

MISSIONTM FRONTIERS

ISSUE 38:6 | NOV/DEC 2016

A MAGAZINE OF FRONTIER VENTURES

40 YEARS OF THE USCWM/ FRONTIER VENTURES AND THE UNREACHED PEOPLES MOVEMENT

WHAT PROGRESS HAVE WE MADE?

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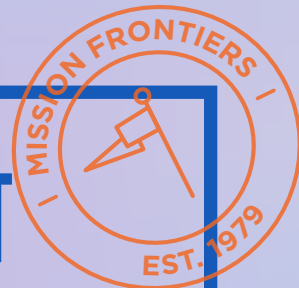
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FRONTIERS

VOL. 38, NO. 6 | NOV/DEC 2016
ISSN 0889-9436

Mission Frontiers is published six times a year.
Call (866) 406-9487 for address changes,
subscriptions.
Editorial Office: rick.wood@frontierventures.org
Advertising: advertising@missionfrontiers.org
Website: www.missionfrontiers.org
Address: 1605 E. Elizabeth St. • Pasadena, CA 91104

Rick Wood, Editor
Kristine Wood, Editorial Assistant
Garrett Inouye, Graphic Design
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Frontier Ventures is a member of
MissioNexus and EPA
(Evangelical Press Association).



THE CALL TO OBEY THE GREAT COMMISSION REMAINS BEFORE US



BY RICK WOOD
EDITOR OF MF

EDITORIAL

Wow! Forty years. So much has been accomplished and yet so much remains to be done. In this issue we pause to look back on the legacy of faithfulness of people like Ralph Winter and others who with vision and passion in their hearts for God's glory in all peoples, risked so much and worked so hard to launch the USCWM/Frontier Ventures and the unreached peoples movement. They made all the progress of the last 40 years possible. We stand on the shoulders of giants, but in many ways they were just people like us whom God chose to use because of their faithfulness and availability—and God honored their faith. As we seek to reach the unreached peoples in our day, we must believe that the God who was faithful in providing for the Winters will also be faithful in providing for us.

GREAT PROGRESS!

But where are we now? What have we accomplished in these 40 years?

See the article by Dave Datema and Dan Scribner starting on page 29. They do a great job of documenting the tremendous progress we have made. Thousands of people groups have been reached for the first time and we have a clearer picture of the remaining task than ever before. This picture will become ever clearer as we get out into these unreached peoples and see what is happening and how best to initiate a movement of disciple making and church planting in each one of them.

Tremendous efforts by Ralph Winter, Luis Bush and thousands of others on behalf of the unreached peoples led to unprecedented progress as we approached the year 2000. Datema and Scribner quote veteran researcher, Patrick Johnstone, on page 31: "The peak in the 1990s reveals that that decade saw more evangelical converts to Christ than any other in history. It may prove to be the greatest decade of harvest there will ever be." Great progress was made in the 1990s, at least in part because of a determined collaborative effort focused on "A Church for Every People and the Gospel for Every Person by the Year 2000." This was the motto of the AD2000 and Beyond Movement

in which Frontier Ventures and this publication were pleased to be active participants. The AD 2000 and Beyond Movement gave birth to multiple networks ranging from the country or regional level to the global level—most focused on reaching the unreached peoples. The Finishing the Task network featured on page 36 is just one of these networks that continue to focus the Church's attention on the unengaged and unreached peoples.

Over the last 40 years the brightest spot in mission mobilization on behalf of the unreached peoples has been the Perspectives course. Birthed in the summer of 1974, it has now grown to be a powerful force in casting vision for God's glory in all peoples. It will engage over 8,700 students in 248 classes around the country just this year. There are now existing or potential Perspectives Study Programs in **46 countries**. The Perspectives curriculum has now been translated into seven languages with two more in progress. Thus far nearly 150,000 students have taken the course in the U.S. and 60,000 more overseas. With the U.S. course attendance growing at around 6% each year, it appears that the vision for reaching the unreached will continue to grow with it. See the article starting

on page 18 for the amazing story of the Perspectives movement.

BUT WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

Datema and Scribner also point out in their article that an ominous trend has developed since the year 2000. The tremendous advances made during the 1990s have begun to regress. The number of workers on the field has actually decreased by 10,000 over the last 16 years. Datema and Scribner speculate as to the cause for this regression, but one thing is clear: *If we are to regain the lost momentum of the 1990s and reach the unreached peoples within our lifetimes, a major new commitment by the global church will be required.* Hundreds of thousands of new workers will be needed and the overall church must make obedience to the Great Commission its highest priority. For this to happen, a revolutionary change in our understanding of who we are in Christ must occur.

WHAT IS OUR IDENTITY?

What is our identity in Christ? Is it only as sinners saved by the grace of God, who are looking for Jesus to bless our lives here and in the life to come? Or rather, is our identity also tied to the fact that Jesus has given us a mission that all of us have been called to participate in? When was the last time you heard a sermon at your church on the Great Commission, Matt. 28:18-20, where every Jesus follower, including you and me, is called to live on mission with God to be a disciple maker and to do so in all nations? I came to understand my responsibility to obey the Great Commission by attending Urbana 79, not because a pastor taught it to me. These were Jesus' last words of instruction to us before His ascension, and He expects

us to obey them (see John 14:21). The Great Commission passage, describes our identity as followers of Jesus. It describes the mission we have all been given of making disciples, baptizing, and teaching these new disciples from all nations to obey all that Jesus has commanded. We are a called-out people to whom the King of Kings has assigned a mission.


But how many believers in our Evangelical churches see themselves this way and are living intentionally and strategically to accomplish this mission? It is very hard to imagine the Church making great progress going forward in bringing the gospel to every tribe and tongue if our pastors do not regularly teach the Great Commission and the average believer does not see themselves as bearers of this mission. In large part what the average believer has received is a private gospel of personal salvation and self improvement, with little focus on those who are lost without Christ—whether they be friends and relatives, or those of other cultures and languages. This is why the global church struggles to make progress in world evangelization; too few believers are living out the mission that Jesus has given to them. They are depending on the professional pastors and missionaries to do the job for them.

RECOVERING THE BIBLICAL MODEL

In order to succeed at reaching the unreached, we must also do ministry the way that Jesus intended. Biologically, the human race survives and grows by way of parents giving birth to children and then raising them to maturity. Likewise, God has designed the Church to grow organically and exponentially by means of well-equipped disciples

passing on their faith to others who are also well-trained to make disciples generation after generation. This is the model that Jesus taught and the one which the apostle Paul used until “there was no place left” for him to work. It is the biblical model of ministry that the Church must employ if we are to have any hope of reaching the unreached peoples and providing access to the gospel to every person. If we continue to have 1 out of 100 or 1000 believers (i.e. pastors and missionaries) be the only ones actively involved in ministry, then we will not have the equipped manpower we will need to succeed.

CAN WE REACH THE UNREACHED?

When Ralph and Roberta Winter founded the U.S. Center for World Mission, now Frontier Ventures, in November of 1976, they had no idea whether they would actually succeed in purchasing a \$15 million dollar college campus in Pasadena, California and launch a movement on behalf of the unreached peoples. As the article, “Three Miracle Years,” on page 11 demonstrates, they often came very close to losing it all. They just knew they had to do whatever they could to raise the Church's awareness of the unreached peoples. If, like the Winters, we each commit ourselves to obeying the call of Jesus to make disciples of all nations, and do so using the model of ministry Jesus gave us, trusting God for the results, then we cannot fail. 

CONTACT

Rick Wood

rick.wood@frontierventures.org

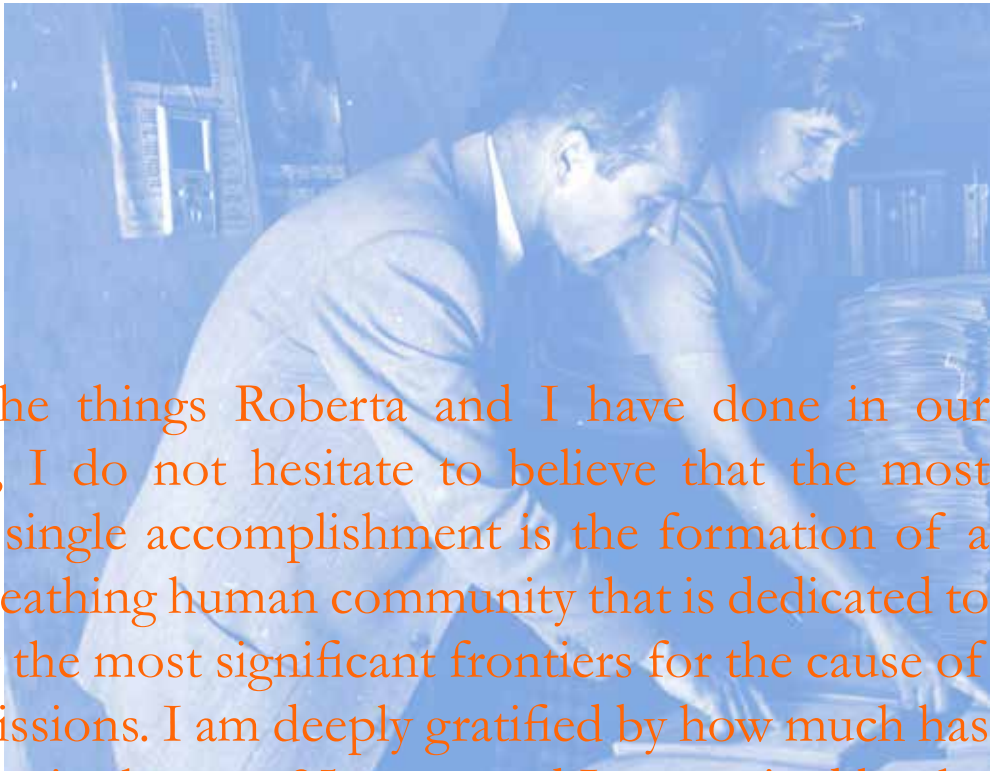
FOR GOD'S GLORY IN ALL PEOPLES



FEATURE ARTICLE

**CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF THE U.S. CENTER FOR
WORLD MISSION/FRONTIER VENTURES AND THE
UNREACHED PEOPLES MOVEMENT**

This article adapted from the 25th USCWM anniversary booklet published in 2001



Of all the things Roberta and I have done in our lifetimes, I do not hesitate to believe that the most valuable single accomplishment is the formation of a living, breathing human community that is dedicated to pursuing the most significant frontiers for the cause of global missions. I am deeply gratified by how much has been done in the past 25 years, and I am excited by the present strength of our organization. But I am most impressed by the big tasks in our future, which may easily eclipse all of our past.

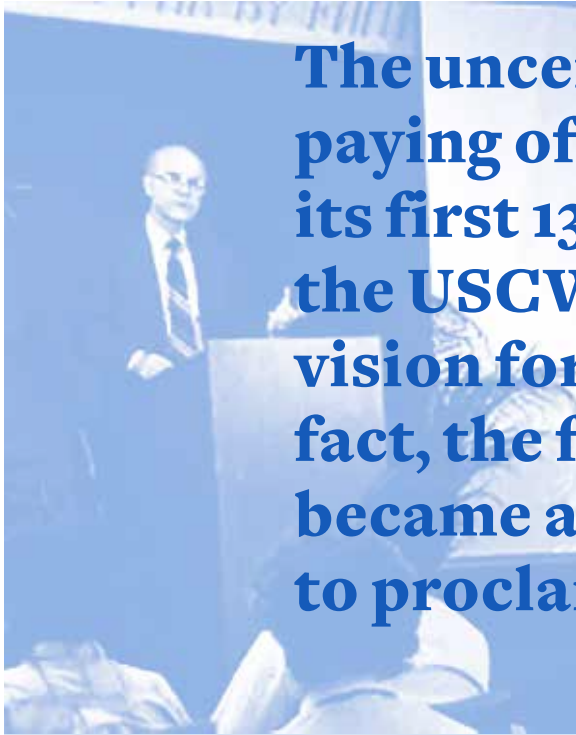
- Ralph D. Winter, at the 25th Anniversary of the USCWM

There are turning points in history where certain people and events dramatically alter the direction of human history and the destiny of millions. Ralph Winter and the founding of the U.S Center for World Mission (now Frontier Ventures) played a major role in the launching of the movement to reach the unreached peoples. This movement has now impacted thousands of people groups and altered the eternal destiny of untold millions of precious human souls.

Dr. Ralph Winter would be the first to tell you that people like Cameron Townsend and Dr. Donald McGavran were the real instigators of this new era to reach the unreached peoples. But few mission scholars today would deny the impact that Ralph Winter had in bringing the plight of the “hidden” or “unreached” peoples to the forefront of the evangelical missions agenda and forever changing the focus of modern missions.

THE LAUSANNE CONGRESS ON WORLD EVANGELIZATION 1974

In July 1974, Ralph Winter gave a plenary address to the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization. This address literally changed history. His address to this congress can be read today in the 4th Edition of the Perspectives Reader under the title of The New Macedonia. In his address he pointed out that the vast majority of mission efforts at that time were being spent on assisting the established church within reached people groups. Little attention was being paid to the dire need of an estimated 17,000 unreached people groups that were “hidden” from the Church and its mission efforts. This address became the starting shot that launched the race to reach the unreached peoples.



The uncertainty and pressure of paying off the property during its first 13 years didn't deter the USCWM from spreading vision for the unreached. In fact, the financial struggles became a soap box from which to proclaim the vision.

THE FOUNDING OF THE U.S. CENTER FOR WORLD MISSION

Through teaching other missionaries, Ralph and Roberta Winter gained an unprecedented overview of the remaining missionary task. They discovered that only half of the world's population could hear the gospel from believers in their own culture and language. To make matters worse, they found there was no major mission effort focusing on these unreached peoples. New missionaries were almost exclusively following in the footsteps of earlier missionaries to already established fields.

Through these discoveries, God led the Winters to take a radical step, leaving a secure tenured position at Fuller Theological Seminary to call attention to the plight of the unreached peoples.

In November 1976, Ralph and Roberta Winter founded the USCWM with no staff but their secretary, and no resources but God and their reputations.

Through God's faithfulness, the USCWM has grown to over 100 members. Its 35-acre headquarters in Pasadena is complemented by 25 regional staff in North America and a dozen in other parts of the world. About 50 organizations share facilities with the USCWM in Pasadena.

THE CAMPUS IS PURCHASED

The uncertainty and pressure of paying off the property during its first 13 years didn't deter the USCWM from spreading a vision for the unreached. In fact, the financial struggles became a soap box from which to proclaim the vision. As the USCWM focused on building a movement to reach the unreached, God honored their faith and brought thousands of donors, large and small, to meet the USCWM's financial obligations. See the article, Three Miracle Years, on page 11.

In the 1980s, many organizations and individuals joined the movement promoted by the newly-birthed USCWM. Mission agencies and denominational mission efforts focused on unreached peoples. The USCWM and other mobilization and research organizations highlighted the essential role of behind-the-scenes workers. Local church members continued to pray and support mission work, and workers and intercessors embraced the vision to break Satan's power over the still unreached people groups.

THE MOVEMENT MATURES

The 1980 global conference of mission leaders in Edinburgh was the first to give prominence to the challenge raised at the USCWM: A Church for Every

People by the year 2000! By the late 1980s a global movement had emerged. By the mid-1990s it had become a global phenomenon. National initiatives in nearly every country of the world gave priority to "A Church for Every People." The foundation was laid for the final thrust to disciple all nations.

As the challenge of unreached peoples continues to spread increasingly on its own, the USCWM/Frontier Ventures devotes more attention to addressing other important obstacles and to gathering and refining insights about how to more effectively establish viable, culturally-relevant church movements among the rapidly diminishing number of unreached peoples.

MOMENTUM BUILDS

God has accomplished far more than could have been achieved through the efforts of the USCWM alone. We want to gratefully acknowledge some of the many other ministries, both past and present, that God has raised as part of this movement.

AD2000 & Beyond Movement - Act Beyond - Adopt-A-People - Advancing Churches in Mission Commitment - African American Mobilization

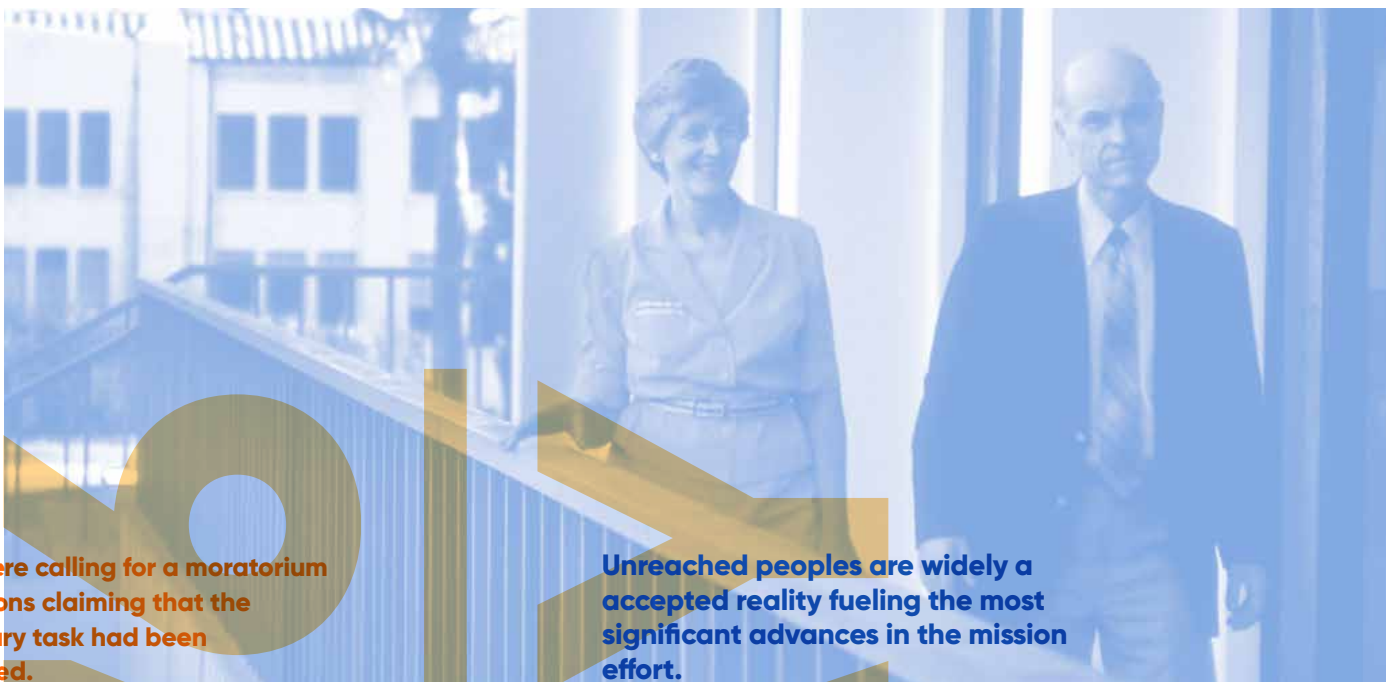
Division - All Nations Literacy - Anglican Frontier Missions - Antioch Network - Episcopal Church Missionary Community - Fellowship of Artists for Cultural Evangelism - Finishing the Task - Frontiers - Global Evangelization Movement - Global Mapping Intl. - Global Opportunities - International Journal of Frontier Missions - International Society for Frontier Missiology - Joshua Project - Korean American Center for World Mission - Latin American Mobilization Division - Lutheran Society for Missiology - Network for Strategic Missions - No Place Left Coalition - Paraclete - Pioneers - Presbyterian Center for Mission Studies - Presbyterian Order for World Evangelization - South African Missiological Society - Teaching English as a Second Language - YWAM Strategic Frontiers - Zwemer Institute for Muslim Studies.

Along the way, the faith and vision of many prayer and financial supporters have provided the USCWM /Frontier Ventures with the essential resources to play a key role in this burgeoning new perspective. The USCWM/Frontier Ventures staff, and the unreached peoples, are deeply indebted to all who have become involved. Your sensitivity and obedience to the prompting of God's Spirit are profoundly appreciated!

THE VENTURE CENTER



Purchased in 1977 by Ralph and Roberta Winter and The U.S. Center for World Mission now Frontier Ventures



Many were calling for a moratorium on missions claiming that the missionary task had been completed.

Unreached peoples are widely a accepted reality fueling the most significant advances in the mission effort.

Missions typically focused on saving individuals.

Missionaries focus on establishing multiplying fellowships.

Mission strategies once centered on political nations (countries).

Missions recognize the strategic significance of biblical nations (people groups).

The mission effort often tried to motivate people by emphasizing the hopeless plight of two billion lost souls.

Missions look with anticipation toward God receiving glory among the last 7,000 unreached people groups.

Missionaries often assumed that the church around the world should look like the church in North America.

We increasingly recognize that the church must fit the culture of the people group where it is being established.

Of approximately 24,000 distinct people groups worldwide, an estimated 17,000 were not even on anyone's radar nearly 2,000 years after Christ.

Of the 7,000 or so groups remaining unreached, almost all have been selected for current or future outreach by one or more mission agency. And for each of these 7,000, there are at least 650 times as many local congregations.

A DEDICATION IN MEMORY OF ROBERTA H. WINTER


1930-2001

After a courageous and defiant struggle against multiple myeloma (a rare form of bone cancer), Roberta Winter passed away on Sunday, October 28, 2001.

Along with her husband Ralph Winter, Roberta was co-founder of the U.S. Center for World Mission. Ralph recalls her as a "beautiful, intelligent, vivacious, loyal, affectionate, and utterly honest person, who was always ready for anything.

Roberta filled many roles at the USCWM, but the two that endeared her to the most people worldwide were her celebration of the historical expansion of God's kingdom (teaching Perspectives classes), and her book,

I Will Do a New Thing, the story of the USCWM. Even today, people reading her book for the first time feel like they have come to know her personally.

The Roberta Winter Institute has been established in her honor with the purpose of raising awareness of disease as a major hindrance to the global understanding of God's glory. Disease kills prematurely and God, not Satan, is often blamed for disease. But with major advances in medical research there is hope as believers unite to work toward eradicating the very pathogens of disease for the glory of God. 

THREE MIRACLE YEARS

AUGUST 1976 TO AUGUST 1979

This article is reprinted from the July-August 1979 issue of Mission Frontiers entitled: "Founder's Reference Issue."

BY **ROBERTA H. WINTER**

Three years ago three people stood on an empty campus, wondering if perhaps, for His glory, God would do a miracle in this place. The cause was stupendous—3.5 billion people still to meet Christ. Could those three trust God for so much? This is the story of the U.S. Center for World Mission and those three miraculous years.

AUGUST 1976

Campus for Sale

We had no money, no following, nor even a well-known name. Why should the college board even listen to us when we asked them to hold this \$8 million campus for us? Other groups had tried to buy it over the 3 years it had been vacant. Now a well-heeled cult desperately wanted it. But God held it for us. This was the first miracle.

JANUARY 1977

Angels Unawares

"Only \$10,000? That's easy," and this perfect stranger pulled out his checkbook and started to write.

We had just been jolted into realizing

we had to ask for a legal option without which we could not be assured we could buy the campus. This piece of paper should have cost us at least \$150,000 (1% of the expected down payment), yet a friend, knowing our financial straits, suggested we offer \$15,000 and see what God would do. He gave us the first \$5000 himself.

That was the beginning of another miracle.

APRIL 1977

The Cult or the Center?

It had felt like a see-saw, back and forth for 3 months. The college board voted to give us the option; then the cult offered \$75,000 for one. The board voted in our favor again, so

the cult offered \$1.5 million as an immediate down payment. It was a test of faith for both the college and us. We still had no money. This college desperately needed money! How we rejoiced at God's grace when on April 15th we received the option in the mail.

JUNE 1977

Who Will Help?

"How can we ever do it?" Ralph groaned. "There's only 3 of us full time. Volunteer, part-time help is great, but we've got to have people we can lean on."

God must have heard his cry, because in late May staff started pouring in. Some moved 3000 miles across country. Some gave up well-paying jobs. We had no money to pay them even a penny—yet they came! A tremendous provision from God's hands.

JULY 1977

Before You Call

"Will \$50,000 help?"

We gasped. Would it! Speaking was a newly converted, rich young man whom our daughter and her husband had met at a retreat.

A few days later we received another call: "Our church will raise \$100,000." We knew that church was quite small, and yet God had touched their hearts and would surely bless them.

SEPTEMBER 1977

Pat Boone Concert

"Pat has only one night in September that he will be in town. That is the 22nd." "And that is the

only night we can get the Civic Auditorium," Mercedes replied.

That concert was full of miracles. First: Pat Boone is tremendously gifted and so vitally, genuinely interested in missions. He was spelled off by Nancy DeMoss, a beautiful young concert pianist whose heart and soul were in missions. We "just happened" to have someone on staff who was experienced in putting together crusades and concerts, someone else with experience in putting together slide shows, someone else who just happened to know all sorts of professionals who "owed" her a favor and volunteered to help, etc. It was God, obviously, who put it all together.

What a miracle night of rejoicing!

OCTOBER 1977

God's Provision

"If you need any extra money, I can loan you some." Three sources of funds called with the same offer. We casually noted their names, but trusted that the Lord would bring in all \$850,000 needed in outright gifts. But on October 1st we still lacked \$300,000. We could see that it was a miracle when the college extended our deadline one week. But it took a lot of prayer and fasting to realize that we should not turn away these loans, these expressions of faith. They also were a miracle, God's own provision for our need.

NOVEMBER 1977

Foundation Blessings

"Dr. Winter, I'd like you to come talk to the head of our

foundation. It may be we can get you some more money." That was another miracle, following closely on the testing of our faith. And what rejoicing when a check for \$200,500 arrived in the mail,

SPRING 1978

A Book, A Chart, A Film

Six hundred and fifty thousand! And due in just another few months. We had worked hard- since November, yet all our efforts at fund raising had failed, spectacularly! Did God have any other plan?

To top it off, we now felt we should ask only for a one-time gift of \$15.95. It was God's business if some felt constrained to move the decimal point, as one lady did and gave \$1,595.00, or give a \$200,000 piece of property, as another did. We would accept all with thanksgiving.

God also gave us three tools: a film *Penetrating the Last Frontiers* entirely narrated by Pat Boone, a wall chart of the same theme, and my book *Once More Around Jericho* God had His hand on these in a very special way that summer.

SEPTEMBER 1978

Last Minute Miracles

"How much do you lack?" Every day for a week this farmer from the plains of Canada had called with the same question. Every day the number had been less, but it was still over \$100,000 two days before our deadline.

"What can I do?" was his question. He sent us \$16,000. Four thousand more mysteriously appeared on our desk. And again

from all over the money came, much of it in \$15.95 amounts, but also much in far larger sums. Again God made it clear that it was not our great skill which had brought it in. Only His grace.

DECEMBER 1978

Graduated Grace

"So soon? We've just begun to recover from that last deadline. And now this?"

It was the first of our quarterly payments, set at \$460,000. And we had on hand only \$50,000. How could God pull us out of this one?

But He did. The college decided to graduate the amounts so that at the beginning it would not be so tough. We had to pay \$50,000 in December and again in March with another \$100,000 due in June and \$360,000 in September 1979.

That was a miracle--another tight one. But now we could breathe.

FEBRUARY 1979

"A Test of Faith"

"It is too much for us," many of our staff said. "We just can't do it." No, our next campus payment was not yet due, but the first part of the down payment on the off-campus houses was. We needed those houses for three reasons: for staff and married students, to prevent the area from becoming a slum, and for endowment from rentals. The price was excellent, but at the Jordan, the courage of many now failed.

Money we had been promised did not materialize, and two days before the due date, we suddenly

realized we were in a severe crisis. Again, various friends, learning of our need, came to our aid with loans, \$45,000 of which had to be returned in just two weeks. But God knew that! Just three days after paying the money, a check for \$50,000 came from the estate of a woman in the East.

JUNE 1979

More Testing

Our most severe test of all. We couldn't make both the second half of the housing down payment and our quarterly \$100,000 payment on the campus. But, praise the Lord, the college board agreed to extend the option on the houses for another year, releasing the money already paid for us to use on our quarterly campus payment. We were delighted at the relatively small additional cost that extension would involve and thanked the Lord that all was not lost.

JULY 1979

Do It Again, Lord!

It has been almost three years since we stepped out in faith—three years of severe testing and tremendous miracles. We have come through times of despair, doubt, even unbelief. And God has chastened us, but brought us through, always. As we look back over the miracles, we wonder, "How can we doubt Him?" Yet, like Peter, we find ourselves often looking down at those waves dashing against our bare feet, and we cry, "Lord, save us." And like Peter, we look up into the face of Him who is all sufficient, and take courage.

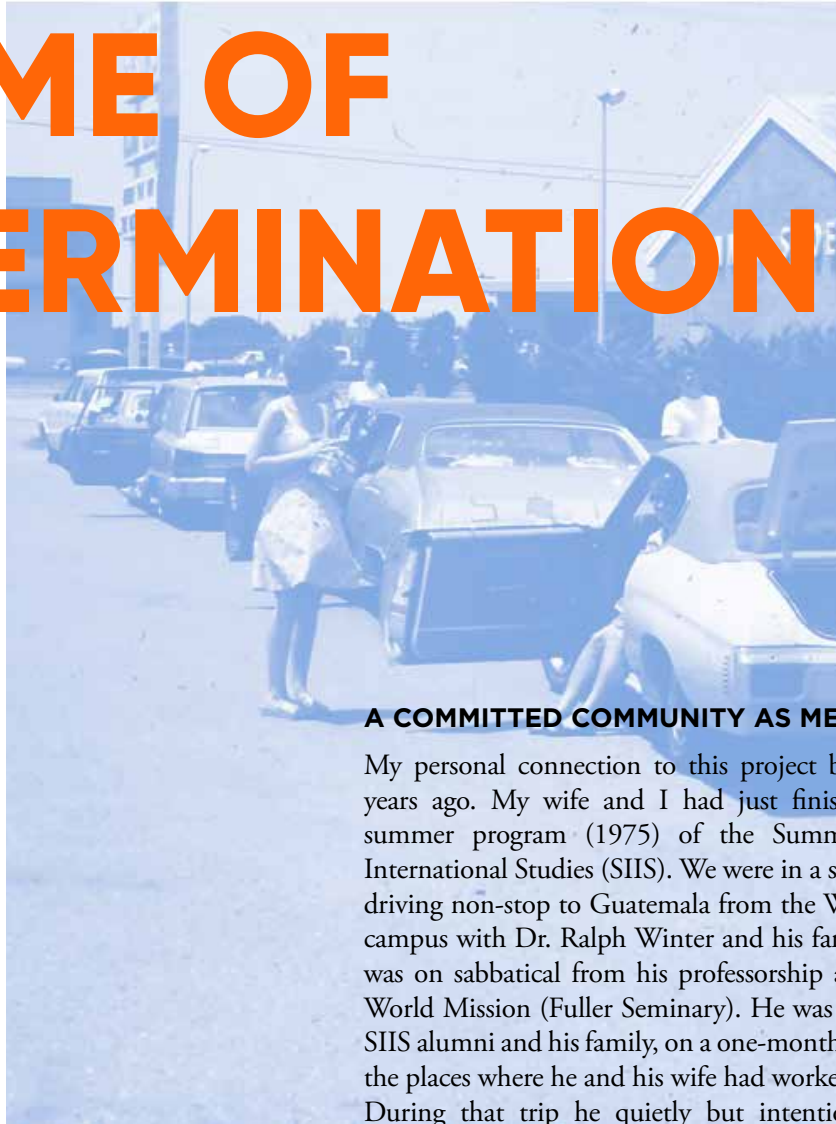
That's where we are as we face our last really large quarterly payment--\$660,000 on Sept. 15th. It is \$300,000 more than we had anticipated because property given us last year still has not sold. There will be other quarterly payments after this one—\$175,000 every three months. And we will need to trust God for those also. But September 15th is our watershed.

Is God able? Yes, He is! Our job is to keep our eyes fixed on Him and go forward, in faith. This is a continued story. Each time we give some solid information about things that are happening in regard to a new era of a new kind of missions. Then we also tell where we stand as an organization because this organization, in spite of its spacious campus, is hanging by a thread. (Our entire future will actually be decided in the next few weeks, and perhaps because of what you yourself actually do or don't do!)

Editor's Note: How did the story end? There were many more twists and turns over the next 10 years culminating with the burning of the mortgage in January 1989. You can read the cliff-hanging account of this amazing saga in the book, *I Will Do a New Thing*, by Roberta Winter.

A SIGNIFICANT TIME OF GERMINATION

FEATURE ARTICLE



A COMMITTED COMMUNITY AS MEANS

My personal connection to this project began some 40+ years ago. My wife and I had just finished the second summer program (1975) of the Summer Institute of International Studies (SIIS). We were in a seven-car caravan driving non-stop to Guatemala from the Wheaton College campus with Dr. Ralph Winter and his family. Dr. Winter was on sabbatical from his professorship at the School of World Mission (Fuller Seminary). He was taking 22 of us, SIIS alumni and his family, on a one-month exposure trip to the places where he and his wife had worked in Guatemala. During that trip he quietly but intentionally described his dream of establishing a monastic type committed community that would commit to doing what was

BY **BRUCE GRAHAM**

bruce.graham@frontierventures.org

www.frontierventures.org

Bruce worked closely with Dr. Winter and the founding team of people establishing the US Center for World Mission and William Carey International University during its first 15 years. He and his wife Christy served in India with indigenous mission movements, particularly the Friends Missionary Prayer Band, ImmergelN (training network) in the area of training of Indian missionaries and missionary candidates, both in South India and in North India. He has earned an M.S. in Aeronautical Engineering from MIT, and an M.A. in Cross-Cultural Studies from Fuller's School of World Mission. He was awarded an honorary Doctorate in International Development from William Carey International University. Bruce now serves in the Office of the General Director at Frontier Ventures.

strategically needed to see the gospel cross over into major blocs of unreached humanity—people groups beyond the reach of existing evangelistic outreach. The facts regarding this task were increasingly constraining him. I began to ponder the idea and grew deeply moved by it.

The director of SIIS that year was Charlie Mellis who had just finished writing a book based on his studies under Dr. Winter at the School of World Mission. It was entitled *Committed Communities: Fresh streams for World Mission*.¹ In the forward, Dr. Winter wrote, “This is no rootless scheme! In brief: a rich, rewarding, truly exciting and relevant book. Wait till this gets out, sinks in. We’ll all see the results. You can hear the ticking as you read.” The SIIS students read the book with great interest and talked often about it that summer. It captured the imagination of our generation that was hungry for a new and compelling expression of world mission. The type of structures Mellis described and the historical examples were captivating to the younger generation of that day.

Another significant stimulus to us during that time was a booklet written by David Howard, Director of InterVarsity’s Mission Department and organizer of the 1973 Urbana convention, entitled *Student Power in World Missions*.² The Urbana convention in 1973 had evidenced a significant increase in college students’ willingness to give their lives for the sake of the gospel among the nations. In the booklet he outlined biblical foundations for mission and the historical record of how young people have been prime movers for world missions in previous generations. We were enthralled by the possibility of another new student volunteer movement for world mission arising across the country in line with the vision of previous student generations. Something significant was happening all across the country among young people in the early 1970s. Something new was about to emerge.

FACTS THAT IGNITED THE HEART OF RALPH WINTER

A year earlier, during the summer of 1974, the germination of a new awareness that 84% of the non-Christian world was beyond the reach of normal evangelistic outreach was constraining Dr. Winter. These facts especially took root in his heart as he wrote a paper to present at the Lausanne

International Congress on World Evangelization that summer. He titled his paper, “The Highest Priority: Cross-Cultural Evangelism.”³ He was still working on this paper as he stopped by Wheaton College (on his way to Lausanne) where the first Summer Institute of International Studies was in session. Dr. Winter was the architect and engineer of SIIS. He had created it in response to the increased student commitments at the 1973 Urbana convention. He had recruited my wife and me to take that first course the summer of 1974.

Since I had studied Aeronautical Engineering, he asked me to help him draw some diagrams that would help present the facts he wanted to present in his paper. Using a protractor and calculator (engineers had recently graduated from slide rules, but no handheld computers in those days!) we drew boxes and circles that would portray the facts that would constrain our lives forever—what later became known as our pie chart.

A TIME TO RISK

The Guatemala trip of 1975 came to an end. By then the idea of establishing a committed community to tackle the challenge of getting the gospel planted among the 84% had really taken root in us. Dr. Winter’s sabbatical was about over. We and other SIIS alumni were ready to mobilize a new student volunteer movement for the sake of the unreached (or hidden peoples as we called them then). The School of World Mission at Fuller Seminary had just created an MA in Cross-Cultural Studies program for those without field experience. Because of this new option and the inspiration and vision in our own hearts resulting from two summers of study in SIIS, we moved from Boston to Pasadena, CA and I enrolled in the School of World Mission. I was Dr. Winter’s student again. We became mission mobilizers in our free time and formed a small community of like-minded graduate students from Cal Tech, myself from MIT, UCLA and others.

Meanwhile, the faculty of the School of World Mission was dreaming about forming a “lab” or annex to the School of World Mission to put legs on many of the ideas and challenges the mission movement was facing at the time. At the same time, the Winters noticed that the Nazarenes were leaving their college campus in Pasadena, putting it up for sale, and moving to a new campus in San Diego.

Dr. Winter's own heart, following his sabbatical, had reached a point of conviction that he was willing to take a risk—his reputation, his faculty position at Fuller, and a steady income—and step out to form a community that would call attention to these large blocs of unreached peoples beyond the reach of normal evangelistic outreach. Could that Nazarene campus be a place where such a community could be established as a Center for World Mission for the sake of these unreached peoples? Something was about to be born.

A VENTURE OF FAITH

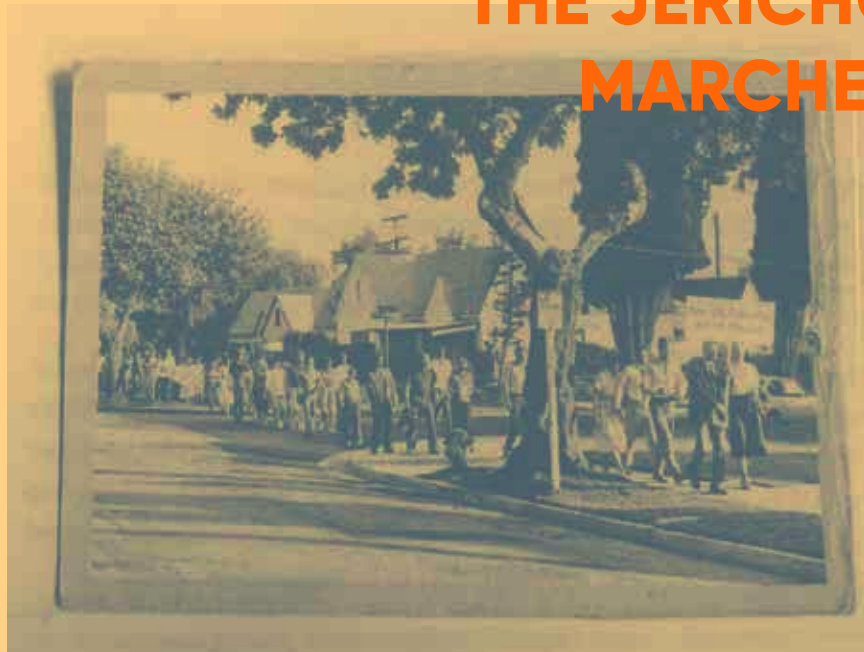
The divinely orchestrated drama began. Dr. Winter was willing to take the risk. A few of us young people were willing to do anything. An Eastern religious cult called Summit Lighthouse⁴ was already renting part of the campus with the intent to buy. This began part of the spiritual drama that, looking back, had prophetic overtones of what it would take to see the gospel of the kingdom break through among these major blocs of unreached peoples. Summit Lighthouse brought spiritual forces of darkness on the campus through mantras, large meetings where they sought the incantations from “ascended masters” like

Confucius, Buddha, Melchizedek, Archangel Michael, and Saint Germain. Mantras were chanted, inviting the “IAM Presence,” into the essence of one's true self. The spiritual encounter was real. A battle regarding who would be the owners of the property and for what purpose began. Would it become a collaboration space, stewarded by a committed community, where the focus was on the unreached peoples? Or would it be a base of operation for a Hindu/New Age rooted cult?

In earlier years the campus was an important

place for education and revival for the Nazarene denomination. The story⁵ of how the Nazarenes believed God for provision during the Second World War (when wood and steel were barely available) to build what is now the John R. Mott auditorium, is an amazing story of dependence on God for provision in answer to prayer. And now the struggle between the purposes of Summit Lighthouse and the US Center for World Mission fueled fresh concern to pray and mobilize Christians all across the country to purchase the campus. Could anyone have imagined a more divinely orchestrated scenario of how to launch a prayer and mobilization effort? We were believing God for a million people to each give \$15 to pay for a 15 million dollar campus. Fund-raisers

THE JERICHO MARCHES



turned their heads at this venture of faith!

JERICHO MARCHES

Momentum began to build. To mobilize prayer and awareness for the land, the idea of doing Jericho Marches arose. “We should march and pray around the campus for seven Sundays. On the seventh Sunday let's marched around seven times! On the seventh time, let's blow trumpets! The idea was embarrassingly exciting. We prayed in silence the first six weeks, and then on the seventh week we

The divinely orchestrated drama began. Dr. Winter was willing to take the risk. A few of us young people were willing to do anything.

got out the trumpets, sang and gave a loud shout! Word began to spread. Churches were mobilized. Even the Pasadena Star News published an article on our marches. Week by week, more people joined the marches. By the seventh week, even Dr. Donald McGavran, the founder of Fuller School of World Mission and a senior missionary statesman, joined us on the seventh and final walk around the campus. As we rounded the last corner, we began to sing, “There’s Just Something About That Name.”

So the mobilization continued. We were given a single room on the campus, what is presently our morning meeting, “Heimbach Room.” We only had typewriters. Dr. Winter secured the interest of a number of mission leaders ready to put their names behind the effort. A letterhead was created for the Center for World Mission (later changed to US Center for World Mission). A board was formed. Those willing to put their names behind this project became an advisory board. We and a handful of others, mostly alumni of SIIS, were willing to lick stamps, stuff envelopes, and be hands and legs to many of the mobilization efforts needed. We began mobilization efforts of all kinds—for churches, for students, for laymen.

Responses began to come in. An option to buy was secured, and a down payment was finally made on October 1, 1977. The Nazarene board of Point Loma voted to sell the campus to us. Not long after this we began the William Carey International University. The following January, 1978, the next

Summer Institute of International Studies, renamed the Institute of International Studies, was held on our campus. This institute eventually became what is now known as the Perspectives Study Program. William Carey Library, the publishing company owned by the Winter family, relocated on the campus. Research Institutes focusing on Muslim, Hindu, Tribal, and Chinese people groups began.

Looking back some 40 years later, God orchestrated a significant effort for the unreached peoples of the world. Churches were impacted, mission agencies and students were envisioned with a new focus on unreached peoples. Many of the people groups that were unreached in 1974 are now reached and evangelizing others. What looms large now is not so much getting to these people but how this gospel will be known and understood within these large blocs of humanity. Like yeast permeating a loaf of dough, may we find His way of seeing His kingdom in the Person of Jesus take root among these peoples.



¹ Charlie Mellis, *Committed Communities, Fresh Streams for World Mission*, 1976.

² David Howard, *Student Power in World Missions*, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, 1970.

³ J.D. Douglas, editor: *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, International Congress on World Evangelization Lausanne Switzerland, (papers and responses), 1975. Pg 213-258.

⁴ Summit Lighthouse, <http://www.summitlighthouse.org>

⁵ A.E. Sanner, D.D., *The Key Works, Story of the Nazarene Memorial Auditorium*, digital copy.

REVIVING THE CHURCH'S VISION FOR THE FINAL FRONTIERS

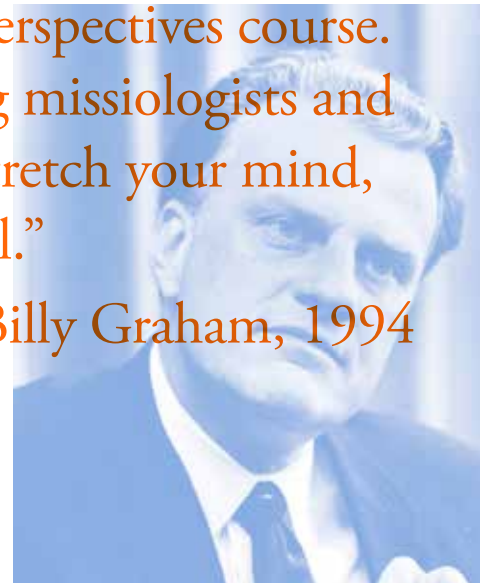
A Look Back at How the Perspectives Course Got Started

FEATURE ARTICLE

Editor's Note: Over the last 42 years the Perspectives course has touched the lives of thousands and helped fuel the outreach of the global Church to the unreached peoples. It has become a powerful force in the evangelical world with over 8,700 students taking the course each year in 248 separate locations. This article, adapted from the Jan.-Feb. 1994 issue of Mission Frontiers, tells the fascinating tale of how it all began.

“In a way that I never imagined, God has called me to preach the Gospel on every continent and many countries around the world. But I know that the on-going work of evangelizing the world, especially the unreached people groups where there are presently no church or witness, is a primary responsibility of Christians everywhere. There is no volume of which I know that will inform, inspire, and motivate Christians for world evangelization like the Perspectives course. It is written by some of the leading missiologists and missionaries of the world. It will stretch your mind, warm your heart, and stir your will.”

— Billy Graham, 1994



INTRODUCTION:

By 1994 over 22,000 people had completed the Perspectives Study Program. Today, over 148,000 have and as a result have impacted churches and unreached peoples worldwide. The nature of the course is the primary reason for its hard-hitting effect. Perspectives is not simply an academic course designed to help mission-minded folks learn more about missions.

Rather, this course has helped open the eyes of people from all walks of life to what God is doing globally.

This program, which examines four major concerns or perspectives is brought to life by the speakers. Each class offers new insight with a different top missions leader and thinker. These teachers offer insight on their area of expertise as well as practical resources for further exploration. The course is divided into

EDITED BY **RICK WOOD**

rick.wood@frontierventures.org

www.perspectives.org

Rick Wood has served with Frontier Ventures for 26 years. He served as Managing Editor for *Mission Frontiers* under Ralph Winter for 14 years before taking over as Editor in Chief in 2008.

The next months were busy ones for Winter and his two college-age daughters, who before 8 a.m. each morning called Urbana commitment signers, inviting them to this new missions course.

four sections: the Biblical, Historical, Cultural and Strategic perspectives on missions.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN —

By now the question arises of just how Perspectives got its start. To answer that requires us to go back a few years...

As a student, Ralph Winter had attended the first “Urbana” student mission convention (held at Toronto that first year) in 1946. Increasing annually from 1,000 that first year to over 10,000 students in

attendance in 1970, student interest in missions was quickened. But during the 1960s their commitment to missions sagged.

Suddenly, however, in 1973 that trend seemed to reverse when 28% of the students attending the Urbana Student Missionary Convention committed themselves to be missionaries if God so desired—a big leap from 8% at the previous convention in 1970!

Three weeks after this sudden reversal, in January of 1974, Winter, then a professor at the Fuller School of World Mission, became concerned that when these

RALPH WINTER'S UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION TO THE PERSPECTIVES COURSE

BY STEVE HAWTHORNE

Ralph Winter has significantly shaped the priorities and practice of many mission agencies and even more local churches around the world. One of the well-known avenues of influence for Winter's ideas has been the Perspectives course.

Everyone is Called: Advanced Missiology Informing Strategic Obedience

What is often overlooked about Ralph Winter's invention of the Perspectives

course is the audience that he was aiming for. Winter was determined to make advanced missiology available and meaningful to university students and lay people. By the time he first experimented with the course, he had already re-shaped field approaches to education for ordained pastors with what came to be known as Theological Education by Extension (TEE). Once the initial content of the Perspectives course had taken shape, Winter insisted that it be refined and

simplified in order to multiply as an extension course. He did this in order to influence the life purpose, not of ordained clergy, but of university students and lay people.

It may seem incredible to us now, but during the sixties and seventies, missions was commonly presented as an all-or-nothing issue for evangelicals. The mission decision seemed simple: Either God was calling me to a high calling of being a missionary overseas,

zealous young people returned to their campuses and homes, they would lose their commitment for lack of any further understanding of missions. He also wondered if this shift might indicate the beginnings of another student missions movement. Would it die because the Church had no way to educate and mobilize these young people?

He talked to InterVarsity—which had never released the names and addresses of those signing the commitment cards. He met with a group of Wheaton mission executives, along with David Howard who represented IVCF, then decided to go ahead with a “Summer Institute of International Studies” the coming summer.

The next months were busy ones for Winter and his two college-age daughters, who before 8 a.m. each morning called Urbana commitment signers, inviting them to this new missions course. Thirty came for nine weeks to Wheaton College in Wheaton, IL. The course was not easy; indeed they received 4 units of credit, transferable even to secular schools. Thus, what is now called the Perspectives Study Program was born.

Because it was too late to get any professor for the entire summer, Dr. Winter asked for one week

commitments from a number of professors. This pattern of exposing the students to many experienced missionary professors and executives proved to be so effective that it has been followed since then, with each professor presently teaching only one three-hour session. Besides what they learned in class, the daily contact through prayer, over-the-meal-table conversations with well-known missionary greats literally changed the lives of those students.

The second summer, many of those early alumni returned, bringing others with them. Two brought ten each, and a couple from Boston led a caravan of 20 students. Within a few years, with the cooperation of Campus Crusade, Navigators and InterVarsity, the enrollment jumped to 250! Then, problems arose because one or two on the board thought it might be best to not grow so quickly but rather to set up a model program of just a few students. Their influence on the board and enrollment was like water on fire. Within two years, enrollment had fallen to 50, then 25. By 1977, there were only 15 students registered, and it appeared that the class would have to be cancelled due to costs. For several years, Dr. Winter had deliberately kept hands off. Now that the course seemed on the verge of expiring, he offered to once again shoulder the

or God was calling me merely to support missionaries by giving and praying. The Perspectives course introduced the amazing notion that God was calling every Christian to live with the same level of commitment, fulfilling diverse but nonetheless critically significant roles in pursuit of one great global purpose.

Winter made advanced missiology not only available, but even necessary, if one was going to live faithfully and strategically for God's purposes. He often used this audacious statement to enlist students: “Every major decision you make will be faulty until you see the whole world as God sees it.” It had become traditional to honor missionaries for their uncommon

dedication. Winter introduced the idea that it was every bit as important to be strategically aware and historically informed as it was to have a high level of personal commitment.

God's Story is Our Mandate: Our Task as a Crucial Part of History

Another significant contribution of Winter was to frame the mission mandate as a long, unfolding story of God working with His people to fulfill His purposes on earth. For years before the course was first developed, Ralph Winter had been teaching the history of the advance of the Christian movement at Fuller's School of World Mission (SWM).

The four sections of the course (Biblical, Historical, Cultural and Strategic) were drawn from four of the five core courses of Fuller's SWM. His approach to integrating the ongoing story of mission advance was to blend insights from social sciences with the powerful theological idea that God was steadily at work to advance His mission even when His people were disobedient. The biblical portion of the course traced the story from Abraham to the present day. The sense of being in a larger drama, filled with precedents and pressing toward a culmination, has brought a sense of destiny, clarity and urgency to our task in the present hour.

FIRST SUMMER INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES IN 1974



responsibility and moved the class to the newly founded U.S. Center for World Mission (USCWM now Frontier Ventures) campus in Pasadena, CA. Once again, the IIS alumni who had joined Winter there took charge of student recruitment, and in four weeks 35 had enrolled, a sufficient number to break even. Within a few years the course began to be offered both in the spring and fall, and the name was changed to the Institute of International Studies (IIS), dropping the word "Summer." The course load was also modified to grant 3 units of transferable

college or seminary credit, as well as an audit option for those who did not want the units.

The question remained, however, of how to get this powerful program to students and others who could not afford to leave their classes or work to come to California for a semester. What about taking the class to them? By 1979, it had been taught in several places: Erskin College, U of Colo. at Boulder, etc. In 1980 Jay and Olgy Gary coordinated the first official extension course at the University of Pennsylvania.

By 1981, the outside readings for the class were gathered in book form with the help of Steve Hawthorne and others. And in 1983, workshops to train coordinators began on the Center campus. Finally, in 1986, the name IIS changed to Perspectives Study Program (PSP).

Since changing its name, the annual teaching locations for Perspectives in the U.S. have continued to expand. In 1994 there were 80. Now, in 2016, there are 248 classes, as well as a rapidly growing number in several countries around the world. Coordinators in these extension locations line up teachers and train new coordinators for other locations as well as help Perspectives alumni find ways to put their knowledge into practice.

The outstanding feature of the Coordinator workshops and Perspectives classes is that they no longer just attract students. Missions pastors, retired persons, and active lay persons now participate as well.

As larger numbers of people take the Perspectives course and then share their experience with others, the classes are seeing steady growth and the extension offices are having to expand in response.

THE GROWTH AND IMPACT OF PERSPECTIVES

Current Statistics

- Perspectives has been around for more than 40 years. (42 years in summer of 2016).
- The number of Perspectives students increases, on average, 6% each year. It is estimated that over 8,700 will take the course in 2016.
- Close to 150,000 people have taken Perspectives in the United States.
- An estimated 60,000 have taken Perspectives in other countries.
- Translation of the curriculum has been completed in seven languages, with two more in progress.
- There are now 10 countries with established national Perspectives Study Programs. There are 16 additional countries that are actively building programs and 20 others with a strong interest in starting one. **This amounts to 46 countries with active or potential Perspectives Study**


Programs. There were no such translations or programs outside the U.S. in 1994.

- The Perspectives Reader was written by more than 150 mission scholars and practitioners and is now in its 4th edition. The estimated number of copies sold is 275,000. Outside the Perspectives course, the reader is also used in many different Bible colleges and seminaries.
- This year close to 1,000 students have or will take the class online. Many of these students are from countries outside the U.S.
- It's a grass roots movement with thousands of trained volunteer coordinators in 13 regions with hundreds of active instructors.
- On an annual basis, over 1,200 volunteers serve on class teams in 250 classes throughout the country.
- Many top mission agencies that are focused on reaching unreached peoples report that large percentages of their staff are Perspectives alumni. Reports range from 20% to 80%.

THE IMPACT ON STUDENTS

Our research shows that as a result of taking Perspectives:

- 19% of our students go on to serve long term in the mission field.
- 61% of Perspective students increased their giving to mission agencies after taking the class.
- We see a 63% increase in frequent prayer for missionaries
- 27% of students increased their giving to the local church.
- 23% increased their involvement with the international community at home.
- We've identified that only about 20% of the people when they start the class feel like they have a strong understanding of the importance of living a strategic lifestyle. After taking Perspectives that number goes to 82%.

If you would like more information on the Perspectives on the World Christian Movement Course, please go to www.perspectives.org . 

Should Missionaries Save?



You might think it's a silly question. After all, everyone should save for things like emergencies, retirement, or college, right? Well, missionaries typically rely on donors to fund their ministry and livelihood, so it's not always easy to save.

Scott Morton, an International Funding Coach with The Navigators, says the key to savings is to...

set aside your savings first, and don't touch it and to set your budget with your sending organization high enough and add 10%.

This is a practical step for both short-term and long-term needs.

Once you decide to start saving, you quickly learn that savings accounts are not all the same. You need one with features and benefits that complement your savings goals.

A popular choice for ECCU missionary members is Money Market Savings. It's an excellent short or long-term saving option—for things like home assignment, retirement or emergencies—it's specifically designed around missionary needs. It includes a special rate exclusively to ECCU members that are full-time missionaries.

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Over **4,000** missionaries bank with ECCU in over **130** countries.

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* Fees waived for missionary members with Interest Checking account only.

THE GROWTH OF PERSPECTIVES

PERSPECTIVES USA AT A GLANCE

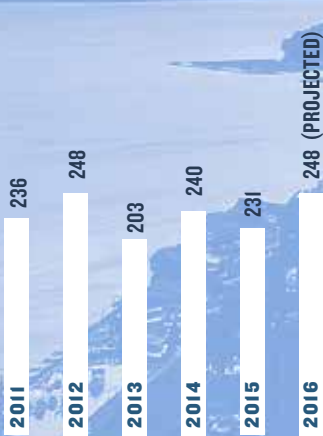
TOTAL NUMBER OF U.S. STUDENTS TO DATE (EST)

148,401

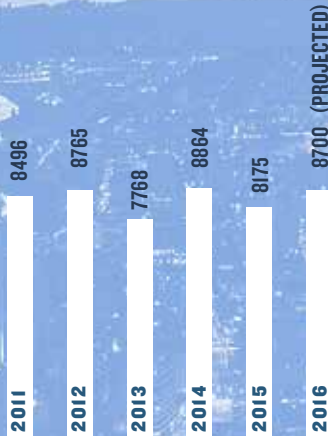
TOTAL NUMBER OF CLASSES TO DATE (EST)

4,210

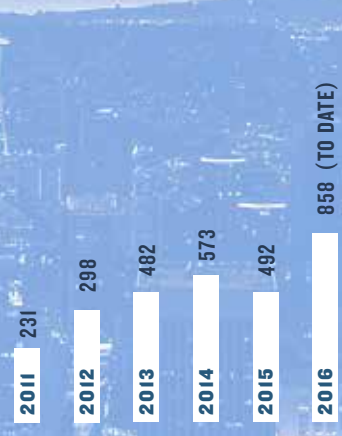
FEATURE ARTICLE



TOTAL CLASSES BY YEAR



NEW STUDENTS



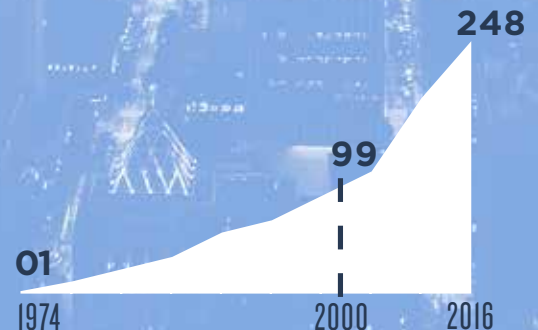
ONLINE STUDENT NUMBERS

Total Number of Active Instructors in the Last 5 Years

2,000+

Total Number of Active Coordinators in the Last 5 Years

600+



HISTORICAL GROWTH OF CLASSES BY YEAR

PERSPECTIVES 'ELEVATES' ITS GAME

SO YOU CAN ELEVATE
YOURS

Under the theme of “Elevate: Climbing Higher, Pressing Further,” more than 300 church and mission leaders gathered in Timonium, Maryland (suburban Baltimore) July 13-16 for the Perspectives (USA) National Conference. The culmination of years of careful preparation, the conference was the occasion for National Director James Mason and his executive team to clarify the Perspectives USA vision, mission and values and to unveil a wide array of new resources to see “the Body of Christ

awakened to pursue the fulfillment of God’s global purpose within every people for His glory.”

If you weren’t there, how can you tap into all these new resources? The Perspectives national team has developed a conference portal where you can access the contents of plenary sessions, 28 breakout sessions and much more. Go to <http://conference.perspectives.org/> to discover how you and your church or agency can “elevate” your game.



BY **DARREL DORR**


Darrell.dorr@frontierventures.org

www.frontierventures.org

Darrell Dorr has served as an editor for *Mission Frontiers*, *the International Journal of Frontier Missiology*, *Operation World* and *the Atlas of Global Christianity*. Also an instructor and mobilizer for the Perspectives Study Program, he now calls greater Seattle home.

GENERAL DIRECTORS LEAD ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION September 14

On September 14 the three General Directors of Frontier Ventures led a low-profile celebration in Pasadena of the first 40 years of ministry of the U.S. Center for World Mission/Frontier Ventures. The audience of approximately 100 members, employees and local friends listened attentively to morning remarks by directors Bruce Graham, Dave Datema and Chong Kim, then enjoyed a catered brunch of pastries and coffee.

In his remarks, Bruce Graham recounted the events behind the founding of the USCWM in 1976 and then the succession of USCWM achievements in the 1980s, 1990s and beyond. Dave Datema presented an overview of 40 years of progress and regress in the worldwide Church's initiatives toward unreached peoples. Chong Kim anticipated the further development of Frontier Ventures as an "order" or committed community, pointing to the vital connections between the work of God within us and the work of God outside us. 

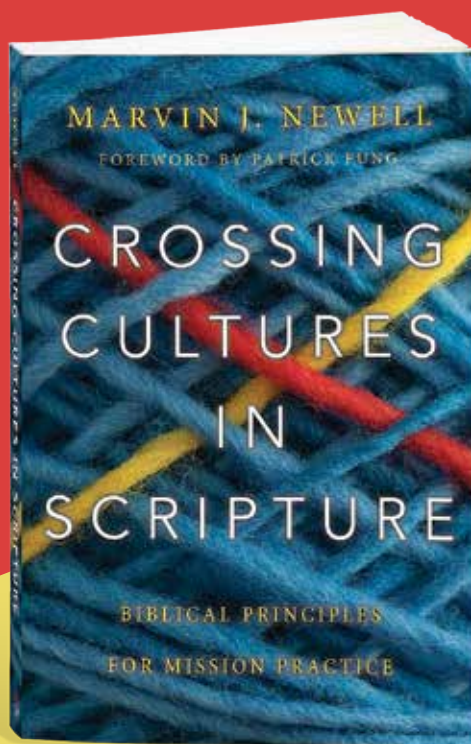


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Biblical Stories of Crosscultural Mission



"This book helps us to both decode the Bible stories from the biblical cultures and encode the Bible stories for different cultures today so that God's message always remains relevant and universal."

From the foreword by
Patrick Fung, general director,
OMF International

Senior vice president of Missio Nexus **Marvin Newell** provides a biblical theology of culture and mission, mining the depths of Scripture to tease out missiological insights and crosscultural perspectives. Organized canonically from Genesis to Revelation, this text reveals how the whole of Scripture speaks to contemporary mission realities.



40 YEARS OF UNREACHED PEOPLES EFFORT: PROGRESS AND REGRESS

BY **DAVE DATEMA & DAN SCRIBNER**

dave.datema@frontierventures.org

www.joshuaproject.net

Dave Datema has been on staff with Frontier Ventures for 17 years and currently serves in the office of General Director for Frontier Ventures. Dan Scribner has been on staff with Frontier Ventures since 1988 and served with the AD2000 and Beyond Movement for ten years. He is now the director of Joshua Project which manages one of the three major databases tracking the status of the unreached peoples.

USCWM ADVISORY BOARD



The work we are commemorating in this issue (1976-2016) did not occur in a vacuum, but was predicated by a paradigm shift in mission thinking. Powerful new ideas stimulated the imagination of believers, catalyzed their collective energies and birthed the modern frontier mission movement.

The dual concepts of 1) viewing the earth's inhabitants in terms of people groups instead of nation-states, and 2) recognizing that a different kind of cross-cultural evangelism was needed to reach them, represented a paradigm shift within mission strategy that has been unparalleled in the twentieth century and beyond. It is hard to over-emphasize how significant these ideas were and remain. Viewing the world as people groups instead of nation-states more accurately represented how people actually think of themselves and brought clarity to the reality that there weren't just a few hundred groupings of people to be evangelized but many thousands. It also brought the Church's understanding of world evangelization into greater alignment with the real meaning of ethne or "nations" in the Great Commission, prioritizing ethnicity over nationality. Just as important, the idea that 87% of the world's unreached population were not accessible to the witness of the world's Christians, and that only by cross-cultural evangelism would they have a chance to hear, spurred the Church into a fortunate reassessment. It was no longer assumed that neighbors or similar people groups would automatically share the gospel across cultural barriers. By 1980, these ideas had matured and coalesced into a compelling narrative that launched the Church's global outreach on a new trajectory.

PROGRESS

Specifically, "progress" over the last forty years in terms of reaching the unreached can be seen in the following realities:

1. There has been huge progress in identifying the unfinished task.

There is a saying, "a problem well stated is half solved." Great strides forward have been made regarding clarifying the remaining task of the Great Commission. When Ralph Winter and others first introduced unreached peoples, the numbers were strictly guesstimates. The last 20-25 years has seen the refinement of three global people group lists with real numbers. Having real data and increased clarity of the unfinished task is a great gift from the Lord and evidence of progress and something to celebrate. In the mid-1990s Joshua Project started out with a partial listing of about 1,750 of the largest unreached people groups. In the early 2000s the Joshua Project list was expanded to a comprehensive global list of 16,500 people groups. Many new unreached people groups were documented for the first time. Increased gathering and analysis of data brought greater clarity to the unfinished task.

Today the global missions community is blessed with three major people group lists. The World Christian Database (WCD), International Mission Board (IMB) and Joshua Project (JP) people groups lists each provide unique perspectives on the unfinished task.

Not only was there progress in understanding exactly how many unreached people groups there

“The peak in the 1990s reveals that that decade saw more evangelical converts to Christ than any other in history. It may prove to be the greatest decade of harvest there will ever be.”

were and where they were located in the world, but also in determining how we should reach them. As missionaries went to unreached peoples all around the world, the focus shifted from identification to methodology. As they came up against “barriers of understanding and acceptance,” new and sometimes controversial methodologies were tried with mixed results. Thus we have seen transformational shifts in how Bible translation is done, new openness toward and acceptance of supernatural signs and wonders as part of our witness, brow-furrowing and hand-wringing discussions on the type and extent of contextualization, concerns over funding and dependency, and a focus on movements with obedience-based discipleship at their core, to name a few. These forty years have been dynamic.

2. Hundreds of once-unreached people groups have been reached.

The exact number is impossible to know because changes in the way people groups were defined and identified means that comparing lists over years is comparing apples with oranges. Numerous people group changes, deletes, adds, splits and merges have occurred over the years that significantly cloud the unreached to reached picture. For example, for many years there were two unreached Zhuang people groups speaking two different Zhuang languages in China on the Joshua Project list. When the 17th Edition of the Ethnologue came out, SIL had determined that there were actually 12 very distinct Zhuang languages. Since the Joshua Project list is basically ethno-linguistic outside South Asia, by default a new people group is created when a new language is identified. Therefore, the original two Zhuang unreached people groups were split

into twelve Zhuang groups based on the language speaker populations. Now instead of two unreached groups there were twelve on the list. The number of unreached people groups increased. Was this a move backwards? No, not really. Instead, there was a better picture of reality. The same number of individuals was involved, now just classified in twelve unreached groups rather than two unreached groups. There are hundreds of cases like this.

However, the undeniable truth is that over the last forty years, in hundreds of people groups, the gospel has not only arrived, but brought with it a viable, indigenous, ongoing church presence. Mission agencies around the globe can attest to this and share their own stories.

3. Mobilization efforts (especially through 2000) were incredibly fruitful and made lasting impact.

What began in the 70s flowered in the 80s and 90s. The capstone of this effort was the AD2000 and Beyond Movement, which promoted many tracks of action around the world among hundreds of agencies. Evidence of this incredible mobilization is found in the fact that, according to Patrick Johnstone, “The peak in the 1990s reveals that that decade saw more evangelical converts to Christ than any other in history. It may prove to be the greatest decade of harvest there will ever be.”

Another evidence of the fruitfulness of mobilization is the impact of people group thinking on various organizations and initiatives over the years:

- Denominational mission agencies have adopted the unreached peoples paradigm in major

ways. The International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, one of the largest denominational sending agencies in the world, re-organized themselves completely around the people group concept. Other denominational sending agencies such as Assemblies of God, Baptist General Conference, Grace Brethren and Nazarene Missions have made their primary focus unreached people groups.

- Non-denominational mission agencies also jumped on the unreached peoples bandwagon, switching their focus in various ways. Dozens of agencies like YWAM, AIM, TEAM, and OMF joined the Adopt-A-People effort.
- Brand new agencies were born with a dedicated focus to unreached peoples, such as Frontiers, Pioneers, Mission to Unreached Peoples (now called Act Beyond), Advancing Native Missions, Team Expansion, Reach the Rest, etc.
- New networks solely dedicated to unreached peoples have risen up. Finishing the Task (FTT) has championed unengaged unreached people groups. FTT has documented over \$1.8 billion dollars being raised toward UUPG ministry in

the last ten years. They also have significant data on workers sent out to UUPGs and numbers of groups engaged over the last ten years. Other significant people-group-focused networks include Vision 5:9 and Ethne. Ethne and their Ephesus Vision seeks to foster cascading “Ephesus Movements” in this generation throughout the most neglected families of unreached peoples. Hundreds of people groups are being targeted through this network.

- Unreached Peoples Prayer networks—There is a growing convergence of the prayer and missions movements. There are numerous unreached people groups prayer networks such as Houses of Prayer, Praying Through the Window, Ethne Prayer Initiative, Inherit the Nations, ACTS School of Prayer, Fellowship of Prayer Strategists.

Finally, the greatest contribution of mobilization efforts over the last forty years has been the flourishing mission movement in Africa, Asia and Latin America. These mission fields have become sending bases, and are providing fresh zeal, new pools of missionary recruits, and in many cases, supernatural power.



REGRESS

While this progress has been undeniable, it has not been without difficulty, and there are signs of regress from the perspective of 2016.

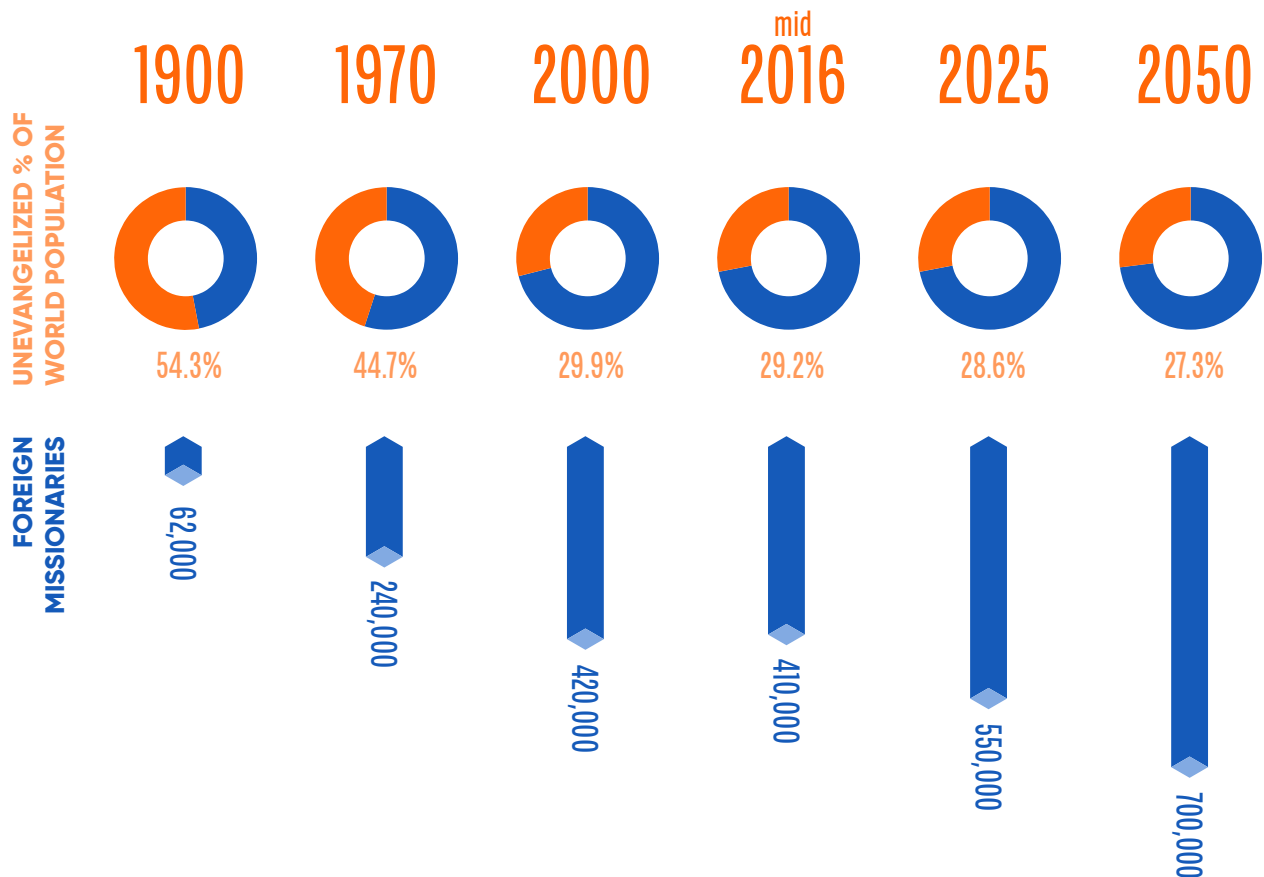
1. There has been a massive slowdown in the pace of evangelization since 2000.

Each January, the International Bulletin of Missionary Research (IBMR) publishes a two-page article called, "Status of Global Christianity." One important line on this chart has special import for our discussion. It shows the unevangelized as a percentage of world population.

Our question: why is the percentage of the unevangelized going down so slowly after the amazing percentage decrease between 1970 and 2000? In that time period, there is a 15% decrease in 30 years (44.7 to 29.9). However, after that, the percentage decrease is only 1.3% between 2000 and 2025 (29.9 to 28.6) as well as 2025 and 2050 (28.6 to 27.3). What gives? We thought it might be caused by an overall population spike post-2000, but world population doesn't appear to be that different

in these time periods (massive growth of 2.4 billion between 1970 and 2000, which is commensurate with the projected 2 billion increase between 2000 and 2025, after which it decreases), so there must be another reason. By our admittedly reductionistic calculations, if the 1970-2000 percentage decrease had become the norm (15% decrease every 30 years), the world would be evangelized by 2060. By contrast, if you follow the trajectory from 2000-2050 (1.3% decrease every 25 years), the world will be evangelized by 2540.

Five hundred years is not a small difference! What happened after 2000 to stall what appeared to be a stunning decline in the unevangelized as a percentage of world population? Has the frontier mission movement itself stalled? Did the sprint for "a church for every people and the gospel for every person by the year 2000" leave us exhausted? Have world events post-2000 demoralized us? Has the continued secularization of Western Christianity led to a failure of missionary nerve? Is the pioneeringchutzpah of previous generations being lost?



Some have suggested a relationship between these numbers highlighted above with the number of foreign missionaries. In the chart found on page 33 we also see the number of foreign missionaries.

Notice the dramatic increase in workers between 1900 and 2000, the present stagnation and the projected massive growth over the next ten years and beyond. The growth rate between 1970 and 2000 is 43%, followed by a negative growth rate between 2000 and 2016. There is likely a correlation between the number of workers and the decrease in percentage of unevangelized. One could argue that the post-World War II surge in workers helped to bring down the percentage of unevangelized. And while we sit in 2016 with 10,000 less workers than existed in 2000, the numbers are projected to increase (31% growth rate between 2000 and 2025, 27% between 2025 and 2050), most likely because of the rise of Global South workers. Might this coming jump in workers once again speed up the rate of evangelization?

Others believe that the reason for this apparent stalling of evangelization is that the low-hanging fruit has already been picked. And a likely derivative is that the remaining unreached peoples pose

challenges that current methods have not overcome. This makes sense. Since the 70s there has been a surge of unreached peoples awareness that has sent hundreds of thousands of workers to the field with “a different type of evangelism.” Great strides have been made over these years. But now we find ourselves in a new reality.

We must say again that statistics are slippery and dogmatic statements based on the figures above would be foolhardy. However, perhaps it would be allowable to suggest that the reason for this sharp decline in evangelization is both quantitative and qualitative. Simply put, there are not enough workers. Many unreached people groups remain vastly underserved. But it goes far beyond more workers. To quote Ralph Winter, “More of the same will not get the job done.” There remains the all-important issue of methodology. From Jesus to Paul to Roland Allen to the present, how we go about evangelization matters. What paradigm-shifting changes need to take place within the frontier mission movement, in theory and practice, to see these last unreached peoples evangelized? Dear Reader, what will happen on our watch?

Since the 70's there has been a surge of unreached peoples awareness that has sent hundreds of thousands of workers to the field with “a different type of evangelism.” Great strides have been made over these years. But now we find ourselves in a new reality.

COMPREHENSIVE GLOBAL PEOPLE GROUP LISTS

WHY THREE GLOBAL PEOPLES LISTS?

How many countries are there in the world? The answer depends on who you ask. Should there only be one list of countries in the world? Different perspectives on the same situation are a healthy thing. Looking at a picture from several angles often yields greater appreciation. Using different definitions and criteria can help clarify a task and highlight areas needing further research. People group database compilers are confronted by questions such as: Is language always the primary definer of a people group? Should caste be considered when defining a people group? Should Christian Adherents be considered when setting the criterion for unreached? Should unreached be defined by exposure or response to the gospel? What are acceptable sources for input and edits? The three global peoples lists answer these questions slightly differently and thus provide different but valuable perspectives.

World Christian Database (WCD) (www.worldchristiandatabase.org/wcd/) – The World Christian Database provides statistical information on countries, cities, languages, world religions, Christian denominations, and people groups. Data sources for the WCD include published and unpublished sources, field work, interviews, questionnaires and officially published reports of government-organized national censuses. The WCD

peoples list is ethno-linguistic, meaning that a people group is primarily defined by language and then by ethnicity, and then by country of residence. Within a language group other factors such as race, tradition, history, and culture sometimes define a subsection of peoples. The WCD classifies peoples by Worlds A, B and C. World A peoples are groups with over 50% of the population unevangelized. The WCD is available in print or online by annual subscription. Suggested updates can be submitted to <info@globalChristianity.org>.

IMB / CPPI (<http://www.peoplegroups.org>) – The IMB / CPPI peoples database is a global list of ethnic people groups from a church planting perspective. It is a private, secure online system that is used by regional and national IMB researchers to gather and submit people group data to the IMB central database. The CPPI list is generally ethno-linguistic and allows for subdivisions of languages based upon cultural or dialect distinctives. In some cases other criteria such as religion are used to define a people group. “Unreached” is defined as less than 2% Evangelical; % Christian Adherents is not considered. A key feature of the CPPI is the tracking of unengaged people groups—peoples without any active church planting occurring. A people group is considered engaged when church planting methodology is underway or being implemented. Suggested updates for review by IMB regional and national staff can be submitted to <gric@imb.org>.

Joshua Project (JP) (<http://www.joshuaproject.net>) – The Joshua Project database is a global ethno-linguistic and ethno-cultural people group database from a church planting perspective. Joshua Project is an open system, gathering data from a variety of sources such as field missionaries and researchers, national and regional initiatives, census data and published sources. People groups on the Joshua Project list are defined by language, religion, culture and caste primarily based on on-site definitions. “Unreached” is defined as less than 2% Evangelical and less than 5% Christian Adherent. A distinctive of the Joshua Project list is defining people groups in South Asia primarily by caste / community and religion rather than by language. South Asia people group data is available at the country, state and district levels. Suggested updates can be submitted to <info@joshuaproject.net>.

ENCOURAGING COOPERATION

In the last several years there has been a significant increase in the communication and cooperation between these three global peoples lists. Initiatives such as Global Trends Fruitful Practices / GTFP have provided the impetus for what has emerged as a peer-group of researchers and collaborative efforts to share and adjust information as much as possible. May the Lord continue to enhance and strengthen the developing connections between the World Christian Database, the IMB Global Research Office and Joshua Project.

WORLD CHRISTIAN DATABASE

CPPI (IMB)

JOSHUA PROJECT

PEOPLE DEFINITION

Globally ethno-linguistic

Outside South Asia ethno-linguistic
South Asia mixture of language and caste

Outside South Asia ethno-linguistic
South Asia by caste

UNREACHED DEFINITION

Less than 50% evangelized

Less than 2% Evangelical

Less than 2% Evangelical and
Less than 5% Christian Adherent

UNREACHED MEASURES

Exposure

Response

Response

SOURCES

Census and academic reports
Denominational reports
Ethnologue

Primarily field staff
Regional and national researchers
Ethnologue

Regional and national researchers
Networks, individuals, other data sets
Ethnologue

PHILOSOPHY

Adds groups when documented in published research

Adds groups once verified by field staff

Assumes worst case, adds all potential groups, removes if verified as not existing

2. Specialized mission efforts (especially surrounding issues of justice) have become the new darlings of mission activity, replacing the unreached peoples concept.

To some extent, this is inevitable as new ideas always have more trending power than old ones. And of course, none of it is intentional. But the danger is in not recognizing that they are apples and oranges. Specialized ministries help us to clarify God's mission, and should be considered tactical, while the unreached peoples concept is strategic or foundational. As a result, we are not just replacing one mission trend with another, we are moving from what is strategic to what is tactical. While these specialized ministries are absolutely necessary if we are to obey the clear warrants of scripture ("teaching them to obey"), they will all realize their best contribution under the overall unreached peoples strategy and not as a replacement of it. If the two are separated, we can once again go back to doing very important Kingdom work in entirely reached and needy contexts. Therefore, the unreached peoples concept cannot be seen as a trend, but as a biblically permanent fact of life and ministry.

3. The very legitimacy of the people group concept is being seriously questioned.

The argument here is that while the people group concept works well in rural areas, where there is homogeneity and clear social and cultural boundaries between peoples, it can no longer be applied to many urban settings, which contain complex mixtures of identity, making simple and coherent people group classification impossible. Without doubt, urban centers do create problems for people group classification. Identities are morphing all the time, but the data is not one-sided in this direction since many ethnic communities maintain close ties even in such identity-threatening diversity. It seems that the jury is still out on how this will play out in any given situation. It is all very contextually defined, creating the need for field strategies on-the-fly. There has yet to appear any definitive study or alternative classification that would cause us to abandon the people group concept. It remains the best working model, even with its challenges.

4. Confusion and dilution of the term "unreached" remains a problem.

The term unreached has led to significant confusion. Some misunderstand it to mean that no missionary has ever been to a group, i.e. reached the group physically. Others think that just because a people group is engaged that it is somehow reached. Even the on/off toggle unreached/reached creates problems when a group crosses some numerical threshold. They disappear off the radar for many when they may in fact still need significant mission effort. A people group is only considered reached when there is a viable, indigenous community of believing Christians involved in a church planting movement with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize this people group without outside assistance.

The term unreached has also been diluted by applying it to entities other than people groups e.g. my neighbors are unreached, lawyers in New England are unreached, the new "Dones" (done with church) movement are unreached. Certainly individuals in these segments are lost but they are not unreached because they live within a culture where there is a viable church movement, thus they have ready access to the gospel message and discipleship.

CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

There is at this very moment a *kairos* opportunity to catalyze breakthrough among the remaining unreached peoples. Those who have gone before us did not shrink back from great challenges. We at Frontier Ventures desire to continue working collaboratively and innovatively with the frontier mission movement, which is our family, the place where we find our identity and purpose. We have much to learn from you, our friends and colleagues. May God bring us closer than ever before in true partnership so that the love and life that is found in Jesus may be freely offered to all, without coercion or constraint. And may the Lamb receive the reward of his suffering, not in 500 years but in our generation.



INDIGENOUS PARTNERSHIPS

THE KEY TO THE FINISHING THE TASK NETWORK

During the last ten years, one of the fastest growing missions movements has been the Finishing The Task (FTT) Network that has been challenging local churches toward the unengaged people groups of the world. During this time 1,447 churches and organizations have pledged to send workers into people groups that have been previously unengaged. Only one in four have so far met their goal, but the 327 ministries who have fulfilled their commitment have sent 19,873 full-time workers into these groups. And these workers have reported 97,897 new churches planted.

In attempting to assess the reasons for this progress, five major factors are evident:

1. An emphasis on Indigenous Partnerships
2. A “help without hurting” philosophy of resourcing the efforts
3. A continually updated list of the unengaged groups verified locally
4. A rise of independent churches without a mission-sending framework
5. A growing commitment to a common agenda and system of measurement

Indigenous Partnerships: When we look at what Jesus told us to do in relation to the Great Commission, we see his commands, “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send workers into his harvest” and “you will be my workers in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends

of the Earth.” Therefore, we conclude that it is our responsibility to reach and disciple people groups both locally and globally and the Lord has called all of us to work together so that no one is neglected. Experience has shown that those who are most available to go to the people groups that have not been engaged are those who live closest to them. So FTT encourages churches from within the country or from outside to find believers close to the unengaged people groups who will become their partners in mission.

FTT recommends five steps in the process:

1. Pray about which group to select. Believers are commanded to go to all of the groups so there need be nothing mystical about which one is selected; we just need to be obedient to go.
2. Schedule a survey trip for the pastor and key church leaders to visit the unengaged group.
3. Find a potential partner to work with and sign a Memorandum of Understanding on what the responsibilities of each partner will be.
4. Develop the strategy with your partner of what will be done and what resources will be needed—workers, training, Bible translation, evangelism, discipleship materials, etc.
5. Set up a resource team in your church who will mobilize prayer and logistical support for the group you have selected.

BY **PAUL ESCHLEMAN**

paul.eshleman@ccci.org

www.finishingthetask.com

Paul Eshleman is Vice President of Networks and Partnerships for Cru (Campus Crusade for Christ International), and consults on major evangelism strategies. Paul founded The JESUS Film Project and served as its Director for 25 years. He also serves as Director of the “Finishing the Task” Network, seeking to be obedient to the command of our Lord by encouraging ministries and churches to reach the thousands of Unengaged, Unreached People Groups throughout the world who have never heard the name of Jesus.

The constant publishing and presentation of the list of unengaged people groups brings back new updates and information. FTT has presented the list to over 27,000 Christian leaders in the past ten years and their feedback has led to much greater accuracy now than in the past.

The indigenous partner has the responsibility to recruit the workers, train them, supervise them, encourage them spiritually and provide reports of ministry progress. Therefore, finding the right partner is crucial. FTT has helped to connect scores of local churches with trustworthy indigenous partners. One of the very encouraging developments over the last ten years has been the dramatic increase in indigenous networks that are working to reach all of the people groups within their country or continent. These would include MANI, South Asia Peoples Network, Serve India, Indonesia Peoples Network, and many, many more.

There are many theories on how the partnership should be conducted, but the objective would be for the engaging ministry to be self-supporting within three years. The FTT emphasis on signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the indigenous partner helps to put a time limit on any resources that might be provided and to guard against misunderstanding and unrealistic expectations.

Help without Hurting Philosophy: There are a wide variety of opinions on what causes dependency and how much help should be given to a new effort. In general, these cautions are a result of continued outside funding, long past a time when local believers should be supporting their local churches. However, some missions have carried this to such an extent that new areas are not engaged because there are no believers to support the first workers. Most of the FTT engaging ministries are generous in their allocation of ministry

tools and equipment but careful regarding personal salaries. Because the FTT rule of engagement asks that workers live within the group, somebody will have to come in from outside the group. Therefore, they may need some outside funding for a period of time. However, in many places, workers will not be accepted within the new community if they have no visible means of support. Some groups are doing an excellent job of helping these workers to be self-supporting through micro-enterprises. In fact, FTT reports over 68,000 bi-vocational and part-time workers who are engaging these kinds of groups.

The Unengaged People Group List: Out of all the things that mission researchers do, few things are more controversial than publishing a list of unreached or unengaged people groups. There are probably fewer than 100 global researchers in the missions community trying to track the activity, or lack of activity, of 5 million local churches and 43,000 denominations. But the constant publishing and presentation of the list of unengaged people groups brings back new updates and information. FTT has presented the list to over 27,000 Christian leaders in the past ten years and their feedback has led to much greater accuracy now than in the past. In addition, these lists have been published in eight global languages, which also provides opportunity for much more input.

Along with the people group list, the FTT research department also seeks to collect information on every group that has been reported 'engaged' by network


partners since November of 2005. The current count is 1,898 distinct people groups "engaged" by 2,295 teams of full-time workers who are:

- Living within the group
- Speaking the local language
- Seeking to do evangelism and plant churches

Some of these people groups have a number of teams working within them located in various geographic areas.

Independent Churches without a Mission Sending Framework: One of the changing factors in the landscape of the American church has been the drift of congregations away from their denominational mission roots. And there are many more independent churches being formed each year. In addition, there are new networks of churches being created that are aggressively building their international outreach.

Antioch Community Church in Waco, Texas is a superb example. To these new networks, FTT Conferences provide a place to gather resources, make connections, and share the latest mission strategies. The next national conference is scheduled from December 6-8, 2016 at Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California. Registration information is available at www.FinishingtheTask.com

A Common Agenda and System of Measurement: Finally, FTT has sought to encourage its network to work toward a common agenda with regard to reaching these people groups that have never been engaged. A second goal has been to develop common definitions. The challenge for the future is to keep track of those statistics that are most helpful for the worker in the field and to convert the research being done into action plans that will result in yet more people coming to faith in Christ. 

THE FINISHING THE TASK NETWORK REPORTS THE FOLLOWING SINCE NOVEMBER 2005

1,898 Distinct people groups engaged

3,295 Ministry teams

19,873 Full-time vocational workers sent by 327 engaging ministries

68,021 Bi-vocational and part-time workers

97,297 Churches planted

2,380,835 Estimated Believers

Many more workers are needed for these groups, but we praise God for His blessings thus far.

*Reported as of September 1, 2016

S P E A K E R S



Francis Chan, Author

"If I could re-live my life, I would have spent more time focusing on this." – FTT Conference 2015



Rick Warren, Pastor Saddleback Church

"There's no more important topic than this, than Finishing the Task." – FTT Conference 2015



Paul Eshleman, Director Finishing the Task

"We're getting close, now's the time to re-double our efforts." – FTT Conference 2015



Finishing the Task

How much longer must they wait to hear the Gospel?

DEC. 6 – 8, 2016

7:30am – 5pm

Saddleback Church
Lake Forest, California

A B O U T

VISION: After 2,000 years, it seems unthinkable that there are still people who have never heard the Gospel, but the fact is, even with advances in technology and transportation, there are still people groups that have NEVER heard the Gospel and have NO believer working among them. Join us in learning to pioneer a new way to reach the remaining unengaged people groups in the world by selecting a group and taking the first steps to send workers where there are none!

W H O S H O U L D A T T E N D ?

- Pastors + Local Church leaders
- Missions and Denominational Leaders
- Resource Providers
- Marketplace Leaders

R E G I S T R A T I O N

Early Registration: \$140/person (Ends November 14th)

Registration: \$165/person (Ends December 2nd)

Register at www.finishingthetask.com

VISION FOR A REFUGEE KINGDOM MOVEMENT

BY **STEVE SMITH**

Twitter: @kingreigncome

Facebook: Kingdom Kernels

Blog: kingdomkernels.com

Steve Smith (Th.D.) was part of a church planting movement in Asia. He currently works globally to catalyze biblical church planting movements to finish the Matt. 24:14 quest. He is the author of *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution* with Ying Kai (WigTake Resources, 2011) and *Hastening and Rebirth* in the “No Place Left” saga (2414 Ventures, 2015 & 2016).

KINGDOM KERNELS

God is moving in unprecedented ways in our generation in the Muslim world. Too often Western believers are filled with fear at the pictures of refugees crossing the borders of Western nations. Such a view fails to look at this migration from an eternal perspective.

The current migrations are consistent with the ways God has moved throughout history to bring people groups to the knowledge of Christ.

And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. (Acts 17:26-27, ESV, emphasis added)

God has consistently changed the allotted periods and boundaries to bring people to know Him. We should praise the God of heaven in giving a myriad of Muslim people groups open hearts and greater access to the gospel, while at the same time weeping with them at the suffering they endure.

God's heart is for a kingdom movement to flow through hundreds of refugee locations and then back into the

home countries from which they have been thrust—some places difficult or impossible for missionaries to access.

Thousands of evangelists have descended upon Europe the last two years to purposefully bring the gospel to refugees resulting in many salvations. In the excitement of good evangelism, however, what emerges as the dust settles will determine if this becomes a lasting kingdom movement. God's desire is for disciples and churches, not simply decisions, to multiply throughout the refugee populations, to the surrounding majority populations (e.g. Germans and Greeks) and back into home countries. Will we settle for good evangelism or press into enduring Church-Planting Movements (CPMs)? The latter is God's heart.

A CASE STUDY

My interactions with the refugee outreach have been to promote the latter (CPM) rather than the former (abundant evangelism). In one country, the Great Commission partners are doing an amazing job of reaching out to refugees with the gospel. They have hosted hundreds of short-term volunteers and the gospel has been shared thousands of times. They have been so busy hosting

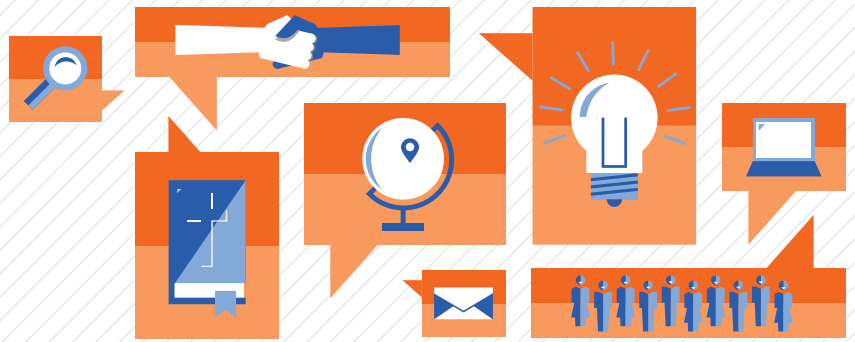
each team to do evangelism efforts that they have had little time to catalyze the next stages of a CPM—on-going discipleship training, church formation and leadership development. Their effectiveness in doing a good thing (evangelism) threatens the needed shift into the next stage (making disciples who can make disciples, resulting in multiplying churches.)

For three days we worked together on how to translate evangelistic fruit into a kingdom movement. Two weeks later, one Muslim-background believer immediately baptized 18 people and formed two groups into churches. He is making the shift to give enough time to the new disciples, churches and leaders.

What changed in him and others was a sense of the larger vision of what God is doing. Refugee believers have been particularly envisioned by the Joseph account (Gen. 37-50) and find almost exact parallels between Joseph's journey and theirs. These new disciples stand on the edge of the refugee outreach becoming a Joseph movement.

THE JOSEPH MOVEMENT

We may fail to recognize how much of the Genesis account the Joseph narrative



takes up. Genesis is painted as follows in broad strokes:

Creation	2 chapters
Fall/Cain	2 chapters
Genealogies	4 chapters
Noah	4 chapters
Abraham	12 chapters
Isaac	2 chapters
Jacob	9-10 chapters
Joseph	14 chapters

In sheer proportion the Joseph story occupies the largest amount of text—14 out of 50 chapters. We rightly accord huge emphasis to the critical stories of

Creation/Fall, Noah and Abraham (the father of all who live by faith). But how often do we contemplate the message of the Joseph movement?

Refugee believers are drawn to Joseph because his story gives meaning to their story. It helps to explain what God is doing according to Acts 17:26-27.

THE JOSEPH MOVEMENT PARALLELS

Joseph appears as a prophet in the Quran; Muslims are familiar with his name. But as Muslim-background believers learn the true story from the

Old Testament, they find a number of parallels with their situation:

The salvation of many: The theme verse of the Joseph account is Genesis 50:20:

As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. (Gen. 50:20, ESV, emphasis added)

From the comforts of Western Christianity, we quote “what was meant for evil, God meant for good.” But can we quote the verse’s purpose statement? The operative word is “to”. God has a purpose in turning evil to good—to save

many people. In Western Christianity, we fear the invasion of our way of life in the refugee situation. Refugee believers see the overarching vision—God’s purpose is to save multitudes of people for eternity. The grand purpose of God is sovereignly moving people groups to bring His kingdom fully to them. God is answering the Lord’s prayer we pray regularly.

Embracing the uncontrollables: Joseph chose to embrace the goodness of God despite having no control over his situation and being moved against his will. Rather than bemoan his situation, Joseph embraced the uncontrollable as signs of God’s goodness and sovereign orchestration. Refugee believers are learning to celebrate the uncontrollables as God’s sovereign goodness to bring about the salvation of many.

Suffering: The uncontrollables included intense suffering for Joseph, even being blamed for things he didn’t do. Often refugees are lumped into the same category as terrorists. Often they are mistreated simply because they belong to a disdained group. Refugee believers see in Joseph an example about how to bear up under suffering and mistreatment in the midst of knowing God has a grander plan.

Dreams: The Joseph story is filled with dreams about God’s purposes. God gave Joseph the discernment to believe and interpret these dreams. When God moves in unprecedented ways, He often initiates them through dreams (even in the New Testament). Within the Muslim world, God is appearing to and speaking to people in dreams and visions. Refugee believers recognize that God is speaking clearly, tearing down defenses and giving vision for the future to them.

Salvation of a new land: Joseph was adopted into a new land (Egypt) and eventually became a source of blessing for that land in the midst of famine.

He was the source of salvation to the majority population though he came from a despised minority—Hebrews (Gen. 43:32). In the hard soil of European evangelism, God is going to use Muslim-background believers to bring salvation to Christian-background lost people (Germans, Italians, etc). Refugee believers are learning that this is part of their calling.

The salvation of the old land: The purpose of the Joseph story, however, was the salvation of the old land/people. Joseph was not preserved alone by God but seventy others from the old land were saved that they might become a people of God. A vision is growing among refugee believers that God wants to both 1) save many refugees along the refugee road and 2) bring this movement back to the home countries. We must help believers in the diaspora to become movements that bring salvation to home countries from which they emerged.

Seasons of darkness: Doubtless at times Joseph felt forgotten by God, his family and friends. Yet in the darkness he did not despair but continued to trust God. The situation had to get very dark before it got better. Refugee believers take encouragement from Joseph’s faith while in dark places. They know that in time God will bring about His purposes.

A new hope: The Joseph story is one in which a new hope emerges, one Joseph could never have imagined despite the foreshadowing of his initial dreams in Genesis 37. From the darkness, a much greater purpose came to light. How shocked Joseph must have been years later when his brothers showed up to buy grain. In that moment, the greater purpose became clear:

5 And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. 6 For the famine has

been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. 7 And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. 8 So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. (Gen. 45:5-8, ESV, emphasis added)

Three times Joseph stated: “It was God who sent me here!” The purpose became clear—a new hope emerging from darkness. For the refugee evangelism efforts to become a kingdom movement, refugee leaders must embrace this new hope—they have been sent ahead by God for the salvation of many. If we fail to call them to a bigger vision or if we shrink back from calling them to suffer for a greater purpose, then we will likely reap a few hundred or thousand new disciples but lose a potential movement to rock the Islamic world.

Don’t compromise: During the dark times and light times, Joseph refused to compromise. As Potiphar’s steward, he refused to sin with Potiphar’s wife. As a prisoner in darkness, he refused to use underhanded ways to escape prison. As the second-in-command of Egypt, he refused to abuse the rank and privilege accorded him. Refugee believers identify with the need to remain true to God’s Word no matter their circumstances—to refuse to compromise or use underhanded ways to better their situation or seek retribution.

Expect helpers along the way: Joseph’s destiny was ultimately in God’s hands, but in the earthly realm was in the hands of others. He trusted God to guide the hands and hearts of the rulers toward God’s ultimate purposes. Along the way, God provided helpers in this journey—Judah to sell Joseph rather than let him

Refugee believers are drawn to Joseph because his story gives meaning to their story. It helps to explain what God is doing according to Acts 17:26-27.

be killed, Potiphar purchasing Joseph, the keeper of the prison giving Joseph privileges, the cupbearer bringing Joseph to Pharaoh, Pharaoh raising Joseph to his right hand. Refugee believers have to trust that God will provide advocates along the way to move them toward the destiny God has created for them.

Create relational networks along the way: The challenge of the refugee road becoming a movement is that relational networks change from week to week. Families are torn apart and new living situations present themselves each week or month. Joseph was torn from his family and moved from place to place. Rather than see only his blood family as his relational network, Joseph created new relational networks along the way—Potiphar’s household, the prisoner network and eventually the palace network of Egypt. Refugee leaders with a vision for a movement realize they must help new believers create and embrace new relational networks face-to-face, by phone, and online. As they embrace these new networks and disciple each other in these various forms, the movement is growing and finding stability.

God’s favor will be upon you: God’s hand of favor was continually upon Joseph. The seed of saving his family

planted in the dreams of Genesis 37 was watered all along the way. God’s promise was one of favor and purpose he could hold onto in dark times. Refugee believers frequently ask: “Why did God save me first rather than my brother or my cousin (or someone else)?” They find a growing sense that God’s favor is upon them to be the channel of salvation and this favor fills their hearts with gratitude.

God’s school of suffering: Years ago a greatly persecuted Chinese underground leader shared with me: “Prison is God’s seminary for me. It is when He lets me stop long enough to study my Bible more deeply, write and hear His voice more clearly.” God’s school of suffering. Suffering was Joseph’s seminary. It was the crucible of shaping Joseph into the man who could be the channel of salvation. The Joseph of Genesis 37 was not ready for the throne of Egypt; the Joseph of Genesis 40 was. Refugee believers must embrace periods of suffering as God’s seminary to prepare them for the greater works Jesus promised (John 14:12).


THE JOSEPH MOVEMENT: A VISION

The story of Joseph is one of uncanny precedent that refugee believers can learn from. It is a biblical case study for

a movement that can be repeated again today. The key will be refugee believers taking on the identity and vision of a true Joseph movement. Such a vision will be as costly to them as it was to Joseph. But if believers can identify this moment as a Joseph opportunity, then it may well become multiple kingdom movements intertwining their fingers both in the diaspora and back home in the sending countries. Will Muslim background believers take on this identity? Will they embrace the cost that comes with the promise?

And for Christian leaders around the world working with these precious brothers and sisters, will we embrace the same vision and communicate it with faith to them? Will we communicate it to our own churches? Will we reinterpret the unfolding events to demonstrate God’s amazing purposes?

If we do, then we are casting a vision of what is on our Father’s Heart.

And, in case you wondered how to cast vision in general, this article has been an example—bringing an encouraging and inspiring word to growing disciples based on Father’s heart. 



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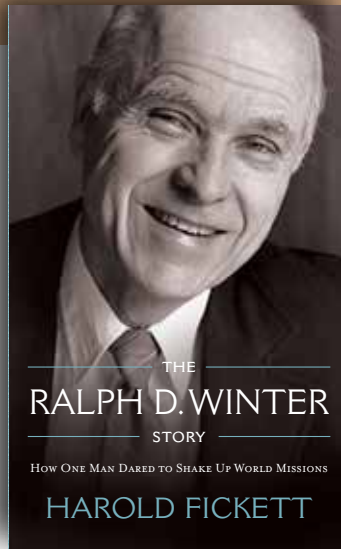
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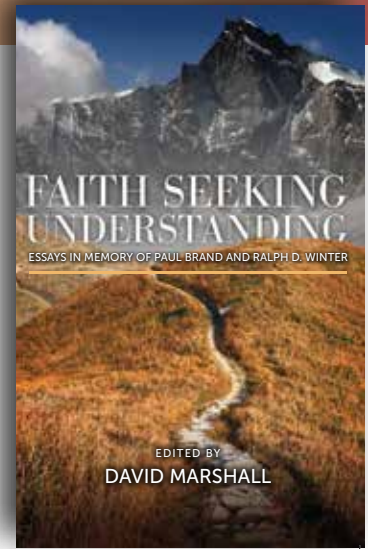
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Lausanne '74

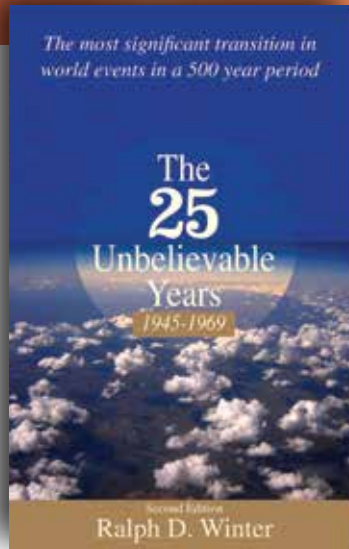
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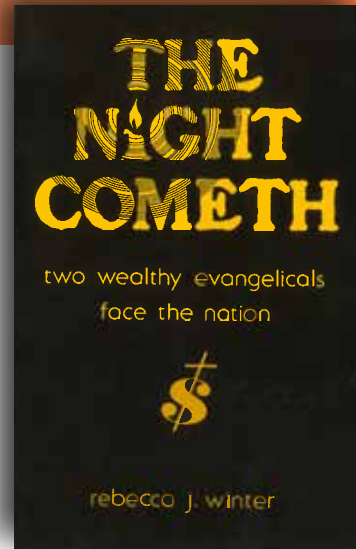
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Rebecca Winter (Author)
WCL | Pages 84 | Paperback 1977

What Makes You Discontent?

by Greg Parsons

Director of Global Connections
Frontier Ventures

FURTHER REFLECTIONS

My wife and I have been on staff here at Frontier Ventures since 1982. We joined staff because we were compelled by the vision of seeing God's kingdom extend to Unreached Peoples. It made us discontent about the status quo. Information was much harder to come by then but we still prayed for the world country-by-country. Leaders talked about missions. But other than isolated tribal work, most were talking in terms of furthering "evangelism," not pioneering work among Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists.

Evangelism is crucial, but it is not sufficient. We remember hearing that even if the church were to reach out as far as it could in effective evangelism, half the world would not be touched! Still, today, perhaps a third of the world remains beyond the reach of current church witness.

That is changing. More "younger" missions from various cultures around the globe are catching a vision for reaching out to the least reached. Areas that were once nationalistic and even ethnocentric are beginning to break out of those patterns (like we all need to) and send global workers to least reached peoples. As I travel around the globe, it is refreshing to hear leaders from other nations express their heart and vision. I spend far more time listening on these trips.

But sometimes it seems like we are stopping short of the goal. I know God sends folks where he will, but

(humanly) it seems like we still don't go, or don't stay long, in the most difficult places. We've noted examples of some who have in *MF* over the 38 years since it began production. We will continue to do so.

Our calling hasn't changed. Yes, now many are talking about what my wife and I experienced as fresh and new in 1982. Almost the entire evangelical mission movement from Latin America has an unreached focus. The Perspectives course is desired by other language groups. So now the core unreached vision is established and standard.


But because that vision is well-known in certain circles, it may hinder our outreach at the frontiers of the gospel. More and more, all over the world, individuals look for things that are new: the latest phone, clothes, TV show, car...just like our economies, which are increasingly driven by retail sales growth. That, in turn, depends on discontent to be sustained. Do we do the same in the church and in mission strategy?

I hope you saw a crucial point in Dave Datema's article, "40 Years of Unreached Peoples Effort" (page 29). He argues that the Unreached Peoples concept is strategic, not tactical. Things like justice, urban mission, work with the poor, creation care, or ministry to the disabled are important tactics that build upon existing church work and foster the spread of the gospel among

groups within the church. Those tactics can also be used to help bring initial gospel breakthrough. Either way, that "breakthrough" phase is the beginning of all that God may want to do through his body.

Another way to say it is that while we can and should work for justice and these other foci, the Bible does not say that everything will be "just" or all the poor will be better off before the Lord returns. The idea of reaching the least reached is clearly biblical and isn't something that changes. People groups (however defined by God, and often changing before our eyes) will be represented around the throne according to Revelation 7:9.

Yet, after working at this a long time and seeking to honor God in the midst of ministry I find myself weary at times. I must heed Paul's admonition to the Galatians that they not grow "weary in well doing" (Gal. 6:9). I exhort you, as I do myself, to pray earnestly...as Jesus said (Matt 9:38 & Lk 10:2). But I was impressed recently—at a global meeting in Asia, by an Asian preacher—to focus on praying earnestly. That is prayer that is somehow more engaged. I want to obey the Lord in that too.

So, pray earnestly the Lord of the Harvest to thrust out workers into his harvest fields. Until we see that happening in its fullness, I hope you too, will continue to be discontent. 

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