

Filling a big gap

WITNESSING TO WESTERN MUSLIMS

A worldview approach to sharing faith

By Richard Shumack

The Latimer Trust. 72 pages. £4.00

ISBN 978 1 906 327 002

Available from www.latimertrust.org

Richard Shumack has been involved in ministry among Muslim refugees in Melbourne for 12 years and is currently completing a PhD thesis in present-day Muslim philosophy.

Most books about Christian ministry among Muslims are either by missionaries writing from their mission experience or by people writing for an ignorant Christian audience. This important book fills a big gap in resources, as it is intended for Christians who need help to share faith with Western Muslims living in a more culturally-complex environment — especially Christians who find formulaic approaches to witnessing inadequate.

The first chapter, *Thinking*, analyses some of the vectors which contribute to people's worldviews. This section is quite profound and really does require reflection and thinking through, as the subject is more complex than might at first be imagined. It deals with how we 'understand' other people, and with belief, culture, and persuasion. This important groundwork is essential if we want reasons we give for our own faith to touch Muslim hearts.

Chapter 2, *Believing*, helpfully examines some things which only Christians believe and some things which only Muslims believe. The author then looks at things that

Muslims imagine Christians to hold in common with them, but actually do not, and other things they think Christians believe in contrast to themselves, yet which Christians actually do not believe.

Chapter 3, *Living*, investigates various 'dos and don'ts' and shows how complex this area really is and that there are hardly any universal rules. The most consistent thing is that men should associate with men and women with women, although even here there can be exceptions.

Chapter 4, *Talking*, looks at the Christian's speaking-style in this context. The main goal, of course, but which can get forgotten, is not to win a debate, but to point people to Christ. To do that, we must be ourselves and not try to present ourselves as something else.

Finally, the author points out that conversion is God's work, spiritual warfare is real, and that Muslims do come to Christian faith.

This is such a useful book that I am reluctant to highlight minor niggles. However, I do think that the proof-checking should have been more rigorous.

Overall, however, I would suggest that this book is essential reading for people concerned to share faith in the context denoted by this book's title. Superb!

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