


A Movement
***Propelled
by Hope***

By **YVONNE W. HUNEYCUTT**

Yvonne W. Huneycutt
(DMin, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary) has served the Perspectives movement since 1991. She is currently on staff with Perspectives Global as an instructor, trainer, and author. Yvonne resides in Texas with her husband, Steve. She can be contacted at yvonne.huneycutt@perspectivesglobal.org.





I sat bewildered and amazed. What is this teaching? How could I just now be hearing such significant information? After all, I was raised in the church—in a strong, mission-minded denomination. I held church staff positions. I had a seminary degree for goodness' sake! How did I miss this? This is revolutionary. My perception of missions was shattered in the space of two hours. My insight into Scripture was enlarged in the space of two weeks. My understanding of God, myself, the world, and my role in it was transformed over a semester.

Welcome to the Perspectives on the World Christian Movement course! My experience may be radical, but it is not unusual. Thousands bespeak a testimony that echoes my own. From college students to professors, from business executives to stay-at-home moms, from pastors to lay leaders, from missionary candidates to seasoned missionaries—we have done more than take a class. We have entered a movement, one that has reshaped more than just our lives. This movement has reshaped the mission endeavors of churches and organizations. It's a movement that is reshaping the world through the kingdom advance of God's people.

From the beginning...

Launched in 1974, Perspectives has intersected the lives of an estimated 300,000 course alumni across the globe. In addition to myriads who have taken the Perspectives course or derivatives of it, tens of thousands have used the Perspectives *Reader* as a textbook in college and seminary classes. There is no way to calculate the additional hundreds of thousands of individuals who have been directly influenced by those who have studied the Perspectives material and embraced God's call and promise for world evangelization.

Perspectives on the World Christian Movement is a course comprised of 15 lessons woven together into an integrated paradigm that unfolds God's declared purpose in this world and his active work toward the fulfillment of that purpose. Although often described as a missions course, in reality, it is not. It is a vision and discipleship course. Its intended purpose is to awaken God's people to his purpose, mobilizing his church to strategic engagement with him in the outworking of that purpose.

The uniqueness of Perspectives that undergirds its enduring legacy is found in two surprising elements. The first is that it is almost entirely a volunteer movement. It is propelled forward by millions of volunteer hours supplied by thousands of eager volunteers promoting, organizing, teaching, and conducting courses around the world. Most full-time staff raise their own support to have the privilege of serving the ministry. The course produces an outcome of God's people voluntarily engaging God's purpose in a multitude of ways for the rest of their lives.

A new old paradigm for missions

Why would so many give so much of their time to this movement? The answer is found in the second sustaining element—the paradigm of the course, which often catches believers by surprise. It is explored with greater detail in my book *Propelled by Hope*. The paradigm is essentially the unfolding of a grand story. A great God is writing a great story, where he creates a great people of blessing within every people, inviting them into his story to co-labor with him in bringing about his great and global purpose.

God's people are not objectivized into useful tools to dutifully accomplish his mission; instead, God grants dignity and purpose to his people by gracing them with a great work in a relational partnership with himself. The outcome of this story is great glory for God. Because God's purpose is certain, God's people engage with him in great hope, knowing that they give their lives to an ancient, eternal, and sure purpose. They are propelled by hope.

This, then, is the Perspectives story: a volunteer movement of God's people propelled forward by hope in the sure completion of God's purpose. The Perspectives movement and the frontier mission movement are inextricably intertwined. Therefore, a broad overview of the frontier mission movement, with its concepts and outcomes, is included in this story. This overview is not intended to be all-inclusive but enough of an outline to acquaint readers with the gist and breadth of frontier missions.

On the other hand, my book *Propelled by Hope* tells the Perspectives story in greater detail, serving as a documented history of this incredible movement. Interspersed throughout the narrative are stories of lives transformed through their encounter with Perspectives. Ralph Winter, the originator of the course, used to say that Perspectives joined a movement of God that was already in progress. This is why my book begins with a historical overview of the major trends in American culture and missions leading up to the mid-1970s. I then document the early development of the Perspectives course, up through 1981, with the publication of the first Perspectives *Reader* and *Study Guide*.

It became a movement.

The Perspectives course not only joined God's movement but itself became a movement, contributing to and accelerating major mission trends. So, *Propelled by Hope* pauses in the middle of the story to highlight the developing trends in world missions between 1980 and 2000. Those were formative decades in shaping future mission outreach, particularly in the frontiers of mission. Grasping the larger context, the stage was set to continue the story of the expansion and development of the Perspectives course in the final two decades of the 20th century.

Part two of *Propelled by Hope* ushers us into the 21st century, with all its change and chaos but also its increasing fruitfulness for the kingdom of God. Again, we examine the historical and global context impacting how we do mission, noting tectonic shifts in the new millennium. The frontier mission movement matured, continuing its global expansion with new expressions while, at the same time, encountering opposition, necessitating consultation and clarification. The mission *field* became the mission *force*. God surprised everyone with cascading people movements to Christ. With broad strokes of the paintbrush, I attempt to capture significant developments in frontier missions during the subsequent two decades.

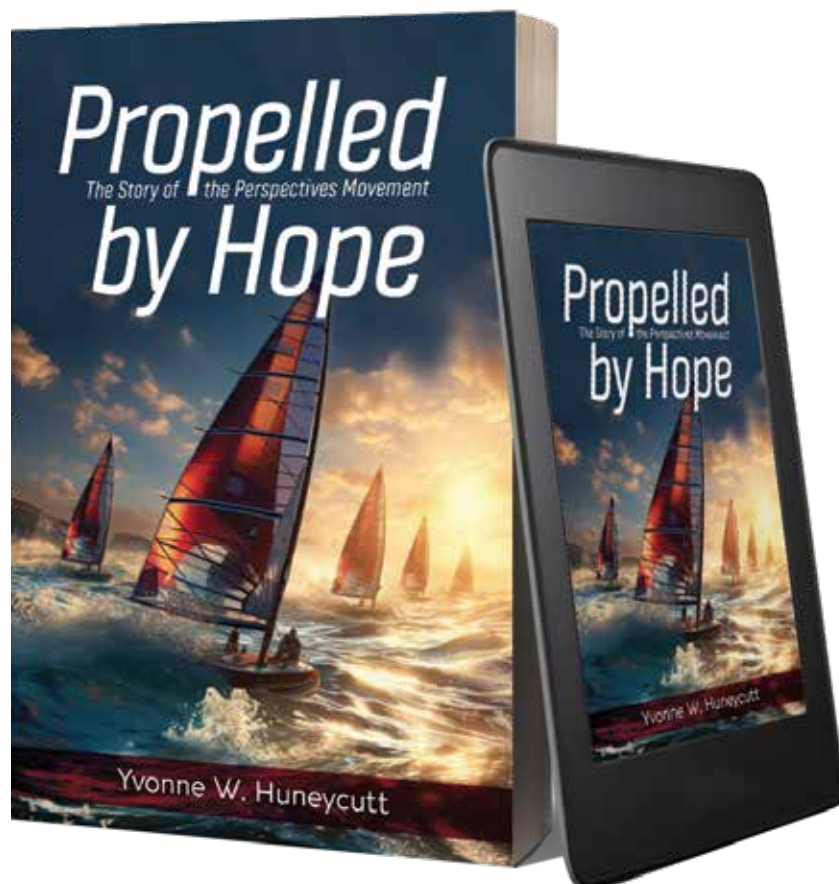
The Perspectives movement continued to mature and expand. The rapid momentum of classes and students brought with it struggle, restructuring, and new initiatives to develop tools and people. The transformative paradigm for which Perspectives is renowned was more clearly defined, enabling the students to engage in even richer ways. Deepening theological and missiological insight, now not just from the West but from many regions of the world, contributed to further curriculum development. Global growth focused on the need for a stronger course identity. Picking back up with the Perspectives story, I trace the developments from 2000 to 2020 in the North American course and organization. A significant section is given to the wonderful spread of Perspectives globally, most of which occurred in just the past decade.

The three years of 2020 to 2022 is forever etched in our memories. The global pandemic impacted Perspectives as it did everything else. During this time, Perspectives USA restructured once more to position itself for future growth. Despite national lockdowns, many global programs reported surprising advances. The challenge of recovering from the pandemic is where we conclude our story.

I often encourage my Perspectives students to be history-makers. But it is more than that. As we engage God's global purpose, we're not just making history—we are fulfilling it. The hope for which we labor is that heaven is richer and fuller and God is more glorified because of our praying, giving, going, supporting, and living for God's eternal purpose: that all tribes and tongues will know, worship, and adore him. 🏡

Adapted from "Introduction" in Yvonne Huneycutt's *Propelled by Hope*. Published by William Carey Publishing, 2024. Used by permission. Missionbooks.org.

LEARN MORE



The fascinating connection between the Perspectives movement, the frontier mission movement, and church planting movements is a story rarely told yet vital to understanding the spread of the gospel to unreached populations. Yvonne Huneycutt's *Propelled by Hope* unfolds the hidden tapestry of these interconnected movements through 60 personal interviews and inspiring anecdotes.

Propelled by Hope traces the development of Perspectives in the context of seemingly every major mission milestone during the past 50 years! It is the story of Perspectives becoming a global movement, changing the lives of course-developers and leaders just as radically as it transforms students into missional world-changers.

DOUG LUCAS, DBA
President, Team Expansion and
Founder/Co-Editor, *Brigada*