

A Review of Islam: What the West Needs to Know

Written by Tim Black

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If you have time for two movie nights in a row, you might want to watch the following two (long) videos.

A friend forwarded this video to me, which I found a very interesting, even convincing presentation of the threat posed to the West by radical Islam:

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-871902797772997781#>

Then I watched this second video, which responds to many of the points made in the first video from a peaceful Islamic perspective:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxh3Fj-qe1k&feature=related>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LTuby5Y9wQE&feature=related>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uRVAMd0gR3g&feature=related>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AixgiXpAFTY&feature=related>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMEYvriUbSM&feature=related>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMCI9TjeFGk&feature=related>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBcvuV9ewAc&feature=related>

It appears to me that BOTH forms of Islam - radical and peaceful - exist. After watching the second video, I was reminded of a question a brother asked me at GA: Is God a theonomist? He wanted me to answer "Yes." But I answered "No." Theonomists are ungodly, when in regard to the death penalties in the OT, they are unwilling to require human civil courts to maintain the principle of "life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth." (Ex. 21:24; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21) That principle, called the Lex Talionis (law of the tooth), God made universally binding on all men in the covenant with Noah in Gen. 9:6, therefore it is more foundational than God's temporary delegation to human courts under Moses of His divine court's right to punish sins less than murder with death, which delegation was ended when God removed the Davidic monarchy by sending His people into exile. If theonomists ruled our civil courts, I believe the West would have some of the same opposition to theonomy which it has to Shariah law.

I find it more compelling to consider not whether Islam is violent (1st video says "yes"), or unjust (2nd video says "no"), but whether it has any true mercy. Islam claims "Allah is merciful," but by denying Christ is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, has no way for Allah's mercy to be extended to man and retain any semblance of justice--Allah's supposed mercy is arbitrary and capricious, perhaps promised to some men in general but not guaranteed to particular men in particular on the basis of an atonement for their particular sins that satisfies Allah's justice.

The good news that Christianity offers is that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor. 15:3)--not for the sins of every man in general, but for the sins of the elect--those particular people whom God chooses to save. This is the 3rd of the 5 Points of Calvinism, called "Limited Atonement," or "Particular Redemption." It is just, because our sins are truly paid for in the atonement, AND because that payment is truly applied to the accounts of those particular people for whom Christ died, so that Christ who said "I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:15) can also say "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out"

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(John 6:37), and "they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand" (John 10:29). Through the work of Jesus Christ, God is both just and merciful--"just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus." But Allah is not merciful, because he has no way of justly paying the penalty our sins deserve, and so has no payment to apply to our accounts. In Islam, man must pay for his own sins, and attempt to cancel out his evil deeds by doing enough good deeds, as the second video also makes clear--Allah loves the one who is righteous. But Christians must admit what Muslims will not--"None is righteous, no, not one...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:10, 23) We sinners cannot make ourselves righteous by our own works, as Islam expects us to do. Because we have sinned. Praise God for giving us a Savior, who saves us from our sin!

So I don't think the first video's possible implication that the West must defend Christianity with the sword is really the right solution. Rather, Christianity must save the East and West with the gospel of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.