

The Qur'ān

For Further Reflection

1. Is devotional recitation of the Qur'ān an appropriate Christian practice? If so, how is this practice best understood and justified? Are Christians (like George Dardess, for example) who take a positive view of this practice affirming an alternative sacramental system, with the language of the Qur'ān a vehicle of divine grace as effective in its own way as the eucharist?
2. Is it appropriate to include readings from the Qur'ān in Christian liturgies (for example, one of the Qur'ānic annunciation-narratives in a Christmas carol service)?¹
3. What, positively, can Christians learn from the Qur'ān? How can the Qur'ān enrich Christians?
4. Does the Islamic view of the Qur'ān as the central locus of revelation, with every word being of direct divine origin, generate an “all or nothing” character about response to the Qur'ān, making it difficult for Christians to offer an appreciative but inevitably selective response, affirming some elements within the Qur'ān and disagreeing with others? How do Muslims respond to a selectively positive view of the Qur'ān?
5. How do we assess the view of the Qur'ān as “late Christian apocrypha”?² If accepted, what are its implications? What other ways are there of expressing positive Christian recognition of the Qur'ān?

¹ Dupuis supports the discerning use of non-Christian scripture in Christian worship, but the “Notification” appears to be criticizing this position when it argues that non-Christian scriptures should not be considered as complementary to the Old Testament (Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, 253 for Dupuis’ view, and 437 for the “Notification”).

² This view is proposed by the Protestant writer F. Peter Ford, Jr. in his essay, “The Qur'ān as Sacred Scripture: an Assessment of Contemporary Christian Perspectives,” *The Muslim World* 83 (1993), 142-164.

6. How do we assess the argument that the forms of Christianity criticized by the Qur'ān are heretical, and that therefore the Qur'ān should not be understood as critical of orthodox Christianity?
7. Should Christians accept (and indeed practise) the application of the historical-critical method to the Qur'ān, as with biblical criticism? Or should they avoid it, conscious that for many Muslims it appears to be an attack on their faith and therefore could damage Christian-Muslim relations?
8. Is it appropriate for Christians to interpret the Qur'ān in ways that harmonize with Christian doctrine but go against mainstream Islamic interpretation? Is it relevant to this question to note that the converse certainly applies, in the long and continuing tradition of Muslim interpretation of the Bible in ways that harmonize with Islamic doctrine?
9. Can Muslim-Christian dialogue helpfully discuss the Qur'ān's claim to be a scripture in the line of the Torah and the Gospel? Can Muslim and Christian scholars fruitfully explore the relationship between the Bible as it now exists and the original Torah and Gospel conceived of by Muslims, along with the process of corruption (*tahrīf*) of the original scriptures widely believed by Muslims to have taken place?
10. Can dialogue between Muslim and Christian scholars helpfully explore more fully the similarities between the intra-Christian debates about Christ leading to the Creeds and the intra-Muslim debates about the createdness or uncreatedness of the Qur'ān?