

Middle East

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The fact that a large majority of the Middle East is Muslim dictates how we approach ministry. We cannot attack the ministry of Islam because that will create barriers with people. Usually the most successful language is the language of demonstrating love and care—in other words, demonstrating Christ. This is a language that is not prevalent in Islam and it's a language that touches people where they hurt. Coupled with this is that this language has an intrinsic aspect of risk because we can be taken advantage of. People will attend church, even make a profession of faith, all for the sake of getting some kind of favor or help in return. Many times we are aware of that, but we continue with the hope that in time the Holy Spirit will touch their hearts and cause them to genuinely commit their lives to Christ. It's very important for us serving in the Middle East to realize that our job is to plant the seed and water the seed, but growth and fruit is the work of the Holy Spirit of God.



In the Middle East we need to employ a variety of approaches. There's no "one size fits all" approach, so our strategy is to reach out to all segments of society, all age groups, and all religious backgrounds. This outreach is usually done creatively so as to attract people to listen to the gospel, while at the same time allowing them to interact with and eventually respond to the message. What we do is a drop in the bucket, but God's call for us in the Middle East has been very clear from the onset that we will win these people to Christ one by one.

Baptist work in the Middle East started in the very late 1800s when a Lebanese man who was saved in a Baptist church in Chicago went back to Lebanon, shared the gospel, and planted the first baptist church in Beirut. In the early 1900s Baptist work progressed to Palestine, especially in the area of Nazareth, and on to northern Jordan. In the Middle East today, there are about 100 Baptist churches, as well as baptist schools and clinics and other supporting



ministries that funnel people into the local churches. Since 1993, the BMA has been blessed with planting 36 churches. Currently, we have 10 new churches that are being planted throughout the Middle East.

In a volatile area such as the Middle East, it has been our strategy to stay in the thick and thin of circumstances. We accept war and conflict as one of the realities of the region, and as bad as war and conflict is, we also consider it one of the great opportunities to spread the gospel to people in times of trouble.

Prayer Requests:

- Perseverance
- Provision
- Protection

Praises:

- For safety
- For souls saved and baptized
- For increased opportunities for ministry

American Missionaries

Jordan

Sam & Suzan Jordan
Elie & Rana Costa El Hage

Lebanon

Charlie & Mona Costa
Joe & Mira Costa

Key ChangeMakers

Egypt

Atef Labib Yousef
Gentleman Nabil

Jordan

Yazan Melkonian

Lebanon

Yousef Hilal

South Sudan

Lewi Mursale

Syria

Maher Semaan