

Establishing the Church in the Midst of Islam: A Flexible Contextual Approach

Kurt Nelson

In 1998, *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* published an article by John Travis (a pseudonym) in which he described six types of Christ-centered contextualizations for church planting within the Muslim world.¹ His model, known as the C1-C6 spectrum, has since become a widely accepted tool used for delineating contextualization issues in the context of Islam.

However, much debate quickly ensued concerning these various models to be used within the Muslim milieu. Dialogue continues even up until now in attempts to defend specific ranges along Travis' spectrum as legitimate while attacking others, sometimes going as far as to call them syncretistic or, at worst, heretical. Who is right and who is wrong? Or does an answer even exist to that question at all?

Perhaps instead of dividing over such a broad spectrum intended merely to promote possible approaches and methodologies in reaching the lost in the Muslim world, we may rather recognize that church planting among such a diverse group of people requires a flexible contextual approach. In doing so, we can then legitimately examine and encompass all of the six types represented in Travis' spectrum when necessary. And when not necessary, we can graciously agree to disagree.

All Things to All Muslims: A Flexible Solution to Contextualization

Radical diversity within Islam necessitates a variety of strategic approaches to evangelism and church planting among Muslims. A "one size fits all"

approach would be irresponsible, thus leaving us open to the charge of being poor stewards of the task of making disciples of all nations. Jesus, as our primary example, demonstrated divine creativity and flexibility in His witness to individuals. The Apostle Paul likewise verbalized the importance of utilizing a flexible approach in his witness to non-Christians in I Corinthians 9:19-22 (NIV):

Though I am free and belong to no man,

Radical diversity in Islam necessitates a variety of strategic approaches to evangelism and church planting among Muslims.

I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.

Modifying our approach to Christian ministry with the goal of greater cultural relevance and effectiveness has been labeled, since the 1970s, as "contextualization." Darrell Whiteman describes three functions of contextualization in his definition of the term, "Contextualization attempts to communicate the Gospel in word and deed and to estab-

lish the church in ways that make sense to people within their local cultural context, presenting Christianity in such a way that it meets people's deepest needs and penetrates their worldview, thus allowing them to follow Christ and remain within their own culture."²

The most commonly utilized model for contextualization of church planting in Muslim contexts is Travis' C1-C6 spectrum. Travis affirms that flexible and creative missiological strategies are required in ministry to Muslims, stating

that, "The diversity means that myriad approaches are needed to successfully share the gospel and plant Christ-centered communities among the world's one billion followers of Islam."³

Jim Leffel adapted the six models of contextualization related to a church planting strategy in the Muslim context into the chart shown on page 3:⁴

C1 Model: Traditional church using non-indigenous language. Christian churches in Muslim countries that exist as islands, removed from the culture. Christians exist as an ethnic/religious minority.

C2 Model: Traditional church using indigenous language. Church uses indigenous language, but in all its cultural forms is far removed from the broader Islamic culture.

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C3 Model: Contextualized Christ-centered communities using Muslim's language and non-religiously indigenous cultural forms. Style of worship, dress, etc. are loosely from the indigenous culture. Local rituals and traditions, if used, are purged of religious elements. May meet in a church or more religiously neutral location. Majority of congregation is of Muslim background and call themselves Christians.

C4 Model: Contextualized Christ-centered communities using Muslim's language and biblically permissible cultural and Islamic forms. Similar to C3 except believers worship looks like Muslim worship, they keep the fast, avoid pork and alcohol, use Islamic terms and dress. Community is almost entirely of Muslim background. Though highly contextualized, believers are not seen as Muslims by the Muslim community. Believers call themselves "followers of Isa Al-Misah," Jesus the Messiah.

C5 Model: Christ-centered communities of "Messianic Muslims" who have accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior. Believers remain legally and socially within Islamic community. Aspects of Islam incompatible with the Bible are rejected or if possible, reinterpreted. Believers may remain active in the mosque. Unsaved Muslims may view C5 believers as deviant and may expel them from the Islamic community. If sufficient numbers permit, a C5 "Messianic mosque" may be established.

C6 Model: Small Christ-centered communities of secret/underground believers. Isolated by extreme hostility, usually individual believers but sometimes in small groups. Believers typically do not attempt to share their faith, others suffer imprisonment or martyrdom.

Of these six models, are some better than others, and are there any that are universally unacceptable? How do we respond to Travis' recent observation that, "Muslims are coming to faith in many different contexts worldwide all along the C1 - C6 spectrum,"⁵ and how to we best utilize this information?

The debate remains the most heated at the upper end of the spectrum, particularly focused upon the C5 and C6

models. Many argue that one or both of these contextualized extremes are overly syncretistic and, therefore, completely invalid as viable options for responsible Christian missions.

I propose a more open-minded approach to Travis' spectrum and to his observations that God is indeed bringing Muslims to Himself along the entire continuum of church structures within the Islamic world. Allow me to briefly address the value, along with a few strengths and weaknesses, of each of the C1 - C6 models.

C1 churches: Traditional churches using non-indigenous language. C1 churches are linguistically and culturally isolated from the majority culture. Nevertheless, Muslim background believers (MBBs) educated in the West, or particularly attracted to Western culture, or disillusioned with Islam, may be drawn to a C1 community. Since this is the least contextualized church model, it; therefore, has the least ability to penetrate the surrounding society with a culturally relevant witness and worship style. C1's greatest strength may be its depiction of the heterogeneous nature of the membership of the Body of Christ. Although, arguably, it remains culturally isolated.

C2 churches: Traditional churches using indigenous language. C2 churches have made one small step toward greater contextualization through the use of the local language. Though culturally isolated, the step toward indigenization is, nonetheless, positive. One aspect of culture is language and the C2 church will, because of this difference, attract more MBBs than the C1 church. Crossing the language barrier makes communication within the local community a possibility, and; therefore, one significant barrier to evangelism and inclusion in community has been eradicated.

Travis observes that, "the majority of churches located in the Muslim world today are C1 or C2" and that affirms the fact that believers in both of these types of communities "call themselves 'Christians.'"⁶

C3 churches: Contextualized Christ-centered communities using indigenous language and non-religiously indigenous cultural forms. C3 churches typically will have a majority

of MBBs. These fellowships are an additional step deeper into the surrounding culture and have removed another significant obstacle to indigenous forms of evangelism, fellowship and worship. Consequently, they will be less “foreign” and more attractive to the local Muslim community.

The main obstacles still remaining within a C3 community are their rejection of Islamic religious cultural forms and the fact that members of the community still refer to themselves as “Christians.” This may be the most common model of community in the more open, less hostile, or “nominal” Muslim contexts such as in Kazakhstan.

At this point on the spectrum, (from C4 - C6), believers in Jesus in these communities cease referring to themselves as “Christians.” This fact, alone, raises the charge of syncretism among some observers. But the originator of the C1 - C6 spectrum makes a valid observation as to why the label “Christian” (and inclusion in a community known as “Christians”) is indeed detrimental to the propagation of faith in Jesus:

In the Muslim context, the word ‘Christian’ is now largely devoid of its original spiritual meaning in Acts. It now connotes Western culture, war (the Crusades), colonialism and imperialism. While some Muslims may associate Christianity with the love and selfless living of Mother Teresa and relief organizations, most tend to focus on negative aspects of present day Western culture like immodest dress, sexual promiscuity, disrespect of elders, indulgence in alcohol, Hollywood violence, narcotics, and pornography. With such negative perceptions of the Church rooted in negative stereotypes of the West, it is little wonder that ‘joining Christianity’ is often seen by Muslims as betraying one’s family and community to join the heretical camp of their enemies.⁷

C4 communities: Contextualized Christ-centered communities using indigenous language and biblically permissible cultural forms. C4 communities are highly contextualized but still not to the extent that they are viewed as Muslims by the local Muslim community. The avoidance of culturally offensive stumbling blocks (alcohol, pork, inappropriate dress) and the embracing of Islamic cultural forms (fasting, terminology, dress, etc.) allow these Christ-centered communities a

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C6 Model: Small Christ-centered communities of secret/underground believers	Isolated by extreme hostility, usually individual believers but sometimes in small groups. Believers typically do not attempt to share their faith, others suffer imprisonment or martyrdom. ³⁴

much deeper penetration into the culture in terms of evangelism, fellowship and worship. Although some outsiders might be tempted to view these assemblies as syncretistic (since their worship appears Islamic in style and they do not refer to themselves as “Christians”) members of C4 communities are still not viewed as Muslims by the surrounding community.

Obviously, these assemblies have an even greater entrée into the possibilities for outreach and attraction of the community than the C1 - C3 models, but they are still viewed as non-Muslims and call themselves “followers of Isa the Messiah.” Noted Islamic missiologist, Phil Parshall, views the C4 model as the “high end” of contextualization with the caution that, “All within this sector [C1 - C4] is legitimate provided it is constantly cross-referenced and subordinated to biblical truth.”⁸

The C4 model is effective in moder-

ate Muslim contexts that are not outwardly hostile to non-Muslims and where being viewed as a non-Muslim follower of Jesus the Messiah is not offensive, nor a cause for ostracism or persecution. Rick Love observes multiple strengths in the use of the C4 model among Muslims:

We need to exploit these built-in theological bridges by using a C4 approach to church planting. A C4 approach is not only concerned about crossing bridges to communicate the gospel with Muslims. A C4 approach also wants to break down unnecessary barriers to the gospel. A C4 approach challenges Christians to reexamine their own cherished traditions and beliefs, neither do we want to baptize our own practices and perspectives as if they were all from God.⁹

C5 communities: Christ-centered communities of “Messianic Muslims” who have accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior. C5 communities are assemblies

of believers who refer to themselves as “Muslims who follow Jesus the Messiah.” If the boundary between C3 and C4 on the spectrum marks the cessation of believers calling themselves “Christians,” then it must be noted that the move from C4 to C5 marks the movement from “cultural Christianity” to “cultural Islam.” Despite some missiologists’ discomfort with the C5 model (largely due to the possibility of believers remaining active in the mosque), many missiologists still contend that C5 communities are a valid expression of the Body of Christ.

Within the C5 model, believers are viewed by outsiders as Muslims, refer to themselves as Muslims, and may be active in the mosque, or even establish a “Messianic mosque.” John Travis provides an extensive and helpful description of the conversion, process, community, relationships, and faith of the C5 believer that offers an invaluable perspective:

C5 believers are Muslims who have been drawn to faith in Christ by the Spirit of God, often through reading the Bible on their own, hearing a radio broadcast, receiving a dream or vision, experiencing a miraculous healing in the name of Isa, or seeing the loving, patient, incarnational witness of a believing friend ...most C5 believers remain acceptable members of the Muslim community by continuing to give alms, keep the fast, pray daily, wear local dress, and use their customary religious vocabulary and worship style. Affirmation of these acceptable Islamic forms not only allow MBBs to keep their place in the Muslim community, but they also build bridges for effective witness to their family and community.¹⁰

One charge levied against some advocates of a C5 model relate to the deceptive use of C5 by missionaries exclusively for the purpose of increased witness in the Muslim community. Even Travis, a cautious proponent of C5, warns that foreign missionaries should not join C5 communities in order to reach Muslims. It is noteworthy, though, that Travis is not opposed to MBBs joining a C5 community for the purpose of witness. More recently, he affirms that, “Some Muslims who receive Christ as Savior deliberately choose a C5 expression of faith, not for their own sake... but for the sake of the lost who would be far less likely to receive truth from outsiders (i.e., ‘Christians’).”¹¹

Thus evangelistic penetration, when practiced by MBBs (but not by expatriate missionaries) in a C5 community, is a legitimate motive and expression of the value of the C5 model. The obvious and greatest weakness of C5 is the increased danger of syncretism. Travis offers a comprehensive list of seven excellent “guidelines for avoiding syncretism in a C5 movement” and then comments on the tensions inherent in C5’s strengths and weaknesses:

A follower of Jesus cannot affirm all that is commonly taught about the Qur’an and Muhammad. Certain aspects of the role of Muhammad and the Qur’an must be reinterpreted. This will perhaps be the most challenging task of C5...¹²

The C5 approach has worked well, despite its challenges, in more hostile parts of the world. Leffel has observed its success in Central Asia where its utilization has helped to avoid “the problem of converts being rejected by their families and communities, keeping them both safe (at least so far) and able to carry on an evangelistic witness.”¹³

Yet even Travis, Leffel, and others caution that C5 may not be a permanent solution to establishing Biblical community in the context of Islam. Leffel urges us to consider that, “a conscious, deliberate goal needs to exist in the mind of the Christian worker to move the believer in Isa from a substantially syncretistic faith to a C4 faith. All Christian workers should agree that C5 contextualization is not the goal for discipleship and church planting.”¹⁴ Rather, it is a process toward the goal.

C6 communities: Small Christ-centered communities of secret/underground believers. C6 communities are clearly the most at risk of being syncretistic. Unlike the C5 model, C6 communities do not have the redeeming quality of evangelistic outreach since one criteria for categorization is that most C6 believers do not share their faith. These communities exist in the context of extreme hostility and violence within their immediate culture. This is often reinforced by government-sanctioned persecution under *Sharia* law. Does C6 then, with the loss of witness and extreme risk of syncretism, have a legitimate role as a form of Christian community within the context of Islam? The

loss of witness will ultimately result in a lack of church growth and reproduction. David Hesselgrave affirms the necessity of maintaining witness in the local assembly:

Witness must come from within the churches as a part of their ongoing outreach. In other words, research seems to indicate that if believers in the churches are not revived and spiritually alive to their ongoing responsibility in the world, churches will not grow and multiply as they did in the New Testament era.¹⁵

C6 naturally emerges where witness to Jesus (whether personal or impersonal, through dreams, visions, Scripture, recordings, etc.) and conversion occurs in the most hostile of Islamic environments. However, C6 must be viewed as a less than ideal and merely temporarily acceptable form of Christian community. As Jim Leffel notes:

C6 is more of a survival strategy than a contextualization model. These believers are forced to choose between rejection from the community or martyrdom and complete anonymity. While it may be best in the short term for a convert to remain in a C6 position, it is certainly no long term plan. Building an indigenous church or igniting an indigenous people movement is virtually impossible under these conditions. This strategy may be necessary in some countries where conversion to biblical faith is illegal and an underground church is still in the making.¹⁶

C6, therefore, is a model whose existence has less to do with our acknowledgment or approval of it as it does with God’s instigation and formation of His work within it.

There remains much to be learned and more to be said about the best ways in which to contextualize the gospel and the presence of legitimate Christian community in the variegated Islamic world. I propose that we unite in remaining open to the Holy Spirit to work through a variety of contextualization strategies to reach the entire Islamic world while defending the purity of both the gospel and of local expressions of Christ-centered community. Similarly, we must scrutinize our own cultural prejudices in light of God’s Word and teaching ministry of His Holy Spirit.

What Do We Do Now?

So why all of these concerns about contextualization anyhow? The eternal salvation of 1.2 billion Muslims waits

Continued on page 7

X + Gospel = World Evangelization

What Is the Missing Component in Reaching the World for Jesus?

Amy Karen Downey

As a trembling non-algebraic thinker, this writer was terrified at even the thought of College Algebra. However, the professor stated he would give credit, up to the point of an error, to students who followed all the problem-solving steps.

A valuable lesson was imparted by Mr. Teltschik—never skip a step in finding the component for it may make a difference between an “A” and a “C.” However, many missionary endeavors and agencies are “skipping” the decisive component, the X factor in the world evangelization equation, found in Romans 1:16—“to the Jew first.” This statement can be affirmed when one considers that the Jewish people, the ethnic descendants of Jesus, are listed as an unreached people group by various missiological studies.¹ This article, therefore, seeks to accomplish two goals: first, to remind the mission world of “to the Jew first”; and second, to illustrate that world evangelization is not possible if the Gospel message is not focused upon the people to whom it was first intended.

“To the Jew First”

The struggle to voice the preeminent component of “to the Jew first” has existed since this author first presented the case at a meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in 2001.²

For even in a bastion of evangelical scholarship such as an ETS meeting or in evangelical churches/seminaries across America, the reality of the “firstness” of Jewish evangelism is often overwhelmed by the cacophony of voices that either decry or suppress the need for Jewish evangelism. R. Kendall Soulen in *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* effectively negated the error of supersessionism but fell prey to the ambivalence of dual covenantalism.³ The pastor of Crescent Hills Baptist in Louisville, Kentucky, (once home to 20th century Jewish evangelist Jacob Gartenhaus) remarked to a 1999 forum on Baptist/Jewish relations, “I certainly don’t believe that any one tradition has an exclusive corner on God. I

would never limit God’s salvation to those who share my own perspective or my own understanding.”⁴ Controversial but influential televangelist John Hagee preaches to a worldwide audience that Jewish people are not in need of Jesus because He never claimed to be their Messiah.⁵

These representative examples of a trend against Jewish evangelism for the mission-minded “church” is contrary to

Many missionary endeavors and agencies are “skipping” the decisive X factor in the world evangelization equation.

the Scriptural evidence of “to the Jew first.” James Leo Garrett, Jr., noted the primary role of Jewish evangelism for Paul, the missionary to the Gentiles, who went first to his own people and only upon or after rejection did he extend the Gospel to the non-Jewish population.⁶ In fact, Garrett’s observation is validated by the textual clues found in Acts 9:20-22; 13:13-52; 14:1-5; 18:7-11; and 19:8-10.⁷ So why is the component of “to the Jew first” missing from the mission equation of so many dedicated and faithful mission-minded individuals? The answer lies in the two-fold answer of an inadequate theological understanding of Romans 1:16 and in the growing mindset of “Christian Utilitarianism.”

Inadequate Theological Understanding of Romans 1:16

Franklin Segler in a 1966 book review for the *Southwestern Journal of Theology* perhaps stated best the argument for a Romans 1:16 component to world evangelization when he wrote, “Ortho-

dox Christianity does not believe a Jew is lost because he is a Jew but because he rejects God’s fuller revelation in Jesus Christ.”⁸ The X factor component for world evangelization clearly states “to the Jew first”;⁹ however, the concept of “first” has been lost in a myriad of inaccurate interpretations and theological inconsistencies as it pertains to the Jewish world.

F. F. Bruce wrote that Romans 1:16-17 is the focal point of the Gospel because in these verses we find “the righteousness of God revealed”; however, Bruce himself is guilty, at least in this commentary, of covering the first part of verse 16 but omitting the X compo-

nent of “to the Jew first.”¹⁰ While omission is the *modus operandi* of Bruce in this commentary series, the concept of excluding the priority of the Jewish people from the world evangelization equation is something that can be traced back to the earliest of Church Fathers.¹¹ This negation of their priority continues with a Lutheran commentary arguing in 1905 that the time of Jewish priority has passed because of the original rejection of Messiah Jesus during His earthly ministry.¹² Variants of this 1905 position continues across the Christian spectrum from Karl Barth to Donald Grey Barnhouse¹³ with little attention paid to what Roy Harrisville sees as understanding the phrase as “not a matter of ‘being’ nice to Jews, but of acknowledging the ‘firstness’ of this enigmatic and empirically undefinable community as sign of the Godhead of God.”¹⁴

Growing Mindset of “Christian Utilitarianism”

Following a particularly frustrating day of seeking to bring awareness to the

urgency of Jewish missions, this article's author put a name to an attitude she often finds within American Christianity, "Christian Utilitarianism."¹⁵ The term was defined as the "establishing the basis for missions/outreach based upon the return of investment involved and not the biblical commands of priority" with "Jewish evangelism/missions often" coming "in dead last in the priority spectrum of missions/evangelism."¹⁶ Jacob Jocz provided the end result of such a Christian Utilitarianistic approach that excludes or suppresses the Jewish component of world missions—"We must, however, remember that if it [the church] has no Gospel for the Jews, it has no Gospel for the world."¹⁷ Jocz wrote those words over forty years ago but it is still a component in the world evangelization equation that is still at best skipped and at worst omitted.

Rediscovering the Missing Component in World Evangelization

The 19th century German theologian Franz Delitzsch summarized the importance of the X factor of Jewish evangelism for world evangelization when he wrote: "For the church to evangelize the world without thinking of the Jews, is like a bird trying to fly with one broken wing."¹⁸ Delitzsch of the 19th century and Jewish missionaries of the 21st century are not calling for the evangelization of the Jewish people at the expense of the rest of the world. Such an action or direction is completely contrary to the rest of the message of Romans 1:16, "and also to the Greek (Gentile)." However, the completion of the world evangelization equation is impossible without the Jewish X factor not only because of the component of Romans 1:16 but also because of the multi-layered promise of Romans 11:11-24. The command to make them [the Jewish people] jealous and the bountiful reward of their ultimate fulfillment told the Gentile Christians in Rome that if they wanted to experience the true abundance of God (esp. 11:11-12) that the component of Romans 1:16 must be realized. This undeniable truth is still true today.

This truth is not realized by simply following a three step process of loving, praying, and giving to Jewish-centered mission agencies.¹⁹ The realization of the first component of the world evangelization

equation is not a passive activity for churches and mission agencies. It requires an active movement that sees a need for a reaffirmation of the Pauline words "to the Jew first" and a commitment to do something about the salvation need of the Jewish people. Failure to return to the first step of the world evangelization equation is to be guilty of what Joseph Gudel describes as "[T]he quintessential form of anti-Semitism."²⁰

Endnotes

1. David Barrett, "Missiometrics 2007: Creating Your Own Analysis of Global Data," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* vol. 31, no. 1 (January 2007): 32. Barrett finds that there is a world Jewish population of approximately 15 million. Connecting Barrett's study to the data that finds that there are only 0.16% of Israeli Jews and 0.11% of Russian Jewish immigrants to Israel who are classified as evangelicals, it would be safe to surmise that the maximum number of Jewish believers in Jesus around the world would not extend to a great deal over 150,000 ("Joshua Project 2000: Unreached Peoples List," *International Journal of Frontier Missions* vol. 16, no. 2 [Summer 1999]: 102). The uncertainty of the exact number of Jewish believers in Jesus is limited by several factors: (1) Jewish population surveys completed by traditional Jewish sources do not count Messianic Jews in their census (United Jewish Communities, "National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01: Strength, Challenge and Diversity in the American Jewish Population," available from www.ujc.org/page.aspx?id=46185; Internet; accessed 26 March 2009); (2) the claim by those within traditional Judaism that one cannot maintain a Jewish identity and be a Christian (Asher Norman, *Twenty-Six Reasons Why Jews Don't Believe in Jesus* [Los Angeles: Black White and Read Publishing, 2007], xxii; Rabbi Bentzion Kravitz, *The Jewish Response to Missionaries: Counter-Missionary Handbook* [Los Angeles: Jews for Judaism, 2001], 18; Rick Halperin, *Choose Life: A Counter-Missionary Study Guide* [Atlanta: Torah Atlanta, 2002], 11-12; and Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *Messianic Judaism* [London: Cassell, 2000], 191); and (3) the variant numbers within Messianic Judaism due to the fact that numbers can be misconstrued by Gentile Christians who choose to identify themselves as Messianic (Cohn-Sherbok, 1 [lists 250,000 Messianic Jews]; Mickey Noah, "A Passion for Evangelizing Jews Drives NAMB Missionaries to Pennsylvania," available from www.namb.net/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=9qKILUOzEpH&b=227361&t=2893179; Internet; accessed 26 March 2009 (lists 100,000 Jewish believers in the United States)).

2. Amy Karen Downey, "Cultural Obstacles to Jewish Evangelism in Modern American Society," Presentation at the Evangelical Theolog-

ical Society Annual Meeting, Colorado Springs, Colo., November 14, 2001. Information and sources from the 2001 presentation are included in this article as well.

3. R. Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Fortress, 1996), 173. Soulen wrote: "Nothing in the Apostolic Witness remotely suggests the validity of a gentile-Christian mission to non-Christian Jews. Christians should not hide or minimize their faith in conversation with Jews. But the church, above all in its gentile portion, should cease organized mission efforts among the Jewish people."

4. Tim Ellsworth, "Baptist/Jewish Relations Forum Deals with Gospel's Exclusivity," available from www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?ID=14842; Internet, accessed 26 March 2009. Much like Crescent Hills Baptist has changed from a welcoming home for Jacob Gartenhaus, other religious organizations have changed as well. The Sisters of Zion which was once dedicated to "conversion" of the Jewish people is now focused on dialogue even at the expense of the Gospel. Mary C. Boys, "The Sisters of Zion: From a Conversational Stance to a Dialogical Way of Life," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 31:1-2 (Winter-Spring 1994): 27-48.

5. John Hagee, *In Defense of Israel* (Lake Mary, Fla.: Front Line, 2007), 134, 135-36, 137, 139, 140, 141, 143, 145; *Jerusalem Countdown: A Warning to the World* (Lake Mary, Fla.: Front Line, 2006), 157, 158, 163, 168, 174-175, 178. In *Jerusalem Countdown*, Hagee takes the argument in another extreme direction by stating that in essence because the Jewish people have survived the Holocaust and other attempts at extermination that they are already the remnant described in Romans 9-11.

6. James Leo Garrett, Jr., *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 493-494.

7. David J. Williams, *Acts, New International Biblical Commentary*, ed. W. Ward Gasque, no. 5 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1990), 174, 240-41; J. Barmby, *Romans, The Pulpit Commentary*, eds. H. D. M. Spence and Joseph Exell (London: Funk & Wagnall, n.d.), 8; James I. Cook, "The Christian Witness to the Jews. A Biblical Perspective for the Church Today," *Scottish Journal of Theology* Vol. 36 (1983): 146; and Garrett, 493-494. James D. G. Dunn disagrees with the philosophy of Garrett and others for he sees the synagogue strategy in Acts as Paul reaching out to the Gentile population who were interested in Judaism. The view of Dunn requires a hermeneutical stretch and eisegetical interpretation that this writer cannot fathom or affirm. James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8, Word Biblical Commentary*, NT ed. Ralph Martin, vol. 38A (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 40.

8. Franklin Segler, review of *Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism*, by Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, *Southwestern Journal of Theology* vol. IX, no. 1 (Fall 1966): 100.

9. Stan Guthrie, "Why Evangelize the Jews?," available from [6](http://www.christiani-</p>
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tytoday.com/ct/2008/march/31.76.html; Internet, accessed 25 March 2009.

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11. Robert Matthew Calhoun, "John Chrysostom on _____ in Rom. 1:17: A Reply to Charles L. Quarles, *Novum Testamentum* 48 no. 2 (2006): 134. Calhoun notes that Chrysostom believed "that Jews had the opportunity [writer's emphasis] to receive the gospel prior to the Gentiles" in which one could adequately surmise that for this early Church Father the time of Jewish salvation had passed.

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14. Roy A. Harrisville, *Romans*, Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1980), 29. See also James Edwards, *Romans*, *New International Biblical Commentary*, ed. W. Ward Gasque, no. 6 (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 41; and Wayne A. Brindle, "'To the Jew First': Rhetoric, Strategy, History, or Theology?," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 159 (April-June 2002): 223-27.

15. Amy Karen Downey, "Utilitarianism ... The Great Sin of American Christianity," available from <http://mysterysolvedwithmessiahjesus.wordpress.com/2008/08/04/utilitarianism-the-great-sin-of-american-christianity/>; Internet, accessed 24 March 2009. "Mystery Solved with Messiah Jesus" is the ministry blog of Tzedakah Ministries (www.tzedakahministries.org).

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18. David L. Larsen, *Jews, Gentiles, and the Church: A New Perspective on History and Prophecy* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Discovery House, 1995), 333; and A. E. Thompson, *A Century of Jewish Missions* (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, 1902), 276.

19. Bill BJORAKER, "Jewish Believers and World Evangelization "To the Jew First...": The Meaning of Jewish Priority in World Evangelism," *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 21:3 (Fall 2004): 113-14.

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Amy Karen Downey is director of Tzedakah Ministries which focuses on reaching the Jewish people through the enlisting and equipping of local churches and Christians and is the author of Paul's Relationship with the Jewish People: An Analysis of 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16 and Romans 9:1-5 (*Emanuel University Centre, 2007*). She is also professor and Program Director of General Studies at Arlington Baptist College, Arlington, Texas. ■

Continued from page 4

to be claimed while we, who know Christ, may not have the opportunity to participate in the joy of that claiming simply because we are too busy partaking in an ongoing verbal joust. Let us, rather, recommit to a creative, open and flexible contextual understanding and approach to winning the Islamic world with the gospel so that we may truly echo, in word and deed, the Apostle Paul. Paul, as our example, made it clear that he himself became "all things to all men so that by all possible means" he might save some (emphasis author's).

Endnotes

1. John Travis, "Must All Muslims Leave Islam to Follow Jesus?," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, 34 (October 1998): 407-408.

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9. Rick Love, *Muslims, Magic and the Kingdom of God: Church Planting among Folk Muslims* (Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey Library, 2000), 190.

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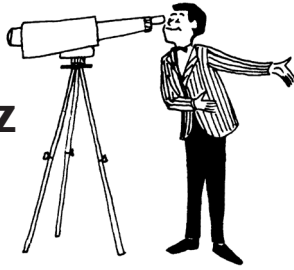
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Kurt Nelson serves as Executive Vice President of Field Ministries at East-West Ministries International (www.eastwest.org) and oversees ministry outreach in the 30 countries in which EWMI operates. ■

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