

# Study Guide for the Week of May 7, 2006

## Christianity and the Religions of the World—Part 4

### Islam

*This study guide is designed to help you to become more familiar with the Bible. Study these passages on your own, with a friend, or with a group. If you or someone you know needs a Bible, please take one from under a chair in the Worship Center. They are there for you to take home and use! Sermon manuscripts are available at [www.saintpauls-umc.com](http://www.saintpauls-umc.com).*

This week we will examine various Bible passages related to last Sunday's sermon on Islam – learning from our Muslim cousins, and understanding more clearly our faith as Christians.

**Monday** – Review your notes from yesterday's sermon. The meaning of the word "Islam" is "surrender" or "submission." Devout Muslims seek to submit their entire lives to God. This is exactly what we as Christians seek to do. This should form the basis for a bridge between Christians and Muslims. How might this be the starting point in discussions between America and Islamic nations regarding terrorism? Take a moment to write down what you think it means to be completely surrendered or submitted to God. When we call Jesus Christ our "Lord" we are submitting to him – the word Lord meaning master or ruler. **Read Romans 12:1-2** and **Matthew 16:24-26** and use these verses as an outline for prayer, inviting Christ to help you be completely surrendered to him.

**Tuesday** – Muslims pray five times each day, if possible kneeling in submission to God as they do. The Christian's mealtime graces were meant to help foster prayer throughout the day. If you do not already do so, consider adopting the discipline of praying when you awaken, at your breakfast meal, at your noon meal, at suppertime, and before you go to bed. Each of these prayers is an opportunity to acknowledge your love and devotion to God. **Read and pray Matthew 6:5-14.** What are the principles Jesus is teaching us in this prayer – his intention was not that this prayer be repeated by rote, but that its content shape our prayers. **Read I Thessalonians 5:16-18.** What does Paul mean by praying without ceasing?

**Wednesday** – Muslims are required to give approximately 2.5% of their income to the poor. Christians are commanded in the scripture to care for the poor, both inside and outside of the church. We are to especially care for those in the body of Christ. As a church we do this through our missions giving, both financially and through in-kind giving like food drives. Have you considered setting aside funds, beyond your tithe, to be able to help people who are in need financially? Let's turn to a familiar passage which guides us in this, **Read Matthew 25:31-46.**

**Thursday** – There are significant differences between Muslims and Christians, primarily regarding the Koran and its teaching about Jesus. Muslims believe Mohammed was given messages by God in trances which ultimately became the Koran. Christians do not believe the Koran represents the word of God – but Mohammed's interpretation of his spiritual experiences in the light of his own theological ideas and his need and desire to unite and lead the tribal people of Mecca and Medina. With regard to his teachings about Jesus we look, as our authority, to the witness of the apostles who walked with Jesus, who watched as he was crucified and touched him after his resurrection, to help us know Christ. Mohammed taught that Jesus was simply a prophet. Let's read a few of the many of verses in the New Testament regarding Jesus, **Read Matthew 1:18-23, Luke 22:14-20, John 1:1-18, Colossians 1:15-20.**

**Friday** – One of the places where we see a significant difference between the New Testament and the Koran is on the role of violence. Mohammed was a warrior and set rules for engaging in war. Some of his teaching has been taken as the basis for acts of terror by extremists. Today we turn to the very different approach of Jesus. **Read Matthew 5:38-45 and Romans 12:14-21.**