

Beyond Jesus Dreams: The Matthew 11 Verse That's Turning Muslim Hearts to Christ

We've kept you updated on the situation in Fallujah, Iraq, the town under ISIS control that was recently reclaimed by Iraqi troops. Thousands of people from Fallujah had fled to a nearby refugee town dubbed the City of Refuge.

[Frontiers USA](#) tells us in the last 18 months, through the work of indigenous missionaries, over 140 of those people in the City of Refuge have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior.

As Iraqi forces now work to secure Fallujah and resume public sanitation, Frontiers' President Bob Blincoe says some of these new Christians want to go back to their homes and share the hope they've found through Christ for the first time in Fallujah!

"They are attracted to go home because that is the place they knew as where they lived their lives. And there's no future for them in the refugee tents in the City of Refuge. But now they have a mission, and they feel jubilant in the Lord. They have been baptized, most of these groups that they're working with have been baptized, which is the real step of faith in the Muslim world."

What is it about the gospel message that strikes such a chord with Muslim refugees?

Blincoe shares, "For the first time, there are enough Muslims who have come to faith to actually do the kind of surveying to understand from their perspective what was the attractive thing about the gospel. More than any other answer, they refer

to Jesus' words, 'Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden. Learn of me, I will give you rest for your souls, for I am meek and humble.' This way of the Lord, this unexpected hope for miserable people, for desperate people, is the No. 1 reason."

The possibility for a growing and flourishing Church in Fallujah and the City of Refuge is having a domino effect. What started as a handful of local missionaries sharing Christ with their neighbors in the City of Refuge now has those new believers turning and doing the same with their family and friends as well.

"This is driven by Muslims who have come to faith themselves, which is the thing that of course must happen. ... Frontiers works directly with the leaders of this movement. There are five or six essential church-starters, all of them from a Muslim background. So we don't know hardly any of the people that have come to faith. We only know the people that are making disciples, which is really how it should be," says Blincoe.

"We have to set in place the kind of disciple making that does not depend on the missionaries for the extension and the creation of new groups. We have to set in place the idea that once you come to faith, you are born again to make other people come to faith as well."

Testimony From Fallujah Refugees

Blincoe shares one of the testimonies of a new family of believers who escaped Fallujah:

"In Kurdistan, Iraq where many refugees have fled to for safety, I heard one story that tells the whole story, and that's about Layla and her husband and children who fled on foot from ISIS in the city of Fallujah.

"They fled on foot, losing ground to the upcoming cloud of the

enemy cars and trucks heading their way when, to their great surprise, a pickup truck slowed down and stopped and [the driver] said, 'Get in the back.' They scrambled into the pickup truck and off they zoomed to the nearby city, which we call the City of Refuge where we are working.

"Once they were safe and in a blue tarp tent on the edge of town like thousands of other refugees, they closed the chapter on their lives [and] couldn't go back for now. [They] lost everything but the shoes on their feet and the clothes on their back.

"Then God gave this woman, Layla, this vision of a man who would tell her about Jesus. That happens, I'm not going to say 'often,' but it's often the entry into people hearing from the Lord. That fellow ... was distributing goods and he came to her house the next day and offered to open up the Bible with them.

"This was not a single occurrence, but over several weeks of reading the Bible, the death and resurrection of Christ is finally what caused them to accept the message of the Lord and soften their hearts.

"So over a year ago, they came to faith and since that time they have started a whole network of about 20 groups of Muslim-background believers, mainly families, who are now studying the Word of the Lord through them, through these Muslims who have come to faith. And what she says is, 'God has now given us the pickup truck.' That is, we were saved by others, now He's given us the chance to save others.

"In fact, she is planning to go back to their city of Fallujah, a city that no westerners could possibly show up in, and bring the hope of Jesus Christ to that war-torn city."

The Soul of Iraq

Looking ahead, the church in Iraq is poised for something big. The harvest is so ready, and individuals and families are

hungry for a deep and satisfying spiritual hope that can be found only through God's Holy Spirit and His Word.

"Now the real contest for the soul of Iraq begins," says Blincoe.

"We have a sense that we are on the frontlines of the free world. That everything depends on winning the people that have been displaced by ISIS, them going back to their homes, and winning those parts of Iraq where no missionaries can set foot.

"So pray for the extension of the gospel into these places, to the Fallujahs of Iraq, and that would be the beginning of what our children may very well say was, 'When did this all begin? The conversion of the Muslim peoples of Iraq?' We may be seeing it in our time."

It's time for believers and churches all over the world to answer God's call to make disciples of all nations, and to respond to the deep needs for the gospel within the 10/40 window.

One of the best ways you can help is by equipping and supporting the local missionaries in Middle Eastern countries like Iraq to spread God's message to their own hometowns and communities. Frontiers USA is doing just that.

"We can help churches get to the frontlines where there are no campfires, no pushpins, to use that analogy, and start original work among Muslims who are prepared by God through what the Bible calls the man of peace, the person of peace, who God has prepared—as it seems that God has prepared Layla and her husband," challenges Blincoe.

"There are more like that out there still beyond the reach of any missionary. Let's go to those places." {eoa}

This article originally appeared on [Mission Network News](#).