

Report from 'The Challenge of Islam' book launch

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Holly Baines reports on the successful book launch event for Tim Dieppe's newly released book *The Challenge of Islam*. She writes about the state of Islam in the UK, and shares how attendees were encouraged to be bold in their faith, bold in their opposition to Islam, and bold in their love for Muslims.

Yesterday, over 200 people gathered to mark the launch of Christian Concern's Head of Public Policy Tim Dieppe's new book, *The Challenge of Islam*.

The rise of Islam in the UK is a very real concern for many, with the tide of Islamic motivated attacks and atrocities filling the news headlines over the last few weeks.

This showed, as attendees filled the room with a buzz of conversation. Some people even started reading their complimentary copies of *The Challenge of Islam* as soon as they were handed them, before the main talk had begun.



These attendees were aware that there is a challenge facing the UK, one that we must tackle with precision, with facts, and with the gospel.

They wanted to understand the foundational ideology of Islam.

They wanted to know how Islam's increasing prevalence in the UK is endangering our Christian freedoms and unravelling the fabric of our nation.

They wanted to know why the church is all-too-often silent on these issues.

And they wanted to know why politicians are welcoming with open arms a religion that rules by intimidation, silences free speech, and is intentional in its desire to dismantle democracy and our Christian heritage.

Introducing the author

At the start of the event, Andrea Williams, Chief Executive of Christian Concern, stepped to the stage to introduce Tim Dieppe.

She began by reminding us of our strong Christian heritage and the centrality of community to traditional British society. But, she said, we have lost much of our Christian foundation.



She is right: our nation has abandoned Christianity and welcomed in secularism and other religions – including Islam.

We've lost our religious identity, and Islam is filling the hole.

Andrea then moved on to tell Tim's story. While working in finance, Tim became concerned about Islam in the wake of the 9/11 attacks.

Over the next few years, he researched Islam and Islamic finance and became increasingly disturbed by what he discovered.

When his bank asked him to run a Sharia fund, he felt compelled to decline due to what he had found out about Islamic ideology. He tried to raise his concerns about the Sharia fund and the rise of Islam in the UK with other colleagues, but with no success.

Eventually, he left the bank and started working as Christian Concern's Islam expert and has continued equipping Christians to confront the challenge of Islam in the UK.

The challenge of Islam

As Tim began his talk, he outlined that there are three parts to the challenge of Islam in the UK. The first is the apologetic challenge: how do we effectively share the gospel with our Muslims? The second, has to do with the theological differences between Islam and Christianity. And the third, which *The Challenge of Islam* tackles, is the cultural challenge of Islam.

Tim's book comes at a crucial time during the fight for freedom in our nation. Over the last couple decades, Islam has tightened its grip on the UK with increasing violent and intimidating acts that have left MPs and the public alike fearing for their safety.

"Islamists are bullying Britain into submission," said Suella Braverman. She was right, and this is no playground bully – all talk and no real power to cause damage. This is a bully which has already invaded almost every area of our culture and government, from Parliament to policing to legislation.

Islam is clear, undeterred and targeted in its objective: to transform a once-Christian Britain into an Islamic nation.

And, as Tim pointed out, so far, they are on track to succeed in the not-too-distant future.

The swift Islamisation of Britain

Tim shared some of the ways Islam has been manifested in the life of our nation.

As of 2021, there are 3.9 million Muslims in the UK. This amounts to 6.5% of the population and is an exponential increase since the Muslim population of 105,600 in 1960.

Pew Research Centre estimates that the Muslim population will be 17% by 2025.

Here in the UK, the average age of Muslims is 27; whereas the average Christian is 51 years old.

Islamic finance is taking root in our financial system and British Muslims are becoming increasingly radicalised. Only 24% of them believe Hamas committed murder and rape in Israel on October 7th, and 29% have a positive view of Hamas. 21% support legalising polygamy and 32% support implementation of Sharia law in the UK.



Only the most radical interpretations would regulate the hijab for girls under the age of eight. And yet a primary school that tried to ban the hijab for little girls was bullied into reversing the ban, and 150 schools across the UK now enforce mandatory hijabs.

Fundamentalist Islamic literature, banned in Saudi Arabia, is readily available in London bookshops. And here in Britain, there are already no-go areas for non-Muslims.

Grooming gangs have wreaked abhorrent abuses up and down our country.

Islam has got an official foot in the door of Parliament with the rise of the Muslim Vote. Tim exposed how this has gone as far as being improper religious influence and voter coercion, with candidates implying that devout Muslims have a duty to vote for them.

Over Easter, rather than celebrating this Christian holiday and our Christian heritage, our capital put up Ramadan lights instead. There are 85 Sharia councils in Britain, and these councils routinely use Islamic law to discriminate against women.

With boldly Islamist-motivated assassinations, Islamists pose the greatest terrorism threats in the UK.

All too often those who challenge Islam are the ones arrested, fined or even imprisoned for 'Islamophobia' – which the current government is intent on defining, despite widespread concern that it will further restrict free speech and criminalise criticism of Islam.

Tim highlighted the story of a 61-year-old non-violent protester jailed for 18 months for chanting "who the f*** is Allah?". The judge said the sentence was to 'deter' others from similar acts of protestation.

And this week, a man was arrested, charged and then doxed by police after publicly burning a Qur'an as an act of protest.

As Tim mentioned the similar case of courageous street-preacher Hatun Tash, applause started at the back of the room and rippled across the audience, echoing people's admiration for her bravery and dedication in the face of intense persecution. Tim reiterated that as Christians we need this same courage to stand up to Islam.

He encouraged listeners to engage not only with the contents of the book but with our wider society, saying "I hope this book gives you the courage and information to stand up to the challenge of Islam".

Q & A: where to from here?

The room filled with applause, and multiple hands eagerly shot up eager to get more answers to various questions raised by the content of the talk.

Ian Sleeper, a Christian Concern client arrested for criticising Islam, highlighted the crucial work that Christian Concern does in protecting free speech and challenging Islam.



Another attendee asked what three things Tim would encourage Christians to do in response to the information shared in his talk. Tim responded with five, as highlighted in *The Challenge of Islam*:

- Pray: we are in a spiritual battle
- Love: because Muslims truly are the greatest victims of Islam
- Confront: as Christians we are called to 'demolish strongholds'
- Resist: we must fight the influence of Islam in our nation, politics, and public sphere
- Expose: we must reveal the reality of Islam if we are to tackle it

A key point reiterated throughout the event was that the truth of Christianity is the answer to the challenge of Islam. But Tim also warned that, *“Islam doesn’t grow when Christianity is strong, but my concern is that Christianity is not strong in the UK right now.”*

As some questioned whether victory was even possible in the face of such an organised force as Islam, Tim boldly encouraged attendees that God is the one who causes change: *“I don’t believe the war is lost yet. We can stand up together today, we can be bold, and God can move mountains.”* A round of applause scattered across the audience, with participants emboldened and encouraged in their own actions to stand for truth, for freedom and for the gospel.

Another question was simple: *“Do you think Islamophobia will end up banning events like this?”* Tim’s answer was even more simple: “yes”. The audience was silent, waiting for more, then laughter rippled across the audience. But it was a laughter sobered by the reality that our freedom is slowly, but steadily, slipping away.



After the questions, Tim signed copies of his book while people browsed the other bookstore titles for sale and continued talking about the topics raised throughout the event.



As the evening ended, there was an air of piqued interest in not only the challenge of Islam, but how to effectively and courageously tackle this challenge.

The clarion call was clear: now is the time for Christians in the UK to be bold in their faith, bold in their opposition to Islam, and bold in their love for Muslims.

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