

What is Dawah?

According to many scholars in this field the term DA'WAH applies to convey the message of Islam to non-Muslims and inviting them to Allah. Non-practicing and lost Muslims need to be reeducated and motivated to become better Muslims; they already know Allah (SWT) and have been given the concept of TAWHEED. Some objectives of Dawah are as follows:

- (a) Conveying the message of Islam to non-Muslims and inviting them to Allah
- (b) Making efforts to remove misinformation about Islam and Muslims from text books, reference material and media,
- (c) Making efforts for the integration of new Muslims into the Muslim community,
- (d) To develop material resources, recruit manpower (volunteer) and provide training for da'wah workers.

One must realize that the goal of Dawah to non-Muslims is not to convert them, in fact do not expect it, but the goal is to inform them and educate them. That is our only duty. Dawah with the intention of conversion might make you too aggressive and might make you come on too strong, hence scaring them away.

Is Dawah a duty on every Muslim?

Yes, it Is a Duty Assigned by Allah.

In the Qur'an Allah has placed the responsibility on the Muslim Ummah to convey the message of Islam to man-kind. Allah (SWT) says in Surah Al-Baqarah: "Thus We have appointed you a model community (Ummah), that you may be witnesses against mankind, and that the Messenger may be a witness against you". Al-Qur'an 2:143

We find numerous verses in the Qur'an on the same topic. Here witnessing means to convey the message of Islam, i.e. to call people towards Allah (da'aa ilallah as in the Qur'an 41:33). Prophet Muhammad (S) completed his assignment in his lifetime by conveying the message to the entire Arabian Peninsula and sending letters to the heads of surrounding countries. In his Khutbah of his farewell hajj he passed on the responsibility to every Muslim when he said, "Those who are present should convey (my message) to those who are not". Bukhari.

He did not allow us to wait until we are a perfect Islamic society before we begin to convey the message. Prophet Muhammad (S) did not wait until a few converts grew up to develop an Islamic society nor he did want us to wait. He said as given in Bukhari, "Convey for me (to the people) even it be single ayah (verse)".

No one as an individual or as a community can delay until perfection is achieved; as soon as you have some knowledge of Islam you have a duty to convey it to those unfortunate people who know little or nothing about Islam and invite them to it.

The emphasis is on the transmission of the message of Islam to other human beings. We, the Muslims are not responsible to convert people by force or coercion, as Allah (SWT) has clearly forbidden such tactics (The Qur'an 2:256). All human beings on earth have God given freedom to submit to Him (God Alone) or submit to taghut (non-God anything).

Remember, dawah has great rewards. **Whoever guides someone towards good, will receive the reward of the one who acts upon it. (Muslim)** This means, if a person is converted through the dawah you give him/her, you get rewards for all the prayers he/she does or all the fasts that he/she does, etc.

General Tips of Dawah

- The best dawah is to be a good example because people can see this without you having to talk to them.
- 1. You should be a good example all the time, not just when doing Dawah.
- 2. Don't be a hypocrite and not follow what you preach. For example: how would it look if you tell people that Muslims can't drink alcohol and then they see you drinking.
- Smell good
- Chew gum or something for good breath. You don't want to drive anybody away.
- Don't act like you're better than the person or people you are giving Dawah to.
- Don't insult the person or their religion.
- Don't tell them that they are wrong and you are right and that they are going to hell.

- Don't get too deep in a subject you don't know much about, because if they have questions, you won't have answers.
- Use common sense to explain Islam because much of Islamic ethics and rules are based on common sense and most people can relate to common sense
- Dress nicely according to your crowd. If you're doing Dawah to teenagers, dress casually. If you're doing dawah to adults, dress a bit nicer.
- **Dawah opportunities are everywhere.** Just look for them. For example: you are eating food with your friends, and they are eating pork. Let them know that you can't eat it. That is Dawah. For teenagers specifically, whenever people are talking about dating or dances, tell them it is against your religion and why.
- The easiest people to give dawah to are the ones who already believe in God or some kind of deity. People who don't believe in God, atheists, are the hardest to give dawah too. Don't be scared to give them dawah, but be prepared and be knowledgeable because they always look at everything from scientific point of view.

Methodology of Dawah

- When giving dawah, you have to be wise. Be careful how you word things and think before you talk.
- Know who you are talking to. For example, try to find out what they are interested in or if they have any problems. According to that, give them their information.
- People will always be interested if it gives them an answer to their problem or it has something to do with them.

Dawah to Christians

- First of all, the best Dawah is by your actions.
- When doing Dawah to non-Muslims, we should try to concentrate on what we have in common to them. For example: Islam and Christianity both believe that abortion is wrong.
- This will break some tension, and it will show them that we are not that much different than them.

- We should let them know that we have a lot of the same ethics and manners as them.
- Let them know that we believe in heaven, hell, angels, devils, the day of judgment, sins, repentance, prophets.
- Let them know we only believe in one God.
- Avoid controversial issues, like is Jesus (pbuh) the son of God or just a prophet.
- Do not insult them or put them or their religion down in any way. Remember, your goal is to educate them on our religion, not to convert them.
- Avoid argument and debates. This only leads to ruin.