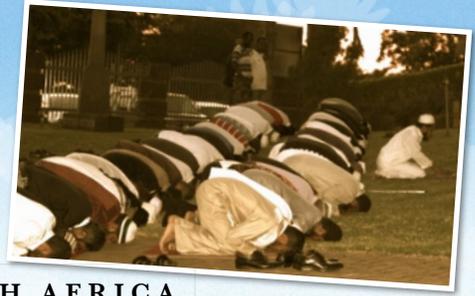


# The Schlelein Family

## Missionaries to the Tsongas of South Africa

FEBRUARY 2015 | LIMPOPO, SOUTH AFRICA



### The Debate

Over the past few weeks, God's people have flooded us with words of encouragement and promises of prayer regarding the Islamic debate on 7 February. I felt those petitions when I addressed the audience, when Abu and I sparred over the text, and when the electricity wasn't cut during scheduled down time. Thank you.

We thought the Muslims would dominate the event, but the Christians showed moxie and came out strong. In the end, the skullcaps and burkas were a little under half of the 500 in attendance.

I argued that Jesus is God and identical to Yahweh in the Old Testament. His claims to Deity through his actions, attributes,

titles, and teachings are stronger than if he had merely said: "I am God. Worship me." I emphasized the gospel in my closing statement, which I posted online along with my opening.

For Abu, as with all Muslims, Jesus was *only* God's prophet. Two hours into the debate, the Muslims (including my opponent) left the building, laid out their prayer rugs, and knelt down in prayer toward Mecca (see top right). After 15 minutes, we continued.

In the end, this debate was far more than an intellectual exercise. Muslims do not resist Christianity because their minds cannot grasp the Trinity, but because their hearts will not bow to Jesus Christ.

### A Few Observations

1. [You can now watch the debate online.](#)
2. After the debate, a few Christians approached me, but nearly a dozen Muslims warmly greeted and thanked me, one of whom invited Melinda and I to his home for a feast. We accepted!
3. During cross examination, I identified "the only true God" in John 17:3 as the Father, to which Abu then said that Jesus obviously could not be the *only* true God as well. When I identified Jesus too as "the only true God", this was met by condescending laughter and applause from the Muslims.
4. This began a series of applause wars, for as Abu and I traded theological jabs, the Muslims and Christians began cheering for the guy in their corner. The moderator finally put an end to it. That too was met by applause.
5. If Abu can memorize the Qur'an (over  $\frac{3}{4}$  the size of the NT) in Arabic by age 11, how much more should Christians imbibe God's Holy Word? After the debate, Melinda and I resolved to study and memorize the Bible more fervently and teach it more diligently to our children.



For the conversion of every tribe and nation,  
*Paul and Melinda*