

Views about the Middle East – are they correct?



Keith Bateman,
MECO's USA Director.

MECO's USA Director, Keith Bateman, answers some questions about how the media can have an influence on our world view, and how this affects those interested in showing the love of Jesus to Middle Easterners.

What misperceptions do you think Americans have about the Middle East and serving there?

By far the biggest drawback is perceived danger. Admittedly, the Middle East can be a dangerous place at times. But increasingly, America can be a dangerous place, too. When my wife and I were in Beirut two years ago, do you know what the top news story on Beirut television was? A mass shooting in a shopping mall in Omaha, Nebraska, near where we lived at the time. We had a Lebanese man actually say to us, "Do you really want to go back to that terrible place, Nebraska, when you could stay here and be perfectly safe with us?"

What is the reality?

I say 'perceived danger' because this is

largely an issue of information. Again, let me illustrate. When my wife and I served in remote areas of Africa (15 years), we would occasionally come upon an old copy of Time magazine. After reading about the violence and other negative reporting of events in America, we found ourselves asking, "Do we really want to take our children back to that awful place? They're going to get killed in the streets!" Why? Because it was true? No, but rather, because news tends to get condensed, so the occasional event sounds like a normal occurrence.

The same is often true of the Middle East. We here in the USA are constantly bombarded with graphic stories and photos of bombing and other mayhem in the Middle East. From this news coverage, we get the idea that this is

the norm there. But it's not. In fact, we frequently tell people that we often felt safer walking around the streets of Cairo, Amman, and Beirut than we do walking on many of our streets here in the USA.

What kinds of opportunities are there for people to get involved in reaching Middle Easterners for the Lord?

Endless! The question isn't so much what can we do, as, are we willing to do it? Are we willing to take the risk? Is it always easy? No. But then, is anything too difficult for God? The truth is, all the great men and women of the Bible had to take on a 'faith challenge' that seemed impossible at some point in their lives.

Are you up to that kind of challenge? Is God calling you to give sacrificially in these difficult financial times? To invite that Middle Eastern couple across the street over for a meal? To pray for Muslims? To serve in the Middle East?

If you'd like more information, then contact your local MECO office (*details on page 2*) or email info@aboutmeco.org



Could God use you to change lives in the Middle East?

MECO is looking for people who could serve as:

Café Manager - Cyprus

Length: 1+ years **Language:** English. Turkish and Iranian an advantage.
Useful Qualifications: Previous experience in management.

Theological Trainer- Amman, Jordan

Length: 3+ years **Language:** English. Arabic required if tutoring.
Qualifications: MA or PhD in theology.

Guest House Manager - Cairo, Egypt

Length: 3+ years **Language:** English. Arabic an advantage.
Qualifications: Previous experience in this type of work is preferable.

Community Worker - Jordan

Length: 3+ years **Language:** English. Arabic an advantage.
Qualifications: Relevant professional experience.

Assistant to Sports Ministry Director - Cairo, Egypt

Length: 4 months (minimum) **Language:** English. Arabic an advantage.
Qualifications: Previous experience in this type of work. Computer skills essential with knowledge of Word, Excel, Powerpoint.

Optician - Arabian Peninsula

Length: 1+ month (minimum). **Language:** English. Arabic an advantage.
Qualifications: Relevant medical qualification.

Computer Support Staff - Lebanon

Length: 1 month - 2+ years **Language:** English.
Qualifications: Computer Technician with ability to maintain our computers and networks. Teachers for Word, Excel, PowerPoint etc.

Going to Urbana 09?
If you'll be at Urbana this year and would like to know more about being involved in the exciting things God is doing in the Middle East, look out for **Keith Bateman**, MECO's USA Director - he'd be glad to help!

URBANA09
December 27 - 31, St Louis

For more opportunities and information, visit www.aboutmeco.org/opportunities