



Confronting Islam: What Every Christian Needs to Know
Saturday Nights: 7:00 pm – 8:50 pm (Eastern Standard Time)
Providence Theological Seminary
Professor: Dr. Tony Costa

1. Introduction

Since the 7th century A.D. Islam has claimed to be the true religion of God and the prophets. It claims to be a religion of pure monotheism (belief in only one God), that it has come to correct the errors of Christianity and Judaism which it views as aberrant religions. It also claims that it will be triumphant over all religions. It declares that Muhammad is the last of all God's prophets sent to the world and that God gave his last revelation contained in the Qur'an to Muhammad. Muslims also claim that the coming of Muhammad was prophesied in the Bible. Is this true? What exactly is Islam? Is it compatible with Christianity? Do Christians and Muslims worship the same God? Muslims also claim to love and follow Jesus. What is jihad and why is terrorism usually associated with Islam? Does Islam seek to take over the world by jihad and impose Islamic law (shariah law) on everyone? Come and join us as we explore these issues.

2. Course Description and Objectives

This course is intended to introduce and orient Christian believers to the world of Islam including its political-religious world view and ideology. The subjects which will be covered in this course among other things will be an introductory approach to Islam, a study of Islamic theology, the place of Muhammad as a prophet within the Islamic tradition, the Qur'an as the holy text of Islam, and the Hadith literature containing the saying and deeds of Muhammad, and various ethical problems pertaining to women's rights and human rights and freedoms in general

including the concept of jihad. This course is designed to challenge critical thinking and provide scholarly handles from a Christian perspective to grapple with the rapid insurgence of Islam in the West while also providing a Christian response to the claims of Islam. This course also encourages Christian students to engage in discussion, present difficult questions in class and commit oneself to a serious study of the course materials. The ultimate goal of this course is to acquaint students with Islam and to equip them to defend the Christian faith and engage those who are part of the Islamic faith.

3. Course Schedule

This on-line course will run for 7 weeks.

The course will run on Saturday evenings from Saturday March 14, 2015 to Saturday May 9, 2015 from 7:00 pm to 8:50 pm (EST). There will be two breaks, one on Saturday April 4, 2015 (Easter weekend), and another on Saturday April 18, 2015 (Professor needs to be away at a function). Students are encouraged to read all the hand outs and texts required for the course. To register for the course please visit <http://ptsco.org>

****Since this course is offered on-line, it is necessary for all students to download SKYPE on their lap top / computers. SKYPE is a free download which can be accessed via the internet. Go to <http://www.skype.com/en/download-skype/skype-for-computer/> It is recommended that students also have a video cam attached to their computers or have a lap top with a built in camera to facilitate visual contact with the computer.**

4. Course Texts

Required for Course:

- a) Norman Geisler and Abdul Saleeb, *Answering Islam: The Crescent in Light of the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2006)
- b) James R. White, *What Every Christian Needs to Know About the Qur'an* (Bloomington: Bethany House, MN: 2013)
- c) Robert Spencer, *The Truth About Muhammad* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 2006). *Please note the professor will provide the students with a PDF copy of this book.
- d) *The Qur'an*. It is highly recommended that students obtain a copy of the Qur'an in an English translation. The professor will make some on-line resources available where the Qur'an and other Islamic sources can be read. A hard copy of the Qur'an however is an essential for any serious student engaging Islam.
- e) Tony Costa, Various Articles

5. Course Outline

I. Introduction

Readings:

Costa, Various Articles.
Geisler and Saleeb, 'Introduction', Appendix 1-2.

II. Muhammad, Prophetic Office, and the Sunnah

Readings:

Costa, Various Articles.
Geisler and Saleeb, chaps. 3-4, 8.
White, chaps. 1, 9.

III. Jesus in Islam

Readings:

Costa, Various Articles.
Geisler and Saleeb, chap. 11.
White, chaps. 5-6.

IV. The Qu'ran and the Islamic Texts

Readings:

Costa, Various Articles.
Geisler and Saleeb, chaps. 5, 9, Appendix 4.
White, chaps. 2, 8, 10-11.

V. Jihad

Readings:

Costa, Various Articles.

VI. Women in Islam

Costa, Various Articles.

VII. Human Rights in Islam

Readings:

Costa, Various Articles.

5. Professor Contact Information:

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