



What's in Your Box?

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ARE WE ALL HERETICS at Frontier Ventures for talking about Insider Movements in this issue of *Mission Frontiers*? Some people have said that to me in years past. What is it about Insider Movements that is so controversial and makes so many people in the church and mission world uncomfortable? Is it simply the fear of syncretism or is something else going on?

You Can't Judge a Box By Its Label

I think some of the problem comes down to the fact that as human beings we like clear categories and definitive boxes with bold labels to put things and people into. We do not like being forced to deal with the gray areas where people don't fit easily into neat categories or boxes.

The reality is that regardless of the label we put on the box, we are always going to have variations of what is in the box. Most people would assume that people in the box labeled "Christian" are followers of Jesus vs. something else like Muslim or Buddhist and they would generally be correct. But within every Christian box there will be an amalgam of faithful followers of Jesus and merely cultural adherents. It is a mixed box. In fact, Barna Research has reported that only around 19% of self-described "born again believers" hold to basic sound doctrine such as the deity of Christ and His atoning work on the cross. In every church, no matter how good, there will be a mixture of faithful followers of Jesus and unbelievers. The parable of the wheat and tares illustrates this reality.

Applying this to Insider Movements, we can see the difficulties that can arise in trusting the label on the box. The box says "Muslim" which, like many boxes labeled "Christian," includes both faithful and cultural adherents. With Insider Movements the Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist boxes will also include those who are biblically faithful and obedient followers of Jesus and yet they continue to associate, to varying degrees, with others from their birth religion, even though they are very different in terms of their core beliefs. The box labeled "Muslim" like other boxes with Christian labels becomes very much of a mixed box. We really can't assume that everyone in the box truly represents fidelity to the label on the box.

Many in the Christian sphere want anyone who comes from a Muslim or other religious background to jump

immediately into the box labeled "Christian," even though this would lead to tremendous upheaval in the family and community, making it much more difficult for the gospel to spread among this people group. Often times when someone does jump into the Christian box from a Muslim or other religious background, those already in that box never truly accept this person as a full member of that box. Is that person a spy? How can we truly trust them considering where they came from? The truth is that a person in the box labeled "Muslim" has the potential to be a more faithful and obedient follower of Jesus than someone in the "Christian" box because each box is a mixture of beliefs, regardless of the label on the box. This is hard for many to get their heads around because we like to believe the labels on the box. This illustrates the complexity of the missionary task. No matter what box we are born into, Jesus calls us to follow Him and that means that all faithful followers of Jesus must critique and reject anything in that box that is not biblical. To fail to do so means we are not faithfully following Jesus.


What is Our Mission?

All of this raises the question, "What is the missionary task of the Church anyway?" Is it to go around the world and make converts who look and act like the believers in our local churches? Or is it to make obedient disciples of Jesus where the gospel becomes indigenous (normal and natural, not foreign) to every tribe and tongue? If the latter is the mission of the Church, then the believers in Jesus and the churches they form are going to look very different from our local churches and from every other church within every other people group. Are we okay with that? Because if believers in the West who support missions want our missionaries to establish believers and churches that look like our local church, then we are going to have three problems. 1) The gospel will not become indigenous to the people we are trying to reach. The gospel will appear to be a foreign import and rejected. 2) We will only reach a very limited group of people who don't mind being an outcast from their family and community. 3) We will never see a movement of people coming to Jesus from that people group. Some degree of contextualization of the gospel is essential for a movement to take place—even in non-Insider Movements.



In the early days of the modern protestant missionary movement, mission workers thought it was a good idea to bring their culture along with the gospel. The mission worker's church back home became the model for these new believers to imitate. They would teach them to sing the same hymns from the hymnal the missionary brought from back home. They might build a church building that looked just like something from their home culture. The men and women would start dressing like Europeans or Americans—the men in suits and ties, the women in long dresses. We can see this happening to this day in various parts of the world. Is that our mission? Is this what Jesus has called us to do—to go around the world and make every tribe and tongue look and act like us? I don't think so. Whether we are talking about Kingdom Movements or Insider Movements, it is all about the people we are attempting to reach being in control of the process of making disciples and planting churches, not the outsiders. In fact our role is to rid the gospel of as much of our cultural baggage as possible so the gospel can look like really great news to every people and nation. That is a mission worth giving our full effort to.

Support the Work of Mission Frontiers

As is the case with most publications, *Mission Frontiers* cannot cover its costs from subscriptions alone. We need additional funds from those who believe in this ministry and are willing to sacrifice to help us move forward in casting vision for Kingdom Movements in all peoples. Like most of the people who work for Frontier Ventures, my salary is supplied by the donations of churches and friends who believe in what I am doing. And also like many staff members at Frontier Ventures, there are many months when not enough comes in to fully cover our allotted salary. To donate to my ministry with *MF* go to www.frontierventures.org, click on the Donate button and put MA 323 in the dialog box. If you would like to help *MF* cover its general expenses and expand its influence, go to the same web address given above, click on the Donate button and put MA 030 in the dialog box. We greatly appreciate whatever you can do to help *Mission Frontiers* and Frontier Ventures continue its work to see Kingdom Movements emerge in all peoples. 



THE 24:14 MOVEMENT DATA DASHBOARD As of March 2021

The Problem: Losing Ground

One of three people have no access to the gospel message.

1985: 3.2 billion lost souls

2019: 5.5 billion lost souls

Evangelism of unreached peoples is not keeping pace with the population growth rate.

The Solution: Movements

Church Planting Movements (CPMs) grow rapidly and often exceed the population growth rate.

In the last 20+ years the number of movements has increased dramatically, spreading to every continent.

The Seven Stages of the CPM Continuum

Stage 1:

Moving purposefully (G1)

Teams on site trying to consistently establish NEW 1st Generation believers and churches

Stage 2: Focused (G2)

Some 2nd generation churches (G1 believers started them)

Stage 3: Breakthrough (G3)

Consistent G2 and some G3 churches

Stage 4: Emerging CPM (G4)

Consistent G3 and some G4 churches

Stage 5: ESTABLISHED CPM

Consistent 4th+ generation churches; multiple streams

Stage 6: Sustained CPM

Visionary, indigenous leadership leading the movement with little/ no need for outsiders. Stood the test of time.

Stage 7: Multiplying CPMs:

Catalyzing new CPMs in other unreached peoples and places.

What God is Doing Through His Body

4,533 reports of active CPM engagements

1,371 Stage 5 CPMs

4+ Generations

79.29 million believers

in all CPM engagements

4.19 million churches

in all known CPM engagements

57,920 believers

per Stage 5+ CPM, average

17 average believers

per church per CPM

24:14 Vision

The Good News of Jesus Christ for every person and a Church for every people

Mission: Kingdom Movements in all unreached peoples and in every place

Initial Goal: Kingdom Movement engagements in all unreached peoples and every place by December 31, 2025

24:14 Values

1. Fully reaching the unreached peoples and places of the earth
2. Reaching them through Church Planting Movement strategies
3. Engaging them through movement strategies with **urgency sacrifice** by 2025
4. Collaborating with others in the 24:14 community so we can make progress together

Join the 24:14 Community

<https://www.2414now.net/get-involved/>

Questions? Contact: data@2414now.net or visit our FAQs at

<https://www.2414now.net/about-us/>

To Report: CPM engagement or progress contact Justin D. Long at Justin@justinlong.org

To view the entire Movement Data Dashboard go to:

<https://www.2414now.net>