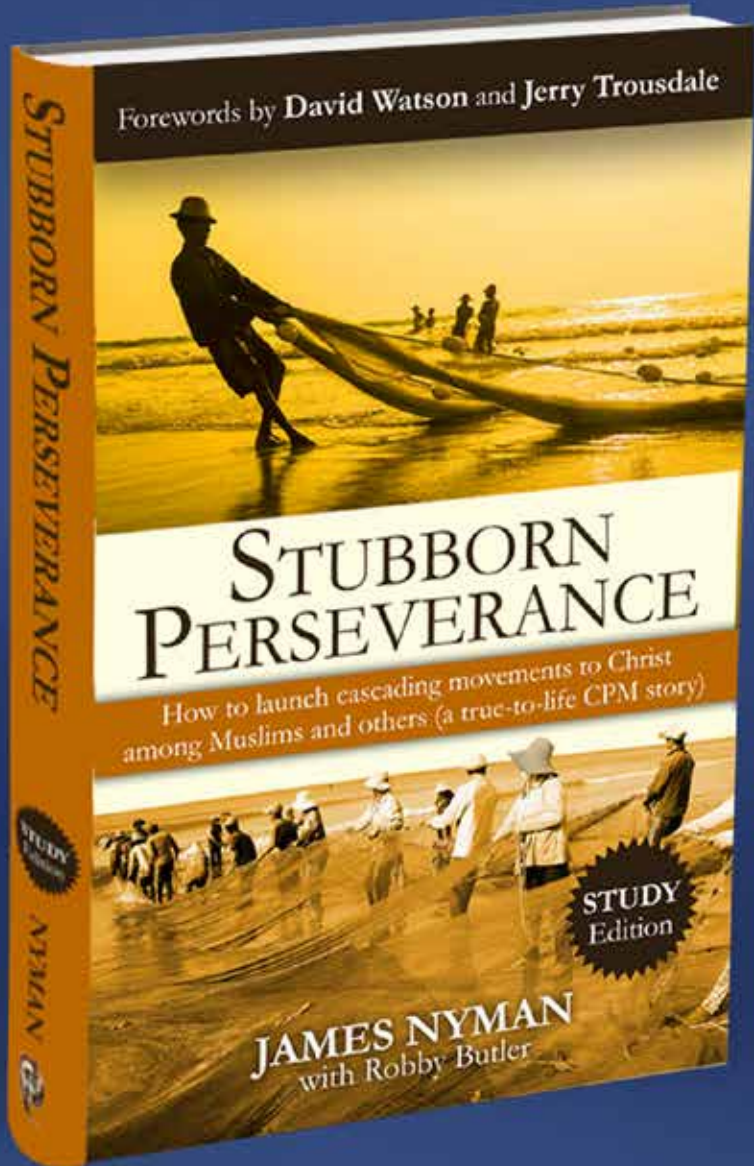


STARTING FROM SCRATCH

BY JAMES NYMAN

Wondering how to get started if your church isn't yet pursuing movements? Stubborn Perseverance may help. Here's an excerpt from James Nyman's new book (2016: Mission Network).



Faisal thought about how his life had changed since he had attended a seminar about church-planting movements (CPMs). *I was so frustrated over my ineffectiveness in reaching my own people, and that seminar turned my world upside down! Studying how the Holy Spirit equipped and led the first century believers to reach their world has given my life new purpose and brought me new and deeper friendships. God, I know it could get difficult, or even dangerous, but would you use us to initiate a movement among our own people?*

Faisal's CPM training had concluded with a challenge for all the participants to gather groups to study CPM principles in the Bible. Faisal and his wife Fatima brainstormed who to invite, then narrowed the list to ten couples. Six agreed to participate, but after the third week, only two couples wanted to continue.

Pursuing a CPM had required a high commitment from each of them. Faisal had had to stop doing many good activities, including leading a men's ministry and weekly fishing with other believers. Most of his friends hadn't understood his new passion to reach their Muslim neighbors, so he was especially grateful to God for these partners.

Faisal was amazed at how quickly God had knit their hearts together around the CPM vision. He looked forward eagerly to their weekly meetings, delighting in a depth of friendship he had not previously known.

...

Faisal took a long drink from his water bottle and wiped his mouth with the back of his hand. "Let's start our discussion. What motivates you to study CPM principles?"

"That's easy," Yusuf said. "I remember what you asked us the first time we met. 'If not you, who? If not now, when?' Those questions really pierced my heart. Who is going to tell our unsaved family and friends about God's grace and mercy? Nur and I have been comfortable letting our lives be our witness. Yet if we don't share verbally about Isa now, when will we do it? No one knows the day of his death."

"You also asked us," Nasrudin said, "How many of our ethnic group, the Sayang, will hear the good news of Isa Al Masih today?" It struck me that, besides the

Faisal and his wife Fatima brainstormed who to invite, then narrowed the list to ten couples. Six agreed to participate, but after the third week, only two couples wanted to continue.

six of us, I don't know of anyone else who is telling our people about Isa. That's just not right!" he added, pounding his fist.

"I am motivated by all Isa has done in my life," Amina said. "When I stop to think about all the wonderful blessings Isa has given me, I'm really quite speechless. He healed the wounds in my heart and provided me such a wonderful marriage with Nasrudin. How could I not share with others? I want them to enjoy the same joy and peace I experience."

"I agree with these motivations," Nur said. "But for me, there is another motive. From studying the Taurat and Injil I know hell is real, and Isa is the only way to heaven. I can't bear the thought of my family and friends going to hell. It is always risky to talk about Isa, but what if they never hear Isa died for them because I am quiet? What if they die and go to hell because Yusuf and I are afraid of how they will respond to us? I must choose to risk suffering in this life so the people I love won't needlessly suffer in the next life. I need training to help me overcome my fears and know what to say."

Faisal waited, but no one spoke further.

"Those are all excellent motivations," Faisal said. "I long to see God do among our own people what He has done among so many others in history. Learning how God can use just a few unified people to bring great change has given my life new meaning and purpose. I feel fulfilled in ways I have never felt before."

Faisal stopped to rub his calves. "Well, we still have a lot of mountain to climb, and we'll need several more breaks before we reach the top. We'll have another discussion during our next break. Is everyone ready?" 