

Frontiers and European Apostolic Partners

By Dick Scoggins April 2008

Background

Frontiers is an apostolic organization which facilitates Pauline type apostles (See paper: Petrine and Pauline apostles for the difference) who are called to leave their country and go to the Muslim world. Frontiers have developed many structures which enable the effective mobilization, sending, and oversight of Pauline apostolic teams working and living cross culturally in the Muslim world.

Recently Frontiers began a wing called Global Initiatives (GI). Global initiatives makes use of Frontiers apostles who live in areas where there are local, national Christians who have a burden to reach their Muslim neighbours. GI works with local believers who live proximate to Muslim populations. These apostles do not need to leave their own country and go to another country; hence much of the structure of Frontiers does not apply to these local teams. GI uses Frontiers apostles as catalysts who help these local believers to learn how to form apostolic teams and plant Jesus fellowships amongst their local Muslim population. These catalysts can have an ongoing relationship with these local teams by coaching or giving them additional training. But there are no Frontiers GI teams (only GI catalysts who may serve on their own Cross cultural team), nor are the teams that GI catalysts start part of Frontiers.

Over the last few years I have developed local apostolic teams in Europe which are reaching local European populations in England and Switzerland. These local apostolic teams are made up of Petrine-type apostles who are planting Kingdom communities amongst the lost in their cities. Comparing this to GI's model, I have been serving as a GI catalyst to help local believers who have an apostolic call on their lives to come out of their local churches and start Petrine apostolic teams which will plant churches locally. As with GI there is no need to cross cultures. These are local teams planting Kingdom communities in their own country. We have begun calling this emerging network of teams European Apostolic Partners.

Working Together

The purpose of this paper is to propose ways that Frontiers can help European Apostolic Partners expand what has been a limited European effort and release an explosion of apostolic ministry in Europe (for more see the article: Apostolic Vision for Europe). This will also help Frontiers fulfil its mandate to plant churches amongst ALL Muslim peoples. There are many communities of Muslims living in the large cities of Europe with very little contextual church planting occurring amongst them. These are outside the normal Frontiers sphere, which is Pauline apostles working and living in majority Muslim countries.

But many European Frontiers apostles are now beginning to return to Europe after years of faithful service in these Muslim countries. This will only increase in the years ahead as the first Frontiers missionaries get older and face family commitments including education of their children, aging parents, retirement, etc. But when they come back there is little that is apostolic occurring in Europe and so many return to local churches and lose their apostolic impulse.

Proposal

European Apostolic Partners proposes that Frontiers apostles returning to Europe from the Muslim world be allowed to work with European Apostolic Partners as GI catalysts who could help catalyze, form and train apostles for local church planting in Europe. This will certainly include a focus of church planting amongst the many Muslim people groups in the large cities of Europe. Any apostolic teams which are formed by GI catalysts will NOT be Frontiers teams, but rather local teams under local authority. These European apostolic teams can construct whatever local structures they determine is helpful for them to accomplish the apostolic task.

Frontiers' catalysts in Europe can continue to have a home inside of Frontiers. Some of them may decide to become part of these local European teams, but none of these local teams will become Frontiers teams since existing Frontiers structures are built for Pauline apostles going to countries other than their own. But they could retain their Frontiers affiliation while serving on these teams if the local teams are fine with this as well as the sending bases.