DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Video: The Call of Islam: Christian Reformed World Missions’ Ministry among Muslims
Length: short version – 4:19; long version – 15:41

A. From the Video

1. How many Muslims are there in the world? What portion of the global population is made up of Muslims?
   **Summary:** There are over 1.5 billion Muslims in the world. That is approximately 20% of the global population of around 7 billion people. Christians make up about 33% of the global population or around 2.3 billion people.¹

2. Where are the highest concentrations of Muslims found?
   **Summary:** The highest concentrations of Muslims are found in Indonesia, Southern Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Muslims make up the majority of the populations of almost 50 different countries. The top 10 countries with the largest populations of Muslims include: Indonesia, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Egypt, Nigeria, Iran, Turkey, Algeria, and Morocco.²

3. What populations of Muslims are found in Canada and the United States? Are these growing?
   **Summary:** There are about 1 million Muslims in Canada and 5 million Muslims in the U.S. In Canada that is approximately 3% of a population of 34 million.³ In the U.S. Muslims make up approximately 1.6% of a population of 313 million.⁴ It should be noted that statistical data on religious adherents varies widely. Populations of Muslims are expected to triple in Canada and double in the U.S. over the next 20 years.⁵

4. What might the video mean by saying “Muslims are our neighbors?”
   **Summary:** Among other things, saying “Muslims are our neighbors” could mean the following:
   a. Many communities in Canada and the United States are ethnically, culturally and religiously diverse. Others may be growing in diversity. This means that Christians, Muslims, and adherents of other religions may live together in the same neighborhoods. They may work together, go to school together, eat together in restaurants, shop together, and interact on a daily basis with one another in a variety of ways.
   b. Christians should love Muslims (and others) as neighbors. In Matthew 22:37-40 Jesus says the first and second greatest commandments are to love God above all and to love your neighbor as yourself. In Luke 10:25-37 Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan to describe our relationship with our neighbor.

5. What are some ways Christians can love Muslims as neighbors?
   **Summary:** Christians can love Muslims as neighbors in a variety of ways.
   a. Desire and seek out the good of Muslim neighbors.
   b. Build neighborly relationships with Muslims.
   c. Help your neighbor when in need and accept help from your neighbor.
   d. Work together on neighborhood improvement projects.
e. Refrain from stereotyping Muslims in negative or unfair ways.

f. Refrain from discriminating against Muslims.

g. Build relationships of trust and share the gospel in appropriate ways.

6. **How do Muslims impact communities in Canada and the United States?**

   **Summary:**
   
   a. As a result of immigration, births and conversions, increasing numbers of Muslims are living in neighborhoods all across Canada and the United States. People of different faiths come into contact with one another and impact one another on a daily basis.
   
   b. People coming from diverse cultural backgrounds can have a positive impact on communities in Canada and the United States with the enrichment of cultural diversity, skills, and knowledge.
   
   c. On September 11, 2001 al-Qaeda, a group of radical Muslims under the leadership of Osama bin Laden, attacked sites in the United States. This event made people more aware of Islam and the impact of Muslims on the U.S. and Canada.
   
   d. Although the impact of Muslims can be recognized in a variety of ways, stereotyping Muslims would be misleading. While bin Laden issued a fatwa or legal pronouncement declaring war against the United States in the name of Islam, he represented only a small minority of Muslims and does not speak for Islam as a whole. There is a wide variety of opinions and behaviors among Muslims just as there is among Christians and other religious groups. Relating to people as individuals rather than groups is generally more productive and loving.  

   6. Some Islamic regulations and behaviors may impact communities in various places. A few of these might include the following:

   1) Prayer times and locations in workplaces and schools.
   
   2) Muslim call to prayer from loudspeakers.
   
   3) Halal (lawful) food in schools.
   
   4) Wearing of the burqa (women’s outer garment with head covering and veil) in schools, airport security, and other areas.
   
   5) Polygamous marriages.

7. **Where and how is Christian Reformed World Missions involved in international ministry among Muslims?**

   **Summary:** World Missions is reaching out to Muslims in more than seven countries across Africa and Asia. Staff is involved in building relationships of trust, radio broadcasts, literature distribution, prison ministry, leadership training, mentoring, and more.

8. **What is the Salaam Project and what are its goals?**

   **Summary:** The Salaam Project is a multi-agency ministry of the Christian Reformed Church in North America with a two-fold purpose. First, to equip Christian Reformed Church members to better understand Islam and to provide the tools needed to reach out to Muslims in their own communities. And second, to increase the Christian Reformed Church’s ministry among Muslims worldwide.

9. **What are some misconceptions Christians might have about Muslims and that Muslims might have about Christians?**

   **Summary:**
   
   a. Some Christians might believe that all Muslims are terrorists when in actuality only a
small minority is involved in terrorist activities.

b. Some Muslims might believe that all Christians are immoral because of the movies and television shows produced in the United States. Some might believe that all Christians worship three gods – God, Jesus, and Mary – and that God had physical relations with Mary to bear a son.

c. Both Christians and Muslims might try to stereotype all people of a religion and attribute the teachings and behavior of some individuals or smaller groups to the religion as a whole.

10. **Can ordinary Christians without advanced training in Islam relate to and share the gospel with Muslims in the communities they share together? What can they do?**

**Summary:** Ordinary Christians without advanced training in Islam or methods of evangelism can relate to Muslims and share the gospel with them.

a. They can love their Muslim neighbors and develop ordinary neighborly relationships with them as mentioned in the summary of question 5 above.

b. They can be proactive in developing relationships with their Muslim neighbors.

c. Instead of arguing, they can share their testimony and how Christ impacts their daily lives.

d. They can learn about Islam from their neighbors, books, videos, the Internet, etc. Some helpful resources are listed on the World Missions website. 

**B. Digging Deeper**

Responses may vary for questions 1-4.

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7 Christian Reformed World Missions – www.crwm.org/muslimministry

Available on our website at www.crwm.org/meet.