

Appendix 1

Statement of Faith

We are commitment to the essential truths of biblical Christianity, which include the following:

God - There is one God who exists eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is the almighty Creator, Savior, and Judge who governs all things according to His sovereign will and is accomplishing His purposes in creation and in the Church to His glory.

The Father - God the Father is the source of all that is good. He initiates creation and redemption which He accomplishes through His Son and the Holy Spirit.

God's Written Word - The Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, is God's written Word, revealing for all peoples His character and purposes. It is the final authority in all matters relating to belief and behavior. The Holy Spirit moved the human authors of the Bible so that what they wrote is inspired, fully reliable, and without error in all it affirms.

The Human Race - Humanity is the climax of God's earthly creation, bearing His image, designed for relationship with Him, and being the object of His redeeming love. All people have sinned. This results in guilt, death, and alienation from God as well as the defacing of every aspect of human nature. People are unable to save themselves from sin's penalty and power and from Satan's dominion.

Jesus Christ - Jesus Christ, both fully God and fully man, entered history as Savior of the world. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and lived an exemplary, sinless life in perfect submission to the Father and in loving relationships with others. He died on a cross, rose bodily, and ascended to heaven where He is advocate for His people and is exalted as Lord of all.

Salvation - Christ's sacrificial death, in which He bore the punishment due to sinners, is the only and all-sufficient basis of God's provision of salvation for all people of every culture and age, expressing His love and satisfying His justice. By God's grace the repentant sinner, through trusting alone in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, is put right with God, adopted by the Father into His family and receives eternal life.

The Holy Spirit - The Holy Spirit makes the work of Christ effective to sinners, giving spiritual life and placing them into the Church. He indwells all believers, empowers them to love, serve, witness and obey God, equips them with gifts, and transforms them to be increasingly like Christ.

The Church - The universal Church is made up of all who have been born of the Spirit. It finds local expression in communities of believers called by God to worship, fellowship, proclaim the Gospel, and make disciples among all peoples, reflect God's character, engage in works of compassion, contend for truth and justice, and celebrate baptism and communion.

The Spirit World - The holy angels are personal spirit beings who glorify God, serve Him, and minister to His people. Satan is a spiritual being who was created by God but fell through sin. He, along with other evil spirits, is the enemy of God and humanity, has been defeated by the work of Christ, is subject to God's authority and faces eternal condemnation.

The Future - The Lord Jesus Christ will visibly return to the earth in glory and accomplish the final triumph over evil. God will make everything new. The dead will be raised and judged. Unbelievers will suffer eternal punishment in separation from God; believers will enter into a life of eternal joy in fellowship with God, glorifying Him forever.

Appendix 2

Contextualization Among Muslims

Opening Remarks:

The topic of contextualization in outreach to Muslims can be controversial and lead to misunderstandings. The purpose of the following position paper is to guide the work of the Saltwork Global (which includes members from several organizations). We seek to work in accordance with biblical principles to communicate the gospel in a way which is understandable to Muslim people (Col.4:3-6; 1 Cor. 9:19,22) and yet remain faithful to our mandate to make disciples of Jesus teaching them to obey all that he has commanded (Matt.28:18-20) and to form biblically based communities of worship and outreach (churches) (Eph.2:19-22). We acknowledge that other ministries to Muslims may use somewhat different approaches, but our team is guided by these aims and practices in relation to contextualization and it is our hope that they will be of help to others in their thinking about contextualization.¹

1. We recommend that individuals or organizations who partner with or support the Saltwork Global workers and who have concerns about these issues refer to the following: **Pioneers Statement on Contextualization** (Pioneers International Handbook, section 4.3.6) & SIM International's "**Discussion of Contextualization Issues for SIM Personnel Working Among Muslim Peoples**" which have guided us in formulating this document.

⁴³... *pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, ...*

⁴⁴*Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.* ⁵*Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.*

⁶*Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone*
(Col.4:3-6)

⁹¹⁹*Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. ...* ²²*To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.* ²³*I do all this for the sake of the gospel, ...* (1 Cor.9:19,22)

²⁸¹⁸*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.* ¹⁹*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*

²⁰*and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* (Matt.28:18-20)

²¹¹⁹*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household,* ²⁰*built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.*

²¹*In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.* ²²*And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.* (Eph.2:19-22)

Intro to Contextualization:

Messengers who bring the Good News have the privilege and responsibility to faithfully communicate the biblical Gospel message. They should model and teach obedience to all the Scriptures under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Thus Saltwork Global workers desire to minister in ways most likely to yield faithful disciples and the reproduction of biblical churches among the Muslim people.

We believe God normally desires new believers to remain connected within their social context (1 Cor.7:17-19, 23-24), while not compromising biblical teaching in their beliefs or practice (e.g. permanently retaining their former non-Christian religious identity) (1 Pet.2:4-5,9-10).

7¹⁷Nevertheless, each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches. ¹⁸Was a man already circumcised when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man uncircumcised when he was called? He should not be circumcised.

¹⁹Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts. ... ²³You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings. ²⁴Brothers and sisters, each person, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation they were in when God called them. (1 Cor.7:17-19,23-24)

2⁴As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him - ⁵you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices

acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ... ⁹you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet.2:4-5,9-10)

The implications of living out this creative tension and Gospel witness are best worked out by groups of believers, through prayer and diligent study of the Scriptures, informed by the story of God's people throughout history, and the global body of Christ.

This affects **5 key issues**, including:

- Allegiance
- Obedience
- Identity
- Culture
- Suffering

1. Allegiance:

We encourage believers (including ourselves) to live in such a way that those around them become increasingly aware of their wholehearted submission to Jesus as Lord. He calls all believers to a

process of transformation into the image of Christ (Rom. 12:1-2; Col.3:9-10), giving courageous and respectful testimony of Christ's work in us (1 Pet.3:14-16).

12¹Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ²Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Rom.12: 1-2)

3⁹ ... you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. (Col.3:9-10)

3¹⁴But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened." ¹⁵But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. (1 Pet.3:14-16)

So, we affirm **the Primacy of the Gospel:**

We proclaim the Gospel so that Muslim men, women, and children, might repent and receive salvation by grace through trusting in Christ alone. The Gospel is the good news that God has revealed his reign over all things in the coming, the life, the death, the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Lord of all, according to the Bible. Because of Jesus' death for our sins and his resurrection, repentant sinners may experience new life under Christ's rule by which all things will be made new and all evil destroyed when Christ returns (Mark 1:14-15; Jn.10:10; Lk.24:44-4; 1 Jn.1:1-3; 1 Cor.15:1-4; Rom.4:24-5:2; Acts 3:19-21; Col. 1:13-14,19-23;).

1¹⁴ ... Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news (gospel) of God. ¹⁵"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:14-15)

10¹⁰ ... I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (Jn.10:10)

24⁴⁴He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. (Lk.24:44-48)

1¹That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched - this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. ²The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. ³We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:1-3)

15¹ ... I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ²By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. ³For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, (1 Cor.15:1-4)

4²⁴ ... God will credit righteousness - for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification. ⁵¹Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. (Rom.4:24-5:2)

3¹⁹Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, ²⁰and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you – even Jesus. ²¹Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. (Acts 3:19-21)

1¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴in whom

we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. ... ¹⁹For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. ²¹Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²²But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation - ²³if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. ... (Col.1:13-14,19-23)

2. Obedience:

Our passion is to see believers (including ourselves) obey all that Jesus commanded (Matt.28:20). This involves an ongoing process whereby believers are empowered by the Spirit and nurtured through the Scripture (Gal.5:16-25; 2 Tim.3:16-17; 1 Pet. 2:2-3).

²⁸²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt.28:20)

⁵¹⁶So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. (Gal. 5:16-25)

³¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim.3:16-17)

²²Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, ³now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. (1 Pet.2:2-3)

So we practice **Evangelism, Discipleship, and Church Planting:**

1. We aim to see peoples from Muslim backgrounds **worshiping and serving God** as Father, Son and Holy Spirit **in vibrant Christ-centered churches** that are faithful to the Bible and living out their discipleship to Jesus in their communities (Matt 16:15-18; Acts 2:41-42,46-47; Acts 20 27-28; Heb.10:23-25).

¹⁶¹⁵ ... "Who do you say I am?" ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon ..., for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church ... (Matt 16:15-18)

²⁴¹Those who accepted his message were baptized, and ... added to their number that day. ⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:41-42,46-47)

²⁰²⁷ ... I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. ²⁸Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. (Acts 20 27-28)

¹⁰²³Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another ... (Heb.10:23-25)

2. We want, as much as possible, for **the Gospel to be implanted within the new culture**. Therefore we teach disciples to allow the Bible to shape their worldview. We believe that through the Bible, God will transform, adapt or affirm different aspects of culture as he builds the body of Christ in that culture. So in terms of **Worldview and Beliefs**, believers are intentionally discipled in such a way that their worldview and beliefs are increasingly transformed into conformity with Scripture (Rom.12:2; Heb.5:14).

12²Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:2) 5¹⁴But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. (Hebrews 5:14)

3. We aim to see disciples (including ourselves) **vitaly engaged in mission** within their unbelieving families and social networks, holding fast to and holding forth the centrality of Jesus and the authority of the Bible. We teach believers (including ourselves) not to be afraid or deceptive but to be bold, wise, patient and gentle, speaking the truth in love with those whom they believe God is bringing to himself. (1 Pet.3:15; Eph.4:11,14-16;)

3¹⁵... in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, (1 Pet.3:15)

4¹¹So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ... ¹⁴Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (Eph.4:11,14-16)

3. Identity:

We want believers to understand their biblical identity in Christ and his church (local and worldwide), and to embrace the implications of that identity as active members of a local community of believers (Eph.2:19-22; 1 Pet.2:9).

2¹⁹Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²²And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. (Eph. 2:19-22)

2⁹But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Pet.2:9)

So in terms of **Identity for Believers from a Muslim Background (BMB) churches**:

1. We aim to see believers finding ways to understand their belonging to and unity with the wider church of Christ. This has consistently proven to be an important part of maturity in Christ for Muslim MBBs (Eph.2:19-22 above)
2. We do not identify ourselves as Muslims and discourage disciples from a Christian background from doing so. Though some have thought it possible to say we are “muslims” because we are told to “submit to God” (James 4:7ff) and the generic meaning of the term “muslim” is “one submitted to God.” However, from long experience with the Islamic worldview and in practice on

the ground, this is seen by them to be deceptive as invariably for them “Muslim” does not just mean “one submitted to God” but very specifically “one submitted to God, who goes to the mosque and is prepared to pray the entire *salat* (formal prayer) in the prescribed way, who practices all of the practices of Islam (e.g. prescribed *Ramadhan* fast, giving prescribed *Zakat* alms, and one who subscribes to and attempts to follow all of the laws of Islam in the way they were set forth by Muhammad in the Qur’an and *Hadith* (traditions) and embodied in *Shar’ia* law thus gaining *ajar* (merit) with God against the punishment of the judgement day.”) As seen above, biblically we would not do this and thus it would be deceptive. At the same time, as we realize that the term “Christian” for a Muslim person is usually equated with “*Gaal* = Pagan” and carries connotations of worshipping three gods, and having no morals to live by (things we do not want to communicate about ourselves), we have often found it helpful, for the purposes of communication of truth, to call ourselves, “Worshippers of the One True God (Deut. 6:4 cf. Mark 12:29) who follow the way of Jesus the Messiah” (numerous times Jesus called his followers to “follow me” e.g. Mark 1:17; Matt.16:24; the Apostle Paul challenged believers to follow Christ’s example as he did 1 Cor.11:1; early Christians were known first as followers of “the Way” Acts 9:1 but very soon also called “Christians = Christ ones” Acts 11:26). Ultimately, what is most important for clearly communicating the meaning of the term “Christian” which they invariably come to understand we are, is by the way we live among them with integrity, humility, consistency and in service to their communities felt needs (1 Pet. 2:12,15-16).

⁴⁷*Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded ... ¹⁰Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.* (James 4:7-8,10)

⁶⁴*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.* (Deut.6:4) and: ²²⁸*One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” ²⁹“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.* (Mark 12:28-29)

¹⁷*“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”* (Mark 1:17)

¹⁶²⁴*Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.* (Matt.16:24)

¹¹¹*Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.* (Paul in 1 Cor.11:1)

⁹¹... *Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples. He went to the high priest ²and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.* (Acts 9:1)

¹¹²⁶ *when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.* (Acts 11:26)

²¹²*Live such good lives among the gentiles that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God ... ¹⁵For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people.* (1 Pet.2:12,15)

⁵¹⁶*In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.* (Matt. 5:16)

3. We, likewise, encourage disciples from a Muslim background to identify themselves in ways that express their primary identity in Christ and to wisely and carefully allow that identity to grow within their communities (see above scriptures). As with ourselves in witness, we recognize that there are dangers to truth and spiritual maturity when disciples from a Muslim background continue to identify themselves simply as “Muslims” (see scriptures above). We would encourage those who

may, in their early days of spiritual formation, continue to use this term for themselves to instead identify themselves in a way that their words (along with their lifestyle and actions) communicate that their primary identity is found in Jesus Christ, their only savior and Lord. (We recognize that the issue of identity for BMBs is complex. We will continue to observe and consider what is happening with BMBs on the ground in this correlation of beliefs and identities).

4. Culture (and religion as part of culture):

We affirm that all cultures reflect elements of God's creative goodness and also human sinfulness (Rom.2:14-15; 1 John 2:15-17). We encourage believers to live out biblically sound and culturally appropriate worship, witness, relationships and lifestyles (Eph.5:15; 1 Pet.2:11-12, 16-17).

2¹⁴(Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. ¹⁵They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.) (Rom.2:14-15)

2¹⁵Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. ¹⁶For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever. (1 John 2:15-17)

5¹⁵Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise... (Eph.5:15)

2¹¹Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. ¹²Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us ... ¹⁶live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover up for evil; live as God's slaves. ¹⁷Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor. (1 Pet.2:11-12,16-17)

Regarding Muslim culture, we seek to affirm in our evangelism, discipling and church formation with the believers from this background all that can be affirmed (that which is in line with or not against biblical principles), to help believers from this background discern what must be left behind (that which is not in line with biblical principles), and what may be transformed. (We seek to do this with our own culture as it interacts with the gospel and church life as well). In the typical Muslim worldview, Islam is integrally a part of their culture and is not separated into a separate category.

So in relationship to Islamic Practices

1. We teach, admonish and encourage disciples in accordance with the whole counsel of the Bible (2 Tim.3:16-17), trusting that through the work of the Holy Spirit they will grow into full understanding and maturity in Christ (John 15:26,16:13). We affirm that the core beliefs associated with maturity are reflected in the Statement of Faith (see above). We recognize that people, who repent and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, will not be mature disciples when they believe. Some indications of immaturity include initial allegiance to Mohammed, devotion to the Qur'an, and participation in Islamic worship in the mosque.

3¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim.3:16-17)

15²⁶“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. ... **16**¹³... when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. (John 15:26,16:13)

2. We do not believe or teach that Mohammed is a true prophet of God (his “revelation”, the Qur’an, denies core biblical truths, e.g. among other things three times it states that “none can bear the sins of another” and emphatically states that “they did not kill him nor did they crucify him (referring to Jesus the Messiah)” and his lifestyle and practices as reported in authentic Muslim sources, Hadith and Qur’an, include serious moral lapses when evaluated by Biblical standards) and thus, while we can affirm that there is only one God, (see Deut.6:4; Mk.12:29 above) we do not recite the shahada. As part of the discipleship process we discuss with disciples the problems associated with doing so. We aim to lead disciples from allegiance to Mohammed into pure devotion to Christ. At the same time in witness, we do not seek to unnecessarily denigrate Mohammed, but rather focus on the goodness of Jesus Christ and what he has done for us, and would seek to teach disciples to do the same.

3. We acknowledge that for many Muslim background believers, their study of the Qur’an may have been a starting point of their fear of judgment, their interest concerning the power and authority of Jesus, and their awareness of the Bible. For this reason we recognize that some Qur’anic verses may be used as a starting point in evangelism to lead people toward Christ, however, we do not believe or teach that the Qur’an is divinely inspired or authoritative (see reasons above). We aim for people to be taught and shaped by the Bible rather than the Qur’an.

4. We aim that any affiliation disciples have with the mosque will be for the purpose of sharing the gospel and not as a way to deceive or avoid persecution.

5. Suffering:

God grants us suffering in this world to refine our faith, strengthen his church and bring glory to Christ (Phil.1:29; 3:10; 1 Pet.1:7). Together, we recognize that persecution is not to be feared, and “everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Tim.3:12; Matt.10:28; Heb.10:32-34).

1²⁹*For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him...* (Phil. 1:29)

3¹⁰*I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death...* (Phil.3:10)

1⁷*These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.* (1 Pet.1:7)

3¹²*In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted...* (2 Tim.3:12)

10²⁸*Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.* (Matt.10:28)

10³²*Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you endured in a great conflict full of suffering.*

³³*Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. ³⁴You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.* (Heb.10:32-34)

So in reflecting on **Persecution** -

We aim that disciples (including ourselves) learn to joyfully endure suffering for the sake of Jesus Christ but not for antagonizing others through unnecessary confrontation (Col.4:5-6; 1 Pet. 3:15-17). Though we are aware of the severe threat which persecution poses to the faith of new believers, we do not believe persecution can be completely avoided nor should it be. In our evangelism and discipleship we teach that all who follow Jesus will suffer for their devotion to him (1 Pet.4:12-16).

4⁵Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (Col.4:5-6; John 15:18-20; John 16:33)

3¹⁵... Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. ¹⁷For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. (1 Pet.3:15-17)

4¹²Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. ¹⁶However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. (1 Pet.4:12-16)

15¹⁸"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. ¹⁹If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. ²⁰Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. (John 15:18-20)

16³³"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)