To me he was just my dad. Not a missiologist. Not a professor. Not a missionary nor a minister. Just the loving daddy who would scoop us up in his arms, take us individually on his trips up into the Mayan villages in the mountains of Guatemala, whistle hymns in ways that sounded like birds’ songs, insist that we learn double-entry accounting before he would give us an allowance, or teach us the Greek alphabet when we were learning to read! Just the creative father who was never stumped by an impossibility or an insurmountable problem. There would always be another way around. Surrender or defeat weren’t in his vocabulary. Possibilities, hope, faith, optimism—his life seemed to brim with scintillating ideas and innovative breakthroughs. Just the dad who involved all of us in each of his countless new projects—even when it meant at least two of us daughters already in college waking up at 6 a.m. morning after morning to call Urbana students back East, inviting them to the first Summer Institute of International Studies. Just the father of four girls who advocated that we learn skills and professions we could juggle as mothers in our own homes without sacrificing the ability to personally raise our children. He was ahead of his time in so many ways.

More than this, he was a father who was devoted to his Lord and who loved the Word of God. Raised in a devout Christian family, his life was irrevocably changed by his time in the Navigators. Just last week I found in his garage a box stuffed with his cards of Navigator memory verses, saved all these years. Maybe that explains why he was so passionately committed to the translation of the Scriptures into the indigenous languages and the translation of the Church into the indigenous cultures. Or why he and his colleagues took theological education to the mountain villages of Guatemala, envisioning a distinctively Mayan presbytery with Mayan pastors, at a time when, in that area, even the men had at best only a third-grade education.

Even in his waning years, he tackled yet another frontier: the origins of disease and its devastating effect on people and the spread of the Kingdom. As the grandfather of a boy with autism (our oldest), my dad was constantly on the lookout for new books with cutting-edge treatments. Several times a year I would receive a package in the mail with five to seven of the latest groundbreaking books on autism. Just last month, from the hospital, he dictated an email response to our son’s “Get Well” card. He wrote: “I’m so proud to have you as a grandson. Both you and I are struggling to make progress with health issues for which we are not responsible. It’s good to have a fellow traveler in that process. Every advance you make delights my heart.…”

I’m proud to have been one of his daughters. I will miss him dreadfully but I look forward to seeing him again some day soon.
orphan for a home. I worked alongside a good number of them, which were then housed in office space a couple of miles away on Walnut Street, desks backed against each other, six organizations to a room, and hardly elbow room or space to think. In the excitement of being around this “watchman” of global missions, there were two things which I have always cherished. The first was his posture towards me and my colleagues. He never let his elite gifting and brilliance puff him up and distance him from us. He was astonishingly willing at all times to include anyone and everyone in what he saw as necessary for the cause of Christ. It was a wonder for me to sit at his dinner table in those early years and to watch him painstakingly map out, for my uninitiated mind, some aspect of the mission before us. He might blow apart my assumptions in a single statement, but he was committed to my understanding of what he himself could see. I'll be ever grateful for the place he gave me, his willingness to stoop, to include, to nurture and shape a young mind for the frontiers of God’s mission.

But, secondly, to any young mind his thinking was intrepid and seemingly dangerous—anything but tame. His bold step from cramped offices and a tenured professorship to establish a mission community that would house multiple mission organizations made that ever so clear. For him any greater awareness and insight was just fuel for action, for decision, for responsibility, for personal relinquishment and sacrifice. Underneath all the strategic reflection was a heart of obedience, a radical commitment to give from all he had received from His Lord. It's what drew many of us to his side, to join his mission community, to model our lives after his.

Learning All the Time: Lessons Learned from My Father

Becky Lewis

Tim and I were in Texas when we heard that the health of my father had taken a significant turn for the worse. We got up at 2 a.m. and drove virtually non-stop back to Pasadena, where I was able to spend the last 50 minutes of his life with him. I was singing around his bed with two of my sisters, Linda and Beth, and my step-mom Barb, when his spirit peacefully departed. And what a great spirit he had! I smiled to think that at last he would be able to understand all the mysteries of God, life and the universe that he had speculated about for so long.

My father never lost his enthusiasm for learning, reading voraciously right up to the week he died. Growing up, we were surrounded by piles of interesting books and magazines. If I happened to wander into his office (a room in our home), my father would sit me on his knee and excitedly explain his new insight for the day. Whether I could understand it or not, his delight was contagious. Some of his innovations were small, like figuring out how to get the wheel of our car to churn our ancient ice cream-making machine. Some were large, like devising a plan to get theological education to the poorest of pastors in the smallest of villages in Guatemala. I remember him explaining to me some of the micro-businesses he was helping pastors there set up to help support themselves, and how they had to be low-investment, meet local needs, etc. Even in grade school I would pore over books he had bought on homemade renewable power or early American frontier inventions, “helping” him think up things that would be useful to the Mayan Indians in our remote mountain valley.

Greatness was not important to my father. He was never seeking a name for himself or a position of power or fame. But he was deeply interested in the problems of this world and what God would have us do about them.
Before I was born, my father persuaded his older brother (also an engineering grad from Caltech) and his father, a top engineer with the City of Los Angeles, to help found an Institute of Technology in Afghanistan, to help the country solve its problems. What he couldn’t persuade others to do, he would do himself. Because of him, I always believed that “loving our neighbor” meant living among the poor and helping them solve the problems of their daily lives. But more than that, he taught me that any solution needs to be broadcast widely so that it can help as many people worldwide as possible, not just our immediate friends.

When I was in college, my father studied the state of Christianity worldwide, and was shocked to discover that some 17,000 people groups did not have anyone from anywhere to tell them about Jesus Christ and the healing, transforming salvation he brings into our lives. He knew from experience that the most important things in life—honesty, love, peace, forgiveness, goodness, etc.—only come from a restored relationship with God. He gathered my mother and us girls around the kitchen table and we discussed the enormity of this problem. We concluded that, as a family, we would set out to do what was needed to persuade some believer from somewhere to bring an understandable, holistic, and gracious witness to each of these people groups, as best we could. “If it is worth doing, it is worth doing poorly,” my father always said. Thirty-five years later, only 8,000 unreached people groups are left. Not too bad.

He taught me so much more: perseverance and grace in the face of opposition or mockers; seeing beyond the obvious problem to the root issues; the importance of encouraging everyone to seek the best they can do for God’s purposes; getting my direction from the concerns of God’s heart. Phrases he quoted that I won’t forget include: “You can get a lot done if you are willing for someone else to get the credit”; “God doesn’t need money, He needs people” (hence the Million Person Campaign to raise lots of awareness and small gifts, instead of a traditional fund-raising campaign); “Don’t do what others can and will do, if there are important things that others can’t or won’t do,” (from Dawson Trotman).

I am grateful to God that, though my father’s spirit has departed to live with God in eternal realms, the spirit of what he stood for lives on in his children and grandchildren and thousands around the world.

HE WAS DEEPLY INTERESTED IN THE PROBLEMS OF THIS WORLD AND WHAT GOD WOULD HAVE US DO ABOUT THEM. —BECKY

Learning to Think from Dr. Winter

Tim Lewis

I would say, “Dr. Winter was one of the three most influential men in my life,” because it is true. But, I have heard so many others say similar things. Along with all of them I could point out how he transformed my understanding of the world and of God. I could show how the entire trajectory of my life was radically altered.

However, he changed not only what I thought about, but how I went about “thinking” itself. “Thinking outside the box” for him was not a game or a claim to fame. It was a way to see where the problems really originated, to recognize unseen factors, and often to redefine the problem itself. Coming out of the context of World War II, he had seen how clear focus and big strategic thinking are fundamental to winning a war. There is little point in winning a battle if it does not strategically lead to winning the war.

I learned from Dr. Winter that often the most important battles are battles of perception. If we cannot perceive what is actually going on, all solutions are irrelevant and
ineffective. The true disciples of Dr. Winter are not just those who carry on with his ideas, but those who have learned to carry on with his way of figuring out problems, issues, and solutions. They are those who step back long enough to consider what God is trying to accomplish in this world, and what we must fully understand in order to help devise real solutions.

Finally, I am grateful to Dr. Winter for giving me one of his best creations, his daughter Becky. She, like him, attended Caltech and thinks in profound and surprising ways. I look forward to seeing how God continues to work through our lives, and those of others, as we strive to apply what we have learned about thinking and living from Dr. Winter. 😊

**Thoughts on My Dad**

*Linda Dorr*

My dad was a lot of fun to play with. He always had time for us. He never shooed us out of his study or away from him. No matter how trivial the question or the problem we brought him, he always treated it seriously. He liked to play soccer. I remember him playing on the field outside our home in Guatemala almost every day with some of the Indian men with whom he worked. He also would play soccer with us four girls. Tricia, the youngest, was always his goalie and the other three of us would work our hardest to somehow best him, but with a mischievous twinkle in his eyes and a chuckle (and some fancy footwork), he always managed to get the ball past us into our goal.

In those days the conventional model for missionary kid schooling would have required sending us four girls away to a boarding school several hours away. Unwilling for us to be separated from our parents for months at a time, he helped to found a school to which we could commute on a daily basis. (This school is still in operation today.)

He was always good at recruiting help from whoever was there, and many times this was us. In the first years of William Carey Library Publishers, when it was still being operated from our home in South Pasadena, I remember helping to stamp a one-paragraph “errata” in the back of one of the booklets that had been printed. (He, of course, rigged up a contraption involving the dining room chandelier, a large rubber band and the stamp to help us do it more easily.) Later, we spent several weeks of our vacation reading out small numbers from one book and writing them into another in the process of producing the *Word Study Concordance*. What is most amazing is not that he solicited our help (no matter how young we were, he could figure out some way we could help), but that he always made it seem fun!

Family gatherings that included my father’s brothers were punctuated with funny tales of the exploits he got up to as a boy, including shooting out a street light with his slingshot (and it taking him years to pay the city back for the cost!) and telling another student how to build a bomb (not realizing the young man would actually build it!).

By the time I was a high school student, most dinnertime conversations at home revolved around world events or were brainstorming sessions on how we could impact the world. It was during this time while attending a student mission conference that I first heard his impassioned plea for people to focus on the unreached people groups. Just back from Lausanne, he shared his early “pie chart.” The phrase “do what others can’t or won’t do” echoed in my head. Like thousands of other young people, this clarion call was to change my life in such a way that I could never be content to be an “ordinary” Christian again.

I know that many people will comment on his problem-solving approach to life, his willingness to attempt the improbable and even the impossible, his willingness to suffer
ridicule and contempt in order to follow a worthy goal, and his passion for the completion of the Great Commission. But, I will always be grateful that though my father was well-known, fame was never of value to him. Rather, he loved his family and he loved His Lord and sought to serve Him as best he could. He never stopped loving us, and we knew it.

Illustrating “Design Thinking” for Mission Purposes

Darrell Dorr

Many of the accolades of Ralph Winter rightfully focus on his creativity and innovation. But those who praise him can miss the mark if they shake their heads in admiration at his genius and leave it at that, for Dr. Winter illustrated approaches to “design thinking” that others can imitate. In particular, he viewed the challenges of world mission and international development through a series of “lenses” through which we, too, can choose to “re-frame” the challenges we face:

• **The Bible:** Dr. Winter shared the evangelical emphasis on the authority of the Word of God. But he also promoted a healthy awareness of how our cultural and historical conditioning often makes us highly selective in how we interpret and obey the Bible. Hence our need for other lenses.

• **Cultural anthropology:** This is the “wide-angle” lens that provides breadth of perspective. More than once Dr. Winter observed that anthropology “loosened him up.”

• **Statistics:** As with William Carey and others before him, Dr. Winter put mathematics to sanctified use, especially to break up large challenges into “do-able” pieces. In the hands of the right man, mathematical statistics is the art of the possible.

• **Alertness to vested interests:** Dr. Winter had a keen sensitivity to how vested interests can distort decision-making. Taking a cue, I have advised my own students, “You can better understand where a man stands if you first recognize where he sits.”

• **The “Navy way”:** Dr. Winter often quoted, “There is the right way, the wrong way, and the Navy way.” Navy service in WWII left a deep impression on a young man who thereafter applied purpose-driven thinking to other mobilizations for urgent goals.

One of the most common questions I’ve been asked through the years is “What was it like growing up with Ralph Winter?” Even though I feel such loss now, a rush of happy memories floods my mind as I consider this. Today as I think of him, I smile, remembering the deep impact that his humor, patience, idealism and love has had on each of us girls. My family had some of our best discussions around our dinner table. I can remember the time when my

Growing Up with My Dad

Tricia Johnson
dad felt that his teenage daughters needed to understand boys better. We all listened and asked questions as if we were anthropologists and it was a foreign culture we were studying. Invariably, we would end up laughing so hard that our neighbor would call and ask us to be more quiet. Over the years her calls became so regular that if the phone rang during dinner we would stop laughing and say “Oh no! It’s Mrs. S. again!”

I also remember that, a few times a year, my mom might say with a sigh, “You know, we haven’t been to the movies in a long time.” Almost without a pause, my dad would reply, “Let’s go right now!” Once or twice we even left our plates on the table and walked right out the door.

When I was small, my dad made me feel like he was interested in talking about anything, whether it was moths, or bird’s nests or magnets. I felt my confidence grow because he sought and valued my opinions. As I grew older, I participated in family council meetings where we discussed important decisions like whether my parents should start a publishing company (William Carey Library) or take the risky step of leaving Fuller Seminary to start the U.S. Center for World Mission. It was a family decision every time.

Standing on the Shoulders of a Giant

Todd Johnson

Ralph Winter passed along to me two things that clearly transformed his own view of his responsibility in the world. First, he embraced the study of the history of Christianity and found it impossible to remain small-minded in the light of the broad canvas of God’s initiatives across the centuries. As a young man he was a Presbyterian who loved John Wesley and whose favorite historians were Baptist and Roman Catholic. I have endeavored almost from the day I met him to follow in his footsteps in this discipline. Second, he had extensive contact with Christians from around the world. As a result, he gradually released himself from the bonds of American culture and thought of himself as a citizen of world Christianity. He built this desire deep into all he touched, including me. It was from those two vantage points that he looked out

I CAN REMEMBER THE TIME WHEN MY DAD FELT THAT HIS TEENAGE DAUGHTERS NEEDED TO UNDERSTAND BOYS BETTER. WE ALL LISTENED AND ASKED QUESTIONS AS IF WE WERE ANTHROPOLOGISTS. —TRICIA

Two years ago our extended family went back to Guatemala to visit many of the people my dad and mom had ministered to almost 40 years earlier. I was glad to see how many were still deeply grateful for my parents’ work and lives. But I was especially touched to see how much my dad still cared for those he had worked with so many years earlier. He spent the next year or more wrestling with the grinding poverty these Mayan Indians faced. To the end, my dad never rested in his quest to help everyone he met to live as God intends.
on the world and saw with razor-sharp insight where reformation was needed.

Consequently he was a man who was “wide awake” to what was going on around the world. He had an uncanny ability to think clearly about not just what was happening, but why it was happening and what might be done about it. Having detected both problems and potential solutions, he immediately went to work on waking up others to this larger reality. In fact, one of his favorite metaphors was that of “sleeping firemen” who needed to be woken from their slumber in order to “put out the fire.” He constantly challenged me to stay awake and to expend my energy waking up others. Perhaps one way we could best honor his legacy is to join him in his desire to get to the root problems in order to help those who cannot help themselves.

As an alert Christian he was painfully aware of the distractions most of us face. Although he spent decades establishing a $15 million campus, he knew that evangelicals here in the United States, the primary group he was addressing, spent much energy on less important matters. I was thinking about him the other day when I worked out the fact that evangelicals in the USA spent that same amount of $15 million on candy in the past 16 hours. Somewhere, likely to the consternation of other celestial inhabitants, he is probably still making such calculations.

My own feeling is that it is impossible to consider his legacy without thinking about our own. His life’s work is unfinished, and we are left here today in the same troubled world that he so clearly interpreted. I feel a deep sense of sadness in losing one of the Christian world’s clearest prophets, but I have an equally deep sense of responsibility to take forward his agenda. That shouldn’t be too great of a burden for any of us if we remember Isaac Newton’s aphorism, “If I have seen so far, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants.”

My Life with Ralph

Barb Winter

Our “love story” still amazes me whenever I consider how God brought us together in five months and two weeks though we were 2000 miles apart! July 6, 2002 began nearly seven good years of marriage. I treasure a myriad of wonderful memories of our life together both at home and in many places around the world. It was my privilege and joy to adapt my life and be a helpmate to this warm, loving, affectionate sweetheart who was so affirming and appreciative, a gentleman at every turn. He was generous with his compliments about meals I served and made me feel like a queen in his “castle.” Ralph loved to tease and make me laugh. A few days before he died, while helping him button his short-sleeved shirt, he said with the glint in his eye, “I’ll get the cuffs!”

Always self-effacing and often shy in public or with guests, he did enjoy having company that brought meaningful, substantive conversations, especially with the INSIGHT students. In the later years of his marriage with Roberta he said 1469 Bresee (our home) was a hospital and a library. But he often expressed gratitude that now we had a home which accommodated gatherings of all sorts. And he helped with preparation and clean-up afterwards.

Ralph had great admiration and respect for the contributions of women. We based our marriage on Psalm 34:3, “Glorify (magnify) the Lord with me; let us exalt His Name together.” He valued my opinions about many issues and decisions he was required to make, and solicited my input on his writings as he dictated or as I proofread. In fact, that was his “hook” when he initi-
ated our relationship. He asked if I would be willing to give him feedback if he sent a paper. Little did I know that he also sent it to eight other donors! However, he claimed that my response was the most intelligent! So he pursued!

Life with Ralph was never dull. I have been privileged to meet so many beautiful folks, both in the Frontier Mission Fellowship and around the world: Korea, Guatemala, Japan, Thailand, Singapore, Budapest and Amsterdam, plus the many places where he spoke in the U.S. It never ceased to amaze me how he was able to pull a message together as we drove or flew to our destination. He could jot down a few words on a card and speak for an hour! His knowledge and memory of historical and biblical details, as well as his ability to relate current missiological data using applicable analogies to which his audience could relate, were astounding. He always left his hearers with a potent challenge.

Ralph wrestled with the fact, and was the first to admit, that he was not a good administrator in following day-to-day details as the FMF General Director or when president of the University. This was perhaps his greatest weakness and disappointment since it left many of his ideas unfinished or incomplete. He himself had more proverbial plates spinning than he could manage at one time.

But his calling and passion for the cause of Kingdom Mission was evident right to the very end of his life. Two verses that fueled him were 1 John 3:8b—"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work." And from Jesus’ prayer to His Father in John 17:18—"As You sent Me into the world, I have sent them into the world."

Ralph always had time for folks who wanted his wisdom or advice. He found it difficult to refuse a call or an appointment. And he always made time to talk with one of his daughters or grandchildren. Many a dinner was reheated! Unfortunately, many promises to send a paper, to write a foreword or a blurb for a book jacket, or to read and respond to a paper, etc., remain unfinished. His administrative assistant and I will do our best to deal with what we find on his desk and on the notations on back of business cards he liked to collect.

In hindsight, would I accept Ralph’s invitation to marry him? Without hesitation! With God’s enabling, we weathered his Lyme disease diagnosed before our wedding, and his multiple myeloma diagnosis just a few days after our wedding, survived our house fire six months later, and faced other physical challenges along the way. But as the hymn writer, Thomas Moore, said, “Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.”

I am so grateful that I could care for him and experience the love that God placed in our hearts for each other, honoring the vows we made “‘til death do us part.” I have been blessed with a husband who loved me deeply but more importantly loved and served the everlasting God with all his being—mind, soul and body. What more could I ask?

WITH GOD’S ENABLING, WE WEATHERED HIS LYME DISEASE DIAGNOSED BEFORE OUR WEDDING, AND HIS MULTIPLE MYELOMA DIAGNOSED JUST A FEW DAYS AFTER OUR WEDDING, SURVIVED A HOUSE FIRE SIX MONTHS LATER, AND FACED OTHER PHYSICAL CHALLENGES ALONG THE WAY. —BARB
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