

“The Qur’an: To Burn or Not to Burn”

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It has been a couple weeks since the extremely well covered media frenzy concerning the burning of the Qur’an has died down. I found it amazing at the coverage that was being given to the plans of a pastor of a small church in Florida to burn 200 Qur’ans in order to make a statement on the remembrance of September 11. I certainly am not saying that it wasn’t worthy of discussion, but I found it inherently inconsistent and hypocritical at the disproportionate amount of coverage it received. I say this because there have been dozens of situations in the past few years where, sadly, Muslims in other countries have been quite eager to burn Bibles, desecrate churches, kill Christians with scant news coverage in comparison to the burning of the Qur’an. Is society in general really this blind to the typically one-sided onslaught of persecutions against Christians around the world, but primarily in countries that are predominantly Muslim?

I want to say upfront that I believe it is a terrible idea to burn a Qur’an, the Book of Mormon, the Vedas of Hinduism, or any other text considered sacred by any religion. This is even more appropriate if you are a Christian who claims to follow and obey the Bible. While it is true that, as Christians, it is our responsibility to verbally share the supremacy of the Bible’s assertions above every other so-called “holy” book, we certainly should do this without unnecessary offense. Nevertheless, it is my conviction that these books do not contain the way of salvation, are offensive to the true God in that they contain false teachings about Him, and should be avoided. Yet it is our responsibility to always speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). This does not mean we need to water down the message and blur the differences. It is right for us to be tolerant and live peaceably with all people (Romans 12:18), but we are to never be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ which alone is the way of salvation for all people (Romans 1:16-17; John 14:6).

There was tremendous outrage over a man burning the Qur’an, but where is the outrage for the subjugation of women, intolerance of other religions, the burning of churches, the killing of Christians, the forced conversions and limiting of all sorts of freedoms? There is no way possible for anyone to find justification for these as found in the person and teachings of Jesus Christ. We are to love and bless our enemies, praying for them, not killing them or forcing them to convert (Matt 5:44; Rom 12:14). In fact, there was one occasion where James and John asked Jesus if they could pray to bring down fire from heaven on those who rejected Jesus’ message, Jesus rebuked them and said, “for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them” (Luke 9:53-56). It is my prayer that we also seek to speak the truth in love, but with the intention of seeing people truly saved from their sin through Jesus’ death and resurrection. I can be reached through our website at www.ccc-nl.org. Have a blessed week!

Published September 30, 2010 New Lenox Patriot