OUR CHANGING WORLD
THREAT OR OPPORTUNITY?

Our world is changing, and changing fast! Countries once considered to be isolated and remote are now readily accessible. Thousands of workers from developing countries are joining the global workforce daily. We are also in the middle of the most significant population shift since World War II, as migrants and refugees from Africa and the Middle East continue to arrive in Europe and North America in unprecedented numbers. On a local level, it is becoming more common to encounter people in our communities and neighborhoods who are from different cultures and backgrounds than ever before.

How should believers respond? While the issues are complex, here are some truths to consider.

1. God is in control. Paul proclaims in Acts 17:26, “From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.” Dealing with change can be scary, but the truth is that God is sovereign, therefore, none of the major shifts that are occurring in our world have taken Him by surprise. He not only allows change, He orchestrates it to further His kingdom and maximize His glory.

2. God pursues those who don’t know Him. Paul goes on to say in verse 27, “God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.” God’s heart is for relationship. One of His primary desires is for people to come to know Him through faith in Jesus Christ, regardless of their race, nationality, or background. God meets people where they are.

3. God uses believers to accomplish His purposes. One of the first recorded cross-cultural encounters of the early church is found in Acts 8 where God used Philip to reach out to an Ethiopian eunuch. God could have chosen many ways to reach him, an angel, a vision, a dream, but chose to use a person. While times and circumstances change, God’s strategy remains the same. God uses people to reach people.

4. God wants us to respond with faith, not fear. While concerns about safety and security need to be considered, our primary question as believers and as churches should be “Lord, what would you have me do in response to what You are doing?” And what a remarkable thing God is doing. Decades and even years ago, we wondered how we would reach people from distant cultures. Now the Lord is bringing them to our doorstep. How will you respond?

2,507,943 PRESENTATIONS OF THE GOSPEL

Because of the Lord’s provision through the generosity of our donors, the number of gospel presentations through EvanTell increased from 1.8 million to 2.5 million. This increase is largely due to our ability, for the first time in several years, to meet the demand for evangelistic tools and training from our current international networks. Please pray for us in 2016 as we pursue new opportunities to partner with church networks in some of the least reached countries and regions in the world, so that more and more people will be reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ. To learn more about our projects, visit: evantell.org/projects.

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- EvanTell Instructors Provide Tracts to Serbian Refugees
- 4 Things to Remember When Sharing Christ With Muslims
EVANTELL INSTRUCTORS PROVIDE TRACTS TO SERBIAN REFUGEES

Last fall, EvanTell sent Arabic and Farsi “May I Ask You a Question” tracts for Serbian refugees to Paul Meehan, one of our certified instructors and printing partners in Hungary and Eastern Europe.

Meehan reports, “We have distributed about 95% of the tracts. Many have heard and read about the gospel.”

Two of Meehan’s partners have been distributing EvanTell tracts, Christian literature, and winter clothes to refugees at a main freeway stop just before the Croatian border. Busses filled with refugees often stop and wait for several hours to get the “go ahead” to proceed into Croatia.

Sometimes police restrict who may help the refugees waiting at checkpoints, but recently there has been a wide open door for handing out tracts and necessities.

Meehan’s partner Steve Luibrand stated, “All the clothes were gone in about 10 minutes and most of the people got some literature too. We stayed for over an hour more and tried to talk to the people who approached us to look at or ask about the booklets or literature.”

Despite the language barrier, several refugees indicated gratitude at receiving literature in their own language. One man took a New Testament and kissed it. Another held a NT to his heart and smiled. Still another pointed to it and tried to talk to the people who approached us to look at or ask about the booklets or literature.

“We need to keep our eyes focused on God’s truth; these are people, just like us, with the same needs and weaknesses as we have. We must love them, and see them as the people that Jesus died for,” said Luibrand. “We must very carefully consider the great events of our age and ask ourselves, are we understanding the times and reacting as Jesus wants us to.”

EvanTell has materials available in over 50 languages. Learn how EvanTell can equip your missionaries or mission teams at: evantell.org/our-work.

1. MUSLIMS ARE PEOPLE. Sounds obvious, but is it? Because of the frequent reports we see on TV about Muslim extremists, it is easy for some to “dehumanize” Muslims, forgetting that they are people too. Muslims, like everyone else in the world, have personal needs. They need a friend, sympathy, help, advice, comfort, and in some cases, the physical necessities of life. The whole atmosphere of your relationship with a Muslim can be changed by ministering to them at their point of need, just as Christ did with people in His day.

2. DON’T FALL FOR STEREOTYPES OR PURPORT THEM. Muslims are not all alike. Just because someone says they are Muslim does not mean they fit into a certain profile or mold. There are many divisions and sects of Islam, including:

- **Sunnis** — Follow the Quran and Hadith (written traditions about Muhammad).
- **Shias** — Follow the Quran and the present day Ayatollahs.
- **Sufis** — Mystics who desire direct contact with God.
- **Folk Muslims** — A broad category including people who practice local forms of animistic religions under an Islamic cover.
- **Nominal Muslims** — They are Muslim in name but not in devout practice. They may have adopted the Muslim label because their parents were Muslim or just to fit in.

You would not want someone to label you in a negative way when they find out you are Christian (think about military Crusades from the past or some forms of “Christianity” you see on TV). Treat others the way you would want to be treated, as Christ did with people in His day.

3. MAKE CHRIST THE ISSUE. When sharing our faith, it is important to remember that we are sharing Jesus Christ, not a political philosophy, lifestyle, cultural mandate, or anything else above Him. Much good and bad has come from both Christian and Islamic cultures throughout the centuries. We are not comparing the two, we are pointing to Christ alone who transcends both.

4. DON’T BASE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM ON WHETHER OR NOT THEY TRUST CHRIST. Do you like for someone to pursue a friendship with you, then abandon you if you don’t agree with something they believe or don’t comply with their wishes? We are not called to be salespeople. We are called to engage and love people, while at the same time pointing them to Christ.


VISIT EVANTELL.ORG/BLOG FOR MORE STORIES AND RESOURCES ON THE THEME “SHARING CHRIST WITH OTHER CULTURES.”