

“[4:157] And their saying: Surely we have killed the Messiah, Isa son of Marium, the apostle of Allah; and they did not kill him nor did they crucify him, but it appeared to them so (like Isa) and most surely those who differ therein are only in a doubt about it; they have no knowledge respecting it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for sure. [4.158] Nay! Allah took him up to Himself; and Allah is Mighty, Wise.” (Sura 4.157-158)

While the Qur’an denies the divinity of Christ, and contradicts much of what is taught in the Bible about Him, it speaks rather highly of Him in numerous places. It teaches that He was born of a virgin named Mary (the only woman mentioned by name in the Qur’an) in these following words —

“[3:45] When the angels said: O Marium, surely Allah gives you good news with a Word from Him (of one) whose name is the Messiah, Isa son of Marium, worthy of regard in this world and the hereafter and of those who are made near (to Allah).[3.46] And he shall speak to the people when in the cradle and when of old age, and (he shall be) one of the good ones. [3.47] She said: My Lord! when shall there be a son (born) to me, and man has not touched me? He said: Even so, Allah creates what He pleases; when He has decreed a matter, He only says to it, Be, and it is.” (Sura 3.45-47)

So if any of us were to ever have an opportunity to share the Gospel with a Muslim, we should not be shy about starting the conversation by referring to Jesus (Isa), son of Mary (Marium) spoken of in their Qur’an. That obviously would be a *starting* point since it does speak of Jesus some 93 times — and with much respect in every case. That approach would be somewhat similar to the approach Paul used in his sermon on Mars Hill (KJV) — or Aeropagus, as it is called in other translations of the Bible.

“Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.” (Acts 17:22-23 KJV)

It’s unfortunate that people like Bill Maher have either so little knowledge of Christianity *or* so much hatred for it that they don’t understand that Christianity is a religion of love dedicated to *saving* souls from hell rather than a religion of hate that instructs its followers to kill those who do not believe the same as they do. It is *that very point* that so *dramatically* sets Christianity apart from Islam. It is also that very point that dramatically demonstrates that those who call themselves “Christians” and react with violence to various issues of our times, are confusing the Word of God with some other belief.

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Dennis and Sherri Owens — Cincinnati, Ohio
diligence@gorfsystems.com — <http://www.gorfsystems.com/diligence/>*



DILIGENCE

“We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.” — Hebrews 6:11

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Voices Against Religion

“Yes, we are a nation that is unenlightened because of religion. I do believe that. I think that religion stops people from thinking. I think it justifies crazies. I think flying planes into a building was a faith-based initiative. I think religion is a neurological disorder. ... I think the vote in Missouri [rejecting same-sex marriage] and a lot of other states is because people are religious. They don’t have to be evangelical, but they’re religious. They believe in religion, which as — I think it was Jesse Ventura who had that quote about religion is a crutch for weak-minded people who need strength in numbers.” — Bill Maher

In case you don’t know who Bill Maher is, he is the host of *Bill Maher’s Real Time* seen each week on HBO. Since *Real Time* was nominated for an Emmy this year we could probably assume that his views mirror many of those in America today. Mr. Maher made the above statement on February 15, 2005 during an appearance on MSNBC’s *Scarborough Country*. The *entire* transcript can be read at <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6980984/>

In the October 1st issue of *Diligence* we stated: “Since *all* religions are now considered by many to be of equal validity, it is consistent with that reasoning that they view beliefs like radical Islam and Bible believing fundamental Christianity as *similar radical sects* of more mainstream religions. While that couldn’t be further from the truth, *many* see no difference between those two beliefs since *both* teach there is only *one path* to God.”

According to Mr. Maher’s statement, it’s quite obvious that he (along with many others) places *all* religious beliefs in the same box and therefore see no difference whatsoever between radical Islam and Bible based Christianity. As far as he is concerned — one’s faith (or religion) — no matter what it is — motivates its believers to engage in violent acts such as flying planes into buildings. This error in judgement on his part is a *clear* demonstration of his ignorance as to how *very* different the teachings and practices of Christianity are from those of Islam.

While we surely don’t profess to be experts on the teachings of Islam — even on the surface, the *differences* are extremely *obvious*. Let’s take a look at some of those differences that are the most obvious.

The **first** difference between Islam and Christianity we'll discuss could be referred to as "the business" in which each of these beliefs are engaged. We're all familiar with the term "jihad." A jihad is a holy war waged by Muslims against infidels. So what is a "holy war"? The *American Heritage New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy* states: "In Islam, a holy way is a war ordained by God." What is an infidel? In Muslim use, it is defined as a person who does not accept the Islamic faith. So exactly what does the Qur'an instruct a good Muslim to do to infidels? Kill them! The Qur'an also teaches that soldiers who die in jihad go to heaven immediately.

Now, let's think about this for a minute. As Christians, we teach that one must *be* a Christian to go to heaven. Islam teaches that one must *be* an Islamist to go to heaven. But let's think about how very differently we go about the *practice* of those seemingly similar beliefs. If one believes that one must be a Muslim to go to heaven and Muslims are instructed to kill those who are *not* Muslim — then Muslims are in the business of sending non-Muslims to hell. Right? Christians on the other hand — through the sharing of the Gospel — attempt to provide individuals with the information they need in order to *choose* where they wish to spend eternity. Then those individuals with whom we share the Gospel have every right to *decide for themselves* whether they will choose heaven or hell. As Christians, we're greatly saddened when they choose hell because of rejecting the Gospel — but we have no desire nor religious instructions to speed up the process of sending them there. Quite the contrary! We *want* God to give them enough time on this earth to accept Him and thereby have an eternal home with Him in heaven. Christians *certainly* don't kill non-Christians for their unbelief. They instead, pray that the person will be given enough time on this earth to *become* a Christian.

"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.." (II Peter 3:9 NIV)

So the obvious difference here??? —

Christians are in the business of *rescuing* souls from hell.

Muslims are in the business of *sending* souls to hell right now.

Their Allah *is most certainly* different than our God.

A **second** difference between Islam and Christianity we want to discuss is Islamist methodology versus Christian methodology. Ephesians 6:12 states —

"For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms."

The Christian battle is a *spiritual* one while Islam's jihad is *physical*. This is obviously a *huge* difference since *this* difference is what motivated the Islamists

to fly the planes into the buildings in the name of their god. *Their* belief motivates them to engage in a *physical* war that encourages and commands acts of violence toward any person or country that is considered to be an infidel. In his book *The Truth War*, John MacArthur states: "Scripture is clear that physical force is not a legitimate tool for the advancement of the kingdom of God. ... This is not to suggest that the use of force is forbidden for individual Christians acting lawfully in self-defense or in defending their families against criminal or military aggression. Physical resistance in such cases is nowhere forbidden in the Bible. ... Scripture nowhere endorses any kind of absolute pacifism." [pg.29, 30] So yes, Christians have a war to fight but it is one of a spiritual nature — not physical. We are to fight for the souls of mankind and we are to use a *spiritual* sword to accomplish that command. Islamists are commanded by Allah in the Qur'an to use a *physical* sword and kill infidels. So the obvious difference here??? —

Muslims are fighting a *physical* way

Christians are fighting a *spiritual* war.

Their Allah *is most certainly* different than our God

The **third** difference between Islam and Christianity we're discussing is how the believers *react* to their faith.

"In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."
(Ephesians 6:16-17 NIV)

This verse refers to the Word of God as our "sword." It is up to each Christian to know and understand their "sword" well enough to be able to use it as his or her "weapon" when fighting the spiritual war and telling others of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So the way in which *Christians react* to the belief *they* hold is by having enough knowledge of the Word to *use* that *spiritual* sword when needed to convince others to accept Christ as their Savior. The way in which *Islamists react* to the belief *they* hold is by using their *physical* sword to kill those who do not believe in their god. So the obvious difference here??? —

Muslims *react* to their faith with the use of a physical sword

Christians *react* to their faith by using their spiritual sword.

Their Allah *is most certainly* different than our God.

There are of course *multiple* ways that Islam differs from Christianity other than those we have mentioned here. The most obvious difference is of course the use of the Qur'an by the Muslims rather than the Bible. Muslims believe the Qur'an is a revelation from God through the angel Gabriel to Muhammad. As we have already seen, the Qur'an teaches that opponents of Islam should be killed or persecuted. The Qur'an also denies that Christ is the Son of God. It further teaches that His death on the cross was only made to appear as such — as these words from the Qur'an state —