Looking inside the Insider Movement

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The Insider Movement is a fairly recent term used to describe a variety of contextualized missions strategies and approaches.

What is the Insider Movement?
Becky Lewis wrote:

“an ‘insider movement’ is any movement to faith in Christ where

a) the gospel flows through pre-existing communities and social networks and where

b) believing families, as valid expressions of the Body of Christ, remain inside their socio-religious communities, retaining their identity as members of that community while living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Bible.”
She continues, ‘insider movements’ can take place within any socioreligious context, Western or not (such as Russian Orthodox, Mormon, Jewish, Islamic, Hindu, Chinese Communist, etc.), as long as believers remain inside their families, networks and communities, retaining the socioreligious identity of that group.
We must examine the trends:

“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

I John 4:1
• “while all non-Christian religions evidence both human and demonic rebellion, they also reflect the activity of God. Therefore, because “God is at least potentially at work in other religions, then the contention of insider movement advocates that disciples can remain within their religious context is potentially true in any situation.”

PROBLEMS WITH INSIDER MOVEMENT

Should we settle for any method or are we to test the spirits and make sure we are biblically correct?
1. Wrong Diagnosis

- “The harvest is plentiful and workers are few.” Matthew 9:37; Luke 10:2
- “For many are invited, but few are chosen.” (Matthew 22:14)
2. Wrong Paradigm

- The various approaches within the Insider Movement base their philosophy of ministry on a paradigm designed by John Travis (Pseudonym), namely, the C1-C6 Scale.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C1</th>
<th>C2</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Traditional church using non-indigenous language.</td>
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C3

- Contextualized Christ-centered communities using Muslim’s language and non-religiously indigenous cultural forms.

C4

- Contextualized Christ-centered communities using Muslim’s language and biblically permissible cultural and Islamic forms.
• Islam needs to be reformed, not abandoned.
  • Islam an improvement on the pagan idolatry of pre-Islamic Arabia
  • Muslims and Christians worship the same God
  • Qur’an is not as bad as some make it to be

3. Wrong View of Islam
• C5- Christ-centred communities of “Messianic Muslims” who have accepted Jesus as ‘Lord and Saviour’. Believers remain legally and socially within the Islamic community. Aspects of Islam incompatible with the Bible are rejected or if possible, reinterpreted. Believers may remain active in the mosque. Unsaved Muslims may view C5 believers as deviant and may expel them from the Islamic community.

• If sufficient numbers permit, a C5 mosque, or ‘Jamaat’ may be established.
“After 30 years of studying the Qur’an I find it overwhelmingly pro-Christ, pro-Bible and pro-Christian.”

Fouad Accad

4. Wrong View of the Qur’an

• Gospel message contained in the Qur’an
• The Insider Movement uses the Qur’an as the basis of their message, which they claim is consistent with a true understanding of Islam.
New Fruitfulness Among Muslims

what Muhammad quoted in the Qur’an comes from what he heard from the Jews and Christians he met in Arabia.

As I’ve studied the Qur’an for thirty years, I’ve found it overwhelmingly pro-Christ, pro-Christian, and pro-Bible. So just as your witness is enhanced when you quote a highly respected secular leader who makes a pro-Christian statement, so the Qur’an can greatly influence Muslims to consider Christ. For example, the Qur’an says, “When the angels said, ‘Mary, God gives thee good tidings of a Word from Him whose name is Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary; high honoured shall he be in this world and the next, near stationed to God’” (House of Imran 3:45). By pointing this out to the Muslim who sincerely wants to please God (and many do), he becomes very interested in learning more about Jesus, for a Muslim wants someone to intercede for him. And who would be in a better position to do so than Jesus, who is near-stationed to God?

In one Middle Eastern country, thirty to thirty-five Muslims have believed in Christ as their redeemer and intercessor while remaining in the fold of their Islamic community for a span of eight years. In fact, we have found that 60 percent of Muslims who are approached with the method explained in this book put their trust in Christ—and all who do, do so without becoming deportable to their own communities.

The purpose of this book is to build bridges between two communities, not destroy them. We are not the ones who will tip the scales of war and peace. But as Christians who are close to Muslims, if we are fully equipped with what the Qur’an teaches us about our Lord Jesus Christ, we will be ready to meet Muslims and share the hope of salvation in Christ with them.
6. Weak Hermeneutics

- Violates principles of Biblical interpretation
- Violates principles of Islamic interpretation
7. Diluted Gospel

- Making the gospel message more palatable and less offensive
8. Confusion Between Culture and Religion

- Confusing Islam as a religion with the culture of Muslims
• They have surrendered the biblical image of Jesus to the Jesus of the Qur’an
  • A great prophet, but not the Son of the Living God
  • Not the Savior of the world
  • Not God’s only mediator between God and man

9. Weak Christology
“Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.”

I Corinthians 1:22-23.

• Bible translators in the languages of Muslims removing the phrase “Son of God” and the fatherhood of God from their translations
10. Succumb to Violations of Human Rights

- Muslim laws against Ridda (leaving Islam) violate people’s God-given rights to free choice and expression.
- The Insider Movement denies Muslims their inalienable right to choose their religion and enjoy full benefits like all other citizens.
“I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.”

[Reference]

- By keeping “followers of Isa” inside Islam, Insiders are in effect promoting the Muslim Umma and by the same token undermining the unity of the One Holy Universal Church.

11. Low View of the Universal Church
12. Undermines the New Identity in Christ

- Insiders want followers to retain their Muslim identity
- Not “Christian” but “Follower of Isa”

- Problems:
  - Christian or convert to Islam?
  - Following a prophet?
  - Both take an explanation
  - The name of Jesus is our identity
13. Undermines Spiritual Warfare

- Insiders are bold in infiltrating the battle zone and exposing themselves to Satan’s tactics.
  - Official convert to Islam
  - Dress like Muslims
  - Attend mosque
  - Fast during Ramadan
  - Participate in Islamic rituals
  - Pray the *shahada* (confession)
• Insiders deny converts the opportunity to fully participate in open Christian fellowship.

14. Undermines Fellowship of the Saints
“Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules…”

(Colossians 2:20-23)

- Remaining within Islam and practicing the rituals denies them the understanding of God’s grace and the truth that we are not saved by works but by faith based on God’s love and grace which is a gift of God.

15. Legalism v. Grace
The tactic of appearing as Muslims and accepting the Qur’an and Muhammad without revealing the full truth that Islam is an evil system is deceptive.
• “If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.”
  John 15:20
• “And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters
  or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will
  receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal
  life.” Matthew 19:29
• “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but
  whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save
  it.” Mark 8:35

17. Avoids Extraction and Persecution
“When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power…”

I Corinthians 2:1-4

- Conversion is not a cultural, social or psychological phenomenon. True conversion is the work of the Holy Spirit.

18. Downplays the Role of the Holy Spirit
• Insiders are offering Muslims the idea of a Jesus sacrificed (Qurban) to guarantee you forgiveness of sins. This renders Jesus as a sacrificed scapegoat, not a risen Lord.

19. Promotes a Cheap Gospel
20. Confusion between church and kingdom

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HANDLING THE WORD OF GOD CORRECTLY

All false teaching boils down to misinterpretations of the Bible.
• As people entrusted with the gospel, we need to make every effort to protect its purity and expose false teaching.

• Although the Insider Movement has some positive elements, it is generally contrary to the Word of God and needs to humbly re-evaluate its approach.

• We who try to uphold the gospel need to not be distracted by false teaching but rather be motivated to preach the unadulterated truth of the gospel and expect it to transform all those who come in touch with it.

Final Word