

Book Review: 'Meeting Muslims: Practical Lessons'

Reviewed by Donna Smith

Meeting Muslims: Practical Lessons, Vivienne Stacey, (Philippines: OMF Literature, Inc., 2006).

In this slim, yet helpful book, Vivienne Stacey leaves us a legacy of insight into how to communicate with Muslims. She shares from her experiences and her theological observations coming out of her many years of personal interaction with Islam and its adherents.

Although Stacey includes several incidents from her earlier writings, she adds to them by reorganizing or developing other ideas and perceptions. Her suggestions to Christians desiring to impact Muslims with the Good News of Jesus Christ are quite practical.

One insight that stimulated my own thinking is her remark that the debating technique used by Muslims even today dates from the nineteenth century. Muslim students are encouraged to draw attention to arguments from debates held in 1854. They have memorised pat answers or objections to certain theological beliefs such as:

- ♦ The Bible – its reliability?
- ♦ Jesus Christ – his divinity?
- ♦ The unity of God
- ♦ Muhammad's mission
- ♦ The Qur'an – the eternal book? (page 63)

Stacey suggests that we question the value of such polemical debate and turn

instead to apologetics (arguing for the validity of one's own system). Knowing that the Muslim debaters have been programmed, we must ask ourselves: 'What are the new agendas through which Christians can regain the initiative?' (page 64). The author challenges us to use fresh initiatives and to find out how to stimulate Muslim minds so that they start seeking answers to our questions. One example that she gives is based on a Bible study of Numbers 21:4-9 to show the seriousness of sin in breaking relationships with God and man. It also brings out God's provision of a way of escape for those who believed.

Other topics covered creatively by Stacey relate to the significant influence of Popular Islam and Muhammad veneration, fruitful interaction with Muslim women, an understanding of the Muslim's way of thinking and the practice of prayer with our Muslim friends.

This concise book is a good one to give to supporters from our sending countries. It will help them in their own witness to the growing worldwide Muslim population. It will also aid them in praying for Christian workers living in Muslim countries.

For a copy of this book, contact InternationalSales@OMFLit.com.