

How to use this Course

Please definitely read this section. It will help you maximise the benefit from the course.

Who and what is this course for?

It is for *Christ's followers from Muslim background*, or those who are close to deciding for Christ. It helps them take first steps in discipleship. Mature believers will also benefit, because the course helps them reflect on issues relevant to Muslim culture and to discuss these with others.

What is the learning method?

This course cannot be completed just through self-study. It is to be used in a relational way. The course method each week is for the learner(s) to:

1. firstly, *learn from the course book* themselves through personal home study;
2. secondly, *interact with you (and others if possible)* in discussion, typically once a week;
3. thirdly, *put the teaching into practice* in the context of their daily lives.

In more detail:

- The *'home study' stage* involves active learning not passive reading. It requires learners to do something after each short section of teaching:
 - Some questions help learners *remember* what they have just read;
 - Some questions help them *understand* and *apply* the teaching to their lives;
 - Some questions help them *reflect* on their attitudes and talk to God about them;
 - Some questions help them be ready to *share* their experiences in the discussion time;
 - Also the pictures and examples help learners to *connect* God's Word with life experience.
- The *discussion stage* makes the material alive and relevant. Learners voice their own opinion and listen to others' opinions. This breaks down old attitudes and brings new motivations.
- The *'practical task' stage* gives the learners something to *do* before the next meeting. It prevents the lesson from being just being theory and makes it a part of their lives.

Is it for use with individuals or groups?

This course can be used in either way, and there are advantages and disadvantages of each. You will be guided by circumstances according to who is available to study the course. If it is possible to bring together a small group of BMBs, this strengthens their interrelationship and allows them to gain experience in leading discussion. Individual mentoring is important too. But 1:1 discussion can become one-directional, when you ask all the questions and they give all the answers; so try to make it a shared experience, where you are both learning from God's Word and from each other.

Here in the Advisors Guide we usually refer to 'the learner(s)', to mean either singular or plural. Also, instead of 'his or her' we use 'their' to include male and female. All the discussion questions can be used with groups or with individuals, though a few of the learning activities require a group.

Must all twenty lessons be covered at one go?

Not necessarily. Twenty weeks without a break is a very long course! So feel free to do it in two halves with a break in the middle; or just select the lessons which are relevant to your learner(s).

What is the format and timing of the discussion time?

There is no fixed time or format. You may vary them as needed, but a typical discussion session might last at least 1½ hours (including refreshments) and would include:

- Refreshments and chat (at the beginning or end)

- Opening prayer
- Review of last week's practical task
- Review of this week's home study
- Discussion of selected questions from the lesson
- Discussion of a Bible passage
- Sometimes, a video clip or an activity
- Practice of a memory verse
- Closing time of prayer, including personal prayer requests

In the discussion time, do not simply go through all the material in the course book. This becomes tedious. Anyway, the learner(s) should already have covered this before coming for discussion, so you need not revise it all. Nor should you add much fresh teaching in sermon format. Instead, concentrate on those practical discussion points which help bring life change for the learner(s).

Is this course based on the Bible?

Yes, very much so. It is rooted in the conviction that the Bible is God's Word and that we as Christ's followers (both the learners and the advisor) need to understand and obey it. *Come Follow Me* is based on 1 Peter, which was originally written to guide new Christians in a context of pressure.

The course book has as its backbone is an inductive study of 1 Peter, taken in sequence from the first to the last chapter (though not covering quite all of the verses). Springing from this backbone, like ribs, are twenty topics important for relevant to believers of Muslim background (BMBs). These ribs link with relevant teaching from other parts of the Bible.

Each lesson has a memory verse to summarize its theme. These verses are drawn from 1 Peter and other books, and are collected for your convenience in the Appendix of this advisor's guide. To aid memory, short verses are selected for memorization, or else short sections of longer verses.

Why does the course book look so simple?

It was originally written for a context where few people have the opportunity for higher education. Therefore it uses easy-to-read text, with concrete examples and pictures. But this does not mean the concepts are simple. Personal study of these lessons provides a springboard for the discussion time leading to in-depth reflection, transformed worldview and practical discipleship. Concrete examples make discussion and application easier than if it was just abstract teaching. Also, a person disciplined through this course has an easy tool to disciple others. This makes the discipling more reproducible.

Why is this advisor's guide so detailed?

It is written to help a wide range of advisors. Some of them need more help in creating discussion questions, others need cultural guidelines. We have also suggested feedback for discussion questions. Experienced advisors will not need this, but it is all included here so that you can select what is relevant for you.

If there are too many questions to cover in each week's discussion time, just select the ones which are relevant to your learner(s). But please try to include the ones which in the course book are marked 'for discussion' or 'personal response'.

Does each learner need their own copy of the course book?

Yes, and so do you. You may obtain these from

www.lulu.com/shop/tim-green/come-follow-me/paperback/product-21011264.html .

Your Role as Advisor

The book is the teacher

In one way, you are not the teacher. This is because the book itself gives the teaching in a simple way. It asks easy questions and it even gives the answers at the end of each lesson. The picture of the 'teacher' reminds the learner(s) of the main points. This makes your task easier, because you do not need to write the lessons yourself. You should not use the discussion time to give a sermon, but rather to help the learners explore and apply the teaching which has already been given in the book.



You are a mentor and friend

The learners look to you as their mentor. You are their role model, advisor and friend. They will watch you carefully. Your example is more important than your knowledge. As one Afghan believer said, *"when I asked for Bible study... I was studying the person who was discipling me"*.

Remember that learners are adults, not children. They have many experiences of life which they can contribute to the group. Therefore in the discussion time, ask them lots of questions. Ask them about their opinions and experiences. Help them to think for themselves. Make sure that they do the 'practical task' each week. Be a good model for them. Care for them. Pray for them. Share their joys and sorrows. As crises arise, help them to face them with a godly attitude.

Meet up with your friend informally outside of the weekly meeting. Have them over for a meal, or go out to do something fun together. Do normal things together. You would be surprised how much they pick up from watching your actions and reactions, how you deal with stress, how you forgive others, your habits, your family life.

Disciples make disciples

A course book cannot make a disciple. Only disciples make disciples. Someone helped you grow as Christ's disciple. Now it is your turn to help someone else grow. These days more Muslim people are turning to Jesus than ever before. But evangelism without discipling brings limited fruit. May God use you as his co-worker, to see fruit multiplied in the lives and families of his dear people coming from Islam to follow Jesus Christ.

How to lead each Lesson

Before each Meeting

1. At least two days before the meeting, prepare the lesson yourself, as if you were the learner. Write your own answers to all questions. Don't take short-cuts.
2. Then, read the 'Aims' for the lesson. Our suggested aims are in a box, at the start of each lesson in this advisor's guide. For example, here are the Aims for lesson 9:

AIMS OF LESSON 9

For each member to:

- a. be sure that nothing can separate us from God's love
- b. understand that persecution will definitely happen but God uses it for our good
- c. learn to act wisely to avoid unnecessary persecution
- d. memorize 1 Peter 2:21

All these Aims have something for the members to do this week:

- 'be sure' is an *attitude*.
- 'understand' is an aspect of *knowledge*;
- 'learn to act wisely' is a *skill* to put into practice;
- 'memorize' is a good way to bring God's Word right inside their hearts and lives.

3. Next, read the Guidelines for this lesson. We have given you detailed guidelines to help you step-by-step. Choose those discussion questions which are relevant for your learner(s). Later, as you gain more experience, feel free to write your own discussion questions according to the needs of your members and the aims of the lesson.

4. Finally, pray for each member of the group. Ask God to help you be a good advisor.

During each Meeting

1. Welcome people as they arrive. Serve a drink if you wish.
2. Follow the steps in the box to start the meeting. For example, here are the starting steps for Lesson 9:

TO START THE MEETING

START WITH PRAYER

LAST WEEK'S PRACTICAL TASK

- Say: "Lesson 8's Practical Task was to do something to serve our community or a needy person or someone in authority. Did you do that, and how did the other person respond?" *[Ask each member in turn. If the other person was grateful for the help, that's good. But even if not, it doesn't matter, for we serve them for Christ's sake.]*

TODAY'S TOPIC

- Say: "Today's topic is persecution, and it is a very hard subject. Maybe our discussion will bring tears because of hurt we have experienced. But God uses persecution for good, and can heal our pain as we talk about these things."

LESSON REVIEW

- Turn together to Lesson 9 Review and ask what the learner(s) wrote:
Question 1: "for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps" (1 Peter 2:21).
Question 2: 1) world, hates; 2) God, persecution; 3) act foolishly; 4) Christ's steps

(Note: Please definitely check if the learner(s) completed the previous week's Practical Task. This shows them that this course is not just about learning truths but about putting them into practice. Also, it shows you how they are making progress in discipleship and where they still face challenges.)

3. Then lead the discussion, using the discussion questions you previously selected. If you run short of time, at least make sure you cover the questions marked 'for discussion' or 'personal response' in the course book. If you are not experienced in group discussion methods, read the guideline 'Leading Group Discussion'.

4. You as advisor should not speak too much of the time. Instead, the learner(s) should speak more. Therefore, whenever it comes to reading a paragraph from the course book or a passage from the Bible, it is better for a learner to read this out, not you.

5. In lessons 1-5, we have included some learning activities, and also some video clips to view online with the learner(s) if you wish (on a computer, tablet or smart phone). If you find good clips or learning activities to fit with lessons 6-20, please let us know about them.

6. At the end, follow the steps in the box to close the meeting. For example, here is the box at the end of lesson 9:

TO FINISH THE MEETING

ASK:

- “What difference will today’s lesson make in your life?” *[Each person should share, including you as advisor.]*

READ the Lesson 9 Practical Task.

SAY:

- “As you go through a verse each day, read it a few times, very slowly. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand how it can bring comfort to you in times of persecution.” “And do the home study for lesson 10.”

CLOSE IN PRAYER

- Ask different members to pray short prayers, thanking God for his strong promise in times of persecution. Pray for those suffering persecution in other countries, especially Christ’s followers of Muslim background.

After the Meeting

1. If your group has marks for tests or attendance, record these.
2. Consider if you led the discussion well. Ask yourself these four questions:
 - “Did I talk too much?”
 - “Did all members take part in discussion including the quiet and shy members?”
 - “Were my questions clear to understand and good for discussion?”
 - “Did the lesson fulfil its aims and was it practical for our lives?”

Learn from experience and try to improve any weak areas next week.

3. Keep praying for the learner(s) during the week.

Leading Group Discussion

Here are some guidelines if you do not have much experience in leading discussion.

- Don't talk too much yourself! You should ask questions, not give a lecture. Adults learn more this way and they enjoy it more. Good questions should:
 - be easy to understand
 - be relevant to the lesson
 - open up discussion (not close it off with a one word answer like 'yes' or 'no')
- Give an opportunity for every member to take part in discussion. Ask the talkative ones not to speak too much. Help the shy ones by asking them easy questions (and don't allow others to answer on their behalf.)
- If group members cannot understand a question, do not give the answer yourself, but ask the same question again in a different way.
- Don't let the discussion stray away from the main point.
- If a member gives an answer which is 'wrong' or does not help the discussion, do not shame them by saying 'you are wrong'. Instead, ask what other members think. Usually they will give a better answer. Or you can say, 'Thank you for your contribution, which we appreciate, but have you considered this aspect too?'
- Concentrate on the practical aspect of each lesson, so that each member of the group goes away with something to apply to his or her life.
- Let the members ask you questions. If you don't know the answer, tell them you will find out before the next meeting. They will respect you more for this than if you pretend to know the answer. Make sure that you fulfil this promise by bringing your answer to the next meeting.
- When it's time to read out a Bible verse or a section from the course book, ask one member to do so. This gives them more chance to be actively involved. It is a good way to get shy members to take part in discussion.

Discipling believers of Muslim background

If you have little experience in discipling a Christian of Muslim background, and especially if you are in the West, please read these pages.

Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of people from all cultures. However, this does not mean making them western Christians. There are good and bad points in all cultures. All of us should let God's Word shine on our cultural blind spots, whether we are from the West or the East. For instance, is it more 'biblical' to wear eastern or western clothes? To eat with our hands or with a knife and fork? To pray with our hands together or with palms turned upwards? To value individualism or sharing? To focus just on our nuclear family or also to care for wider relatives? With many of these practices God welcomes cultural variety, and in some of them there are good things we can learn from believers of Muslim background.

However God's Word challenges other aspects of culture, whenever these are infected by human sinfulness. Discipleship includes learning to value honesty above honour, to forgive those who hurt us, to have a right attitude to the opposite sex, to put God first in all our decisions, etc. These and other issues arise from a mix of personal background and culture. How can you find out the relevant issues for your friend(s)? By spending time with them, listening to them and praying for them. Ask questions about their own upbringing and family life. Remember that individuals are all different. So find out by asking.

Many Muslim cultures have much in common. But remember that they vary too. Pakistanis, Iranians and Arab are not the same! Even within those cultures there is variation between different ethnic groups or socio-economic classes. So ask your friend about their cultural upbringing: what they like about their culture and what they don't like. Sometimes after receiving Christ they reject their old culture. But their long-term psychological health is better served by integrating some aspects of their old culture with the new, rather than suppressing them altogether.

Find out too about the struggles faced by 'believers of Muslim background' (BMBs). Some common issues they face after turning to Christ are:

- Leaving behind their former home, family and culture. This can lead to profound *loneliness* and a sense of *losing their identity*.
- Active persecution by family members. This can lead to a striking sense of *rejection*.
- *Shame* imposed by their former community.
- *Lack of structure* in the Christian faith, compared with Islam which gives people a clear framework to follow.
- *Lack of community* among Christ's followers compared with what they are used to.

Because of these issues, the *Come Follow Me* course has been developed around 1 Peter, with a special focus on questions of identity. It teaches that we are 'God's chosen people', precious to him and bonded to each other in Christ.

BMBs in the West often have more freedom in relation to their Muslim communities, and less persecution, than they would in Muslim lands. On the other hand, they face different challenges, especially if they have fairly recently arrived in the West. These challenges include, for example:

- How to cope with 'freedom of choice' and make decisions wisely;
- How to budget their finances;
- How to adjust to the mindset and cultures of western Christians;

- How to handle relationships with the opposite sex;
- How to negotiate bureaucracy, form-filling, asylum procedures and job-hunting;
- How to integrate the different parts of their identity.

It would be good for additional lessons to be developed on such topics, as *Come Follow Me* was not originally written for BMBs in the West.

Understanding people's stories is key to the success of this course. It will enable you as the Advisor to understand many of the joys and difficulties that former Muslims face in following Jesus. It will also help you to make a link between the course material and the lives of the learner(s) you are discipling. In addition it will allow you to understand why the material covers the topics it does with its focus on topics like persecution, which do not often feature in other discipleship courses. A meal/refreshment time before or after the discussion can really help build up your friendship and trust with the learner(s) in order that they will feel able to share their story.

Finally, it's all about caring. Love makes the biggest impact. Love covers a multitude of cultural blunders! Love means being available to your friend when they are confused and hurting. It means giving hospitality when they are missing their family. It means keeping in touch with them by phone and text, not just in the formal ways of emails and meetings. One BMB said, "*I gave up my family in order to follow Jesus, and all I got in return was meetings!*"

From 2014 onwards, it is hoped that more materials and training will gradually become available to help equip Christians to care for and disciple believers of Muslim background. These would mostly be relevant in other Western contexts too. Please email comefollowmecourse@gmail.com for information on this.

Muslim Terms and Cultural Issues

Limited use of Muslim terms

For the learner(s) to understand new ideas, it can be helpful to start with a bridge from their old ideas. This helps them compare and contrast the old with the new. It also helps them explain the Christian message to their Muslim friends in a way that makes sense and doesn't sound too foreign.

Therefore, to a *limited* extent this course uses a few Muslim terms as a starting-point, and as a bridge to take them from their familiar world to the new world of Christian teaching. For instance, when we talk about Christ's *shariah* (law), it helps learners reflect on their former *shariah* as Muslims and to realize that their new way of obeying Christ as Lord is different.

A glossary of terms

The following Arabic terms are mentioned in this course. Here we give them with a typical English spelling, without technical markings, and with their basic general meaning. More sophisticated spellings and definitions can be found in relevant books. Good introductions to Islam from a Christian perspective include *Friendship First* by Steve Bell, *Cross and Crescent* by Colin Chapman.

<i>Dua</i> (ch 5)	personal prayer
<i>Haji</i> (ch 20)	pilgrimage
<i>Halal</i> (ch 15)	ceremonially clean
<i>Injil</i> (ch 1)	the Gospels, the Gospel
<i>Jinn</i> (ch 18)	spirits
<i>Kafir</i> (ch 2)	infidel
<i>Kalima</i> (ch 1)	lit. 'a word' also used for <i>shahaaha</i> (see below)
<i>Murtadd</i> (ch 2)	an apostate who has abandoned Islam
<i>Paradise</i> (ch 1, 9, 20)	Muslim concept of heaven
<i>Qibla</i> (ch 20)	the geographical focal point of prayer - for Muslims, Mecca
<i>Salah/Namaz</i> (ch 5)	ritual prayer done five times daily by Muslims
<i>Sawm/Roza</i> (ch 17)	fasting done in the month of Ramadan by Muslims
<i>Shahada</i> (ch 13, 20)	witness or testimony. Especially the Muslim creed "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His apostle"
<i>Shariah</i> (ch 17)	religious law and way of life
<i>Shirk</i> (ch 3)	idolatry, associating something with God
<i>Sunnah</i> (ch 17)	example or pattern for living (for Muslims, this is especially Muhammad's example)
<i>Tawrat</i> (ch 4)	the books of Moses, Pentateuch
<i>Ummah</i> (ch 7,14)	Arabic term for the worldwide community of believers
<i>Zabur</i> (ch 6)	the Psalms
<i>Zakat</i> (ch 17)	compulsory charity-tax for Muslims

The 'five pillars', mentioned in ch 20, are the five fundamental Islamic practices; *shahada*, ritual prayer, fasting, *zakat* and *hajj* (see definitions above).

Muslim cultural issues

Most lessons in this course are written with specific cultural issues in mind. These are explained with the Advisors notes for each lesson. However, remember that not all BMBs are influenced by these to the same extent, so you should adapt the application of the lessons to your particular learner(s).

Frequently Asked Questions

In what languages is the course book available?

At the time of writing (January 2014), the only complete updated version is in English. An earlier version of the course is available and ready in Dari. This is the Afghan form of Farsi and can be understood by Iranians, though hopefully the updated version of the course will be available in Iranian Farsi during 2014. Draft translations of the earlier version are complete in Pashtu and Urdu but need editing. Translation has been started in Arabic. For more information on these languages, or for permission to start translation in another language, please contact comefollowmecourse@gmail.com.

How may the course book be obtained in different countries?

Please order it at www.lulu.com/shop/tim-green/come-follow-me/paperback/product-21011264.html. Lulu is a 'print-on-demand' publisher which has printing outlets and local delivery services in several countries. On their website, open the flags icon to check which country is most convenient for you. Later there will also be distribution through Amazon which has an even wider reach.

Is it available online or as a download?

The course book is not designed as a document to read off a screen. Rather, it is a course book for the learner to write their responses, and then bring it along to the discussion time so that with the advisor they can discuss the practical application. This process of active learning is a more effective way to learn than simply passive reading.

For these reasons there is no plan to make the course book available online. Possibly a writeable version to use on a tablet may be considered later. However, the advisor's guide will be freely available online once a website is launched.

Is the course suitable for oral learners?

In one way the course method is already oral, because the key part of it is the discussion time. Also, non-literate learners can memorize the Bible verses, discuss the pictures in the course book, and carry out the practical tasks.

However, the home study element does require the skills of reading and writing. For any learners who cannot read easily or at all, follow these guidelines:

- For each of these people, find another member of the group to be their helper. Beforehand they will go through the lesson together, to help the non-reader (or slow reader) understand the main teaching. Then in the meeting they will sit together, and the helper will help them find the right place or picture in the book. The helper might be a member of the family, or another person.
- Remember that the non-readers in the group have as much experience of life as those who can read. Their opinion is just as valuable. Make sure they have equal opportunity to contribute to the discussion so that all members can benefit.

Does the course refer directly to Islam?

The *Course Book* does not mention Islam directly. This is partly for security reasons, since it was originally written for believers in a very restrictive Muslim country, where anything in print which might be thought critical of Islam could endanger them (this is less of a problem in the West). It was also

because the focus is not on Islam but on following Jesus and his teaching. However, the course deliberately tackles issues which arise for Christ's followers from Muslim background. There is also limited use of Muslim terms as a bridge to take the learners to a new Christian meaning, as explained in the section 'Muslim Terms and Cultural Issues'.

This *Advisors Guide* does refer more directly to Islam, in order to guide advisors who might lack the cultural background, and also because we assume there won't be a security issue. However, if necessary we could consider producing an edition for use in contexts where it would not be helpful to mention Islam. Please contact me if you think such an edition is needed.

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Feedback Requested

1. Are there too many discussion questions in each lesson?
2. Which discussion questions should be improved, and how?
3. Which 'cultural clues' can be improved or added to?
4. Should the Bible translation underlying this course be the New International Version (widely available) or the New Living Translation (easier for second language English readers)?
5. What video clips or learning activities would you suggest for lessons 6-20?
6. What examples from Muslim culture, or case-studies of Christ's followers from Muslim background, would you suggest for future courses of this type?

Please send feedback to comefollowmecourse@gmail.com. Thanks for your help!