

# HIS KINGDOM COME:



## An Integrated Approach to Discipling the Nations and Fulfilling the Great Commission

**W**hat are we supposed to be doing among the nations?

In many ways, the last ten years of Dr. Winter's life was focused on this issue. Having spent three decades getting the church refocused on the final frontiers, he felt that the most productive use of his time in the last decade of his life was to look at strategy issues of how we can best reach the major non-Christian blocs of the world. Why have these groups remained resistant to the gospel message? Is there something defective in what we are preaching? Is it a methodology issue? Like McGavran, he decided to go back to the Bible and see what the guidebook has to say.

He was not the only one looking into this issue. God was speaking to others as well. Thus when the book, *His Kingdom Come*, was released, representing the current thinking of many of YWAM's leaders, Dr. Winter was ecstatic. Here was a summary of much of what he had been saying for the last decade. In a review for the *International Journal of Frontier Missiology*, he commented:

I am very excited about this book. It is important evidence of a major organization turning very gradually and definitely into a nation-building kingdom type of mission, in addition, of course to the ongoing stress on personal conversion.

The theme of YWAM's book was how to disciple all peoples with the gospel of the kingdom. What YWAM's leaders began to see was that the Bible itself is a manual for how to disciple entire nations. Not only that, but discipling nations is the mission of the Church.

*His Kingdom Come* is a collection of 30 articles written by YWAM's senior leadership team. It is organized much like the *Perspectives course*, with sections focusing on the biblical, historical, and stra-



tegic dimensions of discipling nations. Dr. Winter recommended that it become the textbook of a new missions course.

Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, observed of *His Kingdom Come*:

The reader will be impressed that the task of discipling the nations is not for an elite few who go as professional missionaries but is the responsibility of every church and every believer.

This is certainly true, and is a positive move in an important direction. The Great Commission is a mandate for the entire church. Discipling nations is something every believer everywhere is called to participate in, whether it be right where they are among their own people, or by assisting those who are being sent to the least-reached population segments of the world. For too long we have emphasized only the latter when it comes to obedience to the Great Commission. But by virtue of the greatness of this assignment to disciple all the peoples of the earth, clearly the entire body of Christ is needed. And that is the beauty of the Great Commission—it is something so great we can't possibly do it without God's power and without the full cooperation of the global church.

Will YWAM be able to integrate this approach in frontier mission strategies among unreached peoples? One frontier YWAM missionary recently commented that those involved in YWAM Frontier Missions feel left out of this new emphasis. That is certainly unfortunate and unnecessary. Ralph Winter immediately saw the significance of national discipleship thinking in frontier mission strategy. He saw it decades ago, as did Donald McGavran. Thus there is no need for a polarization to occur within YWAM over this issue. Quite the opposite, this emphasis shows how everything we do—whether it be pioneering disciple-making movements among a totally unreached people, or moving a reached people closer to the ideal of national discipleship—is all integrated together and is the ultimate goal of fulfilling the Great Commission. f