October 2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Day after day, news from Arab and Muslim lands mostly speaks of violence, death and religious fanaticism. During one 24-hour period this month Islamist shootings and bombings killed and seriously injured children and adults in five different countries: outside a church wedding in Egypt, a café in Iraq, a village in northern Syria, a diplomatic mission in Pakistan and a civilian bus in Russia. World leaders, including Muslims, quickly issue statements of condemnation and condolences for families of the victims.

The incident in front of the church in Egypt brought unforgettable reactions from by wedding party and local church leaders: “***Lord, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing***.”

A Muslim reporter of a major local TV station responded: “***I am more shocked by the forgiving response of the Christians than by the murderous actions of the terrorists…But this is what Issa (Jesus) has taught them…We Muslims and all people desperately need such heavenly teachings…***” It was widely used by many other Arab media reporters on radio, TV and the Internet.

This encourages us all to keep in mind two very relevant facts. Number one -- the violent attempts of Muslim fanatics to impose their convictions and practices on others are causing increasing disenchantment with Islam. Number two -- more and more Muslims are willing and ready to consider the beautiful Gospel alternative. Yes, the perfect life, “heavenly” teachings and redemptive work of Christ make all the difference!

SMS text and email messages, Facebook contributions arrive regularly from Muslims. While a few threats arrive from angry fanatics who are blinded by religious hate, most are from others who are attracted to our wonderful Savior. Here are some excerpts:

A.A.G. writes from Egypt: ***“…Issa’s* sayings are more than beautiful...”**

H.A. writes from Yemen: “…***Master Christ, I love you very much and I will ever pray for your blessing on my life...”***

The battle is spiritual and your prayer support is needed. When Peter first testified that Jesus is the Christ, the Lord promised “On this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Standing on that promise, we take courage to bring the good news of Christ to the lost Muslim world with great anticipation.

With much gratitude for your partnership in Christ’s service among Arab and Muslim people,

 

Victor and Lisa Atallah