

**Friday Morning
50,000 ft Overview
Bob Blincoe (15 min)**



Bob Blincoe: *50,000 Foot Overview* (15 min.)

Warm opening remarks ...

Isn't this a wonderful place? I always feel my pulse rate drop just a bit when I'm able to get away somewhere special like this. But I've recently been to a place that is quite different from the Four Seasons.

Earlier this year, I was in India.

Now, if you've never been there, India is a noisy, dangerous place. The air is toxic. The ground is toxic. Everything you touch is toxic.

Yet, India represents incredibly fertile ground for the Gospel. Unlike many of the restricted-access countries we work in, India is wide open to Americans. And so I traveled there.

My host took me to a new city called Ghaziabad. It is a city in the state of Uttar Pradesh just east of Delhi. He had already done the pray walk in this city. And he told me, "Now, we are going to go back and open our mouths, and talk about our master."

So, we went looking for a man of peace who wanted to hear the story of Jesus.

Up and down crowded, smelly alleyways we went. Over and over, I went up to people in these busy, noisy streets and said, "I am here because my master has sent me. He told me to look for someone who wanted to hear a story from him."

And the answers were consistent: No ... No ... No ...

But then we heard a "Yes!"

The one who finally said yes was a man with a white hat and a white robe. He was a sheikh, a local leader. This man brought out chairs and put them in a big circle. He called for an interpreter, and he ordered a two-liter bottle of Pepsi for us to share.

So, we sat down, and I told him my story about Jesus Christ from the Sermon on the Mount. And everyone recognized that this was a good thing that I was there. It wasn't like I was preaching on the street with a loud voice. I had his ear.

And when I was done, you know what he said? He said, "My wife is sick."

And suddenly I knew why I was alive and why I was there in Ghaziabad.

I stood up, and I asked him to stand up. I put my hands in front of me palms up and I lifted my eyes to the Lord and through the translator I said, "Jesus Christ, look at this poor man's wife. Restore her to health. Bring her back to his side. Bring her back to her children. Thee who healed in ancient Palestine, heal this woman here, we ask in your name, amen."

Now, I don't know if she was healed. But I do know that I was doing exactly what Jesus had for me to do.

And so we went to the next alleyway, and it was the same thing.

I walked up to men who had the white robe on and said, “I am here because my master sent me. Would you like to hear a story?”

No ... No ... No ... YES!

And then the next block, YES! Three times in three hours.

So, as far as we know, we were the first people in the history of the world to share Jesus Christ with the Muslim people of Ghaziabad.

Frontiers now has a forward base in Delhi, India. Our people go there to get their bearings before heading out into the field. They learn the language; they do their research; they converse with other leaders; and they pray.

So, someday, somebody will go to Ghaziabad. And, with God’s grace, they will carry the Gospel to someone who has never heard it.

This is our work. This is what we do.

We are a movement on the edge. We are focused on preaching the Gospel where Christ is not known.

Very particularly, our goal is to reach unengaged Muslim people groups.

Now, for some of you, that might sound like a mouthful of ministry-speak: “Unengaged Muslim people groups.”

So, what do we mean by unengaged?

Well, in just one region of South Asia, there are nearly one hundred million Muslims now living without a witness ... without someone who is willing to share with them about Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

They are unengaged, in large part, because they live in hard places — places that are hard to reach and hard to survive in.

They live in areas that are often incredibly remote. The temperatures are scorching. There's no reliable electricity, and maybe you can only get water every third day from a broken-down generator. There's often a history of war and conflict. The governments don't want any attention or interaction with outside groups. And so the spiritual forces of darkness reign here.

We send a very special breed of Christian worker to share the love of Jesus Christ with those who have never heard of His salvation and grace. These aren't your garden-variety missionaries. These are the folks who go to the toughest places ... where no missionary pushpins are on the map. And they engage with the Muslim people. They reside among them ... learning the language ... learning the culture ... interacting in a way that allows them to gain the favor of the people.

It's long-term planting at its most long-term.

So that's engagement.

But what do we mean when we speak of "Muslim people groups?"

Well, we look at Muslims the way they see themselves — as the large groupings of tribe, language and caste.

These are distinct groups of 100,000 or more, each with their own language and identity.

And within these people groups are these large families. In fact, a Muslim family — that is an extended family within the tribe — is the largest group of people in which a marriageable man could marry a woman, and both families would bless the marriage as having taken place within “our kind of people.”

That’s a people group.

And you know what, Jesus spoke like that. He spoke of large flocks that were scattered across the land. In John 10:16 he says: “... *And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*”

And Revelation 5:9: “*You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.*”

And here’s the amazing news about Muslim people groups: We’ve come to a place in time where we can count the remaining groups in the Muslim world.

The number is now around 182 distinct people groups who have not been reached with the Gospel of Christ.

So, my friends, we now find ourselves living in the day where we can see the end of the beginning.

The end of the beginning of planting churches among the remaining hundreds of unengaged Muslims.

It can be done in our generation.

In fact, like John Piper says, if we wait any longer, we're going to have to apologize to the Holy Spirit for wasting all of the resources.

So, with love and respect, we invite all Muslim people to follow Jesus.

But "love and respect" is an unusual statement for a lot of Christians as it relates to Muslims.

Christians seem to understand the idea of showing love to Muslims. But the concept of respect toward Muslims is harder to find.

Genesis 1:27 declares that we are all made in the image of God. Including Muslims.

Yet all many of us seem to know about our Muslim brothers and sisters is what we see in the news — the burkas and the bombs ... the beheadings. And so we are afraid of what we don't understand. And out of that fear comes disrespect and hostility — things that only undermine our efforts to reach Muslim people with the love of Christ.

But it is only through love and respect that we can affect transformation in our — quote-unquote "enemy." And so Frontiers is *the* missions agency through which Muslims taste the grace and mercy of Christ.

And here's the amazing thing: Muslims who have only known Muslim fundamentalism are — under the right circumstance — profoundly open to the joy, freedom and forgiveness that comes with following Christ.

My friends, it's not easy being a Muslim today. It is a religion that does not allow people to make choices for themselves, nor does it provide satisfying answers for the huge struggles of life. Here, you have a disheartened, discouraged people who are desperate for the message of Christ. They are desperate to discover others who care about them, a God who loves them and hope for the future.

We know that transformation of Muslim people groups is best accomplished through church planting. And while church planting may not sound fresh and new and exciting, it is absolutely how community transformation happens.

So, believing in Christ's closure missiology, our ambition is to finish the work of planting churches among the remaining hundreds of unengaged Muslim people by the year 2025.

But it takes a very special kind of person to engage the Muslim people.

The folks we send to the field are unique. They are entrepreneurial, risk-taking, challenge-oriented people.

They are not satisfied with building on another man's foundation. They're the folks whose eyes dilate and whose hair stands up on the back of their neck when we say, "Well, you can be like Paul and get out there beyond the frontier."

And, quite honestly, these are people who have been knocked around a bit by the real world. They've been knocked down and gotten back up. And they figure, "You know what? If I can make it in America, I can make it anywhere."

So, they go.

Many of you here in this room know what that's like, too. You know what it's like to be broken in the business world ... to come this close to losing your fortune. You know what it's like to be hurt and broken by friends you once trusted. You know what it is like to come this close to losing your faith.

But, you're back. You survived. And now you ask, "What am I here for?" "Why am I among the fortunate ones?" "What did God bless me with this for?"

Well, this weekend, we want to give you a chance to say, “Wow, *this* is what God intends for me!”

We want to give you the opportunity to partner with us in changing the Muslim world. To partner with us as we work to bring the current evil age to an end.

Following our Founder’s vision, we are *the* missions agency that is exclusively devoted to the Muslim world. *The* missions agency that plants the Church in Muslim communities. Because the Church matters ... only the Church has the power to transform the Islamic culture.

And so this weekend, we will be sharing with you the three pillars of our ministry — a ministry uniquely poised to complete the task of reaching the hundreds of remaining unengaged Muslim people groups.

The pillars are as simple as they are profound:

Now is the time. The opportunities before us now are historic. It may be now or never in the Arab world. We need to send missionaries out NOW.

These are the places. We will reach the Muslim world by going to the hard places, the places where our courageous missionaries thrive.

And, finally, these are the people. These are the people who will carry the message — both our missionaries, who are a special breed, but also the Muslim Christians in the churches we plant. Often martyrs, they are people of unbelievable courage.

Since we think the most important thing to Christ is that we meet his Father’s will ... and since the end of the world seems to depend somehow on the finishing of this task — Matthew 24:14 — I would propose that, although there are many important tasks for the people of God, there is one more urgent task than this.

When Jesus looked upon the lost people in first-century Palestine, “He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd” — Matthew 9:36. And then He proclaimed something remarkable. He proclaimed that these lost souls were a “plentiful harvest” that only lacked harvesters.

And so we look to the task that Jesus has given us in Matthew 24 and 28: Complete the task that I have given you to make obedient disciples of all the world. And I will be with you always to accomplish this task. And when you are finished, I will come back for you!

This weekend, I believe that — if you let Him — you will hear God’s guidance ... His direction for you in the harvest.

Now, in just a minute, you’ll have a chance to see in a very real way how the God of love and grace is writing a new story of Islam in our lifetimes. It’s a compelling video that shares an amazing story.

I hope you enjoy it.

Thank you.