

# MISSION FRONTIERS

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**11** A CONVERSATION WITH DAVID PLATT /  
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/ **06** URBANA GETS RADICAL  
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06

# URBANA GETS RADICAL

## CELEBRATING 66 YEARS OF GLOBAL IMPACT

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# URBANA'S ENDURING LEGACY: CHANGED LIVES



RICK WOOD  
/ EDITOR, MISSION  
FRONTIERS

Over the last 66 years, no other missions event has had so powerful an influence on the mobilization of students for cross-cultural involvement in missions as the Urbana student mission conventions sponsored by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. The list of people involved in the first “Urbana,” held in Toronto, Canada in 1946, includes history-making luminaries J. Christy Wilson and Ralph Winter, who worked together to recruit students from Princeton to go to the first “Urbana.” Also among the 575 attendees from 151 schools at the 1946 conference were Jim Elliot, martyred in 1956 along with four others working to reach the Waodani people of Ecuador, and Elliot’s best friend, David Howard, who would go on to lead InterVarsity Missions and a number of the Urbana conventions. See our interview with David starting on page 15. The conference got its ultimate name when in 1948 the convention moved to the campus of the University of Illinois in the city of Champaign/Urbana. Starting in 2006, the Urbana conventions have been held in St. Louis.

On the occasion of the latest Urbana convention, Urbana 2012, held December 27-31 with over 16,000 people in attendance, we wanted to explore the history and impact of these conventions on the course of world evangelization. At Urbana 2012 alone, 4,224 people made decisions to serve at least two years in missions. This is an increase from 2,676 in 2009. Our own Perspectives on the World Christian Movement course, which is also one of the most powerful tools for mission mobilization, was birthed out of Ralph Winter’s reaction to an increase in the number of people signing the decision cards at Urbana 73. As David Howard says, “Missiologist Ralph D. Winter came to me after the conference, and had noted the change in attitude and interest. He was desperate to follow-up this fresh interest in world missions. By the summer of 1974 he had designed a two-week seminar for students, the Summer Institute of International Studies (SIIS) to explore the biblical basis, history, culture and strategy of missions. This was the precursor of the Perspectives course, which he produced and

unveiled at Urbana 1979.” (pages 10 and 16 this issue.) The Perspectives course now impacts over 7,000 students every year. Go to [www.perspectives.org](http://www.perspectives.org) to learn more.

I am also one of the fruits of Urbana. I was one of the 17,000 students who attended Urbana 1979. I had only been a believer for two years, and I had no clue what missions or the Great Commission was about, but I was part of an InterVarsity chapter on my college campus when they handed me an Urbana brochure. The decision to go was made much easier when my home church, which has faithfully supported my work with the U.S. Center for 23 years now, stepped forward to cover the cost of my attendance. How many more students like me could be mobilized into strategic mission involvement if more churches had the visionary foresight to sponsor their young people to go to Urbana?

At Urbana 79 speakers such as Elisabeth Elliot, John Stott, Luis Palau and Billy Graham opened up my understanding of God’s purposes in the world. I realized that the Great Commission applied to all who claimed the name of Jesus as their Savior. All of us have a role in proclaiming the kingdom of God to the ends of the earth. We just have to find out from God what role that is. David Howard had a similar revelation at his first Urbana in 1946. He says on page 14, “I remember that I was overwhelmingly impressed... that every Christian who has received the gospel is responsible for giving it to those people who don’t have it.” The major question is why do students like David Howard and myself have to go to an Urbana-like meeting in order to learn of God’s call to all believers to make disciples of all peoples?

## URBANA 2012 GETS IT RIGHT AND GETS RADICAL

Each time that one of the Urbana conventions comes along, people on the outside of InterVarsity, like myself, are tempted to wonder whether they will “get it right,” meaning, “Will Urbana have the right biblical focus on reaching the unreached? In the past we have been critical for a lack of focus on the remaining task and an apparent over-emphasis on social gospel outreach at some Urbanas. But this year it appears that they did a great job of striking the proper balance between proclaiming and demonstrating the gospel.

We were also thrilled to learn that David Platt had been invited to speak, and from all reports his message of making Jesus supreme in our lives and taking the gospel to the ends of the earth was well received. After David Platt spoke, the convention delegates rushed the bookstore and bought up all 4,000 copies of David's book *Radical*. See our interview with David starting on page 11. David's message to Urbana this year is the right message for all believers everywhere, not just the younger generation. He said, "We do not have time to waste our lives coasting out casual, comfortable Christianity. We have a master who demands radical sacrifice and we have a mission that warrants radical urgency.... Every passion, every gift, every skill He has given you, every bit of study you are getting is all for one purpose—to proclaim the kingdom of God to the ends of the earth."<sup>1</sup> He went on to say that the purpose of

our education and careers is "not to make it big and enjoy the stuff of this world." No, it is "for one purpose, the proclamation of the kingdom of God, the declaration of the glory of God to the ends of the earth."<sup>2</sup> You can view David's entire message to Urbana 2012 at [www.urbana.org/urbana-12/videos](http://www.urbana.org/urbana-12/videos). Scroll down to "Day 2 Evening" for David's message.

### AN ANSWERED PRAYER WITH GLOBAL IMPACT

In a letter written immediately following the first 1946 "Urbana" meeting in Toronto, conference director and InterVarsity General Secretary Stacey Woods wrote: "We are praying that this convention might be just the beginning of a mighty missionary movement on the part of thousands of Christian students throughout North America."<sup>3</sup> It is clear that God has answered Stacey Woods' prayer in ways far greater than what he or anyone else

could have imagined. But Urbana's future impact could be far greater than its historic accomplishments if it maintains the kind of focus we saw at Urbana '12.

### A NEW REGULAR COLUMN

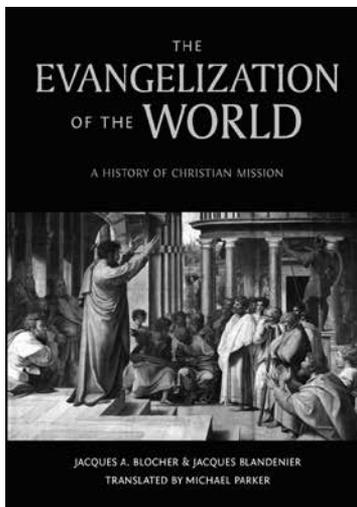
It is my pleasure to introduce a new regular column by Steve Smith called "Kingdom Kernels." You can read his first entry starting on page 33. As the author of *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution*, Steve brings to *MF* a wealth of experience and a depth of insight to the topic of Church-Planting Movements. With Steve's help, in each issue of *MF* we will continue to explore what God is doing through these church-planting and discipleship movements and how we can help foster more of them. 

1. Platt, David, Message to Urbana 2012, Dec. 28, 2012, St. Louis, MO, <http://urbana.org/urbana-12/videos>
2. *ibid.*
3. Taken from <https://urbana.org/history>



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# URBANA GETS RADICAL

## DAVID TAYLOR

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“What happens when every student in this room makes their primary ambition, their primary plan, their primary dream, the proclamation of the gospel to the nations? When that takes hold in our hearts the very gates of hell will not stop the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth.”

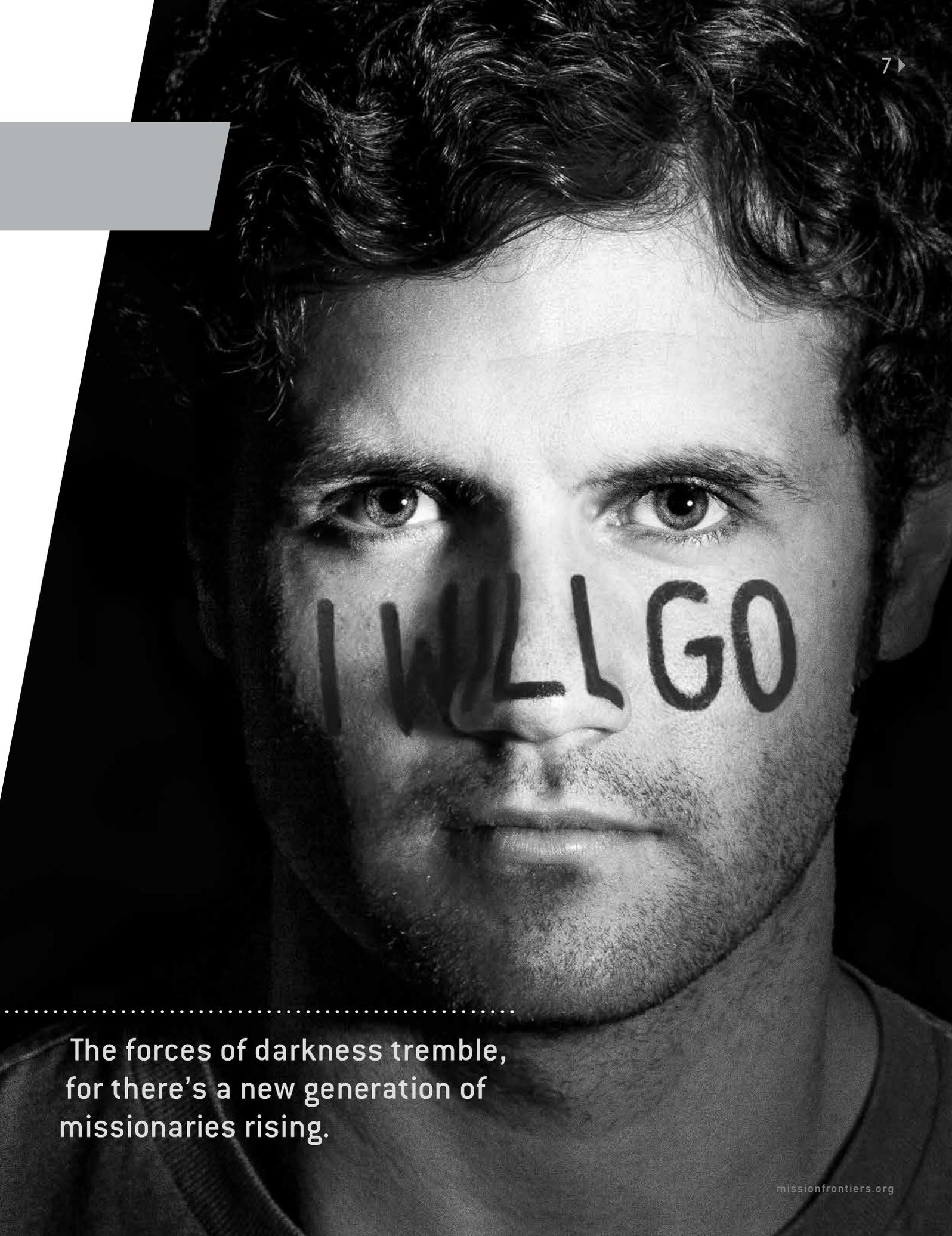
**W**ith such compelling words, David Platt, author of the best-selling book *Radical*, challenged Urbana’s 16,000 college students to a life of sacrifice, commitment and obedience towards fulfilling the Great Commission. His words were echoed in the testimony of a young Brazilian missionary who declared to the convention: “The forces of darkness tremble, for there’s a new generation of missionaries rising...” Her words were prophetic. Over 4,200 attendees signed up for a long-term missions commitment by the end of the five-day convention in St. Louis.

Urbana 2012 was unique in many ways, and from an historical perspective quite significant. Meeting as a separate track, some 30 international student-mission leaders gathered to plan their own Urbana-like conventions in their countries. It is very likely that the sum-total of attendance in these non-American “Urbanas” will far exceed their North American counterpart. Thus, Urbana is more than just the world’s largest mission conference. It is the epicenter of a global movement to mobilize and equip college students for carrying out the Great Commission in their nations and beyond.

For this reason, among others, what happened at Urbana 2012 will have significant influence for many years to come, first, because Urbana is helping to shape the next generation of missionaries, as well as future church and mission leaders, and second, because Urbana is in a unique position to influence the missions movement in the non-Western world, which is undeniably the emerging powerhouse in global mission today.

## THE CALL TO SACRIFICE

Paul Borthwick, author of *Western Christians in Global Mission*, and a speaker at numerous Urbanas, observed that “Urbana 2012 was the most consistent call to sacrificial life and cross-cultural service that I’ve seen in the last five Urbanas.... It used to be said that Urbana was InterVarsity’s gift to the mission community... Urbana 2012 has resumed that theme.” Numerous agencies which partner with Urbana commented on the remarkable level of commitment of students at Urbana 2012. This has led some to wonder whether we are on the verge of a new mission awakening in the United States. Clearly, the Spirit of God is stirring, and not only in this present student generation, but across the entire church. When was the last time



I WILL GO

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The forces of darkness tremble,  
for there's a new generation of  
missionaries rising.

that a “missions book” like *Radical* became a *New York Times* bestseller with more than one million copies sold?

Even so, the response at Urbana seemed to take everyone by surprise, including the organizers. The atmosphere following David Platt’s plenary address was electric. Within 24 hours, every one of the 4,000 copies of his book *Radical* was sold out. So many students flocked to hear his seminar the next day, another unscheduled seminar had to be set up to accommodate the demand. What was so compelling about David’s message? It was simply the message of Jesus: Come, take up your cross, and follow me into the hardest and darkest places in the world.

This radical call was heard for five consecutive days. The exclamation point came on the last night when the

The atmosphere following David Platt’s plenary address was electric. Within 24 hours, every one of the 4,000 copies of his book *Radical* was sold out.

speaker told her story of serving in Afghanistan, where her husband and nine others lost their lives at the hands of Taliban militants in 2010. There was hardly a dry eye in the convention hall. She and her husband’s journey began at Urbana in the 1960s. Following her testimony came the time for students to make their own commitment. They knew exactly what they were signing up for, and where this journey might take them. Even so, over half those present made a commitment to missionary service, including mid-to-long-term commitments.

### WHERE IS YOUR MONGOLIA?

Urbana’s current director is Tom Lin, a Chinese-American who was used by God to start a student movement in Mongolia. His journey in mission began in 1993 when he attended Urbana as a Harvard student. This one event completely changed his life. Since that time, in addition to his service in Mongolia with his wife Nancy, he has been instrumental in seeing 16 new student fellowships

established on campuses throughout the United States. Speaking with conviction from a life that has been fully spent for Christ, at the end of the convention he challenged the students:

“I invite you to make a decision tonight, and not excuses. Where is your Mongolia? Where is the area where Jesus is inviting you? Is yours Afghanistan? ... Despite the risk and obstacles, I invite you to say, ‘Yes, Lord, here I am.’”

Thousands responded that night, making solemn commitments which Tom called “covenants between you and God.” In addition to committing to long-term missions, over 6,000 also committed to leading an evangelistic Bible study on their campus in the next year. Seminars were specifically designed to train students in how to reach people from non-Christian backgrounds on their campuses. With some of the brightest and best from every country on earth coming to study at American universities, the potential for Urbana’s students to impact the world begins on day one when they return home.

Urbana’s students also raised \$800,000 over five days. The funds will be used to help Sat7 broadcast the gospel in the Arab world, and assist in the development of new student mission conferences in non-Western countries. Delegates also made history by funding and assembling World Vision’s largest-ever care-giver kit assembly operation. In one night, students assembled 32,000 medical-supply kits, which will be used to treat as many as 800,000 people in some of the neediest places in Africa.

### THE JUSTICE GENERATION

One of the fascinating features of Urbana 2012 was the juxtaposition of evangelism and compassion ministries. The conference organizers made an intentional effort to show an “integrated gospel” which must be both proclaimed and demonstrated. It has been observed that today’s evangelical college students resonate closely with the justice issues of our time. Alongside seminars on reaching the world’s unengaged peoples were seminars

**Unencumbered by the debates within evangelicalism in past decades, this generation is determined to both share their faith evangelistically and live out their faith compassionately.**

related to sex-trafficking, ministering to drug-addicts, environmental care, and partnering with Roman Catholics in mission.

Observers are calling this generation “the justice generation.” Unencumbered by the debates within evangelicalism in past decades, this generation is determined to both share their faith evangelistically and live out their faith compassionately. The message they are sending is clear: we don’t have to choose between proclamation and demonstration. We are called to share and live, to be the voice as well as the hands and feet of Christ in our generation. The justice generation wants to change the world—and in a way no other generation has succeeded in doing. One cause promoted at Urbana, Live 58, calls for the eradication of extreme poverty by the year 2035.

To be sure, some have been alarmed by this kind of radical optimism, seeing in it shadows of the social-gospel, liberalism, and the kind of shifting priorities that led to the decline of the Student Volunteer Movement following World War I. Indeed, Urbana’s director from the 1970s, and former head of the World Evangelical Alliance, David Howard, observed at Urbana’s press conference that over the last few decades InterVarsity has faced pressure to compromise on the central focus of fulfilling the Great Commission. He warned from his own study of history and from his interaction with students in the 1970s that there is always the threat of sidelining the eternal priorities of the gospel mandate:

In 1920 the Student Volunteer Movement made a knowing and deliberate turn from the founders’ intent. They said we want to talk about war, economic poverty and racism, and we’re going to rid the world of those things.... They did not rid the world of those things. I believe God brought those things to our mind so that InterVarsity was able to keep our focus on Jesus’

command to get the gospel to the whole world. I’ve prayed every day for months now for this convention that God would help them to keep the focus of what the whole purpose of the thing really is.... We’ve gone through cycles on this, and I hope that this will be a cycle where it continues on with the main focus.

While others may be dismissive of David’s perspective, it is hard to deny the facts of what became of the Student Volunteer Movement almost a century ago. Will history repeat itself, or will a new generation demonstrate a model of integral mission that not only transforms the church, but the nations as well? In this regard David Platt also seems to be leading the way. He told the convention about a time when his church had \$500,000 sitting in the bank, saved up, he said, for a rainy day. He challenged his board to give it all to help Compassion International save kids’ lives in India—because for them, their rainy day was now.

### **NOT RADICAL ENOUGH?**

Did the two billion who have yet to hear of Christ among the world’s 8,000 remaining unreached peoples get the attention they deserved at Urbana? It’s hard to say. One of the risks to the cause-driven orientation of the “justice generation” is the tendency to “silo” within causes. Thus while seminars on unengaged peoples may have been well attended, this priority issue was just one cause among many. To be sure, this is reflective of the church at large. Tragically, after 40 years of the frontier mission movement, ninety percent of missionaries continue to go to places where the church has already been established. As a result, almost 2,000 years since Jesus gave his church the Great Commission, close to 3,000 people groups

The reality is that few agencies are equipped to walk students through the journey from commitment to long-term service.

few agencies are equipped to walk students through the journey from commitment to long-term service. What is needed is a program and vision for Great Commission discipleship which committed students can get plugged into right away.

Over thirty years ago, the need for better follow-up at Urbana gave birth to the Perspectives movement, when David Howard and Ralph Winter teamed up after Urbana 1973. David provided the names and addresses of every Urbana student and Ralph created a course that has truly impacted an entire generation. Indeed, in the interval between Urbanas, Perspectives will impact as many or more over fifteen weeks than those who attend the five-day Urbana event. Thus, as one of the fruits of Urbana, Perspectives has effectively doubled the impact.

While this is tremendous, the reality is that even Perspectives is missing a next step. That next step probably looks something like an online social network that connects Great Commission Christians, enabling team work, mentoring and ongoing learning. What if by the next Urbana in 2015 such a tool and program could be made available? Very likely it wouldn't be confined to students for very long!

Urbana 2012 will no doubt be remembered for many things—from the multi-cultural worship in the plenaries, to the social-entrepreneurial “launch lab”, to the unprecedented commitment of the justice-generation. But with absolute certainty its most lasting legacy will be those who find eternal life in Christ among the hardest and darkest places. Indeed, the current president of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, Daniel Bourdanne from Chad, is a believer today because decades ago a college student came to Urbana, heard the call of Christ, and gave up everything to come live among his tribe. May his same story be told 8,000 more times in this generation! 

have yet to receive their first missionary. Surely there can be no greater injustice than to live and die having never heard the gospel. For the estimated 50,000 people who perish each day among unreached peoples, that is their reality. Shouldn't this message be heard loud and clear in every pulpit on every Sunday until it is no longer true that a single soul exists on this planet without access to the good news of Jesus Christ? Shouldn't the same be true of every plenary and seminar at Urbana—no matter what the subject? But perhaps that's too radical.

Even so, the great legacy of Urbana has been organizers' willingness to listen to feedback and engage mission agencies in an effort to serve them better. Urbana 2012 was unquestionably a boost to the global cause of Christ and will accelerate the fulfillment of the Great Commission. The greatest need now, as it always, is an effective mechanism for follow-up. Urbana depends upon its mission partners for this, but the reality is that

## A CONVERSATION WITH...

# DAVID PLATT



**MF: Many publishers will not even consider publishing a “missions book” because they think missions books don’t sell. Then along comes *Radical*... what do you think is going on?**

I remember sending out manuscripts of this book to different publishers, and not many people were interested in it. But what was really helpful even in the process of writing this book was somebody saying to me “Ok, David, not many people walk into a bookstore and ask how my life can impact the nations for the glory of Christ.” So the way we tried to reformat this book when I was writing it was to say, “When we really focus on Jesus and take our eyes off the American dream (and I don’t want to be negative about everything in the American dream, but so many things in our culture are antithetical to the gospel), then missions is the natural overflow.” I try to make it kind of a “back door” into missions, not like a “hook and bait”, but to say “When we get serious about following Jesus, the natural result is going to be making disciples of all nations, and being serious about his mission.”

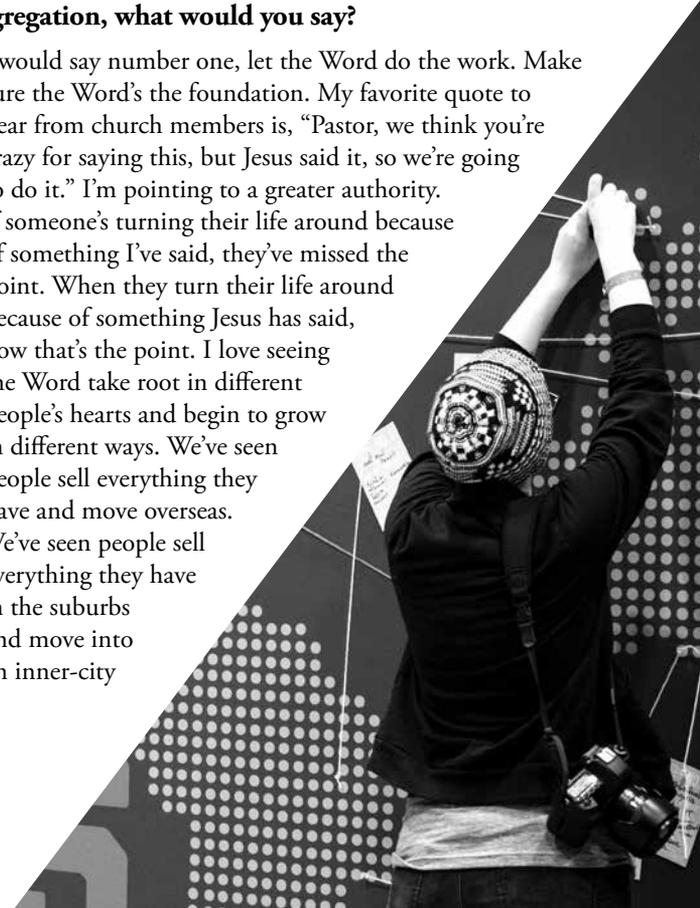
**MF: The sequel to *Radical* was *Radical Together*, which was written from a pastor’s perspective. Can you tell us a little of what it has been like to take your church through this process?**

This whole journey was just a personal conviction in my whole life and my family, and then walking through that with the church. The Word does the work. As we really looked at texts about Jesus in the Gospels, calling people to a radical death and life in him, and as we got serious about those, it was so wonderful to see different people in the church begin to respond in different ways to that. There’s no question, there’s been some people who have left the church in the process, and I regret anything that I have done pastorally that was not most helpful or sensitive in that process. My responsibility before the

Lord as a shepherd is to lead and guide people in a process like that. I have a tendency to push with urgency, and I need to be really careful not to be impatient in that process. So I’m learning a lot as a pastor.

**MF: If you could sit down with a pastor and give some personal advice on how to begin this journey with a congregation, what would you say?**

I would say number one, let the Word do the work. Make sure the Word’s the foundation. My favorite quote to hear from church members is, “Pastor, we think you’re crazy for saying this, but Jesus said it, so we’re going to do it.” I’m pointing to a greater authority. If someone’s turning their life around because of something I’ve said, they’ve missed the point. When they turn their life around because of something Jesus has said, now that’s the point. I love seeing the Word take root in different people’s hearts and begin to grow in different ways. We’ve seen people sell everything they have and move overseas. We’ve seen people sell everything they have in the suburbs and move into an inner-city



environment, where they're living out the gospel in a much more dangerous context. And we've seen people keep their homes right there in that suburban environment and live with a totally different perspective and focus and mission. So I'd say to a pastor, let the Word do the work; make sure to focus on His authority, not your own. And be intentional. I think about it as in an air-war and a ground-war. So, air-war—preaching every Sunday. I want to trumpet God's passion for his glory among all nations, on a continual basis, showing this in the Word, showing what it means to follow Christ. At the same time, on the ground, I want to be living this out in my own life, in my own family. I want to be living a life where there's imitation in these kinds of things. I want to be leading other people on a one-on-one, small group basis—to be doing this in an intentional, disciple-making way, showing people how to follow Christ. So I would encourage any pastor to make sure not to do one without the other.

**MF: What do you think Jesus would say to us if he showed up in one of our churches on Sunday? How might he speak into our American Christianity?**

The things we most need to hear, first and foremost, is his love for us and his desire and ability to satisfy us more than money, and bigger, better possessions, and so many pursuits that we're running after. Jesus is saying to us, "I'm better than all of these things put together, so don't spend your life running after all these things." When Jesus is more satisfying, even the call to sacrifice is really not a call to sacrifice in the end. It's a call to be smart when you have treasure in Christ that is more valuable than everything else in the world put together. You go out and leave behind the things of this life to grab on to Christ. I think that's the picture. That's where I want to focus in my preaching and writing; I want to show Christ as supremely satisfying, and supremely joy- and life-giving. And in that, see people let go of the pleasures and pursuits and possessions of this world, and abandon themselves to him, and to realize that giving your life to him, even losing your life in this mission, is far better than wasting our lives on the stuff of this world.

**MF: You describe Matthew 24:14 as being the "memory verse of hell." Tell us a little about what this verse means to you.**

I think this is an incredible promise that Jesus has given us: This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a testimony to every nation and then the end will come. Now there's a lot of debate about what exactly that verse means in the context of Matthew 24 and 25. But I think the promise is clear when you put it together with the Great Commission, and the end of the story in Revelation 5:9 and 7:9. The reality is that one day every nation, tribe, people and language will be represented around the throne. There is a divine sovereign plan to make known this gospel among the nations, and Jesus is coming back one day to receive the full reward of his sufferings. So I want to give my life and shepherd the church God has entrusted me to lead, to give ourselves to seeing every single nation reached with the gospel, knowing that there is a day when Jesus is coming back to receive the reward that he is due. There is going to be a day when the Great Commission will be completed, and I'd love to be a part of that generation, or to die trying to be a part of that generation.

**MF: One of the emphases here at Urbana 2012 has been to show an integrated gospel. What are some of your thoughts on how to keep proclamation and demonstration in balance with each other?**

I love the way John Piper put it, "We care about all suffering, especially eternal suffering." I think that's a good picture. Yes, all suffering. There are so many suffering brothers and sisters around the world. There are so many people suffering who don't know Christ, who are on the road that leads to hell, *and* who don't have food and water. There are massive physical needs, and eternal suffering is waiting when it comes to massive spiritual needs—people who don't have the gospel, who haven't heard the gospel, or seen the power of the gospel in front of them. And so I hope that in the church that I pastor, there is a primacy on proclaiming the gospel, on addressing eternal suffering around the world.

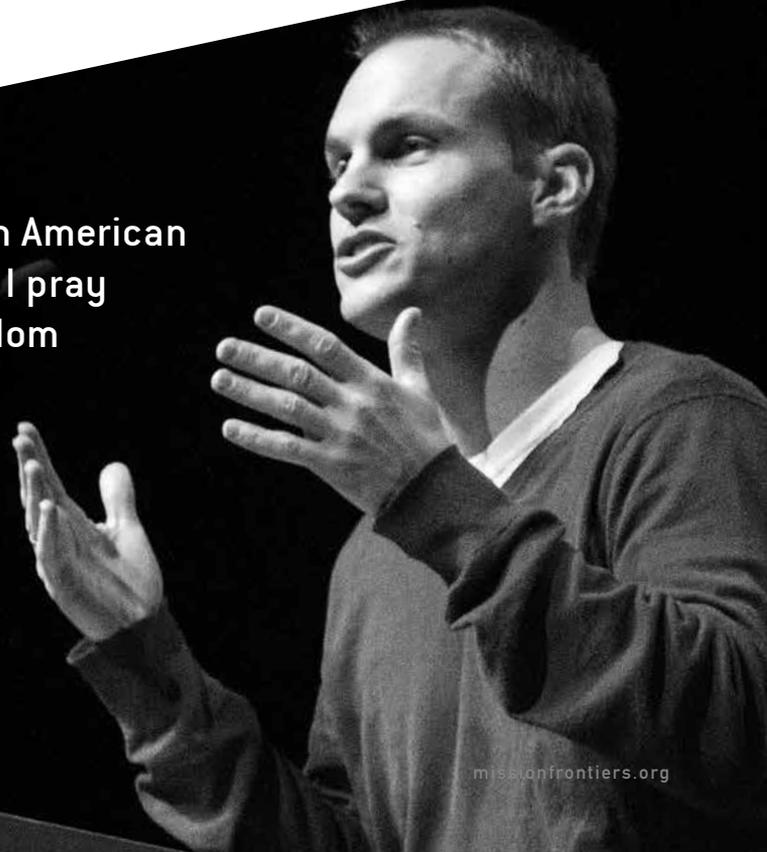
We want to be a part of reaching unreached peoples, we want to go, we want to adopt unreached peoples, we want to send people to them. We want to be praying and giving toward that end, and not just unreached peoples, but peoples around the world who don't know the gospel. But then also, along the way, if we're going to be intentional about making disciples of all nations, we're going to come into contact with a lot of people who are starving, who don't have clean water, and who are in desperate poverty. It makes no sense to come with this good news and not care about the fact that they may not live through the next month. So it just is a natural overflow of proclaiming this good news and making disciples. And particularly, as disciples are made, this is what the church does. The church cares for one another, and loves one another. This is the whole picture in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9—the offering that is taken up among churches for the church in Jerusalem. This is where we, particularly in the Western context, where we have been given so much—have a responsibility to help care for our brothers and sisters around the world who are suffering physically. It certainly is not an either-or, it's a both-and, proclamation of the gospel is central and primary, because this is what matters for eternity. And yes, that is accompanied by love in Jesus' name that platforms the gospel and is the natural overflow of Christians who believe this gospel.

**MF: What do you think is the role of the North American church today in mission?**

By God's grace, it's a good thing that churches are arising around the world and becoming sending bases for

missions. We are not necessarily leading the way in all the ways that we have in the past. I do think there is still a place for North American missions. We've learned a lot about things to do and things not to do in our experience in North American missions. We have a lot with which to serve our brothers and sisters from around the world, as we go together, particularly converging on unreached peoples together, alongside other brothers and sisters from other countries. At the same time we've got a lot to learn from our brothers and sisters around the world. I think, unfortunately, in many ways theologically and doctrinally we're losing grasp of the gospel. Thankfully, we have brothers and sisters around the world that are holding tightly to that gospel. We need to make sure to keep hold of the gospel and let our brothers and sisters encourage us in that. I think the picture of a global community of Koreans, North Americans and Africans, converging on unreached peoples—6,000+ unreached people groups that are needing the gospel—and serving together, praying together, working together—I think the potential for global cooperation in gospel advancement is just glorious in our day. So how do we take advantage of that, and how do we work alongside brothers and sisters, coming alongside indigenous peoples, leading them to Christ, equipping them, empowering them? This can be a glorious day for North American missions, in a whole new way, and I pray that by God's grace and God's wisdom we take advantage of it. MF

This can be a glorious day for North American missions, in a whole new way, and I pray that by God's grace and God's wisdom we take advantage of it.



# THE IMPACT OF AN URBANA DECISION CARD ON ONE LIFE

**D**avid Howard was a 20-year old sophomore at Wheaton College when he attended the first Student Missionary Conference held in Toronto, Canada in December, 1946. He attended with Jim Elliot, his best friend from college.

David remembers his first conference: “I remember that I was overwhelmingly impressed with two things: First, that every Christian who has received the gospel is responsible for giving it to those people who don’t have it. And second, that most of the people without the gospel were not in my country. People in North America had access to the gospel. But most who had not heard were located somewhere else. This raised the pressing question: What should I be doing about that reality?”

“J. Christy Wilson, was the director of that first conference, became a noted missionary in Afghanistan, then missions professor at Gordon-Conwell Seminary. L. E. Maxwell, president of Prairie Bible Institute, was an impressive speaker, as was Bahkt Singh, a noted India evangelist and church leader. Dr. Robert McQuilkin, president of Columbia Bible College, gave the closing address. I remember being impressed with his passion for the church and for the world.

“Even though I don’t remember the details of when I signed the Decision Card, I took the signed card back to campus with me and tacked it above my desk back in my dorm room. I was willing to respond to whatever the Lord would reveal to me...

“I prayed every day that I might be faithful to God in fulfilling the commitment I had made to him represented by that card....

David joined InterVarsity as a student worker part-time in 1951, and then went with Latin America Mission in 1953 to Costa Rica and Columbia, where he and Phyllis served for 15 years. In the 1960s he returned to the US and began speaking again at InterVarsity chapters across the country. He would often pull the card from his pocket to illustrate the importance of making a decision and prayerfully waiting on the Lord for specific guidance as to when and where.

David continued: “The card is now brown, but I remember I prayed about that daily for years. I found the card many years later, tucked away in some old files. I began to carry it with me when I spoke at the *Perspectives* course. When I taught the History lesson, I would share about how God has used young students in modern missions. I would pull my own Decision Card from my pocket and show it to the students as a tool the Lord used: ‘I made a commitment in 1946, and here is my commitment card....’

“I finally laminated it just this last year... to protect it....

“At this last Urbana’ 12 I was asked frequently to see the card.... In fact, Alec Hill, current president of IVCF, now has a copy framed outside his office in Madison, WI, as an illustration of how God uses our decisions to change our lives and use them for his glory...

“This is an illustration of a very minor thing—a card smaller than a postcard—that God can use as a reminder and benchmark to us along our journey into missions. The decision behind the card affected my whole life, which has been spent in missions. I attribute that to my own prayers that I might be obedient to him. The card meant nothing. It was the decision behind the card.” 



## STEVE HOKE

Steve became a life-long worshipper while growing up as a missionary kid in Tokyo, Japan. He now serves in leader development and as a strategic life coach with Church Resource Ministries (CRM), helping mobilize, train and encourage mission teams for global ministry. He is co-author with Bill Taylor of the *Global Mission Handbook: Your Guide to Crosscultural Service* (IVPress, 2009). You may contact Steve at: [steve.hoke@crmleaders.org](mailto:steve.hoke@crmleaders.org)

AN INTERVIEW WITH...

# DR. DAVID HOWARD

## LOOKING BACK AT 66 YEARS OF URBANA:

### STEVE HOKE

Dr. Steve Hoke now serves in leader development and is a strategic life coach with Church Resource Ministries (CRM), helping mobilize, train and encourage international teams for global ministry. He is co-author with Bill Taylor of *Global Mission Handbook: Your Guide to Crosscultural Service* (IVPress, 2009).

### DAVID HOWARD

Dr. David Howard has authored several books on world missions, including *Student Power in World Missions* (IVPress, 1970), *By the Power of the Holy Spirit* (IVPress, 1976), and *Words of Fire, Rivers of Tears* (Tyndale, 1974) on the ministry of Jeremiah.

*Background: I first met David Howard at the 1970 Urbana Student Missions Convention held in Champaign-Urbana, when he was serving as Assistant Director of the event and I was a senior in college. As alumni of the same college, we crossed paths numerous times over the next 40 years, most notably at the Lausanne Conference in Pattaya, Thailand 1980, Lausanne II in Manila 1989, and several World Evangelical Alliance Conferences. Since that time, David has held a series of increasingly strategic leadership roles in global missions. In the last decade I have had the privilege of seeing Dave several times a year in Ft. Myers, FL where he has retired and is remarried to Janet, after his first wife Phyllis died. I interviewed David at Urbana '12 in St. Louis, MO.*

**Steve: Where were you when you first heard about and attended your first InterVarsity Student Missions Conference?**

**David:** I heard about the convention as a freshman in college. I attended the first-ever InterVarsity Student Missions Conference as a 20-year old sophomore at Wheaton College. I attended with Jim Elliot, my best friend. We had met as freshmen on the wrestling team, and became close friends, both being involved in student missions. I had no idea then of how our lives would intertwine.

He was a very zealous missionary candidate, already committed to missions when he came to college. He was talking excitedly about missions and his desire to get to Ecuador as soon after graduation as he could get there. He was already focusing in on Indian tribes—looking for the most difficult and dangerous place he could find. Once he discovered the Waodani (then called the “Aucas”—“*The people*”), the more he wanted to go into the Andean jungles to reach them.

Jim married my sister Elisabeth in 1953. In his biography written by Betty, *The Shadow of the Almighty*, she documents his early interest in missions even before he entered college.

At the first conference, I roomed with John Winston, an MK from Belgium. His experience as a missionary kid in Europe, and his experience in the Navy in WWII, made an impact on me.

**From Toronto to Urbana.** IV moved the student missions conference to a more central location in 1948—the spacious University of Illinois campus in Champaign-Urbana, IL, and I attended as a senior in college.

**Steve: Recap your cross-cultural involvement between those conferences and re-emerging at Urbana '67.**

**David:** When I finished college in 1949, I joined InterVarsity (IV), and traveled the 1950 school year as an appointed "missionary staff member," challenging students to give their lives to missions. It was a significant experience for me in visiting over 120 schools in that year.

I married my college sweetheart, Phyllis Gibson, in 1950 and spent two years at the Wheaton Graduate School. I was also the assistant director of *Urbana 1951*. Little did I know how this triennial student convention would factor into my later life.

So as I completed my graduate work, and ministered with students on campus, Phyllis and I selected Latin American Mission (LAM) and moved to Costa Rica in 1953. At that time Colombia was a country closed to new missionaries. The country opened following a political revolution, and we entered in 1958.

**Steve: Share with us a few of the most memorable and shaping moments that the Urbana Student Missions Convention had on your life as a missions leader.**

**David: Urbana '70:** I was the assistant director, after 15 years as a missionary in Colombia. Dr. John Alexander, president of IV, had invited me to assist Dr. Paul Little. Paul had joined IV as campus staff right out of college and had excelled in campus evangelism and training. He was named Director of Urbana '70. He had quickly gained visibility from his best-selling book, *How to Give Away Your Faith*.

The end of the 60s was a tense time for IV. Kent State had just taken place, and a group of student radicals had shown up, held daily demonstrations, and printed a daily newsheet attacking the conference and our mission purposes. They wanted to commandeer the conference to focus on ending the war in Viet Nam, poverty, and other political issues.

**Campus mood begins to shift.** Only 8% of the 12,000 students signed the Decision Cards indicating any interest. By 1973, 28% of the students signed the cards. Missiologist Ralph D. Winter came to me after the conference, noting the change in attitude and interest. He was desperate to follow-up this fresh interest in world missions. By the summer of 1974 he had designed a two-week seminar for students, the *Summer Institute of International Studies* (SIIS), to explore the biblical basis, history, culture and strategy of missions. This was the precursor of the *Perspectives* course, which he produced and unveiled at Urbana 1979.

- **Computerized matching:** Phill Butler came to us with a way for all participants to indicate their interests and passions and receive a computerized print-out of 5-10 agencies that had ministry openings in the area of their interests. This was the integration of the emerging information technology and mission mobilization.

- **Open up the schedule:** Educator and consultant Dr. Ted Ward from Michigan State University suggested we replace afternoon plenary sessions with seminar-workshops and free time to browse in the Armory and visit the mission exhibitors and the IVPress bookstore. Eliminating the afternoon

There is a great danger in an overemphasis on such immediate needs as global poverty, human trafficking, earthquake relief in Haiti, that we lose a big picture focus on the task remaining.

plenary session may have disappointed some at first, but greatly increased the interactivity between students and missionaries, seminar presenters, agency personnel and speakers. It was a schedule change that has lasted to this convention!

**Urbana '73:** Two innovations stand out in my mind—even to this day. My former co-worker in Colombia,

- Gregorio Landero gave a full address through an interpreter. The students loved him, and showed us that the Spirit was speaking even through the interruptions of an interpreter.
- A woman gave a full plenary address—Elisabeth Elliot. I had resisted inviting my sister for years—for obvious reasons, but others over-ruled. She spoke powerfully from her own woundedness about the place of women in missions, and provided a three-dimensional model of what gifted and capable women could do in this generation in missions.

**Urbana '76** was a wonderful conference. There was a huge change in attitude of students, from the skepticism of the 60s, to the positive, even enthusiastic openness of the 70s students. They were much more excited and almost gung-ho about missions. We filled the university to capacity with 18,000 participants. Most significantly, there was a continued increase in the percentage of students indicating a willingness to consider missions as indicated on their Decision Cards. From only an 8% response in 1970, to 28% in 1973, student receptivity continued to grow!

- We once again invited Dr. Billy Graham to return and speak to the students. He turned me down flat at first, and was quite adamant about not speaking to students, thinking that the latest batch of students was not his prime audience. I persistently encouraged him to reconsider. When he walked on the platform the first time, the entire student audience of over 18,000 rose simultaneously to their feet, and giving him a thunderous and prolonged ovation for several minutes. That act convinced him he did have a message to this student generation.
- Dr. Helen Roseveare was a powerful plenary speaker, who shared transparently about her missionary experience of capture, rape in Congo in the 60s. Her public vulnerability was probably a first for a student audience in the 70s, and paved the way for subsequent messages by Becky Atallah from Cairo and Libby Little from Afghanistan.

**Urbana moves from Southern Illinois to St. Louis:**

Prior to Urbana 2006 IV made the decision to move from the U of IL campus in Champaign-Urbana, IL for several crucial reasons. Campus facilities were full to the max—dorms, cafeterias, and meeting rooms, etc. The spread of the university campus demanded a tremendous logistical

effort to transport students to meals, to the Assembly Hall, the exhibitor space, as well as afternoon workshops. Each move consumed considerable time out of the conference schedule. The St. Louis Convention Center is a spacious hall for plenary sessions, and the adjacent hotels are much closer to the meeting venues than were the Urbana dorms, and the public transportation system is efficient in moving people around.

...it is the critical responsibility of church and mission leaders to keep missions focused on the “main thing.”

**Steve: What are some biblical essentials at age 85 you have a concern for Urbana to sustain?**

**David:** Missions is not just to another part of the world, but also to cross-cultural opportunities and needs which are local. It must always be a both-and balance; never either-or. It must be Local and Global, or *Glocal* missions.

There are some sectors of the world, like the South Sea Islands or Oceania, who have been contacted, and realize their responsibility to respond “From the Uttermost” to those areas that remain unreached. That highlights the vital importance of maintaining a laser focus on the remaining unreached peoples—those people groups that remain beyond the reach of God’s tender mercies. Since Ralph Winter’s catalytic address at Lausanne 1974, highlighting the necessity of recognizing the “task remaining” of making disciples among every unreached people of our world, we have seen the move from mere geography (nations), to a focus on unreached people groups. As we have learned from the worldwide Lausanne movement, it is the critical responsibility of church and mission leaders to keep missions focused on the “main thing.”

There is a great danger in an overemphasis on such immediate needs as global poverty, human capture and rape or earthquake relief in Haiti, that we lose a big picture focus on the task remaining. Pressure groups have arisen over the years that advocate for emphasis on their particular focus (e.g. French-speaking Canadians, Asian-Americans, left-handed artists in Paris, etc). But there remains a task to be completed—and that is to make disciples in every nation, people and language group. While particular pockets of need and specific audiences are critical to identify, we cannot lose our simultaneous focus on the larger biblical mandate to make disciples everywhere.

Urbana has struggled to resist the temptation to succumb to the myriad pressure groups that want that kind of public exposure. We cannot give up what Urbana has been for since 1946.

**Steve: Looking back, what would you estimate to be the kingdom impact of the Urbana Student Missions Convention over the last 66 years?**

**David:** The first impact I have seen is the countless individuals I have met—around the world—sometimes missionaries, sometimes nationals, who testify: “I want to tell you that it was at Urbana that God spoke to me, or called me, or turned my life around and I was given a vision for the world church and that is what I am doing.” That has been by far the most gratifying thing. I heard it again this week—how many people came up to me specifically to thank me for my role and to comment on the impact of a particular conference.

Second, though Urbana does not immediately deliver thousands of fresh candidates to mission agencies as we all might wish, the conference has had a significant ongoing impact on kingdom mobilization by doing what it does best—it provides an immensely popular, contemporary, and excellent venue for students and young people to hear from God in the context of a changing world. Urbana does not in one week “make” students into missionaries. But it has provided a “top of the funnel” experience for tens of thousands of students since 1946. For many it was their first-time exposure to what God was doing in the world. For others it provided Spirit-revealed inspiration to consider missions. For countless thousands over the years it provided a space in which students could meet, up-close-and-personal, veteran missionaries with up-to-the-minute accounts of specific locales in the world, where they could get their questions answered by world-class missions experts and specialists. For providing this venue, churches and mission agencies are incredibly grateful.

Third, the shift to a broader biblical emphasis on holistic mission—ministry in Word, Deed and Power—has provided a scriptural framework in which this generation can operate. A Word-only approach might have turned off each successive generation decades ago. In a vital way, Urbana has kept in step with what the Spirit has been saying to and doing in the global Lausanne Movement, as well as in the World Evangelical Alliance and the Majority World Mission Movement. IV has fought to maintain a biblical “balance” between either extreme—  
an emphasis on Word

evangelism on one hand or on social engagement on the other. Instead, they have sought to keep the message biblically balanced and holistic—without losing a razor-sharp edge on reaching the unreached.

Fourth, it has brought biblical world missions into the mainstream. It has masterfully platformed biblical missions as a current, contemporary and continuing concern of the world church. Urbana has kept biblical missions as a constant for every generation over the last 66 years. That is an invaluable gift to the church and missions.

Urbana is not a “training time” as many might want it to be, but it is an effective way to expose students to what God says in his Word about getting the gospel to the whole world, and exposure to what God is doing in the world today. I think the conference has faithfully kept that twin emphasis before each student generation.

**Steve: What is the debt the North American missions movement owes to InterVarsity Christian Fellowship for sponsoring this convention every three years for the last 66 years?**

**David:** For almost 66 years Urbana has been the premier student missions conference in the world. IV has done more to expose the North American student generation to missions than any other single effort or event over these eight decades. It has facilitated more kingdom mobilization—with no strings attached—than any other effort by any other mission organization.

In addition, the Urbana convention has often pointed to critical changes in our world and needed innovations in global missions, including multi-ethnic inclusion, using the computer for candidate matching, mission and the arts, worship and missions, and women in missions, to name just a few.

The last 300 years of church history reveals that whenever there has been a forward movement in world missions, the Spirit has initiated it through students! What IV has done at Urbana with students is to awaken the entire North American church to its missions responsibility.

And for that huge effort we owe them a great debt of gratitude for what God wants to do in his church, through students. Just as the Spirit used the Haystack Prayer Meeting with a handful of students in 1806 to catalyze formation of a plethora of new mission societies throughout the Northeast, which sent out their first missionaries by 1812, may there be a fresh wind of Spirit-energized mission outreach from our country to the remaining unreached peoples of our globe.

My prayer is that God’s Spirit might once again work through *Urbana’12* to awaken the church to its worldwide responsibility in world evangelization. 

# WHAT I'VE LEARNED FROM 14 URBANAS

*Editor's Note: Steve Hoke first attended Urbana '67 as a 17-year old freshman at Wheaton College. Since that convention of 5,000, he has only missed two conferences, and has attended in several different roles—staff photographer, exhibitor, missions leader and seminar facilitator. We asked Steve about his impressions and the most significant lessons he takes with him from his many Urbanas.*



## STEVE HOKE

Steve became a life-long worshipper while growing up as a missionary kid in Tokyo, Japan. He now serves in leader development and as a strategic life coach with Church Resource Ministries (CRM), helping mobilize, train and encourage mission teams for global ministry. He is co-author with Bill Taylor of the *Global Mission Handbook: Your Guide to Crosscultural Service* (IVPress, 2009). You may contact Steve at: [steve.hoke@crmlleaders.org](mailto:steve.hoke@crmlleaders.org)

It's not that it took me attending 14 Urbana conventions to get the point, or to be obedient to the Spirit's call on my life. Rather, over these 46 years I have served in a series of missions-related roles as student, pastor, professor of missions, mission mobilizer, missions executive, and most recently as a missionary trainer and coach that has permitted me to be an active participant in so many memorable events. It has been a profound privilege. Let me sort my favorite impressions from my mental scrapbook into four major categories: biblical insights, people, shifts, and memories.

## BIBLICAL INSIGHTS:

For 42 years I have treasured the sight and sound of Dr. John R. W. Stott calling out, arms widespread, in his distinctive British accent that so many of us remember, to recognize the dual demands of *"The Promise and the Blessing"* of Genesis 12:1-3. I first "caught" the truth of the Abrahamic Covenant, the heart of Lesson 1 in the *Perspectives* course, "live" at Urbana '70. It was a life-changing paradigm shift for me, from a limited Great Commission understanding of mission to a fledgling but whole-Bible theological foundation.

At *Urbana 1973*, while furtively sneaking along the aisles of the U of IL Assembly Hall taking photos of the participants and proceedings as unobtrusively as I could, I was halted in my tracks when Dr. Edmund Clowney, speaking on *"Our International Anthem"* from Psalm 96, concluded his prophetic call to doxological mission with these words: "When we worship God as we ought, that's when the nations will listen!" I was dumbstruck. For the first time, someone connected the dots for me between worship and mission. He was the first who ever showed me that worship and missions were inextricably linked.

At *Urbana 1987* Ajith Fernando, director of Youth for Christ Sri Lanka, held the audience spellbound for four memorable Bible expositions on "Jonah the reluctant short-termer." For over 46 years Urbana speakers have been my favorite Bible expositors, calling the North American church and successive student generations to discover that "Our God is a missionary God, and the Bible is a missionary book." I heard it first at Urbana!

**PEOPLE:**

I have heard, seen, met and interacted with some of the most noted and gifted “world Christians” at the many Urbana conventions I have attended. That opportunity was available to every student who attended! It was like walking through God’s Missions Hall of Fame. Let me cite the range of those the Spirit has used as mentors and tutors in my own missions walk—George Verwer, John R. W. Stott, John Alexander, David Howard, Gregorio Landero, Billy Graham, Paul Little, Tom Skinner, Elisabeth Elliot, Jim MacLeish, Helen Roseveare, Jeannette Yap, Becky Pippert, Ken Fong, Miriam Adeney, Ajith Fernando, Paul Borthwick, Sondra Van Opstal, John Piper, Libby Little, Ramez and Becky Atallah, and

I may have once thought that Urbana was about me...It’s taken a few years to realize that Urbana is actually all about how the Holy Spirit shows up in the lives of the students.

David Platt, to name but a few. In addition to them, I came face-to-face with literally thousands of missionaries and mission reps who have brought the world to my Urbana doorstep. Their lives and stories of God’s unfailing love and faithfulness have been life-shaping for me.

Urbana for me was never about meeting famous people, but hearing from God’s gifted messengers. Urbana provided an incredibly rich smorgasbord over 46 years of the best and latest biblical inspiration, instruction and worship. The assembly and exhibition halls became vision-stretching venues for global networking and meeting contemporary missionary heroes. Every question I would take to a conference was answered in interaction with the missionaries God brought to speak to me.

Secondarily, those people brought a rich diet of cutting-edge messages and seminars across the range of contemporary missions practice, from “Affirming the Will of God,” “Out of the Salt-Shaker” personal evangelism, women in missions, worship and missions, Church-Planting Movements, to the task remaining. Some of the most significant lessons and insights I have learned from God in mission I learned at Urbana conferences. From small group Bible studies to plenary sessions with over 20,000, Urbana has provided space for the Spirit to show up and be my teacher.

I gleaned one of my most profound insights at a 1973

seminar with Elisabeth Elliot. Over 500 students were jammed into a classroom to hear Elisabeth speak. In response to a student’s question about the value of a college education or a particular major, Elisabeth simply said: “Never let your education stand in the way of the will of God.” I have used that gem of wisdom dozens of times since then in my own advising of missionary candidates.

**SHIFTS IN MISSIONS:**

Urbana programs have reflected many of the major shifts in missions practice over the years. In 1967 Billy Graham represented crusade evangelism, and an Evangelism-In-Depth workshop spotlighted a rapidly spreading mission innovation emerging in Latin America. The Urbana audience was probably 90% Caucasian at that conference, yet in December 2012 it was over 43% multi-ethnic, reflecting the huge increase in the number of Asian-Americans who have flocked to the convention since 2000. This multi-ethnic diversity has been a hard-sought goal of InterVarsity, and reflects the changing face of global missions over the last 30 years—the emergence of the Majority World church and missions movement. During my years of attendance we have witnessed the sea-change of missionary sending shifting from the North and West to the Majority World of the South and East.

Another highly visible trend has been the continuing shift in worship from the song-leader-led hymn singing of the 60s, to the introduction of multi-ethnic worship bands starting in the 70s. The changing band composition has framed the continuing changing genre of worship music from hymns to contemporary worship songs. In the last two conventions, the multi-ethnic, multi-media plenary sessions have been orchestrated by the gifted worship director, IV staffer Sondra Van Opstal, who has creatively blended sound and light, drama, interpretive and tap dance, media vignettes and humor, staff testimonies of campus evangelism as well as summer short-term teams.

In every decade there has been fresh impact in the familiar areas of worship, instruction and inspiration on a massive scale, produced creatively and with excellence for a very critical student audience. While mission agency participants have not always adapted easily to changes in media or music style, all have been appreciative of InterVarsity’s commitment to present the biblical call to cross-cultural mission in a culturally appropriate and creative manner.

Not to mention the incredible and constantly expanding contribution of the authors and resources of *IVPress* would be a huge oversight. *IVPress* has continued to

publish the very best of thoughtful, biblical and mission-oriented Christian books and curriculum. That is another immense contribution to the global missions movement.

### **MOST SIGNIFICANT MEMORIES:**

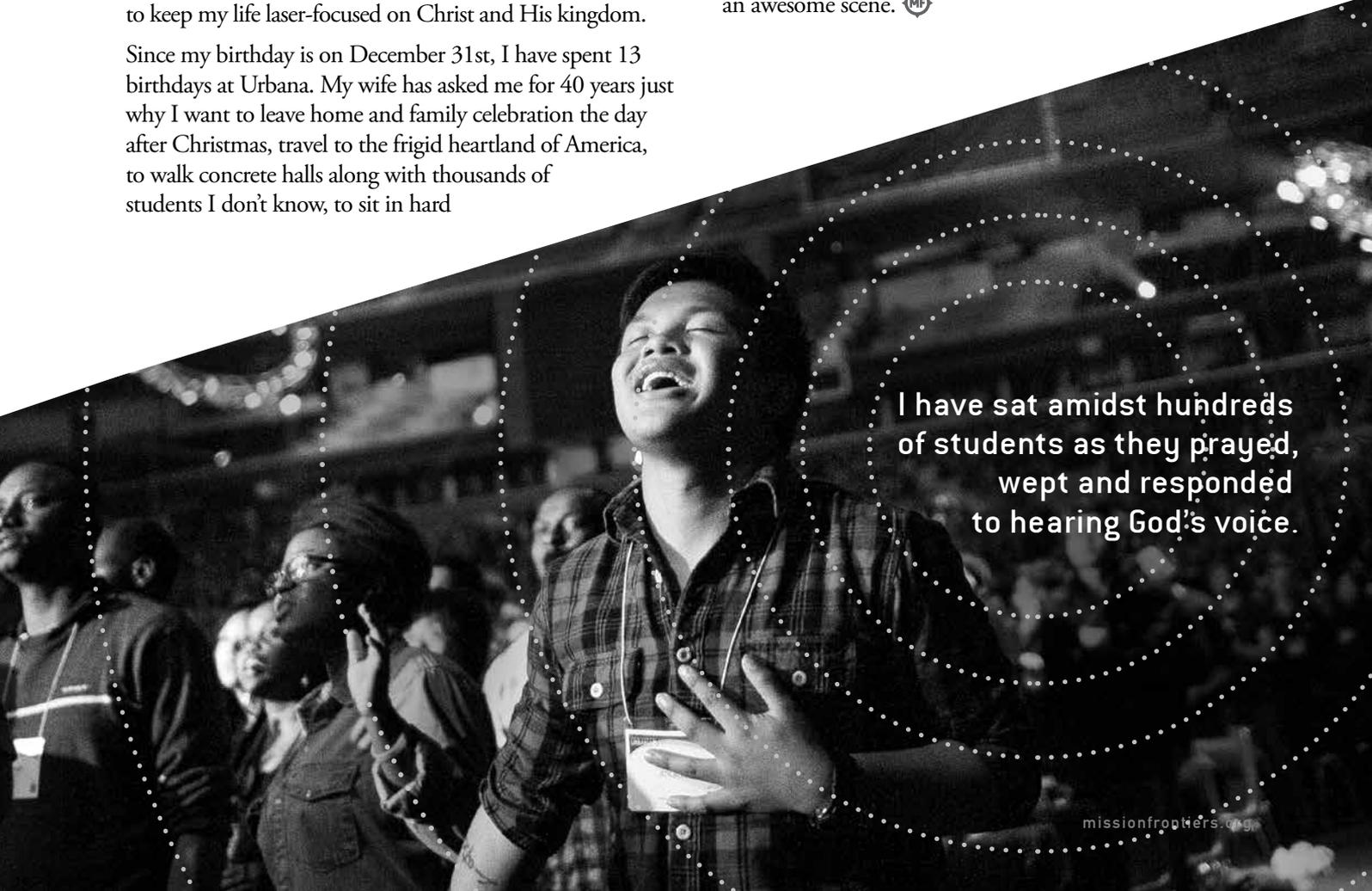
Being front-row at 14 masterfully orchestrated missions pep rallies of “apostolic proportion,” and having been privy to that many scenes of private and corporate surrender and commitment has kept my heart soft and shaped my perspective on God’s foreign policy. As a freshman I remember how my spine tingled when I saw hundreds of students stand around me in commitment to Christ. As a grad student I remember the awe of the crowd when they responded to the call given by Dr. Billy Graham. I have sat among hundreds of students as they prayed, wept and responded to hearing God’s voice to them in seminar and plenary sessions. I have been swept up in the wonder of multi-cultural, multi-media worship that resounded with the music of heaven. I have prayed in the New Year at 13 midnight Communion services, and been moved to tears while singing “We Rest On Thee” or the IV hymn classic, “I Cannot Tell.” Singing “Great is Thy Faithfulness” with 15,000 was my first foretaste of heavenly worship. I have been both challenged and encouraged by four generations of students, missionaries and speakers whom the Spirit has used to keep my life laser-focused on Christ and His kingdom.

Since my birthday is on December 31st, I have spent 13 birthdays at Urbana. My wife has asked me for 40 years just why I want to leave home and family celebration the day after Christmas, travel to the frigid heartland of America, to walk concrete halls along with thousands of students I don’t know, to sit in hard

plastic seats in a drafty assembly hall, and eat fast-food meals for four days rather than sitting at home enjoying my birthday with family and friends.

On Sunday afternoon, December 30, 2012, while facilitating two seminars and answering questions for an hour with sincerely seeking students, I realized my answer. I love Urbana because, for me and tens of thousands, it has become a “thin place”—a place where the Spirit of God shows up and manifests his presence in silence, in solitude, in worship, in seminars, in Bible Study groups and in interpersonal relationships. Hearts are softened. Minds are enlightened. Lives are enlivened to God’s call to missions. It is one of the most significant “spaces for God” the Spirit has used in my life to hear his voice and to respond in “a long obedience in the same direction.”

I guess I keep returning because I want to be a part of Urbana being that for the next student generation. I may have once thought that Urbana was about me and what I brought to the conference—my workshop, my book, my wisdom. It’s taken a few years to realize that Urbana is actually all about how the Holy Spirit shows up in the lives of the students. It’s one of the great places in my lifetime where the Lord of the Harvest consistently shows up to raise up laborers for the harvest. It is an awesome scene. 



**I have sat amidst hundreds of students as they prayed, wept and responded to hearing God’s voice.**

# ENTER THE CONVERSATION FROM URBANA '12

## MF STAFF

### EMPOWERING EVERY TRIBE AND TONGUE TO WORSHIP JESUS

*A Conversation with the editors of the new book from William Carey Library, Worship and Mission for the Global Church, by Robin Harris, James Krabill and Brian Schrag (see page 41). They are all part of ICE, International Council of Ethnodoxologists. For more information, go to [www.worldofworship.org](http://www.worldofworship.org)*

**MF: What is ethno-doxology, and what kind of response have you seen here at Urbana?**

**Robin:** We study how people around the world worship God. We would like to see that worship grow and see more people worshipping God in their own heart-music and heart-styles. This generation especially wants to engage with the arts in ministry. This is a huge wave. At this Urbana we've seen the most response ever. This is the first time that ICE (International Council of Ethno-Doxology) has been here as a presence. When we interact with students they tell us, "God has gifted me as an artist and I want to be involved. Can we do this in missions?" This is the first time Urbana has offered a whole bevy of seminars on this. They brought on five speakers from ICE. The sessions are well attended and we're really excited that Urbana has this vision of exposing people to ethno-doxology.

**MF: How does someone get involved?**

**Robin:** There are a number of different approaches. The first is taking what you know, your arts, your music, and you bring them overseas, and you just do them. The second model is a bridges model, where you go and you learn about that culture's music, and you use this as a bridge into the culture and as friendship evangelism. The third approach is where you go and learn how to encourage local people to use their own local artistic and musical

resources to spread the kingdom of God and encouraging their expressions of worship to the Lord.

**Brian:** A great way to get involved is to connect with ICE. You can join as an associate or an organization, and that opens a door to the 300 people and organizations that are members.

**Robin:** ICE is not a mission agency but a large network. We just network people together and provide resources. The big deal this year is the book and handbook we are publishing with William Carey Library. The title is *Worship and Mission for the Global Church*, edited by Robin Harris, James Krabill and Brian Schrag.

**MF: Tell us a little about this amazing book you guys have put together.**

**James:** Our ICE team was being asked to conduct intensive courses in a variety of contexts on this subject. We kept compiling collections of articles and eventually became aware that we needed to do something more substantial. The book has three main sections. The first section is foundations, which includes biblical and theological reflections on why supporting culturally appropriate worship is the goal of the church. The second section, another 200 pages, is stories from around the world of all the things people are doing in this field. And the third section is a tools section, which shows you how to do all kinds of practical things—how to design a multi-cultural worship service, how to conduct an arts-worship seminar, how to mentor artists, etc. The book includes 100 authors from over 20 countries. It really was an attempt to be as international as possible. The book includes a fabulous DVD in the back as well.

**MF: Western music, and especially Christian worship music from the West, is becoming increasingly dominant around the world. How much of a concern is this, and what can be done about it?**

**James:** That's really central to part of the issue. There's probably a tendency in this group to be a little unrealistic about the huge wave of impact that Western music

## When they see you asking about their music and arts they feel so loved and validated. That cuts through the barriers.

will continue to play. We obviously want to encourage something that we would call culturally appropriate, but realistically the church is going to be a hybrid. At the very least what we want to do is legitimize and encourage people to take another look at their own cultural gifts. I just talked to someone from Central Java who said that the worship leader in their church just got permission to translate all the Hillsongs into Central Java. I thought, “Central Java? I think there are a few arts there!” So I just began to encourage him about appropriating what God has given Central Java and trying to find a way to integrate this into the worship life. But realistically it’s going to be a hybrid. To be most cynical, the people with the money who can produce the CDs, the videos and the television programs will continue to have huge impact. It’s the new form of empire and cultural hegemony, and that’s what you’re up against.

**Robin:** God has given us a burden to encourage those who are being marginalized by this huge wave of stuff coming out of the West. And we can be the voice for those who have immensely expressive means of communication but are being pushed off to the side. We believe this is a gift to the church that should not be lost.

**Brian:** When I was in Congo, the church had been there for 50 years, and the first evangelist there had told all the people to burn their instruments because they were associated with their old life. Inside the church no one knew how to play the traditional instruments. So when they decided to integrate the local instruments in the church, specifically the *kundi*, we had to go outside the church to find someone who knew how to build it, tune it, and play it. The first time I played the *kundi*, there was complete silence. Normally there’s a lot of noise going on, and I thought we had done something wrong. So after the service, I asked a church member why everyone was so quiet. He replied, “What could we do? It cut our hearts.” Even though they had lively music, and translations of the hymns, the community arts penetrate into the hearts in ways that other things can’t do.

### **MF: What is the significance of ethno-doxology for reaching unreached people groups?**

**Robin:** Working with local music and art forms is the ideal way to show love to people. When they see you asking about their music and arts they feel so loved and

validated. That cuts through the barriers. The result is then a church that is not foreign but is deeply rooted and has much more potential with connecting with other people. It is generative and reproducible.

### **MF: Tell us about the history of how you got started as a network.**

**Robin:** One of the exciting things about the history of this movement is how connected it is to *Mission Frontiers* magazine. The 1996 July/August edition had a whole spread on worship—on having the focus of mission being worship. Many of us in this movement read that issue. Those articles were so influential and really launched us. I read it when I was in Siberia at that time, very isolated, not really understanding how God could use a musician in ministry. It really came alive for me when I read those articles. I went on to do some masters studies and then a PhD in this field. We are extremely grateful to the USCWM and to WCL for working with us on these volumes. We sense a great sense of partnership. You guys get what we do.

## WHERE DO WE FIT?

*A conversation with Paul Borthwick, author of Western Christians in Global Mission: What’s the Role of the North American church?, which was selected as one of the “Book of the Day” offerings at Urbana 2012.*

### **MF: You have written a very timely book, and one that is highly overdue. What led you to write about the role of the Western church in global mission today?**

**Paul:** I speak at about 12 or 14 mission conferences a year, and I’ve discovered two opposite extremes. On the one side are churches that still have a mindset of “the West to the rest”—we have to reach the whole world on our own. The other extreme is saying, “There are so many people rising up from Nigeria, India, Brazil or South Korea—our work is done, we’re off the hook.” So I start by giving the reader a global overview of trends and a sense of what is happening in the world today. I give the pros and cons of how I see the North American church and the pros and cons of how I see the non-Western church. One of the flaws that many of us get into is thinking the non-Western church is perfect and all we need to do is get out of the way for them. Let’s not over-romanticize the church around the world; let’s be realistic about it. I fundamentally disagree with the idea that the baton has been passed, because in the analogy, the person who releases it is out of the race. I don’t think there is ever a time when the Western church is released from our obedience to the Great Commission.

**MF: You talk about how Western missions has been conducted from a position of power, and that we need to come now as servants. How do we begin doing that?**

**Paul:** Coming as servants is tough because of our academic and financial power. It's easy for us to want to dictate the agenda. I believe it takes some major effort to convince our non-Western brothers that we are there to serve and not dictate our agenda. But, of course, power is a two-way street. It's not always that we assume the power, but in the majority world they often give us the power. Pastor Oscar Muriu, of Nairobi Chapel, said at Urbana 2009, "When I go into a meeting with a white missionary, I say please just listen, because when the white man speaks the conversation is basically over." There's politeness, they defer and, at times, there's the residual effects of colonialism.

**MF: What would you say to a local church that says, "We have \$100,000 in our missions budget, and we could use this to send out two American missionaries, or 100 national missionaries." How do we decide what is most strategic in this equation?**

**Paul:** It's a very good question, but unfortunately it is reflective of our materialism. Our pre-occupation with money drives the agenda with the question "What is most cost-effective?" Sure it might be true you could send more national missionaries. But in India, for example, sending missionaries from lower castes to higher castes might be cheaper but less effective than sending Westerners or people from other countries. So it's a very over-simplified view of missions. If I were talking to a church, I would say find out if there are people in your church that you believe are prepared for and called to strategic ministry. The reality is that as soon as the only thing the church gives to missions is our money, our vision diminishes. When your own flesh and blood is out there, the church prays more, they are more concerned about it.

**MF: It's been said that Westerners suffer from a guilt-complex about how rich we are in an age of great poverty and suffering. How might you advise a short-term mission group who will be exposed to some of this firsthand and may want to make a difference?**

**Paul:** The best advice I can give to short-term missions—and I'm a lifelong fan of short-term missions even though I'm aware of all the potential damage they can do—is make sure you're connected to some long-term ministry locally. Otherwise you're just going on a poor tour, and maybe you'll feel like you've put a band-aid on something. But if it's going to be sustainable there needs

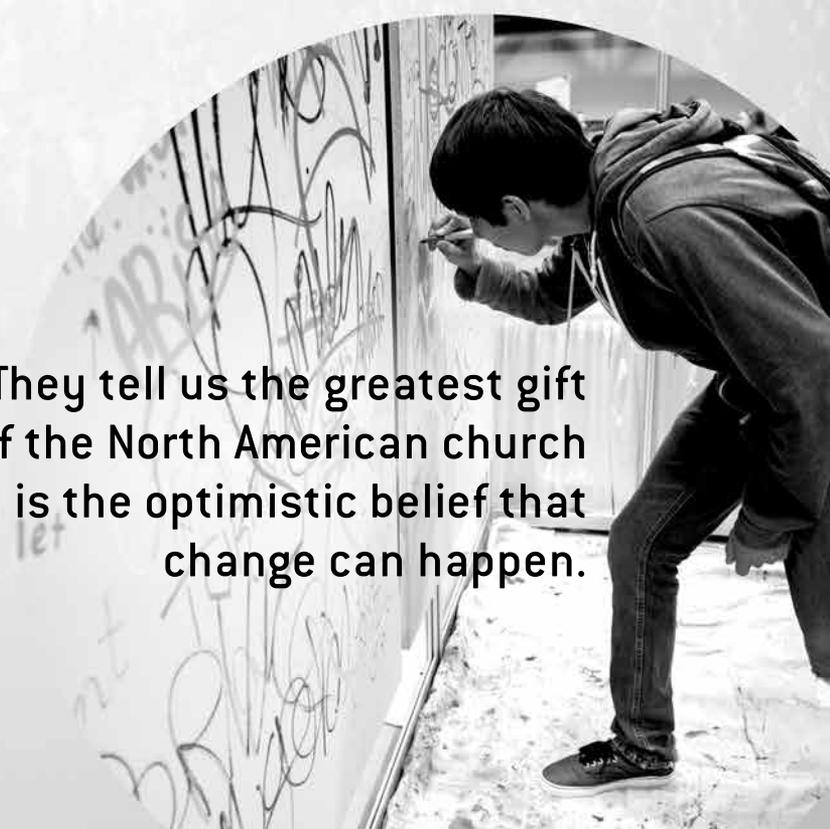
to be some group on the ground that's there long-term, and you go in to serve their purposes. Poverty-alleviation is not going to happen by doing a one-week training on micro-finance; it's not as easy as a ten-day project. Ultimately, short-term missions shouldn't be just about having a great experience for your group, but actually doing something that's going to have a long-term, kingdom-building effect in the location you are serving, long after you are gone.

**MF: What do non-Western leaders want to say to us in the West?**

**Paul:** One of the things I try to do in the book is give voice to the non-Western church. Overwhelming, the number one thing they want us to hear is to prioritize pioneer church-planting. They tell us the greatest gift of the North American church is the optimistic belief that change can happen. We look more in the future than the past, and pioneer work really requires this.

**MF: You've been to many Urbanas. How would you evaluate Urbana 2012?**

**Paul:** Urbana leadership has listened to some of the critique. As one person put it about Urbana 2000—it was more of a worship conference with missions thrown in, than a missions conference with worship. In 2012 David Platt pulled out all the stops. Tom Lin called students to ask God, "Where is my Mongolia?" I think Urbana 12 was an excellent call to global and local mission. And over 4000 students committed themselves to two years or more of cross-cultural service! 



**They tell us the greatest gift of the North American church is the optimistic belief that change can happen.**

# A DORMITORY IN RURAL AFRICA?



GLENN SCHWARTZ

/ Glenn J. Schwartz is Executive Director Emeritus of World Mission Associates in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and author of *When Charity Destroys Dignity: Overcoming Unhealthy Dependency in the Christian Movement*. It is available through [www.wmausa.org](http://www.wmausa.org).

Recently an appeal for funds came across my desk and caught my attention. It was an appeal to help build a girls' dormitory in a rural part of Africa. Obviously girls need an education, and they need a place to stay while they study, especially if their homes are far away from the school. Who could oppose raising funds in America for such a worthy project?

First of all, the appeal stated that the girls currently need to find housing in nearby villages with relatives or others willing to take them in.

Unfortunately, this has led to various forms of abuse, including sexual abuse, and being forced to work for the host family when the girls should be in class or studying. Teenage pregnancies are forcing some to leave school, perhaps never again to have the opportunity to finish their schooling. The appeal for funds said the dormitory was necessary so that the girls can be "safe" from the evil in the surrounding villages.

As I read it, the appeal made me sad because I had some personal knowledge of that area of Africa. The gospel has been preached in that area for over 100 years. In the early days, mission stations were established as places where local people who wanted to follow Christ could find a safe haven, away from the "sinful atmosphere" of the

surrounding villages. So, the idea that the school dormitory would be a safe haven is not new. Interestingly, one of the facts of life is that young girls, despite the "safety" of school dormitories, can still get pregnant out of wedlock.

What grieved me most is the implication that after 100 years of preaching the gospel in that area, the villages are still not safe places for these girls to live! What does this say about the nature of the gospel that was preached—that local populations

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**WHAT GRIEVED ME MOST IS THE IMPLICATION THAT AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL IN THAT AREA, THE VILLAGES ARE STILL NOT SAFE PLACES FOR THESE GIRLS TO LIVE!**

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cannot be trusted not to prey on teenage girls? It is quite possible that the men violating these young girls attended mission-related primary and secondary schools themselves. Why has the gospel not brought deep spiritual transformation? Should they not, after 100 years, display a level of morality that makes their villages safe places for young girls to live?

If there has not been an effective level of transformation in the hearts and minds of the villagers, will building

a dormitory on the secondary school compound solve the problem in the long term? Or does this lack of spiritual transformation point to the inadequacy of Western-style education, which may leave the mind improved but the heart wanting?

About 40 years ago some anthropological research was done in East Africa on the spirituality of those who attended four years of secondary school. It was discovered that those about to finish four years of secondary education were more likely to be committed to an animistic paradigm than when they entered the program four years earlier. The explanation was that the nearer the students got to graduation (anticipating the adult

world), the more likely they were to take the non-Christian paradigm seriously, indicating that many of them lacked a deep personal relationship with the Lord. To them, Christianity did not seem to have the answers for "adult" questions, perhaps because for them it was formed, incubated and developed in a Western-style educational environment that often denied the realities of the "spirit" world.

In a situation such as this, where

compassionate Christians want to provide shelter for young women, what could possibly be a workable alternative? The alternative is to present a gospel that does not extract people from the real life of traditional villages, but finds a way of dealing with the spiritual issues faced in the villages where the young women are seeking accommodation. This, of course, needs to be addressed in the long term. The need for the dormitory represents a more urgent and short-term solution.

How can sinful villages be transformed? Western-style education is definitely not adequate to deal with the realities of the spirit world in which most of these young people live their lives. The only viable solution is to present the gospel—within the villages

themselves—in such a way that the kingdom of God and the power of His transforming grace can be extended over the villages, so they can become safe places for everyone to live. When that happens, the village no longer needs to be a place of evil but a place where God's transforming grace is seen on a daily basis. Those same villages can become places where adult men and women will create a safe place for their children, youth, and all residents and visitors who are seeking shelter.

In short, the long-term hope for the Christian church in rural Africa or anywhere else is **not extraction from but transformation of the village**. A life-changing experience with the Holy Spirit, combined with biblical teaching and an emphasis on

holy living, can turn sinful villages into places where spiritual men and women will care for and disciple their youth.

And when it comes to mobilizing local resources, think of it this way: if villages are safe places for young women to live, foreign funding for dormitories will not be needed. In fact, if local people deem such dormitories to be necessary—and they take psychological ownership of the school—they may even make and burn the bricks to build the buildings! If that were to happen, the appeal letter can be sent to the local people capable of making and burning the bricks without appealing overseas for funding. People in Africa deserve the blessing of doing such things for themselves. 

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- ③ September 19–21: North American Mission Leaders Conference 2013  
[www.MissionLeadersConference.com](http://www.MissionLeadersConference.com)
- ④ September 21: NextStep: Equipping for Dallas Perspectives Alumni  
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BOOK REVIEW OF...

# RALPH D. WINTER: EARLY LIFE AND CORE MISSIOLOGY

by Greg H. Parsons



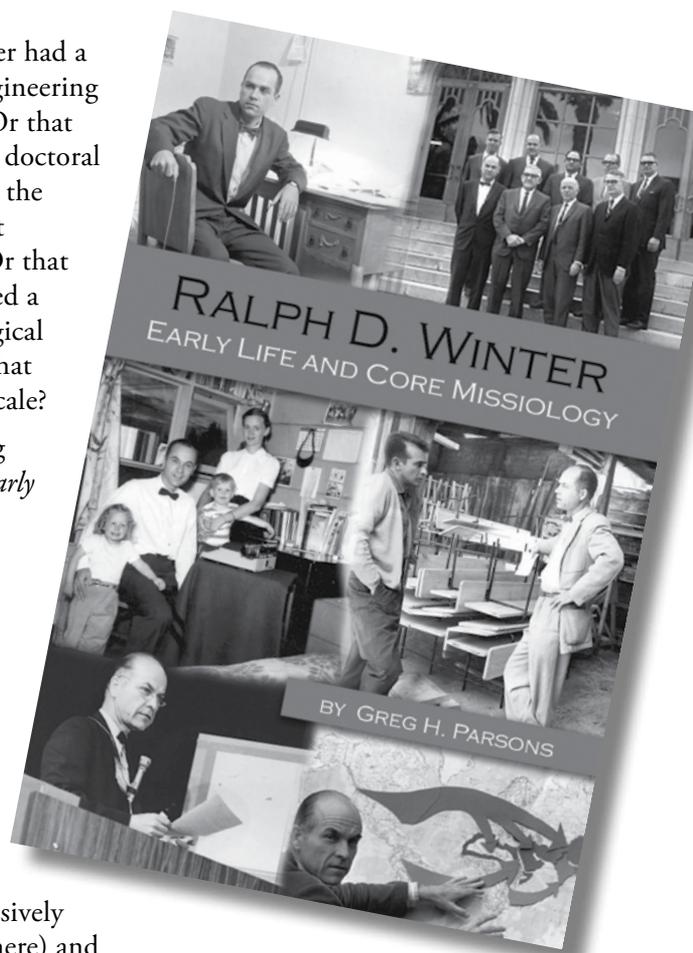
DAVE DATEMA

General Director,  
Frontier Mission Fellowship

**D**id you know that Ralph Winter had a penchant as a youth for re-engineering and re-building firecrackers? Or that one of his main professors during his doctoral work threatened to remove him from the program because of Winter's constant attempts to change how he taught? Or that the World Council of Churches played a significant role in promoting Theological Education by Extension (TEE)? Or that the E-scale actually began as the M-scale?

These and other surprises await in Greg Parsons' new book *Ralph D. Winter: Early Life and Core Missiology* (WCIU Press, 2012). The book is Parsons' doctoral dissertation recently approved by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. It is the result of many years of association (Greg has been on staff at the USCWM since 1982), research in Winter's personal records and archives, as well as many interviews with Winter and his colleagues.

The book reads amazingly well for a doctoral dissertation. Though extensively footnoted (some of the best stuff is there) and boasting a 74-page section of appendices, it is nonetheless easily accessible for readers of all kinds. Roughly half of the book is biographical, dealing with Winter's upbringing, education and marriage, his years as a field missionary in Guatemala and his tenure at Fuller Theological Seminary as a professor. These pages help show the forces that shaped Winter's thinking and life direction and are crucial to understanding the person behind the persona.



Author: Greg H. Parsons  
 Publisher: WCIU Press, 2012  
 Binding: Paperback, 441 Pages  
 ISBN 13: 978-0865850750  
 List Price: \$19.99

Available for sale on [www.wciupress.org](http://www.wciupress.org)  
 for 20% off with discount code: CSNZ4F9H

The other half of the book focuses on three basic aspects of Winter's legacy: Theological Education by Extension, Sodalities and Modalities, and his 1974 presentation on cross-cultural evangelism at the Lausanne Congress. While many readers familiar with Winter's life will already know about these topics, what is most helpful in Parsons' treatment is to see the progression of thought over the course of years that eventually led to the ideas themselves. All ideas spring from a context, and the specific context for these ideas in Winter's life are instructive and enlightening.

While the book does not focus on any of Winter's more recent thinking, the reader will be surprised by how current many of these "old" ideas remain. For example, in the 1970s Winter would often deplore the fact that while mission agencies were good at planting churches in foreign fields, they seemed blind to the need to plant mission structures in those same fields. Even today, with the

needed and encouraging focus on Church-Planting Movements, there remains a need to consider mission-planting movements as well. If it is true that Winter was ahead of his time, then it should not surprise us that many of his old ideas still speak today.

Anyone who met or read Ralph Winter, and in turn grew fond of the man, will love this book.

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IF IT IS TRUE THAT WINTER WAS AHEAD OF HIS TIME THEN IT SHOULD NOT SURPRISE US THAT MANY OF HIS OLD IDEAS STILL SPEAK TODAY.

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# THE ETHNEPHEBUS VISION

Co-laboring to Catalyze “Cascading Church-Planting Movements” Among the Least-Reached Clusters of Peoples



## JUSTIN LONG

Justin Long has been a missionary researcher for 20 years. Since 2010 he has served with Mission to Unreached Peoples, where

he edits in-depth studies of People Group Clusters.

He serves on the Global Ephesus Support Group, and regularly blogs at

<http://www.justinlong.org>

and on Twitter at

@justindlong.

Let's start here: *Ethne* really isn't like any other network or conference out there—at least, none I'm familiar with.

I've been to a number of mission conferences. Some have been huge, and some have been very small. Some have been intensely scripted—so much so that if you just walked through the script it was like being on a mini-vacation in a nice hotel. Some have been very loose, so that you could hardly recognize the outcome. Many were very academic—papers presented, discussions held over lunch, maybe some fireworks if some controversial position was taken, but mostly very thoughtful and theoretical.

*Ethne's* not like that at all. One of the attendees perhaps described it best when he said *Ethne* is like a family meeting where news of what's happening is shared over a meal.

Briefly, *Ethne* is a network for people passionate about reaching unreached peoples. It grew out of the meetings held after the end of the AD 2000 & Beyond Movement, when such people found there was still a need for a global network focused on unreached peoples. (At one of the Lausanne meetings, for example, those interested in unreached peoples and those interested in ministry among the handicapped and disabled were all folded into one track called “hidden and forgotten people.” We amicably but quickly split into tracks 12A and 12B.)

As *Ethne* formed and grew, it intentionally kept its form as a decentralized and relationally-based “swarmish” network. There is no central *Ethne* headquarters, no incorporated body, not even a bank account (which makes registration for conferences interesting). It is a true “network of networks,” representing the sum of all the regional unreached networks (such as COMIBAM, MANI, IMA, the Korean World Mission Association/KWMA, SEALINK, PMA and many others). Every three years *Ethne* holds a conference in some region of the world. The exact place rotates: the first was Bali 2006 hosted by SEALINK, the second Bogota 2009 hosted by COMIBAM and the third and most recent was Seoul 2012 hosted by KWMA. These conferences typically bring together about 400 field leaders and practitioners.

The conference is “by invitation only,” but if you are working among unreached peoples and connected to someone else, it is really not hard to get invitations (issued relationally through the networks). The big constraining factor is typically the size of the venue and the quota: one of *Ethne's* values is that it proportionally represents the various regions. Western faces are very much a minority—in the conference as a whole, and certainly on the stage. Even the name *Ethne* was chosen because it's Greek, not English, and needs less translation.



through the relationships and thinking processes of many participants. It started with a simple question: how do we accelerate the process of reaching all peoples and whole regions?

Leaders in the *Ethne* movement are passionate about unreached peoples, but also ruthless evaluators of their own work. The statistics are stark: although the percentage of the world with no access to the gospel fell from 75% in 1800 to 54% in 1900, and further to 29% today, in “real numbers” the actual population of people who have never heard of Jesus grew from 674 million in 1800 to 880 million in 1900, and then *doubled twice* to

An *Ethne* conference focuses on 1) celebrating Great Commission progress among unreached peoples; 2) assessing current opportunities and resources; and 3) accelerating movements to Christ among all peoples. These events always have their interesting moments. As with any family, you will encounter a cousin or two who can spin a great story—and then, on follow-up, you find the story has been, shall we say, filled with a bit of hot air. But elder brothers and sisters keep us on track and focused. There are those who come unsure about the whole idea of unreached peoples. Some arrive energetic and excited, others disillusioned and weary from the continual strife of their labors.

I always have two pictures in my head when I think of *Ethne* conferences. The first is worship: led by a multinational team, we sing songs in a variety of languages, with moments of humor and moments of pure joy. At *Ethne* 2012 I was very moved by the incredible Russian, Filipino, Thai and Korean worship. The second picture is the dining hall: it is a heart-warming thing to walk in a little late and see some 400 people eating and talking animatedly together.

While it is perhaps true that these triennial events are the most visible part of *Ethne*, the real purpose of the movement is to stimulate initiatives and projects that result in workers moving into unreached peoples and stimulating Church-Planting Movements (CPMs)—also called Disciple Making Movements (DMM)—among related people groups. The most recent project is the Ephesus Initiative.

### EPHESUS: THE SIMMERING CONVERSATION

As with all such initiatives, Ephesus has been bubbling in the background for a long time, working its way

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## STATISTICS TELL US THAT THE GOOD BEING DONE IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH. POPULATION GROWTH ALONE IS OUTSTRIPPING OUR EFFORTS.

two billion today. The number is continuing to grow, at an average rate of 57,000 new people per day, largely due to population growth. Researchers estimate that by 2025 the number of people who will have no contact with Christianity will reach 2.2 billion.

Obviously, the vast missions movement is doing much good. The growth of the church is fastest in Africa and Asia, and many remarkable stories of church-planting have been heard at each of the *Ethne* conferences. (Some of them are in very sensitive places, which cannot be easily put in print, but *Mission Frontiers* has carried some of these stories in past issues.) Yet the statistics tell us that the good being done *is not good enough*. Population growth alone is outstripping our efforts.

This lack of overall progress led to some re-thinking. Instead of engaging single people groups, is it possible to engage whole clusters—to catalyze Church-Planting Movements that “cascade” throughout clusters of families of related people groups—faster than population growth? Many teams have sought to start Church-Planting Movements among single people groups (again, documented in past issues of *Mission Frontiers* and other journals). What about “cluster movements”?

Acts 19:9-10 tells how Paul and his co-laborers worked in Ephesus for two years, and “all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.” If it could happen then, why not today? This question was first asked and considered at a 2008 *Ethne* Steering Committee meeting. At the time the question was posed as, “How can the various strategic initiatives of *Ethne* work better together?” (which had always been *Ethne’s* intent but had yet to be achieved). Out of this discussion came the idea of focusing on two or three specific clusters and developing a coordinated effort in each.

At *Ethne* 2009 the various strategic tracks (Prayer, Information, Mobilization, Crisis Response, Member Care, CPM, etc.) took the discussion up more broadly. They asked, how can pray-ers, community developers, crisis responders, mobilizers, tentmakers, researchers, trainers and so on work together to see CPMs among families of unreached peoples? The participants developed the idea of “collaborative CPM initiatives,” along with a very rough initial priority list with such clusters as Sumatra, the Fulani, the Kurds and Bedouins.

In 2010 a follow-up meeting was pulled together when a number of CPM practitioners and *Ethne* members gathered in the United States. Participants were asked, “What would it look like to really do this?”

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## IS IT POSSIBLE TO ENGAGE WHOLE CLUSTERS—TO CATALYZE CHURCH-PLANTING MOVEMENTS—THAT “CASCADE” THROUGHOUT CLUSTERS OF FAMILIES OF RELATED PEOPLE GROUPS—FASTER THAN POPULATION GROWTH?

Based on these initial “brainstorming” ideas, yet another meeting was held during the 2010 Cape Town Congress of Lausanne, in which more CPM practitioners also took up the question, and after tweaking the concept they, too, agreed to be involved.

In late 2010 a list began to emerge. An Ephesus working group started with the notes and interest that had already accumulated, and framed this within the Joshua Project’s global research on unreached peoples and clusters. A “beta” version of a priority list of clusters was drafted and circulated among many *Ethne* members and global researchers. This draft was further refined in early 2011.

Right before the “Closing the Gap” meeting in the United States in 2011 the *Ethne* Steering Committee

met and took up the discussion of how to make *Ethne* even more action-oriented. The idea of the Ephesus Initiative—now in a much stronger and more developed form—was proposed. After discussing it, the *Ethne* Steering Committee formally agreed to adopt the Ephesus Initiative as a strategic focus.

Ephesus was also discussed at the “Closing the Gap” meeting itself, and became a major part of the agenda. As a result of the post-Cape Town meeting and the “Closing the Gap” meeting, about a half-dozen clusters were adopted for CPM focus, and strong teams began to emerge.

### THE NEXT STEP: ETHNE 2012 AND BEYOND

Ephesus was introduced broadly at Seoul 2012. Over 100 Church-Planting Movements (or disciple-multiplying movements) are known to be growing right now among specific people groups. *Ethne* leaders wanted to see many more CPM teams launched—but even more, to see some existing CPM teams take on whole clusters. The goal of each Ephesus Initiative team is to (1) prioritize specific, most-neglected “clusters” or “families” of people groups (mostly based on the Joshua Project list); (2) “in this generation” catalyze collaborative, reproducible Church-Planting Movements that can cascade throughout multiple people groups in a cluster; and (3) find ways to stimulate global collaboration to inaugurate movements together as a Body.

At Seoul 2012 we heard reports each day, but on the second day the participants divided into a number of working groups around people group clusters, with the intent of exploring the formation of an Ephesus team. Early meetings focused on sharing





- The family of 400+ unreached peoples in the Kush mountain ranges
- An unengaged urban area in South Asia, and other similar areas

In addition, some progress has been made in the Persian, Turkic and Middle East clusters, but no specific Ephesus teams have yet formed.

Between *Ethne* 2012 and *Ethne* 2015 we will continue to recruit people who will serve on the various Ephesus teams, start an ongoing collaborative training process for the various Ephesus teams to learn from each other, and seek to resource the teams. If you would like to connect with these groups, please send an email to [ephesus@ethne.net](mailto:ephesus@ethne.net). MF

information about the cluster, and then transitioned into action steps. As with any decentralized network, some of the working groups made more progress than others.

Now comes the hard question: what next? The biggest problem with a decentralized network is not poor-quality action, but no action at all. Apathy is the killer. In the wake of *Ethne* 2012, to keep momentum going, a Global Ephesus Support team has been formed, including eight “fairly public” individuals (myself among them), as well as six “less public” people whose ministries might be harmed by publicity. This support team exists to help make connections and provide resources to CPM teams that want to engage whole clusters. In addition, there are presently 28 Ephesus team facilitators in eight Ephesus teams, and a fairly large training network is available.

The eight current Ephesus teams include:

- The Cushitic Family (Afar, Beja, Oromo, Somali)—44 unreached peoples—57 million people
- The Fulani/Hausa/Kanuri Family—98 unreached peoples—78 million
- Southeast Asia—653 unreached peoples (311 unengaged)—303 million
- Sumatra—49 unreached peoples—26 million
- East Indonesia—104 unreached people—25.5 million
- Bengali—407 unreached peoples—330 million

WHAT NEXT? A GLOBAL EPHEBUS SUPPORT TEAM HAS BEEN FORMED TO HELP MAKE CONNECTIONS AND PROVIDE RESOURCES TO CPM TEAMS THAT WANT TO ENGAGE WHOLE CLUSTERS.



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# THE JOURNEY AHEAD

## STEVE SMITH

/ Steve Smith oversees the work of the International Mission Board (SBC) for Southeast Asia, and coaches churches and organizations on moving toward biblical Church-Planting Movements. He is the author of the book *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution* with Ying Kai (WigTake Resources 2011). You can follow Steve's musings from his devotional thoughts and kingdom ministry on Twitter @kingreigncome and Kingdom Kernels on Facebook.

In a remote valley in a restricted access nation, I gathered with my Ina partners as we discussed how to reach the 1.4 million Ina people. I had taught them repeatedly that the only way to reach all 5,000 villages was through a kingdom movement in which Ina people were ignited to reach their own people and beyond.

And yet these dear brothers and sisters continued to struggle with how this might happen, until one fateful afternoon.

One of the Ina leaders approached me jumping up and down with excitement.

Brother Steve, you'll never believe what we discovered! [Continued jumping.] As you know, we represent 80 new Ina churches. [Jumping.] We can easily go back and train each of our 80 churches to start a new church in six months or less. In six months, before the harvest season, we'll have 160 churches! [Him jumping. Me feigning ignorance.] That's not all! We can train all 80 new churches to start a new church in six months or less. And before the planting season six months later, we'll have 320 churches! [Jumping higher; me

feigning shock—though real shock is beginning to set in.]

That's not all, every six months we can help the new churches to repeat the pattern so that every six months we double in number from 320 to 640 [pointing to the numbers] to 1,280 to 2,560 and finally to 5,120!

Brother Steve, we are going to be finished in 3 ½ years!

All the Ina in the room were jumping up and down, smiles on their faces. It was beginning to occur to me that the Spirit had finally opened their minds to understand Church-Planting Movements and their part in them. Hope welled up in my heart that the Ina could indeed be reached in my lifetime. They really were grasping the idea that every new believer could be trained and expected to live out a lifestyle of witnessing to and training other new believers.

**The movement came to life.** A couple of years later, my supervisor responded to my monthly report: "Steve, this sounds like the book of Acts!"<sup>1</sup>

I just love Church-Planting Movements (CPMs)! The operative word here is *movements*. Jesus made it clear that **He** would be the

force behind the church growing: "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18 ESV). CPMs are God-engineered movements in one of their purest forms, harking back to the kingdom movements of Acts. They can't be explained from a human-engineered standpoint. *I love CPMs because I love seeing Jesus at work!* Interactions with faith-filled believers in CPMs have radically altered my life to one of increased devotion, faith and effectiveness.

## WHAT IS A CPM?

In their essence, CPMs are Spirit-engineered movements in which disciples and churches multiply generation by generation. Disciples display a value to love Jesus by immediately obeying all that they learn in Scripture and taking responsibility to win and disciple others in a like manner. CPMs emerge when there are consistent fourth-plus generation churches in multiple areas. "Fourth-generation" is defined by believers from a first-generation church (started by an outsider or pre-existing Christian) starting a second-generation church, which starts a third-generation church which then starts a fourth-generation church. If fourth-generation occurs consistently, then it's usually a God-movement.

In CPMs models of discipleship and church are extremely reproducible and life-changing in order to enable each new generation of believers to start new generations as a part of their normal lifestyle. How rapidly are the

new generations emerging? CPMs typically double in size at least every 18 months, though new generations can start every few weeks or months.

## WORD, WORKS, WINESKINS AND WORRIES

Most of us have never lived in such a kingdom movement. When we live in the world of non-movement, we find it hard to believe there is a reality different from our own experience. *The goal of this regular column is to draw lessons from this alternate world of kingdom movements so that we can implement their biblical principles in our own lives.*

If I can get someone to walk in the midst of a CPM, then that person will much more likely know how to cooperate with the Spirit in CPM processes. The ethos of CPMs is more easily caught than taught. The faith of CPM believers is contagious. But since most of us cannot physically walk among these movements, we will learn from CPMs and their practitioners in four areas:

**Word**—biblical principles for CPMs that were foundational for the explosion of the church in the first century A.D. and are foundational for modern CPMs.

**Works**—case studies of modern CPMs. *Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them.* (Ps. 111:2) We will study what CPM practitioners are doing on virtually every continent.

**Wineskins**—methods and structures that effectively cooperate with the Spirit in reproducing generation by generation: finding God-prepared people, evangelism, short- and long-term discipleship, church planting/life and leadership development.

We will share practical methods that can help you in pursuing a God-movement.

**Worries**—concerns and questions that are common when CPMs emerge, and biblical answers for those.

## WHAT'S AHEAD IN THIS COLUMN, OR WHY I'M TICKLED TO DEATH ABOUT IT

*Mission Frontiers* will serve as a worldwide forum for lessons from CPMs. Men and women in the midst of CPMs will share their insights with you. Here are some of the top highlights in the issues ahead, or why I'm tickled to death to learn what they are learning.

### CHANGING THE PERCENTAGES

Stan Parks, who works with Mission to Unreached Peoples, says that in CPMs we see real changes in percentages. CPMs are genuinely helping us win people faster than the birth rate so that cities and people groups are actually becoming *Christian*.

Keeping up with population growth is a challenge any church faces. For example, the average annual birth rate in the U.S. is about 6.3%<sup>2</sup> and does not include the growth in population of immigration to the U.S. For churches to actually make gains on the demographics of society, they would probably need to at least beat the birth rate. So a church of 100 people needs to evangelize and baptize at least 6-7 lost people each year just to maintain current Christian demographics and more than that to make net gains. Otherwise, we are losing ground in the kingdom. Is your church beating the birth rate?

In CPMs the percentages are changing drastically. In CPMs a group of 100 believers evangelizes and baptizes a typical range of 30 to

100 persons per year. *In other words, many CPMs are doubling the number of believers every 12 to 24 months.* In one recently-emerged CPM in an unreached people group in South East Asia, every village now has a church.

In the months to come we will discover ways to change the percentages in your community. Let's beat the birthrate and reverse the decline of evangelism!

### DIVERSITY OF EXAMPLES—A MODEL FOR ANY CONTEXT

Fifteen years ago, CPMs were few and mainly occurred in certain regions and demographics. This led to the assumption that CPMs can only occur in limited-access nations among rural populations. Today, however, we are tracking dozens of CPMs—on every continent in virtually every worldview. Places we thought could never experience CPMs are now blossoming. What this means is that there are probably examples that are very similar to the ones you face. Rural and urban. Literate and non-literate. Churched, post-churched and pre-churched. Western and non-Western. Muslim-background, Hindu-background, tribal-background, atheist-background, etc.

### WE CAN NO LONGER SAY: "IT CAN'T HAPPEN HERE!"

Within the diversity of contexts are *diverse models* or adaptations of models which all share similar principles. In the months to come, we will explore models that will fit your context.

### MISSION OR MINISTRY? TRUE COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

Transformation and justice issues have rightly captured the attention of the church today. Frequently missionaries host short-term teams who say:

“We want to come do hands-on ministry—help the poor, right injustice, set free the captives—not evangelism (or not *just* evangelism).” This is an understandable reaction to evangelism and discipleship that does not result in transformation. The result, however, has been an unfortunate pendulum swing in which churches and organizations attempt to transform communities without first transforming hearts.

An exciting phenomenon is emerging in CPMs: *as churches multiply through a people group and take seriously the transformational commands of Scripture, societies are being transformed.* Research still needs to be gathered in this area. But what are emerging are frequent testimonies of transformation. Women are being freed from prostitution. Crime is waning. Education and literacy are rising. Unemployment and poverty are decreasing. Acts of mercy abound. We are finding that the most effective transformational model is the biblical model of making disciples who have the power by the Spirit and admonitions of the Word to love others as they love themselves. Rather than transform first, we disciple first, then watch transformation emerge as a fruit of discipleship and church life. In the months to come we will learn how to follow a similar path of community transformation.

## IMMEDIACY—A RETURN TO LIFE-CHANGING DISCIPLESHIP AND COMMUNITY

The ethos within these kingdom movements is to love God with all one’s heart, soul, mind and strength and to love one’s neighbor as oneself—and to do this in life-changing community with others. Many churches around the world display a similar ethos. CPMs don’t

have the edge on this. But it’s really impossible to see a God-movement like a CPM *without* this ethos. In other words, when you find a true CPM you also find life-changing discipleship and community. The emphasis in CPMs is that by God’s grace we obey everything we’ve learned in Scripture. What emerges is an authentic Christianity that feels very New Testament-like.

**While CPMs multiply rapidly, they are not primarily concerned with rapidity. Instead they are concerned with immediacy.**<sup>3</sup> Believers hold a value of *immediately* obeying what they learn. The Gospel of Mark uses the word εὐθὺς —“immediately”—over 30 times.

And Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.” And *immediately* they left their nets and followed him. (Mark 1:17-18 ESV, emphasis added).

Mark emphasizes that disciples, like their Lord, obey immediately out of their love for God.

Because disciples in CPMs frequently obey the Word without delay or reservations, it results in rapid life transformation and rapid multiplication of believers and churches. But in reality, this is rapid only by Western standards, not by biblical standards. In CPMs such Christianity is the norm; to not live this way is viewed as an aberration.

In the months to come we will learn how to cultivate such discipleship.

## THE JOURNEY AHEAD

CPMs are not a cure-all. They come with their own set of problems. Any model of discipleship and church does. But they are the most concrete expression of God’s kingdom coming on earth as in heaven that I know of.

They beautifully display the growth of the kingdom that Jesus described as the new norm:

The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches (Matt. 13:31-32 ESV).

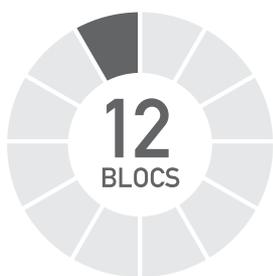
Not only do CPMs expand like this, but the number of CPMs is expanding like this, and our understanding is also expanding like this. At a recent CPM conference we hosted in the U.S. a participant remarked that it was somehow appropriate that America was now learning from Asia, where many of the modern CPMs were originally birthed. In the coming months may we develop a global conversation where the whole Body of Christ is learning from mustard-seed movements on each continent! 

## FOLLOW-UP:

To send examples of what you are learning in CPMs to be featured in future issues, write us at [KingdomKernels@onepost.net](mailto:KingdomKernels@onepost.net).

*Kingdom Kernels is a regular column featuring lessons from Church-Planting Movements around the world.*

1. [Excerpt adapted from *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution* by Steve Smith with Ying Kai. WIGTake Resources. 2011.]
2. The latest statistics from Pew Research record 63.2 births per thousand women in the U.S. in 2011, which is an all-time low for the U.S. *U.S. Birth Rate Falls to a Record Low; Decline Is Greatest Among Immigrants*, Gretchen Livingstone and D’Vera Cohn. Nov. 29, 2012. Washington: Pew Social & Demographic Trends.
3. I’m indebted to Stan Parks for this distinction in terms.



Spotlight for March 2013

## EURASIAN PEOPLES

WITH EMPHASIS ON THE PEOPLES OF THE NORTH CAUCASUS

### HELEN BRUCE

Since 1997, Helen Bruce (a pen name) and her husband have facilitated international collaboration among Caucasus-hearted entities, pursuing disciple-making movements. She lives with her family in Russia.

“Russia is for Russians.” In 2013 Moscow this prolific and profane graffiti hearkens back 100 years to the failed policies of tsars and leaders of Russian Orthodoxy, who advocated for *one religion, one administration, one national consciousness*. Yet the North Caucasus’ 45 distinct Sunni Muslim ethno-linguistic groups are reminders that not all souls in Russia are Russian! After hundreds of years of battles for Soul and Soil, the Caucasus nations today remain in a “graceless chasm.” Hence the Caucasus proverb: “When will the blood cease to flow in the Caucasus Mountains? When the sugar canes grow in the snow.”

During the 1890s-1920s, with a newly completed vernacular Russian Bible, the evangelical church flourished “next door” to Caucasus nations, but the “all nations” mandate of Scripture lost out to nationalistic theologies. Today the blossoming church of the former Soviet Union is overcoming the “-isms” of the past, awakening to God’s heart to send

messengers of God’s grace who can communicate a Caucasus Jesus to Caucasus Souls on Caucasus Soil.

Today praying groups have *Taken-Into-Their-Hearts* (persistently and long-term) 31 of the 34 unreached peoples of Dagestan and the 11 unreached peoples between Chechnya and Adygheya. Thirteen of 45 language groups are legitimately engaged with various phases of intentional, cross-cultural efforts toward disciple-making movements. Fruit comes from “work produced by faith, labor prompted by love, and endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” (1Thess. 1:3). *Still, 32 unreached peoples in Dagestan, Chechnya and Ingushetia remain painfully isolated from God’s blessings of Messengers, the Message and Communities*. But we know that God responds to persistent, praying people!

*Take-Into-Your-Heart Prayer* prays with heart commitment like Paul in Philippians 1:7, that is, 1) praying for *presence*—the right people, in the right places, at the right times; and 2) praying for *completed*

### *Scriptures and effective Scripture use.*

In 2012 the Chechen Bible became the first Caucasus-language Bible completed and published (a 40-year project)! Despite war, active Islamic insurgencies and visa challenges, an increasing number of people are finding jobs or starting micro-businesses with kingdom purposes in view. The North Caucasus Regional Partnership sponsors in-country gatherings for workers to mentor one another, receive training, pray for one another and deal with disciple-making questions. A new generation of workers have developed relational priorities to help each other along—they are brothers and sisters dwelling in unity and love for one another (not without challenges). Some groups are diligently working on Chronological Storytelling for the Caucasus context—a much-needed process for communicating with oral learners that allows for small-group discovery learning.

When we pray for “the right people in the right places at the right times”, we hope for people like Shaadia Firoz (a pen name). Her story, *Love that Triumphs*, comes into English in 2013.

I was born in the North Caucasus, in a Muslim family, influenced by Communism’s residue and strong Muslim traditions. As a young girl, I sincerely believed Islam was indeed the religion of peace and goodness; with all my heart I searched for a close relationship with the God of Islam—like millions of honorable people in Muslim cultures around the world today. But my story is of a lack of peace in my heart.... From age 18 until 25 I ended up in Moscow pursuing my childhood dream of love, recognition and security through fame and success through singing. Singing was like breathing to me, but I struggled through life, naïve, gullible and vulnerable. My culture placed high



Used with permission, IMB

demands on females for modesty and restraint, while the males were given permission for practically anything and everything. I was haunted by my father’s drunken curses, “I’ll bury you alive!” or “I’ll cut you up in pieces, like cattle!” In my Moscow years I felt that I was fully under all these curses and that my life was totally shameful and ruined.

Shaadia returned home and made a successful singing career, yet one without any solution to her longing for purity and holiness. Finding no meaning through psychology or Islamic rituals,

One night, having fallen asleep with my regular prayer to “know the truth,” I dreamed a vivid dream. I saw far off a vision of a very close friend who died several years before. She was shaking her head from side to side and repeating, “No, Shaadia, no, it’s not correct.” The dream had an intense impact, moving me to seek trust in God, not in rituals. Very shortly after this dream, by a strange set of events, I ended up in a House of Prayer in my city, thinking that it was some kind of psychological treatment center....

In time, in the loving Jesus community, Shaadia hungrily searched the Scriptures.

In all my years of effort in Islam,

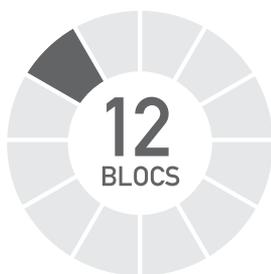
Mohammed had never changed my life. So what about this great Isa (Jesus), who so amazingly changes the lives of people, and how does He do this?

At a home meeting of believers, she finally understood that she had found what she sought her whole life: Isa. Over the next eight years, accused of betraying Islam, she twice suffered family death threats against her. Her pastor was murdered in 2010. In 2011, she read Scripture portions *in her own language* for the first time.

This had a huge spiritual, emotional impact inside me that overwhelmed me. I understood spiritual truths at a much deeper level. As a test, I began translating the book of Jonah into my language—and I came alive doing it! It brought a level of understanding to my own life that I had never had before.

Jesus made it clear that she was to devote the next 10 years to translate the last 37 books of the Bible in her people’s language (one of 32 languages in Dagestan). *Please pray for this Bible to be completed!* 

To learn more, contact [MFCaucasusResponse@gmail.com](mailto:MFCaucasusResponse@gmail.com) and read [www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/overlooked-no-more](http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/overlooked-no-more)



Spotlight for April 2013

## EAST ASIAN PEOPLES WITH EMPHASIS ON THE JAPANESE WORLDWIDE



### GARY FUJINO

Gary Fujino (fujig@aol.com), a third-generation Japanese Canadian, lived and worked as an urban, church-planting missionary in Tokyo, and among the Japanese diaspora globally, for 17 years. He is co-editor, along with Timothy R. Sisk and Tereso C. Casiño of the EMS monograph, *Reaching the City: Reflections on Urban Mission for the Twenty-First Century* (William Carey Library, 2012).

It may surprise some that the Japanese of Japan are the world's second largest unreached people group.<sup>1</sup> However, with less than one-half of one percent of its 127 million people defined as "evangelical", and barely 2% in Japan even professing "Christian" faith (which encompasses Roman Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses, in addition to mainline Protestant denominations), this ranking reflects a grim spiritual reality. Over one million Japanese nationals live and work abroad annually. Add to this a dispersion totaling three million Japanese descendants in more than 50 host nations, and the need to reach this huge cluster of unreached peoples remains imperative.

A major missiological challenge has been the fact that the Japanese have long thrived at taking influences from outside the archipelago and turning them into something "Japanese", without a sense of compromise to their national identity. This attitude influences evangelism and church-planting as much as does culture, since they are inextricably linked. Thus, in Japan, being Japanese often precedes being a Christian, so heartfelt witnessing and discipleship are struggles for even sincere believers.<sup>2</sup> It is not unusual for an adherent to Christianity to worship at a local congregation but also offer food at Shinto god shelves or prayers before Buddhist altars at home, without a sense of contradiction.

Over the centuries, this island nation has skillfully and successfully adapted technology, arts, culture, language, even religion from China, Europe and North America. A key element of this borrowing has been the concept of *wakon yosai* ("*Japanese spirit, Western learning*"), where the outward appearance is retained while keeping its "spirit" eminently

contextual. Ironically, in lands touched by 100 years of Japanese immigration, when this same *wakon yosai* ideal is reversed it creates Buddhist "churches" in North America<sup>3</sup>, where the proper location name is "temple" in Japan. Or, in the same way, with the largest *Nikkei* ("*Japanese descendant*") population outside of Japan<sup>4</sup>, Japanese in Brazil have fused Catholic celebrations for *Dia de Finados* (the Day of the Dead) in early November with *Obon* (a Buddhist festival for dead spirits), a national holiday week normally observed in Japan in the middle of August. For the Japanese psyche, being "spiritual" is much preferred over the idea of being "religious." And those who walk with Christ in this manner are making inroads.

Since entering the new millennium there have been a number of hopeful signs for mission (both inside and outside Japan) which bear notice:

1. In an unprecedented combined venture, mainline, evangelical and charismatic churches jointly celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Protestant mission in Japan. Factionalism has always been a bane in Japanese politics, as well as in the church, where these three groups never got along. So this show of comity in 2009 for the unity and witness of the Body, after more than five years of planning, was a major achievement for the established church in Japan.
2. The 2011 triple disaster of a 9.0 earthquake, flattening tsunami waves and a nuclear meltdown galvanized the church in Japan. Many local observers said that they had never experienced the church working together like this in their lifetime. Not only did it wake up the church internally, it also brought an international prayer focus for the country that

had not been seen since the end of World War II.

3. Traditional models and methodologies do not work in the sparsely populated disaster zone so Christian groups are cooperating with local authorities and are trying new ways to reach a beleaguered citizenry using a more holistic approach.
4. There are smatterings of “newness” in the way that Christians “do church” and also in the way that a biblical witness is propagated in Japan. Many innovative angles are being attempted to reach the Japanese in a more contextual manner. Urban church plants are being started in downtown Tokyo and other large and mid-sized cities; organic church and lay-led Japanese house and cell church-planting are becoming increasingly common; prayer, evangelism and discipleship groups via Skype have been used creatively when distance or expense prevents frequent contact; and various church and mission groups are cooperating together to foster multiplication and lay-led movements that will start not one but many church plants in a given local area, even throughout the country.
5. Immigrant missions (lay Christian migrant workers from Latin America, Africa and Asia) are slowly affecting the Japanese church. A few of these churches are opening their doors to non-Japanese congregations worshipping within the confines of their own buildings and campuses.
6. There is also a growing awareness of the need to reach the Japanese and *Nikkei* diaspora outside Japan. On the one hand, a number of groups in Japan are committed to reaching the Japanese diaspora throughout the globe. On the other hand, Japanese nationals saved overseas as well as many *Nikkei* Christians born overseas have taken up the torch to reach the Japanese in Japan. Brazil, Peru, Canada and the United States lead the way in sending *Nikkei* with Japanese ancestry to reach the Japanese in Japan, even as Japanese from Japan go out to reach non-Japanese with the gospel.
7. One of the most fascinating missiological realities is that Japan itself seems to be the “Mecca” (or “Jerusalem”, if you will) to which all Japanese seem to re-converge. Unlike many other diaspora populations around the world, the return rate of Japanese nationals living overseas is very high—over 90%—and the length of stay outside of the country is normally no longer than five years.<sup>5</sup> Often, Japanese saved overseas have to relearn their faith in order to live as Christians within the Japanese context after they return. And many *Nikkei* Christians living within the four most concentrated populations abroad<sup>6</sup> have never been to Japan but say they want to go there, both for work opportunities and to share their faith.

Three times in Japanese history, Christian faith and its accoutrements have exploded across this nation through economic, political and nation-building venues. In each era, despite their foibles, these movements produced new disciples, new churches and a deeper penetration of the gospel into society as a whole. The fourth wave may be approaching. 

1. According to Joshua Project (<http://www.joshuaproject.net/unreached.php>)
2. Tadataka Maruyama, *The Cross and the Cherry Blossom: The Gospel and Japanese Culture at a Crossroads* (Trinity Journal, vol. 21NS, no. 1).
3. This was actually an early “strategy” used by several Buddhist sects, copying Christian evangelistic methods in Japan, to propagate Buddhism in North America.
4. Official estimates range between 1-2 million Japanese descendants, mostly concentrated around Sao Paolo city and Sao Paolo state.
5. These findings are based upon unpublished ethnographic research I conducted between 2009-2012 in Brazil, Peru, Japan and the United States with repeat, onsite visits to each country, utilizing participant observation and in-depth interviews with more than 50 native informants, to determine better ways to reach these disparate populations with the gospel for their contexts.
6. Regionally, these areas comprise North America, Europe, Southeast Asia and Latin America.

## ACTION POINTS:

- **NETWORK:** Use the links in the Resource List to join an existing network, or start your own.
- **SEND/GO:** to Japan and to its diaspora. New workers are needed (Matt. 9:38) in-country for relief work and to help Japanese to initiate indigenous multiplication movements.

There is also a growing need for workers to serve in diaspora lands among the Japanese there, especially Brazil and Spanish-speaking Latin America.

- **GIVE:** To in-country churches and organizations that support the evangelization of the nation, and to missions and individual missionary/candidate families committed to serving there.

## RESOURCE LIST:

Homepage of the Japan Evangelical Association:  
[http://jeanet.org/bind/top\\_en.html](http://jeanet.org/bind/top_en.html)

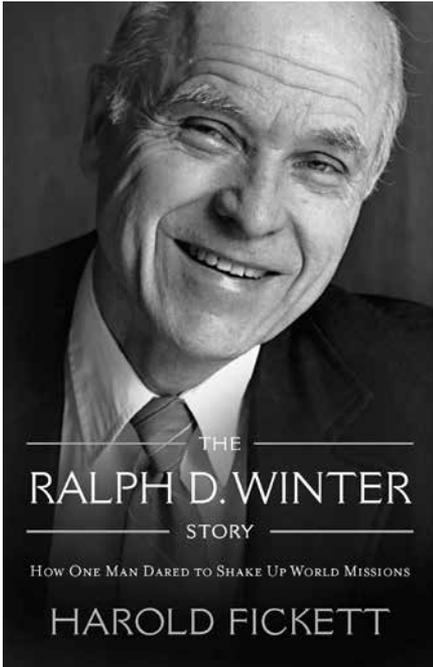
Homepage of the largest coalition of evangelical mission agencies in Japan:  
[www.jema.org/joomla15/](http://www.jema.org/joomla15/)

Japanese diaspora-related links:  
[www.discovernikkei.org/en/](http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/)  
[www.jclglobal.org](http://www.jclglobal.org)  
[www.rjcnetwork.org](http://www.rjcnetwork.org)



# New Releases

# WILLIAM



*“Ralph Winter was one of the most important and creative mission thinkers of the late 20th century. He was also a fervent supporter of the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world. This biography will be inspiring and challenging.”*

*Lon Allison, Executive Director,  
Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College*

## THE RALPH D. WINTER STORY

### How One Man Dared to Shake Up World Missions

Legendary American missionary strategist Ralph D. Winter always provoked strong reactions, one way or another. The U.S. Center for World Mission and William Carey Library are bringing us an important biography, *The Ralph D. Winter Story: How One Man Dared to Shake Up World Missions* (William Carey Library, 2013), by renowned author Harold Fickett. This long overdue book captures both the genius and the controversy of a self-described “social engineer,” named by TIME magazine as one of the 25 Most Influential Evangelicals in America.

Winter’s honor was well deserved. An engineer by training, he asked fresh questions and came up with innovative answers no one had ever considered. Winter’s work redefining the missionary task to focus on unreached or “hidden” peoples was revolutionary. His dogged determination to find a better way to train local Christians resulted in the powerfully effective Theological Education by Extension movement (TEE).

The book shows how Winter grappled with the theological meaning of the bone-marrow cancer that eventually killed both Roberta and himself. His tentative answers on “evil intelligent design” provoked new ways of thinking, fresh controversy, and a unique initiative—the Roberta Winter Institute, which focuses on the wide open field of disease eradication for the glory of God

The *Ralph D. Winter Story: How One Man Dared to Shake Up World Missions*, published by William Carey Library, provides an outstanding look at the life, ministry, and continuing influence of one of the true giants of the evangelical missionary movement, and indeed of contemporary evangelical faith.

Harold Fickett is a critically acclaimed author of novels, biographies, and works of spirituality, including “The Holy Fool”, “The Living Christ,” and “Dancing with the Divine.” He was a co-founder of the journal “Image,” was president and editor-in-chief of “Catholic Exchange” and co-wrote “The Faith” with Charles Colson. He currently serves as managing editor USA of “Aleteia”, an international website for truth-seekers, published in six languages

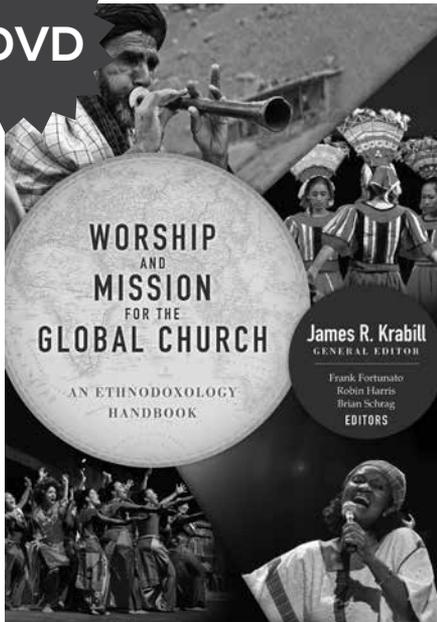
Go to [www.RalphDWinter.org](http://www.RalphDWinter.org) for further information.

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Harold Fickett  
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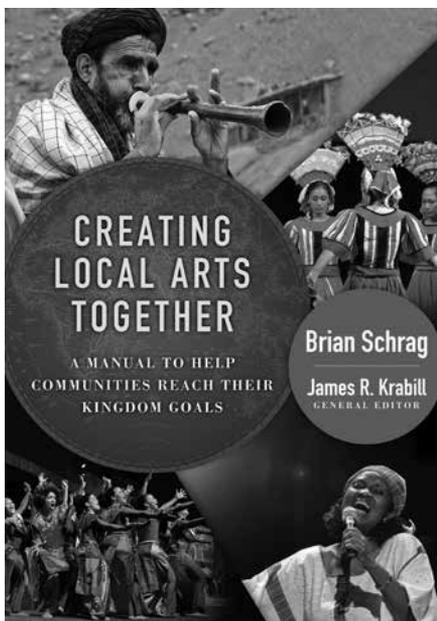
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Creating Local Arts Together leads practitioners through a seven-step process to encourage kingdom growth through local arts. The two volumes are closely referenced.

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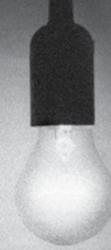
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# THE YOUNGER GENERATION



GREG PARSONS

/ GLOBAL DIRECTOR,  
U.S. CENTER FOR  
WORLD MISSION

It was the fall of 1946. Ralph D. Winter was 22 years old, already a graduate of Cal Tech. About ten years before, he had become friends with Dan Fuller, son of popular radio preacher Charles E. Fuller. He had also spent a year at Westmont, after

returning from Navy pilot training when World War II ended. During his time at the new Westmont College, he heard about Inductive Bible Study and learned that Princeton professor Howard Tilman Kuist was the best teacher of this method. So Ralph recruited Dan to go with him to Princeton for a year and learn what they could from Kuist and others—like world-renowned NT scholar Bruce Metzger. During that year, they met a man named Bill Bright! But that is another story.

The InterVarsity representative at Princeton was J. Christy Wilson. He and Ralph helped recruit other students to go to what was the first of InterVarsity's weeklong student conventions in Toronto, Canada. Later that year, Ralph also helped organize a student mission conference at Princeton, which brought together speakers Eugene Nida and Bruce Metzger. (He wanted to be sure they knew each other and could compare

their respective areas of scholarship.)

Every three years or so, Ralph attended what became known as “Urbana” until he was in his 70s. He continued to take any opportunity to influence young people with a broader view of the world and how God might want them to be involved in it.

Today, it seems easier and more tempting for older believers to “give up” on the younger generation. Any reason they are different from us seems reason enough to focus on some other area in our churches or in mission agencies.

It is no radical insight, but that is just shortsighted! As anyone who works with youth will tell you, they are the future of the church. They are the future missionaries, pastors, elders, business people... so what should we do?

Spiritually minded young people are looking for mentors. They may not fully understand you, just like you struggle to understand them, but they know you have lived your life and made it through rough times—keeping strong in the faith. We all have failures and shortcomings, but if you have learned from them, you have something to share. God is in the business of using people in spite of themselves.

So check with those who work with the young people (high school and college) in your church. Ask them how you can serve. You don't have

to dive in fulltime—just making yourself available will mean a lot and potentially make a great impact for the kingdom.

If you live near a college campus, contact the student groups on campus and see how you might connect with them.

If you are a young person, seek out those older than you who could be spiritual—and practical—mentors to you. You will have to work through how it will play out for you and you will learn helpful lessons in the process.

I've shared this before, but my brother and sister-in-law live right across from a large campus in the South. When their kids were in high school, they added on to their home and have had college students—often foreign students—living with them ever since. Now, they know former students all over the world who are business people, moms and dads, some in ministry, some believers, some not. Many of these students came to Christ, and most consider them to be as close (or closer) than their parents.

Naturally, they had to set up boundaries for those who live in their home. And not all of us could handle that kind of “live in” ministry. But there are many ways we open ourselves to opportunities God might use to work through us.

Pray that He shows you how to do that. 



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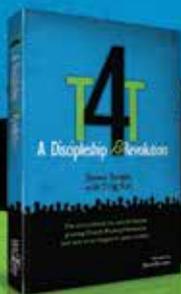
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