ. That is as simple as I can put it. It is knowing Christ.

Do you know Christ? Well, if you know Christ, you also know some things about yourself. You know, you don't measure up. You know that you are not good enough to earn your way to heaven, and you will never be good enough to earn your way to heaven.

And you know something else: Christ was good enough in your place, and he died in your place. And so you are right with God, not based on what you have done or promised to do, but what Christ has done for you.

Now, I want us to look at the Crusades for a moment in light of that, because I think it is pretty profound. One of the great authorities on Islam in the Western world is a retired professor from Princeton University named Bernard Lewis. Lewis made this statement:

'In speaking of the Christian world, we use two different words: "Christianity" and "Christendom,": the one denoting a religion, that is to say a system of belief and worship, the other a whole civilization that grew up under the aegis of that religion, but containing many elements not part of the religion, some even contrary to the religion. In speaking of Islam, we use the same word, "Islam," in both senses, and this gives rise to confusion, among Muslims and others.' (Lewis 2009, 4)

When Jesus was about to be executed by the cruelty of the Roman cross, he made a statement as his disciples pulled the sword to defend him. He said: "Don't you think that I could not at this point call on my Father, and he would send 12 legions of angels to rescue me?" (Matthew 26:53)

He said to Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world. Otherwise, my disciples would fight" (John 18:36).

In biblical Christianity, there is no place for physical coercion. In biblical Christianity, it is all “turn the other cheek” (Matthew 5:39). In biblical Christianity, it is all “forgive your enemies”(Matthew 6:14-15).

Now, a biblical Christian can be a soldier, and a biblical Christian can be elected to political office, and a biblical Christian can become a policeman. And in those roles, they may have to use or authorize deadly force.

But they are not waging war in the name of Christ. They are waging war or waging peace or defending the community by virtue of the office they have as an agent of the civil government.

What happens when you mix Christianity with the state as happened in the wake of Constantine’s edict of toleration, the Edict of Milan? What you end up with is a squirrely thing that is neither Christian nor biblical, but in reality substitutes something.

Look at this—I think that this is very, very striking—Mohammed promised—if you look at the Crusades in your handout—in the Quran, chapter 47, verse six: “Those who are slain in the Way of Allah... Soon will He... admit them to the Garden which He has announced for them”

Quran nine, verse 111: “Theirs (in return) is the garden (of Paradise): they fight in His cause, and slay and are slain... Then rejoice in the bargain which ye have concluded: that is the achievement supreme.”

Now, I want you to see something. Can we justify the Crusades at all?

Yes, I think we can. As a civil matter, I think we can talk about defending people who fought in the Crusades. However, the Crusades were not really fought as, for example, Charles Martel at the Battle of Tours in AD 722, when Islamic armies were stopped from advancing into France. That is one thing.

The Crusades were rooted in something else. The Crusades were rooted in the false idea that somehow or another, there is virtue in going to places where Jesus was born, where he walked, where he was crucified, where he was buried.



Now, let me ask you a question. Is there anything in the Word of God that, in any sense whatsoever, would imply that there is some kind of virtue, some kind of credit, some kind of shortening your sentence of punishment, some kind of getting into heaven easier, if you make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem?

Is there anything of that in the Bible? Of course, not.

How do you get to heaven? I have already said it. You get to heaven by repenting of your sins and casting yourself on God's mercy in Christ. And everybody—whether he is a Jew or a Muslim or an Atheist or a Baptist or a Methodist or a Presbyterian or a Catholic—everybody who repents of his sins and casts himself on God's mercy in Christ will be saved—without exception.

Now, I want you to see that in the beginning of the Crusades, near the end of the Council of Clermont, Pope Urban II gave a rousing sermon in which he promised:

“All who die by the way, whether by land or by sea or in battle against the pagans shall have immediate remission of sins. This I grant them though the power of God with which I am invested” (Bongars 1905, 517).

In order to launch the Crusades, the Bishop of Rome adopted Mohammed's plan of salvation, whether he knew it or not. That is what he did. In order to get people to engage in the Crusades, the Bishop of Rome adopted the Prophet Mohammed's plan of salvation. I challenge anybody to prove that wrong. That is historical fact. That is what Pope Urban II said when he launched the very first Crusade.

What did he do? He patterned the way of salvation after the way of Mohammed. He was very wrong. He prostituted the Church of Christ to a political end. He did. And he erected a false system of salvation in order to motivate people to fight and kill.

But here is the reality. While I may kill as a soldier of the United States or as a police officer—and we have had someone in our own congregation serving as a police officer within the past 12 months who had to use deadly force. And I went to see him that night, when I learned about it, and I assured him that he had done what he had to do. He had to take human life. It was essential; he had no choice.

While we may take human life by virtue of holding civil office as a policeman or a soldier, Christ has never called us to advance his kingdom by taking human life, but only by giving up our own lives.

And don't you see, then, that the Crusades are a blight on the name of Christ, and God did not bless the Crusades?

Indeed, if you read the great Christian historian of the 19th century, Philip Schaff, they did things like setting Jewish synagogues on fire and burning up the Jews inside (Schaff 1979, V:105).

The Crusades have nothing to do with Christianity. They conflate the gospel of Christ with a man made gospel. I am not saying that everything they did was wrong. But I am telling you that Christ hasn't called you to defend the Crusades and say: "Oh, we were better than the Muslims." You are a fool to say that, because the Crusaders did some dreadful things.

So I am saying that our President was correct, that people have hijacked the Christian message, hijacked the teachings of the Prince of Peace, and done great evil in the name of Christ. And the Crusades are an example—not that they were all evil, and not that the Crusaders were any worse than Saladin—whose name, curiously, means "The righteousness of the faith" —and, by the way, he was from Saddam Hussein's home town, Tikrit.

I am not saying that the Crusaders were worse or better than the Saracens. I am simply saying Christ hasn't called me to defend what people have done in the name of Christ.

"I don't preach myself. I preach Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:5).

Christ is impeccable. He is without sin. He is without fault. He is without flaw (2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15). But people who have named his name have done terrible things.

The President also mentioned lynching. That wasn't something in the distant past. That happened in my lifetime. Have you ever heard of Emmett Till? I was alive when Emmet Till was murdered. Lynchings occurred in Alexandria in the lifetime of people who are still alive now. You say: "Well,

they weren't done in the name of Christ." Of course, they were done in the name of Christ.

So the President is right, and I agree with the President on this 100 percent.

But—and this is gigantic—he left out the thing that is the key issue—but so did George Bush.

Let's look at the foundation of Islam, and let's look at the foundation of Christianity, and there is no comparison.

Christ is the eternal Son of the eternal God. He never sinned. He loved his enemies. His dying words on the cross are: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). He died and rose again for you.

Mohammed, on the other hand, was a man who was full of the spirit of vengeance and revenge. Justice was not swift and sure; **vengeance** was swift and sure. Anybody who crossed him, or who in any way he perceived as insulting him, was cut down.

And then think of that poor Jewish woman. Her husband has been murdered, and the same day Mohammed sleeps with her. What do you call someone who does that?

So I am saying to you that the missing thing that you don't get from Republicans or Democrats, and that you don't get from the news media is this:

Look at Christ Jesus and look at Mohammed, and there is a world of difference.

And I implore you to turn to Christ—my Christ, my Savior loves you. He left the glory of heaven for you because he loved you, because he put your needs and welfare above his own. He left the glory of heaven that you would never taste the fires of hell.

He did everything that you need. Won't you come to him?

And, Dear Ones, if you are a Christian, don't get caught up in the polarizing, demonic divisions of modern America, with political parties and others who

are beating dead horses for their own purposes, trying to fan the flames of hatred and division in our nation.

Reach out in love. Don't defend what other people have done in the name of Christ. Defend Christ. Tell people who Jesus is.

Cause people to look at the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God. Christ and Christ alone is worthy of your worship. And without Christ, if you are a Baptist, you are going to hell—if you are a Presbyterian, you are going to hell—if you are a Catholic, you are going to hell—if you are a Muslim, you are going to hell.

Your only hope and my only hope is Jesus Christ. You are not good enough to go to heaven, but Christ was good enough in your place. He died for your sins. That is all I have to commend to you.

Christ is my only message. Christ is my only hope, not Western Civilization, not the United States, not the Crusaders, not the lynch mobs, Christ.

Look to him. I commend him to you.

I am a flawed man—as every single person here is, as all of our characters in history, from George Washington to Abraham Lincoln—all had flaws. There is no hope for any man or any woman in history, but Jesus Christ and him crucified. And no matter what you have done, he will receive you.

### **May we pray?**

Lord, we live in a world of lies and misrepresentation. We live in a world where Presidents tell us the truth, but leave out the most critical truth. We live in a world where our news media, not only leaves out the critical truth, but often spins yarns as we have seen this week (with Brian Williams).

Lord, where shall we look? Your Word alone is truth. Your Word alone is reliable. But grant us, Oh God, as we take that Word, defend that Word, proclaim that Word, never to do so with a view to our own self-justification and our own righteousness, but only with the alien righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, our only hope in life and death.

For Jesus' sake.

If you are here today and you are not sure that you know the Lord Jesus Christ, I would love to share with you. Remember, again. Christians are no better than Muslims, but Christ is the eternal Son of God, without fault, without blemish, and Mohammed was a very flawed and, at times, a very vengeful, lustful man. Come to Jesus.

Bob/Robert Benn Vincent, Sr.

## THE HANDOUT DISTRIBUTED WITH THE SERMON

### The Personality of the Prophet

As one reads through the Quran and Hadith, he is struck by the Prophet Muhammad's radically different personality. Muhammad came to have a particular hatred for those who had been blessed with so many prophets down through the ages and who refused to accept his being the ultimate prophet of God:

“Allah's Messenger said, ‘The Hour will not be established until you fight against the Jews, and the stone behind which a Jew will be hiding will say, ‘O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, so kill him’” (Al-Bukhari 1997, 4:113).

Muhammad seemed to revel in revenge. This is recorded throughout the pages of the Quran and the Hadith. Particularly troubling is the account of his slaughter of the Jewish, Banu Qurayzah tribe of Medina. Suspecting them of being in collusion with his enemies in Mecca, Muhammad delivered them to be judged:

“The Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him, sat with his Companions and they were brought in small groups. Their heads were struck off. They were between six hundred and seven hundred in number” (Ibn Sa'd 1993, 286).

Ibn Sa'd adds that Muhammad took a Jewish woman whose husband had just been killed as part of his spoils: “The Apostle of Allah, may Allah bless him, chose Rayhanah Bint 'Amr for himself and ordered the booty to be collected. One-fifth portion of the goods and captives were separated and the remainder was sold to the highest bidder” (*Ibid.*).

It should be noted that this genocidal massacre was the direct result of the same spirit who first told Muhammad to recite in the cave outside Mecca:

‘When the Prophet returned from (the battle of) Al-Khandaq (i.e., the Trench) and laid down his arms and took a bath, (angel) Jibril (Gabriel) came and said (to the Prophet), You have laid down your arms? By Allah, we angels have not laid them down yet. So set out for them.’ The Prophet said, “Where to go?” Gabriel said, “Towards this side,” pointing towards Banu Quraiza. So the Prophet went out towards them.’ (Al-Bukhari 1997, 5:269)

Muhammad had little respect even for members of his own family when it came to satisfying his sexual desires. Here is a revelation given by Allah to the Prophet Muhammad regarding his daughter-in-law, Zaynab bint Jahsh:

“Behold! Thou didst say to one who had received the grace of Allah and thy favour: “Retain thou (in wedlock) thy wife, and fear Allah.” But thou didst hide in thy heart that which Allah was about to make manifest: thou didst fear the people, but it is more fitting that thou shouldst fear Allah. Then when Zaid had dissolved (his marriage) with her, with the necessary (formality), We joined her in marriage to thee: in order that (in future) there may be no difficulty to the Believers in (the matter of) marriage with the wives of their adopted sons, when the latter have dissolved with the necessary (formality) (their marriage) with them. And Allah’s command must be fulfilled. There can be no difficulty to the Prophet in what Allah has indicated to him as a duty. It was the practice (approved) of Allah amongst those of old that have passed away. And the command of Allah is a decree determined.” (Quran 33:37-38)

If one examines these two verses from Sura 33, several things become apparent.

- (1) The first is that Zaynab is the Prophet Muhammad’s daughter-in-law, married to his legally adopted son, Zayd.
- (2) Secondly, at the time of these events, other people were scandalized by the action of the Prophet Muhammad because they saw such a marriage as incestuous.
- (3) Thirdly, fear of their reaction caused the Prophet Muhammad to delay doing what he wanted to do.
- (4) Fourthly, in a profound example of *deus ex machina*, the eternally written Quran provided the Prophet Muhammad with the solution: his son Zayd must divorce his wife, and Muhammad is ordered to marry her.

## **The Crusades**

Near the end of the Council of Clermont, Urban II gave a rousing sermon in which he promised: “All who die by the way, whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission of sins. This I grant them through the power of God with which I am invested” (Bongars 1905, 517).

How strikingly similar are Urban’s words with those of the Quran:

“Those who are slain in the Way of Allah... Soon will He... admit them to the Garden which He has announced for them” (Quran 47:6).

“Theirs (in return) is the garden (of Paradise): they fight in His cause, and slay and are slain... Then rejoice in the bargain which ye have concluded: that is the achievement supreme” (Quran 9:111).

“And know that out of all the booty that ye may acquire (in war), a fifth share is assigned to Allah—and to the Apostle, and to near relatives, orphans, the needy, and the wayfarer—if ye do believe in Allah and in the revelation We sent down to Our servant on the Day of Testing—the Day of the meeting of the two forces. For Allah hath power over all things.” (Quran 8:41)

Christian historian, Philip Schaff, wrote of the First Crusade:

‘The scenes of carnage which followed belong to the many dark pages of Jerusalem’s history and showed how, in the quality of mercy, the crusading knight was far below the ideal of Christian perfection. The streets were choked with the bodies of the slain. **The Jews were burnt with their synagogues.** The greatest slaughter was in the temple enclosure. With an exaggeration which can hardly be credited, but without a twinge of regret or a syllable of excuse, it is related that the blood of the massacred in the temple area reached to the very knees and bridles of the horses. “Such a slaughter of the pagans had never been seen or heard of. The number none but God knew.”

‘Penitential devotions followed easily upon the gory butchery of the sword. Headed by Godfrey, clad in a suit of white linen, the Crusaders proceeded to the church of the Holy Sepulcher and offered up prayers and thanksgivings. William of Tyre relates that Adhemar and others, who had fallen by the way, were seen showing the path to the holy places. The devotions over, the work of massacre was renewed. Neither the tears of women, nor the cries of children, nor the protests of Tancred, who for the honor of chivalry was concerned to save three hundred, to whom he had promised protection—none of these availed to soften the ferocity of the conquerors.’

‘The religion of the Middle Ages combined self-denying asceticism with heartless cruelty to infidels, Jews, and heretics. “They cut down with the sword,” said William of Tyre, “every one whom they found in Jerusalem, and spared no one. The victors were covered with blood from head to foot.” In the next breath, speaking of the devotion of the Crusaders, the archbishop adds, “It was a most affecting sight which filled the heart with holy joy to see the people tread the holy places in the fervor of an excellent devotion.” The Crusaders had won the tomb of the Saviour and gazed upon a fragment



of the true cross, which some of the inhabitants were fortunate enough to have kept concealed during the siege.’ (Schaff 1979, V:105)

### **IS/ISIL/ISIS**

IS/ISIL/ISIS is an authentic attempt to follow the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad as they are revealed in the Quran and the Hadith.

IS/ISIL/ISIS holds to the same understanding of Islam as does the leadership of Saudi Arabia. The fundamental difference in the two is that IS/ISIL/ISIS is in the House of War (دارال حرب Dar al-Harb), while Saudi Arabia is in the House of Peace (دارال إسلام Dar as-Salam/Dar al-Islam). Shiite Islam is less radical than both, but it, too, is an authentic attempt to follow the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.

## DOCUMENTATION

- Al Bukhari, Imam Muhammad bin Ismail bin Al Mughirah. 1997. *The English translation of Sahih al Bukhari with the Arabic text*, Vol. 1-9. Translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Darussalam Publishers and Distributors.
- Bongars, Gesta Dei per Francos. 1905. *A Source Book for Medieval History*. Translated by Oliver J. Thatcher. Editor Edgar Holmes McNeal. New York: Scribners.
- Ibn Sa'd. 1993. *Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir*, vol. 2. Translated by S. Moinul Haq and H. K. Ghazanfar, in "Excerpts from the Sira of Ibn Sa'd," ed. Andrew G. Bostom 2008. *The legacy of Islamic anti-Semitism*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.
- Lewis, Bernard and Buntzie Ellis Churchill. 2009. *Islam: The religion and the people*. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Wharton School Publishing)
- Obama, Barack H. 2015, February 5. "Remarks by the President at National Prayer Breakfast," *The White House*. Retrieved February 8, 2015, from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/02/05/remarks-president-national-prayer-breakfast>
- Schaff, Philip and David Schley Schaff. 1910. *The Middle Ages: From Gregory VII., 1049, to Boniface VIII., 1294*, of *The History of the Christian Church*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.