

A Time For Prayer

In Thailand, when they build a new house, one wall in the family room is constructed so their Butsudan, a family altar, can be placed there. A Buddhist picture is placed in the center, and candles and incense burners are placed on either side. The candles and incense are burned as the family gathers in front of the altar for their morning and evening prayers. Most Buddhists never leave their faith during the course of their life.

In America, when we build a new house, we too preserve a wall in our living or family room. Is it a place with an altar with the Bible and an image of our God? No - It is the special place we have reserved for our big screen

television and our various media devices.

As Christians, we are increasingly alarmed at the growth of the Muslim faith, not only in our country, but in the world as well. How is the Muslim faith growing so rapidly? It is estimated 61% of the youth in our country have attended church at least some prior to their 21st birthday. That means 39% of the youth in our country have not been raised in church. In addition, an alarming increasingly number of young adults who were raised in the Christian faith become inactive by their early twenties. In our country, the average family has 2.5 children. In the Muslim faith, the average family has over 10 children, and virtually none

ever leave their faith. Do the math.

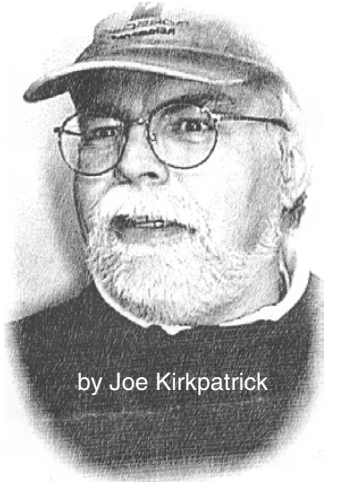
In America, members of the various Christian faiths have always considered our nation to be a "Christian" nation. However, while we have been sitting in front of our big screens, being "casual Christians," the Muslims have been building their nests and spreading the world as rapidly as fire ants. It is predicted that by 2040, the members of Muslim faith will encompass more than 50% of the population of our country, based on their current rate of growth. And, let me set the record straight - I, too, have been one of those Christians who has sat in front of my big screen and let it happen.

Muslims start out their

day with prayer, and end their day in prayer as well. In addition, they stop whatever they are doing and pray three more times throughout the day. As the Muslims are zealous in their dedication, most of us Christians are unfortunately just as zealous in our complacency. Any Muslim will tell you the habit of prayer is the key to their faith. Over past several years since 911, I have taken a real interest in studying the Middle East, as well as the Muslim faith. The radical Muslims who are terrorists are one of the most successful enemies we have had for one reason - they are almost impossible to infiltrate. This enemy is solely driven by their beliefs and convictions, not by

money or power. They are doing it for one reason: Allegiance to their god.

What can we as Christians do? Start by doing a simple thing - join me in making a commitment to pray at least once a day, and twice will be even better. Get down on your knees and humble yourself before God. Thank him for what he has done for you and your family. Ask him to look over our country, and our soldiers. Talk to him about the needs of others that you know of. And last of all, talk to him about guidance for yourself. We are all pretty much creatures of habit, and change doesn't come easily. However, once you get in the habit of praying, you will find you miss it if you don't.



by Joe Kirkpatrick

Will praying really help? Only you and God will know.

- Any comments? Contact Joe Kirkpatrick at: tristateim@aol.com

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