

the *hajj* and were disappointed that Mecca did not match up to their mental picture of it. The book offers a wealth of material that can be turned into questions that one can raise with Muslim friends to help gently insert a wedge between them and their trust of the Muslim tradition and ‘what they’ve always been taught.’

Finally, as I finished reading the book, I realised it was also a reminder of an area of profound theological difference between Muslims and Christians—that the God of the Bible is both bigger *and* smaller than the God of Islam. On the one hand, in the incarnation He stepped into geography and history, limiting himself to time and space, getting His feet dirty with Middle Eastern dust. But, at the same time, He is far bigger than geography and history—Christians do not need to pray to a particular location, in a particular language, for us to talk with our Father. If Gibson’s thesis in *Qur’anic Geography* is correct, perhaps we can use the book as a conversation starter as we seek to introduce Muslims to the God who desires not to be encountered through a Black Stone, but to transform our hearts of stone.

Reviewed by Andy Bannister

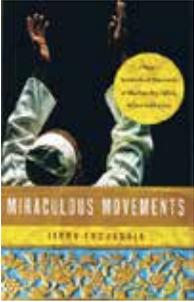
Dr. Andy Bannister is the Director of Ravi Zacharias International Ministries in Canada (www.rzim.ca) and lives in Toronto with his wife and baby daughter. He speaks regularly throughout Canada, America and further afield on Islam, apologetics, philosophy and culture. Before moving to Canada, Andy lived and worked in the UK, where for ten years he was involved in evangelism and outreach amongst Muslims in London. His PhD was in Qur’anic studies, developing computer software tools to analyse the Arabic text of the Qur’an, demonstrating that it shows all the signs of having been generated live, in oral performance. This explains a number of features of the Qur’an, including its high use of formulaic language and phraseology, performance variants (multiple versions of the same stories, each differing slightly) and its allusive use of Jewish and Christian traditions. Andy’s book, based on his dissertation, Retelling the Tale: An Oral-Formulaic Study of the Qur’an should be published in late 2013 or early 2014.

**Miraculous Movements:
How Hundreds of Thousands of Muslims
Are Falling in Love with Jesus**

**By Jerry Trousdale
Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2012, 208 pages**

How can anyone *not* be excited and curious when reading a subtitle that tells us that ‘Hundreds of Thousands of Muslims Are Falling in Love with Jesus’? Curiosity is stirred even further when the subtitle promises to tell us ‘How’ this is happening!

Miraculous Movements delivers on that promise, giving clear descriptions of truly miraculous ways God is at work in our day in many Muslim communities in Africa. Trous-



dale notes that the stories shared in the book are based on research and personal interviews with more than 130 leaders from primarily Muslim backgrounds and a few from Christian backgrounds. The large number of interviewees from Muslim backgrounds underlines that the amazing fruit being described is not the result of Western missionaries winning numerous converts, but rather of movements taking place *within* families and groups. This is largely occurring when a local ‘person of peace’ becomes the instrument God uses to open a door for the gospel to their household or network (their *oikos*) and from there the gospel is received in culturally appropriate ‘clothing’ and thus spreads rapidly to others within that group.

In his opening chapter, Trousdale notes that, as incredible as the stories may sound, these amazing movements are indeed taking place:

When one reads or hears of all that has transpired and continues to transpire...none of this seems really possible. Yet everything you read in this book is happening through a highly intentional focus on making disciples the way Jesus did, informed by the Bible, and somewhat counterintuitive to the types of ministry that most of us have experienced before. (31-32)

The next chapter describes in some detail ‘Jesus’ Counterintuitive Disciple-making Strategy,’ some elements of which are:

- Go slow at first in order to go fast later.
- Focus on a few to win many.
- Engage an entire family or group, not just the individual.
- Share only when and where people are ready to hear.
- Start with creation, not with Christ.
- It is about discovering and obeying, not teaching and knowledge.
- Disciple people to conversion, not vice versa.
- Coach lost people from the beginning to discover and obey biblical truth.
- Expect the hardest places to yield the greatest results.

The book’s concluding chapter presents ‘Biblical Practices for Engaging Lostness.’ Among these are:

- Pray abundantly
- Gain access to the community
- Find the Person of Peace
- Start a Discovery Bible Study with the Person of Peace and the members of his network.
- Baptize and start a church

- Develop leaders

Those who have read ‘Exponential Disciple-Making: A Fresh Approach to Church Planting Movements’ by Steven Steinhaus (in *Seedbed*, Dec 2011) or have attended Pioneers’ ‘First Steps’ (Level 1) training in the Discovery Method of CPM, will recognize the similarities in approach. In fact, the approach being described in *Miraculous Movements* is the model that constitutes the ‘DNA’ of our recent Pioneers’ CPM training seminars. While recognizing the essential similarity in approach, readers may note a slight difference in descriptive title. While some find the description ‘Church Planting Movements’ exciting, others find it off-putting. Thus other aspects of the model are sometimes highlighted, with titles such as ‘Disciple-Making Movements,’ ‘Exponential Disciple-Making,’ or ‘Discovery Method.’ Each description highlights an aspect of the marvellous work the Lord is doing in bringing hundreds of thousands to himself among groups previously unreached by the gospel.

Miraculous Movements is written at a popular level, so it bypasses exposition of the theological underpinnings of the approach being used. That foundation could easily fill another book. Trousdale has chosen to start with the stories and the basic outline of the approach through which the Spirit of God is working to bring hundreds of thousands to a saving faith in Christ. The book succeeds admirably as a popular introduction to a church planting approach that many workers are finding to be a breath of fresh air in their efforts to reach Muslim peoples with the gospel.

What is more, I believe that the approach described in *Miraculous Movements* holds great potential to help resolve some of the issues of current debate concerning contextualization in Islamic contexts and ‘Insider Movements.’ Consider a few of the strengths of the IM approach:

1. It focuses on bringing people to faith in groups, rather than as isolated individuals.
2. It tries to minimize unnecessary social dislocation as people come to faith.
3. It allows for a certain amount of ‘messiness’ and even ‘out of our control-ness’ in the CP process.

However, I believe that the Insider approach also has a number of significant weaknesses, which I have discussed in other articles.¹¹ I see the Disciple-Making Movements model having all the strengths listed above, without the weaknesses. Those who dislike or have concerns about the IM approach generally stress that a sound church planting work should have the following characteristics:

11. See: ‘Do the Roots Affect the Fruits?’ *International Journal of Frontier Missiology*, Summer 2007; ‘Contextualization: A Few Basic Questions,’ *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, April 2008; ‘What is Church?’ *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, October 2010

1. A soundly biblical ecclesiology.
2. Followers of Jesus coming to a clear understanding of their identity (in their heart and in their social context, sometimes after a period of time), so that they are no longer religiously Muslim.
3. A mechanism of viable connectedness to the global and historic body of Christ.

However, those who express concerns with IM approaches also often have some weaknesses in their approach, such as leaning toward traditional (Western) models of church and tending to force beginning works into mature church patterns prematurely.

The Discovery model illustrated by Trousdale in this book has potential to open a path for the strengths listed above without falling prey to some of the weaknesses. In addition, to the extent that either pro-IM or anti-IM workers seek to push new believers

The Discovery model illustrated by Trousdale in this book has potential to open a path for the strengths listed above without falling prey to some of the weaknesses. In addition, to the extent that either pro-IM or anti-IM workers seek to push new believers toward their own views on contextualization, I believe they tend to diminish the potential for truly indigenous church planting and multiplication.

toward their own views on contextualization, I believe they tend to diminish the potential for truly indigenous church planting and multiplication. So I am a big fan of Trousdale's recommendation that in CPMs 'Outsiders deculturalize the gospel; insiders contextualize the gospel.' I believe that the Disciple Making Movements (CPM) approach, as Trousdale has described it, contains the best wisdom of both sides of the contextualization debate and

a marvellous way forward toward a resolution of that debate. I am hopeful that with the publication of *Miraculous Movements* more people may begin to realize this.

As I carefully read this book, each chapter provided new things for which to praise God and new fodder for intercession. I found myself pleading with God that what he is doing in Africa and beyond would also happen among other Muslim groups all around the globe.

I highly recommend *Miraculous Movements* – for inspiration, for stimulation of strategic thinking and for pondering and delighting in the great works of the Lord. The Psalmist grounded his appeal for God to work mightily in the works God had already accomplished: "Then I thought, "To this I will appeal: the years of the right hand of the Most High." ... I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds" (Psalm 77:10, 12 NIV). I welcome *Miraculous Movements* as a testimony from faithful brothers and sisters still alive today – an inspiration and challenge to us all.

Reviewed by L.D. Waterman