

Week 3

Five Pillars of Islam

In Islam, faith is sanctified by action.

Everything a Muslim does is ultimately meant to be an act of worship

1. Testimony of faith (Shahaadah or Kalima)

“There is no god but God, Muhammad is the messenger of God.”

- Shiia tweak , the creed is optionally expanded with the addition of a phrase “*and Ali is the friend of God*” *Remember the Shiia / Sunni discussion?*

Said three times in front of cleric and witnesses, and they “become” Muslim.

I became a Christian by telling my little church in Tulsa that I accept Jesus as my Lord and savior. Something very similar to this.

Lord Jesus Christ, I am sorry for the things I have done wrong in my life. I ask your forgiveness and now turn from everything which I know is wrong. Thank you for dying on the cross for me to set me free from my sins. Please come into my life and fill me with your Holy Spirit and be with me forever. Thank you Lord Jesus, Amen.

• Prayer (Salat) – Five Times a Day

Facing the Ka’bah in Mecca. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/galleries/salah/>

1. Fajr (dawn)
2. Dhuhr (noon)
3. Asr (afternoon)
4. Maghrib (evening)
5. Isha' (night).

There are all sort of exceptions and clarification for how to pray in different circumstances, but most importantly it is the intention that leads to purifying prayer.

Seen the Airports lately? many now have Muslim prayer room along side the “traditional” chapels.

• Almsgiving (Zakat) "to purify" and "to grow."

By caring for the needs of the poor, all of a Muslim’s wealth is purified. Stewardship in the church is a “pillar” of our faith as Christians.

• Fasting (Sawm)

- Three types

- as compensation for repentance
- ascetic fasting
- ritual fasting
 - Ramadan – month of no eating from sun up to sundown. The month lasts 29–30 days based on the visual sightings of the crescent moon,
- Pilgrimage (Hajj)

Once a lifetime --it is expected. It is a Pillar of Islam to go to Mecca if one is physically able.

When a faithful Muslim going on pilgrimage to Mecca he is called a Hajji because he/she is fulfilling the discipline of going on Hajj. I have not heard it in a while, but Hajji when used by a non-Muslim is usually derogatory.

A mosque (masjid in Arabic) is a place for worship in Islam.

The first thing that is obvious is that men and women are separate.

Although prayers can be done privately, either indoors or outdoors, nearly every community of Muslims dedicates a space or building for congregational prayer.

Minaret

A slim tower rising from a mosque. Minarets may be square, round, or octagonal and are usually covered with a pointed roof. It was the place where a muezzin made the sung call to prayer.

Prayer Hall

The central area for prayer is called a musalla (literally, "place for prayer"). No furniture is needed, as worshippers sit, kneel, and bow directly on the floor. There may be a few chairs or benches to assist elderly or disabled worshippers who have difficulty with mobility. there are usually bookshelves to hold copies of the Qur'an and individual prayer rugs.

Prayer Rugs

During Islamic prayers, worshippers bow, kneel, and prostrate on the ground. The only requirement in Islam is that prayers be performed in an area that is clean – nice addition huh?

Mihrab

Men only

The mihrab is an ornamental indentation in the wall of a mosque, which marks the direction to prayer. Mihrabs vary in size and color, but are usually shaped like a doorway and decorated with tiles and calligraphy to make the space stand out.

Women in worship

Women are almost always separate. Very progressive Mosques have men and women worshipping together but they are the minority. The women are separated by wall and

can hear the cleric and the prayers. Sometime they can view the proceedings via angled mirror or they are seated in a balcony.

Minbar

The minbar is a raised platform in the front area of a mosque, from which sermons or speeches are given. The minbar is usually made of carved wood, stone, or brick. It includes a short staircase leading to the top platform, which is sometimes covered by a small dome.

Dome

Many mosques are decorated with a dome rooftop, particularly in the Middle East. This architectural element holds no spiritual or symbolic significance, and is purely aesthetic. The interior of a dome is usually highly decorated with floral, geometric and other patterns.

Shoe Shelf

purely practical to preserve the cleanliness of the prayer space.