



ENGAGING OUR NEIGHBORS

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Libin Abraham 0:00

A few weeks ago, the McKinney City Council chamber was packed, and you know why it was packed. The council was considering a site plan for Islamic Center, mosque, and a community center. So over 100 people showed up to speak publicly. More than that were there, but over 100 people spoke over the course of five and a half hours or more. So if we go a little longer today, it's not going to be five and a half hours. Some spoke in support of the mosque, others spoke in strong opposition to this Islamic center being built. But at the end of the day, the city council unanimously voted to approve the site plan, explaining that it complied with the city's ordinances. But as you listen to the conversation that happened in McKinney that day, it was clear that this was more than just about a building being built. There were many deeper, bigger questions being asked by citizens. Questions like, "What's happening to our city and to our country, to our culture. What are the implications of religious liberty when we might vehemently disagree with the religion that surrounds us? How does Islamic belief and political thought conflict with the values of our country, and how should Christians respond when Islam is growing not somewhere over there, but right here in our own neighborhoods? Well, I have a feeling that McKinney is not going to be an isolated story or situation; that this conversation will continue. Here's a map that the Pew Research Center just put up about the growth of Islam in America. In the year 2000, there were 1,200 mosques, and in 2020, there were 2,800 mosques. In 2007, there were 2.4 million Muslim Americans, Americans who call themselves Muslims, and in 2026, five and a half million Muslims here in America. What about Texas? In 2010, there were 166 mosques identified across Texas, and by 2020, in just the distance of 10 years, there were 224. So a 35 percent increase. So as you see the realities in our own area and region, there's a few feelings you might have had because I've had some of them. So, I want to name it for us. First of all, we may feel a sense of cultural loss because America, across its 250th history, has been predominantly shaped by Christian values and Christian beliefs. So then, what happens when other world religions come and grow and multiply? Well, there's a little bit of a cultural loss, other values and systems of thinking that are introduced. And here's what I want to say to us: It's okay to have that feeling. Acknowledge it, because you might be thinking, "Man, this America is not the America I grew up in, and it's okay to acknowledge that, and even grieve it if you need to. However, we cannot let that sense of cultural loss determine our theology, or our missiology, our view of God, and our view of missions. So, cultural loss is a common feeling we may have. Second of all, we have concern or fear, legitimate concern or fear. What does the growing or the growth of Islamic communities and community centers and schools mean for our future, for our children? What does it mean for our culture and for our city? What happens when another religion grows in influence when sometimes it appears Christianity may be decreasing in its influence. Well, those questions are worth having, and conversations worth having. But here's what I want to remind us of: the church across 2000 years has never needed to be the cultural dominant religion for it to be impactful or faithful. In fact, you can actually argue that the church has been the healthiest and has most rapidly grown when believers in Jesus embrace their New Testament identity as exiles in a foreign place. The cultures never needed to be the cultural dominance in a society for it to be impactful. Think about the first century. In the first century, Christians did not have political power, they didn't have cultural power, they didn't have financial power, and yet they turned their world upside down. Why? Because they had spiritual power. They had a supernatural power, not from below, but from above, and the Spirit of God equipped the church and sent the church on mission to change their country and to change their cities.

Libin Abraham 4:51

So hear me: our confidence as the Church of Jesus has never been in having or being the cultural majority. Our confidence has always been in a risen Jesus, who has been and is and will build His church, no matter what religions and no matter what worldview surround it. That has been the confidence we have in a risen Jesus. So we may feel cultural loss, or concern, or

fear. But third of all, there is this conviction around religious liberty. Religious liberty. I want to read to you the first half of the First Amendment. It goes like this: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. So the First Amendment prevents the government from establishing a religion or discriminating against other religions, and it protects the free exercise of all religions. That's why a city cannot say Christians can build churches, but Muslims cannot build mosques. Religious liberty by nature has to apply to every religion, not just the ones we agree with. At the same time, there is a growing concern about what if a religious ideology has in it political beliefs, legal systems, that if applied to a nation or a government, would be in direct opposition to the laws of our constitution, because there is a real thing called political Islam. Otherwise, it's called Islamism, and Islamism envisions a city, a country, a government shaped only by the most traditional views of Islamic law, or known as Sharia law. And there are parts of Sharia law that are about private devotion to God. How often you fast and pray and give to the poor, and all of that is completely fine under religious liberty, but then there are political convictions and commitments within Sharia law that seek to purge an entire city of any principles that are not rooted in Islamic law, and those aspects of a political system found within the Sharia law. Hear me, are completely incompatible with the Constitution of the United States. They are, and there's a resource I put in your notes today of a great book called Sharia versus Constitution. Goes line by line of the incompatibility between the orthodox, the traditional view of political Islam, Sharia law versus the Constitution. So we find ourselves in an interesting place, don't we? On the one hand, we must defend every Muslim's right to practice, exercise their religion because the First Amendment affords us the right to do so, and we must protect the Constitution at the same time-the laws that govern a land for the well-being of all people, not just some people. That's where we find ourselves. So, what do we do with all of that? Come back next Sunday. I'll finish the sermon then. I was reading the first few paragraphs of my sermon to Stacy last night, and she's like, "My blood pressure is already going up. I want to give us three phrases that I hope will be the framework in our heart, in this conversation, in our mind as we think about how we engage with Muslim neighbors and this growing population of Muslims around us. First of all, we must love Muslims. We must love Muslims. Muslims, at the end of the day are not just an ideology; they are people. They're people made in God's image, men and women who carry the same image of God. Guess who loves Muslims? God. John 3:16 does not say, "For God so loved the Christians that He sent His Son. No, no, no. For God so loved the world, the world that would crucify him, the world that would reject him, the world who would say to Jesus, "I want nothing with you. That world, God so deeply loved that He would send Jesus. God loves Muslims and social Christians. Now it's helpful for us to understand: Muslims are not a monolith. Like there is not just one type of Muslims. There are multiple, at least three groups of Muslims out there today. First of all, there are cultural Muslims, and these are people who culturally are Muslims, but they don't really practice the religion. They don't study the Quran. They have no connection to the religion itself. But they are by culture Muslims, just like there are cultural Christians. Well, this is the faith I grew up in, and so if I've got to check a box, that's who I'm going to be.

Libin Abraham 9:44

Second of all, there are practicing Muslims, and these people are privately, deeply devoted to their faith. They really believe what they believe is that what they read and study in the Quran is true, that their traditions are real, and so they will spend their life in deep. Devotion to Allah, to the Quran. They're not interested in taking over. They don't. They want to be deeply woven into the fabric of American life while being privately devoted to their Muslim faith. And this actually represents the majority of Muslims, people who are practicing Muslims devoted to their God. But then there is a minority group who are radical Muslims or extreme Muslims, and this by far is the minority among Muslims. These are the group of people who will chant "Death to America" or "Death to Israel. These are the people who will want to see harm done to anyone who disagrees with their ideology or belief systems. These are those who want to purge the society of anything but Islam, and radical Islam is dangerous to any country. In fact, Muslims often fall prey to their own extremists. Case in point: Iran under the Ayatollah, and this minority group must be taken seriously, and they must be removed from any opportunity to do harm against a society or against a people. But this still is the minority group, though they do exist. You might wonder then, what do our neighbors across the street, literally right over there, across International Parkway, represent which of these groups do they belong? Well, right across the street is Kalam, and Kalam is a seminary. It's a community center, and it is a mosque. It's actually the largest Muslim seminary in the country, with over 600 active enrolled students, and these are students who were born and raised in America, who have professional jobs, but they come to study the Quran and to study Arabic, and then they're sent to be imams across the country. As I've had many conversations, a few conversations with the leaders at Kalam, what I've gathered is that they are not extremists; they are not radical. They seek peace and mercy. Now, I don't just say that because they told me that. Of course, they would say that to me. I say that because I've watched multiple videos of their founders and leaders speaking at Muslim conferences and speaking to Muslims, explicitly rejecting extremism, radicalism, and violence. At the same time, they are very convinced and deeply devoted to their faith. They have a thorough

discipleship plan. From babies who are growing up in those families, they're out of space over there, so they're expanding 20,000 square feet on the front end of the building, a space to help children memorize the Quran, children will literally take a break from school and spend a whole year memorizing the Quran. They've got a coffee shop to reach young people who are feeling loneliness and battling depression and anxiety as an on-ramp, as an entryway into their community. So there is the discipleship strategy that are intentional about what I've gathered, though. They're people of moderation, and not violence and radicalism. I say all of that to say, when you think about your neighbors, your coworkers, your classmates in school, when you think about doctors or teachers or engineers around you that are Muslims don't assume that all of them are extremists, because the vast majority of Muslims are not extremists. But actually, they want to raise their families just like you want to raise your families. They want to be woven into the American story. They want to make a life. Jesus explicitly calls us in the New Testament to do two things, to love our neighbor and to love our enemies. That's hard to do, isn't it? Yet, enemy love and neighbor love are foundations of the Christian gospel. So, our first framework, as we think about how do we engage in a growing, diverse population of religious around us, we love them. We love Muslims. But here's the second thing: we can love Muslims and reject Islam. We must love Muslims and reject Islam. Christianity and Islam are not simply two slightly different versions of the same religion.

Libin Abraham 14:18

They make fundamentally different claims about God, about salvation, about Jesus, about the cross, about how to have eternal life-fundamentally different religious systems-and we should actively reject any form of Islam that is extreme, that is violent, that seeks to purge a city or a people of any principles that are not rooted in traditional Islamic law. We should seek to reject any forms of political ideology that that dehumanizes human life or erodes the values of justice and freedom. Islamism as a political idea is dangerous to America and is dangerous to any country. Women are treated in the most inhumane ways. Muslim women, Islamism, or this political ideology of Islam, it does not promote the freedom of religion. It only allows people to practice Islam. It punishes those who leave Islam. It quashes the voice of Christians and Jews, and it seeks to set up government rooted only in the traditional interpretation of Islamic law. Again, not all Muslims are Islamist, but when this political ideology shows up, we must reject it for ourselves and for our future, so a Muslim is free to believe and voluntarily practice Islam, but a Muslim, just like no other religious person, is free to replace American civil law with Islamic law when the two contradict. So love Muslims, reject Islam. Here's the third thing: share Jesus, share Jesus, share Jesus. My hope and my heart today is not to mobilize our church against Muslims. No, I want to mobilize our church towards Muslims with the gospel of Jesus Christ, our primary purpose on the earth, if you are a follower of Jesus, is to bear witness of the crucified and risen Jesus. So hear me: the growth of Muslim population in North Texas-it's not a cultural problem to be solved. It is perhaps our greatest missional opportunity to bring the gospel of Jesus to a people who might have never heard about Him anywhere else. How many of you, by show of hands, you believe in the Great Commission? I hope that's all of you. It's the last few words of Jesus in Matthew 28, where He says, "Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, go preach this message of forgiveness of sins. Sometimes the Great Commission causes us to go to the nations. Other times, God is so gracious and saves us a whole lot of airline tickets and visa application fees by sending the nations here. But the end result, the outcome is the same. Share Jesus, preach Christ crucified and risen, preach the forgiveness of sins that comes through Jesus alone, make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. So the reason why we are here today on earth and not in heaven, is because there are people who must hear the gospel from us. Luke 13 verse 29. Notice the words of Jesus: They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, to share the banquet in the kingdom of God. Friends and I just tell you they have come from the east and the west and the north and the south, and the table is set. But we get to invite them to the King, so the Holy Spirit works on their heart and makes them a part of the kingdom. Love Muslims, reject Islam, share Jesus. I wanted you to hear today from one of our Bentry members and a dear friend of mine, Renaud Benjani. Renaud grew up under Sharia law in the Middle East for many years. So did his family, and God has done a beautiful work in Renaud's life. And along with his wife Karen, 15 years ago, they started what's called I Hope Ministries, which has already blessed our church, and their heart is to share the gospel with Muslims and to equip American churches to share Jesus with people of a different world religion. So today, Renaud is going to tell you his journey, and he's going to encourage us through his journey. So would you welcome my friend Renaud?

Speaker 1 19:08

How do you and I live sent on mission? How do we practically reject Islam but love Muslims and share Jesus with them. I'm going to demonstrate how through a couple of stories, including my own testimony, to answer these questions. So let me start with Halim. Halim is a Christian. It has a construction company Working predominantly in oil-rich Islamic ruled nations

in the Middle East and North Africa. Now you know Christianity was born there. Perhaps you know that by 600 AD, the majority of the population. There was Christian, but do you know that today it's 99% Muslim? So Halim's customers and workers were predominantly Muslim, and he and his wife Salma, they rejected Islam, but let Muslims and share Jesus. You see, Salma she shared her faith in Jesus. She was compelled by the love of Christ and the belief that every Christian is an ambassador for Christ. So she shared Jesus, despite the fact that it is illegal over there and could lead to death. Now, I don't know if you can imagine that. Now, Selma had a son, young son named Elias, and he watched his mother talk about Jesus and share him with love and courage. So, as a boy, he wanted to copy his mom. So imagine this with me: this four-year-old standing in front of their apartment building in a big city, cars passing by, Muslims walking by, some to work from work, perhaps to a restaurant or to a store, and this little boy enthusiastically telling them, "Jesus, the Son of God, loves you. Now most Muslims simply smiled at that boy, but not everyone. Over the next nine years, because Elias kept sharing Jesus, he endured things no child should ever experience. He was kidnapped by Islamic extremists. He was tortured repeatedly, and as a boy, he didn't understand why this was happening to him. But eventually, his mom found out why, so she made him stop talking about Jesus publicly, but something had already begun to happen in that boy's heart: pain, anger, hatred. As a teenager, his parents sent him to the U.S. Now you might think coming here solved everything for Elias. Well, it didn't. Instead, Elias transferred his anger and hate from Muslims toward God. He reasoned, if God was real, he wouldn't have allowed all of this to happen to him. So, in high school, Elias walked away from the Lord, and for the next 25 years, he lived far away from Him. His life slowly unraveled. Multiple failed marriages, financial collapse, deep emotional wounds. By his early 40s, his life was in pieces and filled with guilt and shame. He hit rock bottom. Maybe you know how some of these things feel. Different stories, same brokenness. Well, Selma grieved over her son, but she never stopped praying for him. She came to the U.S. learned English, and she started sharing Jesus with his children, her grandchildren, just like she did with Elias as a boy. In that process, after 25 years as a prodigal, something began to happen in Elias's heart. God used Selma again to woo Elias back to Jesus. Selma is why. my mother. I am that son. I am renowned Elias Bisani. Now, after God wooed me, He healed and transformed me. He removed my hatred. He replaced it with his love, and then God transformed me from a mr. Wrong to a mr. Right, and then He brought me to my Miss Right, Karen, and we got married in 2010. Can you believe it? She married me. So with Karen as my partner, we began I Hope Ministries, and it's just amazing to consider the transformational miracle that God did-that I began serving the God I once denied as an instrument of His redeeming love with Muslims, the very people I once hated. Now, God redeemed all-not some, not many, but all of my past for His glory and kingdom purposes. God didn't only redeem my past; He gave it a purpose. God wants to do the same with you. Whatever you may have suffered from, are suffering from, or will ever suffer from, God wants to redeem it for your good and use it for His glory and kingdom purposes. Now, for me, the people I once feared and hated became the very people God used me as an instrument of His redemption. When God redeems you, He invites you into His redemption story.

Speaker 1 26:14

And just as Jesus saved His disciples 2000 years ago and called them to point others to Jesus as Lord and Savior. God wants to do the same through you. God called I hope Karen and me to equip the church to come alongside the church to equip you to share Jesus Across faiths, it's a difficult task because most Christians never share Jesus with someone from another faith, especially with Muslims. Well, that's because they're worried they might offend him, say the wrong thing, and maybe, and it's a lot more than that. So they don't share Jesus, but especially with Muslims, because with Muslims it's much more than just worrying about offending them. They might be afraid of them. They might think they don't know anything about Islam. They might be like I was, angry, and view them as the enemy. As a result, only a few Christians ever share Jesus with someone from another faith, especially Muslims. But like Salma, you and I don't need to choose between truth and love. You can reject Islam and still love Muslims and share Jesus with them. God is sending you on mission to introduce a Muslim to Jesus. Just think about it. What an amazing privilege you and I have. So up until now, like the pastor said, Christians had to go over there to reach the nations. But God has brought the nations here, right here, in Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, right across the street. Sometimes right outside here in the coffee shop. This summer, one of our team members sent her elementary age daughter back to school, and they discovered that she was the only Christian in her class. Her classmates were Muslims and Hindus. They don't have to go somewhere to reach the nations. They're right there in their daughter's classroom. So today, right here is one of the most strategic mission fields in America, and you are right in the middle of it. God has given you and I the most amazing gospel sharing opportunities we could have ever had. So, with that in mind, let me share with you an example. Muhammad, a devout Muslim, came from a devout Muslim family in the Middle East, he came here as an international student. His family was wealthy, so they paid for everything, and they gave him a generous monthly allowance. He didn't have to do anything except focus on his education. Now Muhammad came from a Islamic ruled nation, so he never heard the gospel there because it was punishable by death. For three years, right here, he drove by

churches like Bentry. He was curious: How do Christians worship? Was it? What is it like in there? But he thought, as a Muslim, he needed an invitation by a Christian to check it out. But for three years, not one Christian invited Muhammad to church. God, in His sovereignty, placed Muhammad right there within reach of Christians, so he can hear the good news about salvation and Jesus. But nobody shared it with him. Meanwhile, Muhammad loved his Christian friends. He was worried about them that they'll go to hell, so he shared Islam with them. He shared the Quran with them. He invited them to to a Quran study to the mosque. But for three years, not one Christian invited him to church or gave him a Bible. But all that changed when Muhammad met Justin, they met while playing soccer at the university. Now, when Muhammad offered a Quran to Justin, Justin responded just like trained by I Hope Ministries. Justin said, "Yeah, I'll accept the Quran if you accept a Bible, so can you see the simplicity of that? How you can do that? So when Justin offered a Bible to Muhammad, that threw Muhammad for a loop because no one's offered him a Bible before. Muhammad initially said no, no thank you because he thought that the Bible was corrupt. So Justin said, "Well, don't you read it? Look for the corruption. We can talk about it. Can you see the simplicity of that? It's not rocket science, and the suggestion made too much sense to Muhammad, so he accepted a Bible. Now, feeling emboldened, Justin said, "Well, why don't you come to church with me? So Muhammad thought, "Finally, I get to see how Christians worship. So he said yes. Now at church, Muhammad heard the gospel for the first time in his life.

Speaker 1 32:29

He rejected it, but that began Muhammad on a two-year journey. But right here in church, you know what surprised Muhammad? The worship music, because you see, Muslims don't have worship or music of any kind in a mosque. So he enjoyed it. That two-year journey that began that day resulted in Muhammad becoming a follower of Jesus. Now Muhammad, yes, you can clap for that. Now Muhammad paid a big price to follow Jesus. His family cut him off financially, so he went from financial wealth to financial poverty overnight. But so Muhammad says, Jesus is worth it all. I may have lost wealth, but I gained eternal life. But Muhammad's family didn't give up on him. So his brother came from the Middle East to talk sense into him. Muhammad's brother became a follower of Jesus. Muhammad went from converting Christians to Islam to now leading Muslims to Jesus. And what changed Muhammad's life. It wasn't a professional evangelist or theologian or pastor or apologist. It wasn't someone who knew the Quran or Islam, but just an ordinary faithful believer who, compelled by love, was willing to start a simple conversation with a Muslim, Justin allowed the love of Christ to flow through him in the context of a relationship. God wants to do the same through you. So let me ask you: What might God be asking you to do Next, as you consider that, remember this: Jesus doesn't save you to be in a Christian bubble. Jesus saves you to join Him in His mission. Jesus equipped you with everything that you need. God gifted. You with unique talents to do your role, and God gave us this task of reconciling people to Him, and He gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. So we are Christ's ambassadors. We speak for Christ when we plead. Come back to God. The nations are here. They're in our workplaces. They're in our neighborhoods. They're in our schools, and some of them may be just like Muhammad, waiting for a Christian to be to befriend them. What if that Christian is you?

Libin Abraham 35:56

Thank you, Renode. So maybe there is somebody in your life who needs to hear the gospel from you, and God has orchestrated a relationship for you to do so. So you might be thinking, "How do I start a conversation that takes an ordinary conversation into a spiritual conversation? The good news is, you don't have to be an expert on the Quran or learn Arabic. Every Christian is equipped to share Jesus, I think about how often Jesus used questions to engage people in a conversation. People came to Jesus with arguments to debate him, but Jesus came with questions. So I want to close our time by giving you five questions that serve as bridges into gospel conversation when you have a conversation with a Muslim. These are on your notes as well. But five conversation questions to ask that I believe the Holy Spirit can use as a beautiful bridge into the gospel. Here's the first one: Ask your Muslim friend, "What do you believe about Jesus? What do you believe about Jesus? Did you know that the Quran only names Muhammad by name four times, but the same Quran names Jesus by name 25 times? 25 times, Isa, Jesus, is mentioned in the Quran, and across 34 different references in the Quran, Jesus is described as the he's literally called the Messiah, the Son of Mary, the Messenger of God. Now, of course, they don't believe that he died on a cross. They believe Jesus was right before the cross. Allah took him into heaven. But Muslims have a high honor and reverence for Jesus. So simply ask them. Tell me what you believe about Jesus. See, you don't have to introduce a Muslim to Jesus. They actually already know about him. He's part of their holy scripture. He's part of their conversation. So ask them, why do you think Jesus is the Messiah? Why do you think he's mentioned this many times in the Quran? What sets him apart from the rest of the prophets? When I was at the cross across the street at Columb, I asked them this question. Okay, if you don't believe that Jesus died on the cross, then what do you do with the prophecies of Old Testament prophets like

Isaiah that you do believe in, that literally say he dies on a cross or that he dies, this kind of a death. So ask them about what they believe about Jesus, and perhaps that would lead you, like Justin did. Hey, can we just explore together what Jesus says of Himself? Let's open up the Gospels and see who Jesus is. What do you believe about Jesus? One of the books I put in the resource guide is a book by Nabil Kareishi, Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus. Nabil was a devoted Muslim follower, but that he began to really explore these two questions: Did Jesus die on the cross, and did he rise from the dead? He says this was the dividing line between Islam and Christianity, which, by the way, is the dividing line between every religion and Christianity. Did he die, and did he rise from the grave? First question is: What do you believe about Jesus? Here's a second question that could lead into a gospel conversation: What do you believe happens when Jesus returns? What do you believe happens when Jesus returns? Did you know that Muslims expect Jesus to come back to Earth? In fact, Jesus is one of the most central figures in Muslim eschatology. They expect Jesus to come back to Earth to defeat the Antichrist, to bring justice and judgment to the earth, so you can ask them. Tell me what you believe about Jesus coming back. Why Jesus? Why not Muhammad? Why Jesus? And by the way, it's interesting. They do believe Muhammad died, but Jesus didn't die. That puts Jesus in a little bit of a different category to me. But what do you believe Jesus will do, and why do you think He will come back? Why do you think if He's just a prophet for 2000 years ago that He becomes the central hero of your end times view in eschatology? Listen to their answer, and then perhaps tell them, "Can I tell you why I believe Jesus comes back? We believe that Jesus came the first time to be rejected, but He comes back as the revealed King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Libin Abraham 40:27

He is coming to reign not just as a messenger, but as Lord of all, as King of Kings. In fact, Paul said this in Acts 17, verse 31. Paul says, "Because God has set a day when He is going to judge the world in righteousness by the man he has appointed, he has provided proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead. There's a reason why Jesus comes back. It's because he has defeated sin, death, and the grave once and for all. And I'm looking forward to the whole world seeing Jesus for who He truly is, don't you as well? Amen. Jesus will return. What do you believe about Jesus? Why do you think He returns? And third of all, what does sacrifice mean to you? Whole concept of sacrifice. Muslims believe in some of the Old Testament key sacrifices. They believe God made the first sacrifice to cover Adam and Eve of their shame. They believe in Abel and Cain's sacrifice and that God received Abel's sacrifice and rejected Cain's sacrifice. They honor Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son in obedience to God. In fact, once a year they have a whole festival of sacrifice where they honor Abraham's willingness. Now they believe it was Ishmael that he took up the mountain, though the Quran does not name him as Ishmael. The Quran just says Abraham took one of his sons, but the Quran does say that God provided a ransom for Abraham and he didn't have to sacrifice his son. So every year at the Feast of Sacrifices, they honor Abraham's willingness to sacrifice, and guess what they do? They offer an animal sacrifice in thanksgiving that God provided a ransom. What they don't believe is that all the Old Testament sacrifices ultimately point to Jesus, because we believe what John said when he saw Jesus, he says, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. All the sacrifices are pointing to Jesus; otherwise, there is no point of the sacrifices. So, invite a Muslim friend to consider with you: What do you think is the significance of these sacrifices? If God assured to Abraham that you believe in that He would provide a sacrifice, we believe that He has provided the sacrifice, and that sacrifice is Jesus. Because the core of our confidence is not the sacrifices we make. The heart of the Christian gospel is not what we do for God, but it's a sacrifice that God has made for us in His Son, Jesus. Here's the fourth question: How do you know God will receive you? How do you know God will receive you? Every devoted Muslim, they do so many things, and it's actually remarkable: prayer and righteous deeds, and doing whatever it takes, because they desperately want to be received by Allah. But none of them have a certainty that their God will receive them when they breathe their final breath. There is absolutely no certainty, only a hope so. In fact, one of their famous hadith sayings is, "No one's deeds alone are sufficient to enter paradise, not even Muhammad's, apart from Allah's mercy. So they're hoping that at the very last breath of their life, Allah in that moment has mercy, though they'll never be guaranteed mercy. So they strive. They they are deeply devoted religiously through their own work in hopes of earning Allah's mercy. But the Christian gospel is entirely different than that. We do not have a hope so; we have a no so, because the gospel isn't about what we can do; it's about what has been done for us. So John says in First John five verse 13, I have written these things to you, to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may say what? Say no, not hope or wish or wonder, but that you might know that you have eternal life. This is the confidence and the certainty the people of different religious faiths crave and long for a sense of deep certainty about their salvation, and this certainty is only offered in the Christian gospel. Here's the last question: Can I pray for you? Simple, isn't it? Can I pray? Because you know what I found out to be true, Christians, Muslims, atheists, Hindus- they all go through moments in life where their theology is tested. Life happens. Crisis happens. A child gets sick.

Libin Abraham 45:14

A marriage falls apart. You get a diagnosis. Your job is lost. Dreams come crashing Down, crisis happens, and in that moment when crisis happens for a Muslim, ask them, "How can I show up for you? And you show up for them. Don't let the world out love you. You serve them. You sit in their pain. You cry with them, and you ask them if you can pray in the name of Jesus, and they will not refuse that prayer. And when you pray, ask for God to encounter them with His love. Ask for the peace of God to fill them. Ask for the love of the Father to surround them. Renew told me the story of a young Muslim lady here by the name of here. She was in the Dallas area for for seven months. I'm sorry, seven years. Seven years. Zahir was a beautiful young lady, and her parents decided to marry her off to a guy from the Middle East, and she was fine with that until she realized that the guy she was going to marry was the same age as her dad, and she would be one of four wives. Zahir is in distress, and she shows up to work here in Dallas, and she has a coworker named Paula. Paula noticed the things were not okay, and Paula went over there and she hugged her with tears, heard the crisis happening in Zaheer's life, and Paula said, "Hey, you know what I do when I'm in crisis? I pray. So can I pray for you in Jesus' name? She prayed. Then Paul said, "Can can I actually bring you to church with me? That makes me feel better, just to go to church and be with the people of God. Zakir was interested, and she said, "You think I can come with my hijab and with my dress and all of that, she said, "You can come just as you are. Just come. So Paul brought Zaheer to a church nearby here, and that day Zaheer heard the gospel from Isaiah 53, and about how Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament. And within two years, Zaheer was baptized in the name of Jesus, Amen. Let's praise God for that. All because somebody loved her. Said, "Can I step into the crisis with you? Can I pray for you? Can I invite you to a community that will love you as you are? So, church, it's simple. Let's engage in loving conversations. Let's love Muslims, reject Islam, and share Jesus. Would you stand with me? I want to end our time by specifically praying for our neighbor. So here's what I want to ask us to do. All right, all of us, we're going to physically turn towards that direction. That's where Kalam is. We're not praying against them. We're going to pray for them. We're praying against the evil, but we're praying for them. We're going to pray that God encounters them with His love, that they would have visions of Jesus, this man in the white robe that many Muslims have seen in their dreams, and they could not deny the real Jesus, who is their Savior. So, would you just stretch your hands towards that campus and begin to pray for revival, pray for salvation? There is no other name by which mankind can be saved except the name of Jesus. We believe that 2000 years later, this is still good news for all people. It is the power of God unto salvation. So, Father, today as a church community, out of love, out of deep compassion for those who do not yet know Jesus, we pray for those across the street. We pray that you would meet them, that they would experience your love. We pray for their well-being, God. We pray that you would fill their life with loving Christians who speak truth, who show up in ways that astonish them. We pray that their eyes would be open to see, even from their own writings, that Jesus is the Messiah, that there is no other. He is the Word of God embodied. There is no other prophet but Jesus. God convince their hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit of the uniqueness of Jesus being Lord and Savior of all. And we pray, God, for our city who needs Jesus.

Libin Abraham 49:36

God, we pray for a great awakening in our land, in our generation, in our time, God, you have set our church apart for such a moment as this. As you've gathered the nations, God, may we be faithful to go to the nations to bring the message of Jesus, to see lives transformed, to see idols fall and lies exposed, and for truths to reign and for. Grace to be experienced. Use us, God. Don't pass us by. We're available. Our hearts are yours. We want to love those who don't know you, rejecting claims that are evil, and yet sharing the good news of Jesus with those who need the gospel. Equip us and strengthen us. Strengthen us in the name of Jesus, we pray. And the church said together, "Amen, amen, amen. Can we just give God a praise in advance for lives and souls that will be saved?