# Catalyzing KINGDOM breakthrough

by John Lambert

### Introduction

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hen I first came to the Pasadena community from
Thailand nearly three years ago,
I heard two specific words in my heart: "revitalization" and
"intercession." I believed the
Lord was planning a renewal of vision and purpose for our community, though I didn't understand what this meant in particular. I began to encounter others in our community that were sensing the same things and working to bring needed change.

As I began to delve deeper into the story of our history and the legacy of Ralph Winter, I became even more convinced of the need to re-emerge. "Intercession" was not simply about prayer, but also about standing in the gap between what is and what could be. Eventually I was asked by our leaders, whom you will hear from in a moment, to serve them directly. Through their calls for new organizational alignment and clarity, we began a strategic planning process that brought us into a rebranding initiative.

I became the project manager for this initiative and have carried it forward under their leadership until now. Working with our incredible partners, PlainJoe Studios, and our own Frontier Ventures Communications team, we were able to take the best of our legacy from Ralph Winter, the heart of our current leadership, and many of our

community's hopes for the future and translate it all into what you now see and read today, both here in *Mission Frontiers*, and online at frontierventures.org.

In this issue, we hope that you will gain a little insight into the thoughts behind our organizational changes, what values and aims remain constant for us, where we see ourselves headed, and what we are hoping to see happen in the days to come. Each of our subsidiaries will share a report about their own progress as well. One thing is certain: we are more convinced than ever that the greatest priority in mission today must be a concerted effort to see the kingdom of God breakthrough where it is not, among the last remaining unreached people groups of the world.

Catalyzing kingdom breakthrough among unreached peoples is still our highest aim and priority. As we look to our 40th anniversary in 2016, we hope you will join us with fresh passion for a new day in frontier mission, for the glory of God.

Now, it is my pleasure to introduce you to the leaders of Frontier Ventures and give you the opportunity to hear from each of them.

Ralph D. Winter's successor,
Dave Datema, took the reigns
as General Director in 2009.
In 2012 he began leading with
two other men, Chong Kim
and Bruce Graham in a plural
leadership model that continues
today. Datema led the INSIGHT

program before being asked to lead the organization. He grew up in West Africa and Jamaica as an MK and is an ordained Church of the United Brethren Pastor. He has an M.Div. from Winebrenner Theological Seminary.

Bruce Graham was originally recruited by Ralph Winter before the U.S. Center was established in 1976. Graham was instrumental in helping to start the IIS program, which later became known as Perspectives. He has served as a missionary to India for a total of 15 years. He carries an M.S. in Aeronautics and Astronautics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) as well as a M.A. in Cross Cultural Studies from the Fuller School of World Mission.

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Chong Kim was born in Korea and immigrated to the States in his teen years. He joined Ralph Winter in 1987 and was instrumental in establishing mobilization efforts in the Korean American church. He started a new mission structure focused on the frontiers. Kim was mobilized through the Perspectives program and received his Master's degree in International Development from

William Carey International University.

The following messages from our leadership were excerpted and adapted from talks given to our community this past December.



# **Contextualizing Our Constants**

by Dave Datema

Over the last five and a half years, we have been going through a major transition as an organization. These last five and a half years have been hard for our community in various ways, but I believe we have emerged into a new day.

Through it all, I believe there has been a consistent message: we are not going to change our primary purpose of catalyzing kingdom breakthrough among the unreached AND we are not going to change the vision of the Pasadena campus as a center for collaboration that points to and equips them for the frontiers of mission. These things are not new and these things are simply not going to change. They represent organizational constants. This is where we have great continuity with the past.

The responsibility for these constants now belongs to us. If our vision for breakthrough among the unreached or a campus full of collaboration for the frontiers is to be fulfilled, we must ask ourselves if we are willing to pay the price. It cost those who went before us and we understand that it is going to cost us as well. We have had to wrestle with the question, "How bad do we

want it?" But we believe that these constants are worth the cost.

As we fight for these constants, a lot of other things have changed or are in the process of changing. And I believe that all of us serving in the frontier mission movement must make the necessary changes to our ministries if we are serious about continuing to labor for the unreached in a new day and age, and captivating the next generation for the frontiers.

Dr. Winter—and some of you reading this article who have been at this for a long time—successfully captivated the previous generation for the cause of unreached peoples and the frontiers. Now after 40 years we find ourselves amidst another generation. And this is the challenge—we've got to do it all over again. Success with one generation guarantees nothing. Just ask Borders, Circuit City or Blockbuster Video. If we're going to be contextual, if we're going to speak to people where they live, if we're going to captivate this next generation for the frontiers, we will have to change.

We are beginning to see some of these changes as our publications get revamped and re-tooled, as Perspectives changes to meet new demands and as we have begun to develop a Launch Lab to start brand new projects that will address the unique needs of the new age we are in.

Our rebranding is one important way that we are "contextualizing our constants." We are working to contextualize our constants for a new generation that God is calling to the unreached. And while much is new and much will change, we trust that those who are familiar with us as well as those meeting us for the first

time will see plainly that we remain focused on catalyzing breakthroughs among the unreached peoples. We remain focused on collaboration that accelerates breakthroughs. And we remain focused on identifying barriers to those breakthroughs and helping find solutions with others. Those remain constant for us, even as we seek new ways to do them.



# Our Collective Miraculous Past

by Bruce Graham

### We Are On Our Fourth Name

I want to give just a little bit of historical perspective on our name change. We are actually on the fourth iteration of our name since the days we began. The first one was when we incorporated—and I was helping Dr. Winter sign the incorporation papers. We incorporated at the beginning as The Center for World Mission in 1976. This name was directly connected to Erik Stadell's prayer that the Pasadena campus, which had been recently vacated by the Nazarene denomination at that time, would become a "center for world mission." Then some people said to us, "That's a little bit audacious...the center for world mission?" So, we changed it to the U.S. Center for World Mission, in light of the fact that we hoped to see other regional centers in other countries. We would associate with other "centers for world mission." Then 1990 came along and we began to realize that as projects began to grow and identities associated with

projects and directions of projects began to go one way or another, we needed to articulate what is at the heart of who we are and we needed to change the incorporation to the name Frontier Mission Fellowship in order to distinguish who we are apart from our projects. So we had the U.S. Center for World Mission and we had William Carey International University as well as other projects. Now we are crossing a 40-year threshold in which we are changing our name once more.

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that now as you walk
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now established in
Mott Auditorium.

# The Vision, The Order, and The Land

When we began there were basically three key things of significance growing in Dr. Winter's mind.

One was the increasing awareness of large blocs of humanity, like islands in the midst of countries, to which the gospel had not yet gone.

And existing evangelism was not spreading among these peoples.

There needed to be a new kind of evangelism, a new approach to people, a new way of helping people understand the gospel. That vision

was emerging before we had the campus. This was 1972, 1973. It got pretty well articulated in 1974 when Dr. Winter was on his way to Lausanne Congress.

The other key idea percolating in his heart and mind was the significance and enduring quality of the Catholic orders. He was keen on starting a Protestant type of mission order undergirding this vision. It would be distinct from a local church, from an agency, or an academic institution. It would be a task-oriented community.

Then the Pasadena campus came up for sale. It was to be, in Dr. Winter's mind, a laboratory whereby this vision, served by this order, could explore new ways for the gospel to get in among those peoples. Dr. Winter loved to tinker, and he loved to create, and he loved to solve problems and develop new ways of doing things. So the campus was meant to be a place where these kinds of things could happen in a collaborative, germinating kind of environment.

We were originally given just one room on the campus. Across the street from us, on that side of the campus was Summit Lighthouse, a New Age cult. They venerated all kinds of "ascended masters" with Elizabeth Claire Prophet being their prime leader. I reflect back on all of this and I say to myself, "this is kind of prophetic...what happened here in the early days." If you can imagine us stepping out in faith to purchase this campus for this vision and on that side of the campus was this New Age cult that the Nazarenes (the former owners of the campus) surely did not want

to sell it to. Summit believed in all kinds of "ascended masters":
Muhammad, Buddha, Jesus, and so on. We were given one room on this side of the campus to see if we could rally people to the vision in this unique environment. It was all very prophetic in my mind.

The large auditorium on campus, now known as John R. Mott Auditorium, was full of the chanting of Summit Lighthouse. We went in one time. It was amazing...the music...the mantras: "I am the way. I am the truth. I am the life." In their minds, they were god. You'd hear it all over campus. I find it amazing that now as you walk around the campus, nearly 40 years later, you hear worship to Jesus night and day because of the house of prayer for all nations now established in Mott. In much the same way that the Nazarenes held camp meetings in that building, we continue to hold worship, prayer, and missions mobilization gatherings today. Former Nazarenes around in those days are delighted to hear what is happening.

There was something very foundational in our DNA that was emerging in the midst of these beginnings. We started Haggai community up the street from the campus. Haggai community had to do with not putting our hands to our own house but to His (God's) house that lay in ruins. And there was a restoration of priority they were being called to...His house over "paneling" our own houses. When this priority was lost, money went through holes and their fields were not productive. We believed that if we put God's house over our own

house, God would meet our every need. This was the essence of the Haggai community and the spirit which pervaded the campus in those early days. Over the years, this all germinated and grew—the vision and the community on this entrustment of land. I believe all of these things reflect something of our core DNA.

### **Building A Bridge**

There was a looking out to the field and there was a looking back which began to define our posture as an organization. It was as though we were a bridge linking together these two functions. We were mobilizing a new generation towards this great task in this way. And our campus was the place where this collaborative effort was based.

This whole first generation, for 40 years, articulated and mobilized toward this vision. We went through a lot of time and effort to articulate what was needed. A key word encapsulating this was "frontier mission." And we worked with others to create and define terminology that would help people understand the nature of the task. Much of this you can find in our Perspectives Study Program reader.

Securing the campus took us about fifteen years. Promotion of the vision secured the campus. The community developed a number of significant projects, with which many people in the mission community are now familiar including Mission Frontiers magazine, which initially began as our news bulletin; Global Prayer Digest; and Perspectives. We had other mobilization initiatives beyond these projects. We had training initiatives. We had educational programs through William Carey International University.

These first forty years were shaped by these things. After Dr. Winter's passing, we entered a transitional period. In the early 1970s, there was a great ground-swell of devoted, highly committed young people with hearts on fire to share Christ. There was the Jesus movement. We were involved in a significant work among young people out in Park Street Church in Boston. Many things have developed from their work in those days. Yet there is still the need to see the gospel planted among thousands of people groups still sealed off from any present evangelistic outreach.

Now stirring all across this country is a new inspiration and revitalization taking place among young people. Could it be that God is preparing once again a major new initiative over the next 40 years toward fulfilling this vision?

### A Whole New Generation

We are in the midst of a transitional period. Do you feel the stirrings among young people? What will harness their commitment and devotion? We want to shout a clarion call that is understandable, enticing, and motivating toward this vision. Part of this has to do with our name and our identity as an organization.

The last generation of effort has launched all kinds of people to the uttermost and in many cases they have bumped up against walls in making the gospel known. It's time for a new generation to rise up and take their place in God's purposes for the unreached, to build on the work of the previous generation and to carry it further.

May God find in us a willing heart for him to write another chapter in this generation. When he purposes to do a new thing, he often gives people a new name, and that is what much of our new name and branding is about. Our new name is Frontier Ventures. The campus entrusted to us will be known as the Venture Genter. And



at the heart of Venture Center will be a house of prayer and the Ralph D. Winter Launch Lab. It's who we were at the beginning. It's who we are now.



# Our Heart's Posture

by Chong Kim

If I can broadly categorize Dave's input on "contextualizing our constants" as our present challenge and opportunity and Bruce's talk as understanding our past, I'd like to focus on our future as Frontier Ventures, especially as it relates to our core purpose and distinctive contribution as a committed frontier mission-focused community

### **Reflective Activism**

Some 40 years ago, one decisive cornerstone for establishing the U.S. Center for World Mission was the conviction of reaching the Unreached People Groups (UPGs). We were the sole flag bearers of championing the vision of reaching the UPGs. Some 40 years later, we are not the only organization that is waving the flag of

the UPGs. One natural question we have asked is, "what then makes us unique and compelling?"

I am not saying that we stop waving the flag of the UPGs. Over 7,000 unreached people groups still remain, so we still have work to do. But I believe we have to do more than wave the flag. We must realize that these remaining unreached peoples are unreached for various reasons. I'm convinced the remaining progress will not be made by mere or more activism alone. What's needed in missions today and what I'm calling for our collective community to embrace is the concept of "reflective activism."

Paraphrasing what Dr. Winter said, the major progress of the gospel was made among peoples who had little to lose by adhering to the Western form of Christianity. "Western missions effort by and large is a single failure of listening and learning from the local and indigenous contexts. This failure allowed perpetuation of a "western" flavor of Jesus followership all over the world," observed Richard Fox Young in his opening editorial in the book, *Asia in the Making of Christianity*: Conversion, Agency, and Indigeneity, 1600s to the Present. We need to concern ourselves with how to best

reach them without making them be and look like us. I believe this is where the word, kingdom, and our mission of "identifying barriers and pursuing solutions" becomes critical. And these two concepts are interrelated.

# Why do we focus on kingdom breakthrough?

We focus on the kingdom because Jesus did. And yet the three most important creeds basically missed it all together. Listen to what E. Stanley Jones penned.

"By the time the creeds were written in the 3rd century, what had happened to the conception of the kingdom of God? The Nicene Creed mentions it once, but only in reference to our life beyond the borders of this life, in heaven: "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." The Apostle's Creed and the Athanasian Creed don't mention it at all.

The three great historic creeds summing up Christian doctrine mention once what Jesus mentioned a hundred times. Something had dropped out. A vital, vital thing had dropped out. A crippled Christianity went across Europe, leaving a crippled result: a vacuum was left in the soul of Western civilization.

1983

International Journal of Frontier Missiology (IJFM)

1985

Historic Pasadena Campus is Paid in Full 1990

Global Prayer Digest (GPD) 1984

International Society for Frontier Missiology (ISFM)

1988

Frontier Mission Fellowship (FMF) The word and concept of the gospel would have no meaning without the phrase "gospel of the kingdom," or "gospel of Jesus Christ." People in Jesus' day were familiar with the word, gospel (euangellion), referring to any great deeds performed by the emperors of Rome. Jesus used the same word to convey the concept of the good news but only in the new and revolutionary context of the kingdom (not earthly but heavenly), himself, or of God. Thus, the context was everything.

We are called to make disciples of all nations. I believe what's captured in the Lord's Prayer is why we do what we do: we make disciples in order to see God's kingdom come "on this earth as it is in heaven." Notice we are not saying "disciple making breakthrough" or "church planting breakthrough." Our vision is directly aligned to what Jesus taught us to pray and live out as in "kingdom breakthrough," especially where the kingdom is not yet. This is where our laser focus on the unreached comes into view.

# So how does kingdom breakthrough happen?

Our concern for kingdom breakthrough won't happen without

the effort of identifying barriers and pursuing solutions. We have to understand that not all barriers are the same. The more foundational barriers are, the more hidden they are, because they are at the level of assumptions and worldviews. We cannot be satisfied with surface type barriers and solutions. We have to go after the assumption-level barriers.

What's ironic here is that these assumption-level barriers "feel" so far removed from directly reaching the unreached, yet because they are foundational in nature, they do address root barriers and solutions. If we have learned anything from our history, we have learned that solutions are often relatively easier to pursue than identifying foundational barriers.

However, to borrow from the store, "Toys-R-Us", I believe one of the foundational barriers is us—"Barriers-R-Us!" One prevalent reason why we as westerners interface with many cultures but often plant expressions of "western Christianity" all over the world is that the western missions movement has often failed to recognize the brutal fact that we were the main barriers. However, I am certainly not saying that there weren't other barriers. This is precisely

why Dr. Ralph Winter talked so reflectively and extensively about the critical need to de-westernize the gospel. The gospel of the kingdom somehow morphed into the gospel of western Christianity.

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So can we honestly reflect the concept of us being the major barriers? How do we overcome this barrier among us? How do we help everyone (wherever they are from) to see that major barriers are themselves? Accepting the idea that we are the barriers is humbly and honestly seeing "the log in our own eyes," missiologically speaking. Let's face it. Our natural tendency is to try to make others

2001

Ralph Winter Named in Top 25 Most Influential Evangelicals in America by TIME Magazine

ZUUŁ

Ralph Winter is awarded the Lifetime of Service Award

2000

**INSIGHT Program** 

2005

Joshua Project (JP) Joins the Family

2008

Ralph Winter Appoints
Dave Datema as
his Successor

be like us. We often make others do church like we do. We require others to follow Jesus like we do. We require others to love God like we do.

I believe if we acknowledge "the log in our own eyes" and the fact that we ourselves may be the barriers, we will go a long way in seeing the rest of the world embrace Jesus as their own. So what does it mean for us to acknowledge "the log in our own eyes?"

# Our Foundational Assumptions

I think one starting point would be for us to recognize our foundational assumptions about life and how we do it, i.e. worldview both in its strengths and limitations. One obvious example has to do with our cultural penchant for individualism--both its blessings and curses. And we also need to acknowledge that our worldview is not completely aligned to the biblical kingdom worldview. Recognition of our foundational assumptions will set us up for taking forward steps on what Nouwen describes as cultivating "the poverty of heart and mind."

Here, I'd like to borrow some words from a recent paper I wrote for the *American Society for Frontier Missiology* in 2014:

Mark Twain said wisely, "It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so." Richard Rohr, in his talk titled, "The Beginner's Mind," says, "Ignorance does not result from what we don't know! Ignorance results from what we think we do know—but don't! Most ignorant people are, in fact, quite certain." One defining characteristic about kingdom spirituality is our willingness, tenacity, and commitment to unlearn and let go of our wrongly assumed realities. One reason why some do not readily embrace the "poverty of mind and heart" as much is because there is often a great deal of confusion and even pain involved.

### **Missiological Love In Action**

The kingdom coming in us, among us, and beyond us can only be ushered in through love. The end of kingdom spirituality is love. Thus kingdom breakthrough can essentially be interpreted as a love breakthrough. Think through some of the major breakthroughs in your life. Would you not qualify them as "love breakthroughs"—as in God breaking through to us in and through love? God is love and inevitably love is what we will experience.

Therefore, we can begin to "see" more clearly that these are not mere warm, feel-good spiritual breakthroughs but a revolutionary missiological breakthrough of love. Not imposing our cultural ways of doing spiritual life and following Jesus is missiological love in action. This is directly related to the vision of seeing Jesus movements all around the world not in monochrome but in a full and bright spectrum of God-ordained colors. Love is both powerful and empowering. It changes our lives and others' lives. And we can be used by God to live this out with the vision of seeing all peoples come to Christ. At the end of the day, this is the heart of Frontier Ventures.



www.frontierventures.org

Organizational Rebranding and Reorganization Begins

2013

Ralph D. Winter Launch Lab Envisioned 2014

Frontier Ventures and Venture Center

2013

PRIME Initiative Envisioned

*?*በ!3

The Ralph D. Winter Research Center 2015