

Eleven Frontiers of Perspective

Part II: Eleven Frontiers of Perspective (7-11)

by *Ralph D. Winter*

These additional frontiers add to those described in the previous issue of IJFM. Their order is not alphabetical nor necessarily logical but rather the order in which they have seized my attention across the years. Some of them are by no means any longer “new” frontiers, and, by definition, those that have been considerably crossed by now are not really any longer frontiers of mission. They are presented as examples of new insights (for me) which have arisen as time passed.

Perspective Seven: Beyond Christianity

We may need to go beyond mere radical contextualization. The Biblical faith has gone beyond Judaism. The NT has shown us how that can and must be done for the sake of the Gentiles. We have now also long seen how our Biblical faith has been able to go beyond Roman Catholicism. To go beyond Judaism did not invalidate the faith of those believing Jews who remained Jews. To go beyond Roman Catholicism does not invalidate the faith of those believing Catholics who have stayed behind. Is it time to allow for the possibility that some people around the world will choose to go *beyond Christianity* as we know it?

This has already begun to happen. We note the existence of millions of Africans who are eagerly following Christ and the Bible, but who do not identify with any form of traditional Christianity. The Lutheran-Missouri Synod study mentioned in Part I of this paper (IJFM 20:3) describes millions of devout followers of Jesus and the Bible in the city of Chennai (Madras) alone, who have not chosen to call themselves Christians, nor to identify with the socio-ecclesiastical tradition of Christianity, and who still consider themselves Hindu. That report indicates that there are many more of this kind of devout believers than all the devout believers in that place who do identify with the social tradition of Christianity! Or, take China. What about all those millions in the house churches? When the bamboo curtain rises, how certain can we be that they will wish to be identified with formal Christianity—in China or any place else?

The NT Judaizer had only one solution: make people of any background into Jews. The Roman Catholics have for the most part had only one solution:

Ralph D. Winter is a senior mission thinker who has been actively involved from the beginning of the massive mission transition from simply thinking in terms of countries or individuals to thinking in terms of peoples. He is founder of the U.S. Center for World Mission, and is currently president of William Carey International University.

make everyone into a Catholic. Have Evangelicals done the same? For the most part, yes.

We have seen it work fairly well—to draw people into Evangelicalism, a Westernized Evangelical movement. But by and large this has happened only if they belonged to a minority or an oppressed group—like tribal peoples or Koreans under the Japanese, people who had more to gain by giving up much of their cultural identity. In all such cases worldwide, people have seen the value of identifying with a foreign import that would befriend them and take their side. But by now we have lapped up most of these minorities and oppressed peoples. The future is correspondingly bleak for the further extension of our faith into the vast blocs of Chinese, Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists *unless we are willing to allow our faith to leave behind the cultural clothing of the Christian movement itself*. Do we preach Christ or Christianity?

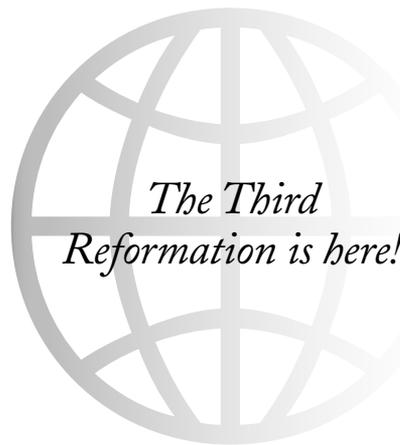
Apparently our real challenge is no longer to extend the boundaries of Christianity but to acknowledge that Biblical, Christian faith has already extensively flowed *beyond Christianity* as a cultural movement, just as it has historically flowed beyond Judaism and Roman Catholicism. Our task may well be to allow and encourage Muslims and Hindus and Chinese to follow Christ without identifying themselves with a foreign religion. The Third Reformation is here!

Perspective Eight: A Different Type of Recruitment

Is it not strange that most mission agencies have settled on recruiting people who are college or seminary graduates? Not really strange. Most businesses wait until people graduate from college to take them in. Even in that case businesses recruit in engineering schools for engineers, in business schools for business majors, etc. That is, the secular world is very concerned that the people they take in have the right background.

One obvious reason for this is that it is possible to do so. We have engineering schools and business majors. For mission agencies, however, it is not quite the same. Yes, there are mission

majors in Bible colleges and in some Christian colleges. But it is ominously true that in many cases those students who choose those majors face curious pressures from the bulk of the other students, attitudes not far from “distance,” even ostracism. In a Christian college? Yes. In very few of these schools is there an entirely wholesome and healthy attitude toward Christian service, much less missions. The bulk of the students seem to feel in this “Christian” atmosphere that they must defend themselves against pressures for full-time Christian service, and the missions students are very



much a distanced minority no matter how favorable the faculty and the school officially may be.

By contrast, on the secular campuses—where 15 out of 17 Evangelical young people are to be found—there are student Christian fellowships which tend to be much more interested in options for Christian service. But, they still don’t have either the guidance or the right courses available to them.

Due to the simple fact that the source of the bulk of Christian service volunteers has become the secular schools one of the major trends in the past fifty years, then, has been, inevitably, for the mission agencies not to expect new recruits to have prior Christian training. Thus has arisen the pattern of the agencies requiring “a Year of Bible” for those without a Bible college or Christian college background. This policy has indeed pushed many into further schooling in Christian institutions—where, unfortunately, they have met the negative under-

tow toward Christian service already mentioned, and often less than ideal course offerings. Some missions have no pre-candidate requirements at all. At one large, conservative seminary I was told that ten percent of the incoming students are interested in missions but that only two percent of the seniors are.

In the past fifty years, then, the mission movement has moved considerably from seeking candidates from Christian schools with a lackluster training in missions, to seeking candidates from secular schools, often with a lackluster preparation for Christian service. There is no mission-world parallel to a technological company going to Stanford and wooing graduates into engineering and technology.

However, things are changing. It is now possible to do something radically different. There is now available a hefty educational package which can be studied either before or after going to the field. It is credit and degree bearing. It meticulously integrates 100 textbooks and hundreds of additional articles and chapters from other books into 320 lessons requiring four hours per lesson as well as additional activities. It is designed to be a part-time activity. It does not require physical relocation to any school campus. It is already employed by several fully accredited schools for both B.A. completion studies or an M.A. degree. (And those schools have cleared approval with their regional accrediting bodies.) It is also available as a first-year of college. It is utilized by the Wycliffe field-survey department, since it can be studied during either secular employment before going to the field, during on-field ministry, or a combination of both. It covers everything taught in seminary as well as the core of a substantial liberal arts degree plus anthropology, linguistics, and missiology.

The basic implication of all this is simple and arresting: missions can now be vitally in contact with dedicated high school graduates or with a vast untapped group of people who have only two years of college, whether they are still in school or have been out for ten years, and

guide them and track them through high-quality, carefully-designed basic training for Christian service as either laymen, pastors, or missionaries. These pre-candidates do not have to burn their bridges behind them at any point prior to completion of this program. And missions can accept them as full members when they have this training behind them. Tracking with them earlier is one factor.

There is a fascinating additional factor. By waiting until students find their own way through college, mission agencies are all vying for the same reduced number of people. College graduates interested in missions are few and far between. They have not usually had the right training, as we have noted. They are much more likely to be laden with debt.

By comparison, there is an enormous number of people who have only two years of college, and they are even more likely to be excited about missions and less burdened with debts and less sought after by agencies. The report is that 40 million Americans have only two years of college. Ten million of these are Evangelicals of which one out of fifty are keen for missions but have been blocked by the lack of a degree. One out of fifty out of ten million is 200,000 people! Presently unsought by missions! Able to take this new curriculum and hold down a fulltime job, and emerge without debt!

By focusing on high schoolers or on these two-year people, the agencies will not be lowering but raising their standards. Such agencies will know far more about their new candidates than ever before—if they have tracked them after or during a curriculum like this. They will be seeding their work force with people who for the first time have serious, professional, foundational academic training for cross-cultural mission. This in turn is the most hopeful remedy for the pervasive trend today to a tragic amateurization of missions, what with short termers staying on and local churches sending ordinary members out on tourist-mission jaunts, and few regular candidates having the right foundation for cogent career service.

Perspective Nine: A Trojan Horse?

Briefly, this is the problem we face: 15 out of 17 Evangelical young people are never in a Christian school, a Christian college or even homeschooled. And even in the Christian schools and colleges secular textbooks are commonly employed by “secularized” Christian teachers (one had never heard of D. L. Moody!). Yet this means that our children from a very young age are exposed to 30 hours of secularized perspective each week but only 30 minutes (and on a totally different subject) in Sunday School.

However, only a handful of widely used secular textbooks dominate the public schools and colleges. Why can't supplementary booklets be written that would comment chapter by chapter on precisely these books, referring by page number where something important has been left out or is stated with a bias. Such supplementary booklets could then be employed in 1) Christian schools, 2) homeschool contexts, 3) by Christians teaching in public schools, 4) very importantly by Sunday Schools, 5) *but most importantly by concerned parents* (who may not be able to count on any of the first four). Working through the final two will likely allow us more comprehensively to reach the “15 out of 17” than anything else we could do to stem the tide of secularization of our country.

When the Maranatha High School came to our campus, we made an agreement with them for us to develop for their classes supplementary materials corresponding to the key secular texts they already use. This will then be what we will endeavor to promote all across the world in the five ways mentioned above. We will seek to draw on, as advisors, such outstanding Evangelical scholars as Mark Noll of Wheaton.

This kind of an effort could become the most strategic attempt yet to stem the tide of secularization in our schools, public and private. It is somewhat like the ancient strategy of the Trojan Horse, since such materials are designed to become an integral part of both the major time commitment

of virtually all students everywhere as well as concerned Evangelical parents.

Perspective Ten: Needed: A Revolution in Pastoral Training

This revolution deals with three drastic drawbacks pervasively embodied in pastoral training both at home and abroad. These are so serious that it is sad yet fair to say that the seminaries and Bible schools of the world are a surprisingly weak and often negative contributor to the growth of Christianity around the world. The growth of virtually every church movement everywhere which has adopted residential schools of any type for their exclusive source of pastoral candidates has slowed, declined, or even stopped. At the same time, virtually every church movement everywhere that is rapidly growing selects its pastoral leaders later in life and may not effectively train them, maybe not at all.

The school-supported movement may have superior theology without growth and vitality. Those movements which do not depend on residential training of young people for their pastoral leaders are often vital in faith and growth but weak and inherently fragile due to their lack of foundational knowledge.

Is there something wrong with the pastoral training institutions? Yes, even though they may have excellent, well-prepared faculty and entirely valid intensions. Usually they have most or all of three deficiencies. They are often wrongly criticized for other things that may not be the heart of the problem: for being “academic” or “out of touch” with grass roots conditions. It is much more likely that the roots of their inability to contribute dynamically to the growth of the church lie in most of the following problems of inherent design:

1. Wrong Students. The most severe problem is the simple fact that 90% of the students in pastoral training are not the seasoned, mature believers defined by the New Testament as candidates for pastoral leadership. Both in U. S. seminaries and in some four or five thousand overseas Bible Schools, Bible Institutes, Theological

colleges, etc., the vast majority of the students will never be effective pastors, no matter what or how or where they are taught, simply because they likely lack pastoral gifts; and at their age and level of maturity, there is no way to predict that they will ever gain the essential gifts and maturity.

On the other hand, those church movements that are growing effectively depend primarily on the dynamics of the local church to select leaders, not school admissions offices. And they then depend primarily upon the inductive process of local church life to train these leaders, as well as whatever resources may be accessible to these home-grown leaders in the form of books, radio, or quite often, apprenticeship. They do not avoid or despise the schools. Their local leaders simply do not have access to the riches the schools possess. These people are usually married men with families and bi-vocational employment, not to mention church responsibilities.

Can the schools make their riches available to pastoral leaders on the job? Yes and no. They could theoretically, but they don't know how, and tend to feel it difficult to transcend the culturally defined niche they are in. The global movement called Theological Education by Extension is by now well known. In India it has taken hold effectively in the form of a program encompassing 6,000 students called *The Association For Theological Education by Extension* (TAFTEE). But this program was not launched by any existing school, and its graduates are not routinely incorporated into existing denominations. The latter polite rejection becomes understandable only when you recognize that a large proportion of those studying under TAFTEE are people coming out of midlife: doctors, engineers, university graduates. Existing pastors, who control the ordination process, are mostly the output of traditional Bible Institutes or Seminaries, and may actually fear the competition of this non-traditional source of leadership. The typical TAFTEE graduate, compared to the typical seminary or institute graduate, is not only more mature but has more extensive secular

education. This latter factor leads to the second aspect of this problem.

2. Wrong Curriculum. When Bible institutes first got started in America, judging by the pattern portrayed by Moody Bible Institute (founded roughly 100 years ago), the idea was to offer study of the Bible to adults whose previous education, even as far back as 1900, had already been edited to a secular viewpoint. The idea of supplementing school curricula with Bible studies was a good one.

However, when the night school for adults, who already had some public school, began to be replaced by a daytime Bible school curriculum devoid of any other subject, a reverse censorship took place. Students exposed to nothing but the Bible, whether in Sunday school or Bible Institute, could never discover the profound impact of the Bible during the many centuries following it. If they did do any serious study in public schools or colleges concerning the "rise of Western civilization" or the history of the United States, those courses skillfully omitted the role of the Christian church, unless negative. No contrary view was available in schools just teaching the Bible.

Today, the average missionary to, say, India, is very poorly prepared to answer the questioning of honest intellectuals who have heard that Christianity was a drag on scholarship, science and enlightenment, and was an intolerant and oppressive force, launching "crusades" against Jews, Muslims and even other Christians. Why? Because the missionary's secularized education told him the same thing. To answer with an outline of Romans is not enough.

The answer? Christian efforts to educate their young people, whether in Christian schools or Home school programs, must be able to reintegrate the secular perspective about everything with a Christian perspective about all those same issues, specifically. This cannot be done in 30 minutes in Sunday school after 30 hours in the previous week of secular schooling, and on a totally different subject.

A student that comes home from school with the idea that William Jennings Bryan flunked the Monkey Trial need to know that he actually won the case, and to learn on Sunday that David slew Goliath will do him no good on that point.

The student who hears that the Salem Witch Trial "shows what happens when religious people get control of the community" (as one textbook has it) needs to know that Princeton University Press came out with a restudy of the Salem event, *Witchcraft at Salem*. This book shows that it was precisely the *clergymen* in Salem, who studied both theology and science at Yale, who insisted on a strict, scientific court trial, which ended the hysteria that had been promoted by the *businessmen* in town. Then, for that student to go to church and learn how Samuel chose David will do nothing to erase that Salem slur.

God has given us two "books": 1) the Bible, which is His Book of Scripture, and 2) nature, which is His Book of Creation. He does not want us to slight either one. Yet the sad situation is that, in general, one major human tradition (the scientific community) is studying the second and despising the first, and another human tradition (the church community) is studying the first and ignoring the second. Yet, both are essential in understanding God and His will. The Bible itself affirms the second, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament displays His handiwork (and) there is no speech or language where their voice is not heard." See also Romans 1.

Thus, we run counter to the Book of Scripture itself if we do not rejoice in, and discern the glory of God in His Book of *Creation*. We cannot fully declare the glory of God if we do not embrace science as a vast domain in which we can both see God's glory and advance His Kingdom.

Some have suggested that there is both an evangelistic mandate and a cultural mandate. I see this as an artificial dichotomy. Being human we are likely to conceive of the redemption of homo sapiens as the primary concern of God. But homo sapiens is specifi-

cally the most recent divine strategy to hasten the advance of the Kingdom of God. Man was created to be responsible for all other created beings. His fall made him part of the problem not merely a chief means of the solution and by no means a trustworthy custodian of life forms. We easily forget that even if there were no humans, or if all humans were “saved,” the Kingdom of God would not necessarily have come and all things on earth conformed to the will of God even as it is in heaven. Man was meant to be an ally in the redemption of Creation, not merely in his own redemption, although that is essential for his restoration as a worker in the Kingdom, or as a warrior on God’s side in the destruction of the works of the devil.

Nature, prior to the appearance of homo sapiens, is shot through and through with terrible slaughter, bloodshed, violence, and suffering, as the result of the fall of Satan, even before Adam. Man was supposed to work with God in destroying the source of that evil. This is God’s world, but it is severely distorted by the fallen adversary of God. “The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that he might destroy the works of the devil (I Jn 3:8).”

Of course, Jesus could not have been understood if he talked about microbiology. Even John Calvin was unable to talk about it. Both he and Luther even opposed the idea that the earth was a globe. However, after centuries of gradual advance in the understanding of nature, with God employing even “secular” scientists now and then, we now know that 90% of the complexity of life is smaller than the cell. That is small! It would take 200,000 cells to cover the period at the end of this sentence. The responsibility of humans for restoring the reputation of God (about whom many people are so confused as to believe He creates suffering and sickness) is now much larger than ever before. That responsibility is also more logical and urgent than ever before. The evil working of the Adversary is right before our eyes picking off believer after believer, long before natural death.

As was mentioned in Perspective Nine, fifteen of every seventeen

Evangelical students is totally untouched by any Christian grade school, high school or college. At the very moment they study materials that have been secularized, whether American history or sociology or psychology or whatever, that is the time they need additional materials to round out and perhaps correct the picture. They cannot effectively study one year in secular books and another year the Bible. This is essentially the insight of Perspective Nine.

3. Wrong Packaging. It is one thing to value both the Bible and the Book of Creation, and thereby to be able to present the full spectrum of the task of advancing the Kingdom of God through the schooling process. But there is something else. We live in a world which speaks specific languages and channels life in specific cultural patterns. It is a missionary principle to speak the language of the native. In this respect the entire Bible Institute movement falls desperately short. And, although it no longer exists as a movement in the USA it is still very much the pattern overseas.

In Bolivia a young man approached me and explained that after he had completed three years of public schooling, a nearby Bible Institute had “stolen” three years of his life. After attending there three more years he did not emerge with a sixth grade diploma recognizable by the government. Now he was unable even to get a job in a car repair shop.

In a South East Asian country recently a faculty member of a Bible college shared with me the tragic fact that after graduating from this Bible college, students were unable to enroll in the national university. The units and degree structure did not conform to the pattern of society.

Once it is understood that we have to present both the Book of Revelation and the Book of Creation, we still need to package that education in recognizable packages. Recognizable to whom? To the world, of course. It is a desperate mistake to suppose that a parallel but equal system is the answer.

The most extensive major cultural tradition ever developed in history is

the university pattern. If Christianity has won astonishingly wide expansion into the world’s cultures, the university has even more greatly succeeded. The thousands of college-graduate missionaries of the famed Student Volunteer Movement often thought that universities were part and parcel of the Kingdom of God, and did not always understand the strategy of what we call church planting. Their universities were often so successful that they attracted a mountain of non-Christians, and eventually lost their faith, just as happened with hundreds of colleges about the same time in the USA. That is something surely to be feared and guarded against.

But is the answer to set up a separate system and offer non-standard credits and non-descript degrees which are not recognized in the larger society? Joel Carpenter’s recent study, “The New Universities” demonstrates that if the missionaries are not going to establish university institutions, national believers will. When I left Guatemala in 1966 the first Evangelical university in Latin America in many a year had just been established. Now it has 30,000 students. Now there are twelve other Evangelical-origin new universities down through the hemisphere. Carpenter’s study finds 41 “new universities” world wide in the same category. This is not something that is going away.

Perspective Eleven: The Religion of Science

This frontier has been mentioned in passing under the needed revolution in pastor training. However, it eminently deserves to be considered a frontier in its own right.

This is the largest remaining frontier, and it is, ironically, the result in part of the very intellectual vigor of the Christian faith. This frontier is the science community, *which is now as global as the Christian faith itself*. It is a faith. All effective scientific endeavors are dependent totally, not on a “method,” but a *faith in the existence of order in nature*. This is a uniquely Biblical insight. It came with the Christian faith.

However, it is as though the Book of Creation and the Book of Scripture have each spawned a global faith community, and that to most of the adherents of either faith, the “other” is clearly—if not fearfully and harmfully—invalid. Millions of earnest souls around the world have been challenged and awed by each of the two books, and have been captured by profound belief in them. They are often so confident of the glory they have found that anyone from the “other” side who questions the glory they perceive is automatically assumed to be blind and or faithless.

This is not to say that a large minority of each of these two faith communities does not partake in various ways of the cultural tradition of the other. There are, for example, many scientists who are church goers. They may have no where near as profound a faith as they do in the truth and beauty of their scientific experience. There are also many Bible believing people who are happy with science and technology but who do not regard it as a holy experience comparable to what they find in the Word or at church.

More troublesome by far are those zealots on each side who actually seek to tear down faith on the other side. We think of people like Carl Sagan or Richard Dawkins, for whom confidence in the Bible is ridiculous, or some of the zealous believers in the Book of Scripture who actually twist scripture in their attempt to dethrone science. I refer to a quoting of Psalm 19:3 as saying (speaking of the handiwork of God in creation) that there is no speech or language where their voice is [not] heard. By leaving out the negative the Bible is on their side against science!

Obviously the Book of Scripture extensively attributes a revelation of God’s glory to what we call *general revelation*. Paul, in Romans chapter one, seems to present the ultimate summary of the power of *general revelation*. He goes on to imply in chapter two that there are gentiles that “do by nature the things the law requires” without ever seeing or hearing from Scripture.

Whether or not we can readily make these statements congruent with our popular formulas for getting to heaven, these gropings of faith are extremely significant in missions in regard to foundations on which to build. Various religious faiths contain ambiguous mixtures of truth and nonsense. Yet we do not do well to ignore anything which is true, no matter where we find it.

In fact, perhaps the most classic of all missionary mistakes is the perspective with which Abraham dealt with Abimelech. Why, Abimelech asked, did Abraham tell a lie and try to deceive him? Because, Abraham said, “I said to myself there is no fear of God in this place.” Instead of expecting to find that the Holy Spirit is in contact with all peoples, and building upon that foundation to the extent he might, Abraham presumed that all virtue was on his side and that Abimelech could not have possessed any spiritual foundation to build upon.

Thus, in crossing this frontier into the realm of science we must not ignore the presence of the Holy in the very world of science. If we can be people whose devotion to the living God is richly nourished by both books we can respect the genuine beginnings of belief in the lives of many if not most scientists, we can rejoice in the faith they have, which will give them reason to hear of another kind of faith.

But it is not as simple as that. Zealots on both sides have erected high walls to dichotomize and polarize the two Books. Simple, honest inquiry across this frontier is thus as uncommon as it is unusual.

On the other hand, it would seem to be, inherently, the easiest of all frontiers to cross, as well as having the greatest potential in terms of communicating with the entire world. Just think—no translation needed! We need ourselves to love His Word and His Works, and we need to share the manifest glory from both of those books if we wish to cross this huge, gargantuan frontier.

But are these frontiers?

Looking back on these shifts of perspective, how many of these things can readily and feasibly be called *frontiers*

of missiology? Of some value might be the following definition:

Mission frontiers, like other frontiers, represent boundaries or barriers beyond which we must go yet beyond which we may not be able to see clearly and boundaries which may even be disputed or denied. Their study involves the discovery and evaluation of the unknown or even the reevaluation of the known. But unlike other frontiers, *mission frontiers* is a subject specifically concerned to explore and exposit areas and ideas and insights related to the glorification of God in all the nations (peoples) of the world, “to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God.” (Acts 26:18)

But let’s examine these some of these issues.

What about number two—the idea of the Great Commission in the Old Testament. That’s not the usual kind of frontier. But for me it has certainly been. I have often referred to this insight as the greatest intellectual revolution in my life. The whole Bible is completely different because of that one new understanding. It has really made the Bible much more precious and significant to me. Since then I have studied the Bible far more than in all of my life before, and so it is a frontier of thinking for me even if it might not go over well to some as a “frontier.” Note that it is one of the mind-blowing elements of our *Perspectives* course.

By contrast, to say that there is a whole huge number of peoples yet to be reached—that does sound like a frontier. But, of course, to say that all these peoples can be reached readily now may reduce that frontier to just a sort of need for further encouragement.

However, in number seven, to suggest that there are situations where we may need to make a major shift, giving up our “form” of Christianity—so-called in order for the Biblical faith to penetrate Hinduism, *that* is still a frontier. That’s the radical decontextualization frontier, and I don’t think we need to pussyfoot about it. That perspective itself is not totally new, and we can safely say that both the frontier of the *unreached* peoples as well as the new

frontier of the supposedly *reached* peoples must now be re-addressed with a truly Biblical form of Christian faith that makes sense of them. Here, then, are two major frontiers.

In fact, the latter involves zillions of more individuals than there are contained in the remaining unreached peoples, which is a relatively small number. I did some calculations on AD2000's 242 "untargeted" groups. I came up with a total population of only 15 million people. Then I looked at all the smaller unreached groups—the 4,000 or so groups smaller than 10,000 in population. As mentioned earlier, they only constitute another 1.5 million people. So we're talking about a total of merely 16.5 million people in all of AD2000's 242 "untargeted" groups in the world! Is that a big number? It is only 1/300th of the world's population! While this is not a huge frontier it is still a pressing challenge.

Someone might say,

Just because there are only a few remaining "untargeted" groups does not mean that all other groups are actually reached—that is, already having a "people movement to Christ." There are still some massive larger unreached groups. AD2000 could be wrong.

That is perhaps true since they do run up to 10 or 15 million in some cases, like the Juang in South China. But even so, we have our arms around the task. But it's only a bowling ball; it's not one of these great huge balls that people push back and forth on a field that are 15 feet high. This is a manageable ball, and it's a frontier still, admittedly. It is not less important because we are now also talking about the frontier of radical decontextualization—one of two major dimensions of frontiers.

And then, of course, the fifth step—could you call it a frontier if you are trying to disentangle Biblical faith from our own Christian tradition? I certainly think so. I'm not sure how many are involved in trying to do so, or at least with that terminology.

I do not doubt that numbers six and seven are *frontiers*. Certainly eight is. Eleven, I will grant you, is a sociological rather than an ethnic reality, and it is a frontier in a slightly different sense. But does it matter whether *frontier* is the best word for it or not? It is pressing, it has been grossly neglected, it is perfectly enormous, it looks like one of the easiest and most thrilling frontiers to cross. All a new perspective on a frontier means is that this is something that throws light on our path into the future. The future is itself a frontier, after all. **IJFM**

Show Me God: What the Message from Space is Telling Us about God.

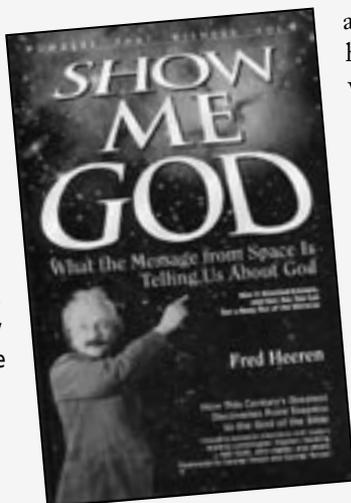
By Fred Heeren. Wheeling, Illinois: Searchlight Publications. 1995, 336 pp., ISBN 1885849516

—Reviewed by Ralph D. Winter

The retired president of the Western Conservative Baptist Seminary in Portland, Earl Radmacher, says,

Heeren has faithfully brought together the two books of God (natural and special revelation) in a captivating way which provides not only deep appreciation of our God but also a very practical way to "be ready to give a defense" (1 Peter 3:15) for the hope that is in us.

George Verwer writes the foreword. The fact that this powerful book straddles the great divide between "the two books" of God makes it my kind of a book. This is how we all should be thinking.



However, it is also a marvelously edited book, lavishly illustrated with very readable graphics all the way through. Very comprehensive, it covers a very wide range of the kinds of questions sceptics wrestle with and which Evangelicals find hard to answer.

It must have taken years to accumulate the many fascinating scientific facts it trundles out and to consider their meaning for balanced belief in today's highly "scientized" world.

It is just the thing for young and old who become, or who might be confronted by, raw scientific disbelief and wonder what the Christian answer is for those issues.

Heeren is an outstanding Christian and science writer and has given us

a popular but profound book which is very accessible.

The endorsement at Gabriel Resources, which handles it, is:

Show Me God is a rare chance to hear about the latest space discoveries from the discoverers themselves—and to learn how their findings affect life's big questions. With the help of today's foremost astronomers and cosmologists, Fred Heeren examines how their discoveries affect the big questions about creation, the fine-tuning of the universe, the likelihood of extraterrestrials, why we're here, and the nature of God.

This 336-page hardcover book retailing at \$16.99 is only \$7.50 at Gabriel Resources/WCL. To contact them, their web site is www.wclbooks.com, email gabriel@wclbooks.com, or PO Box 1047, Waynesboro, GA 30830. Or you can order toll-free at 1-800-MISSION. See the William Carey Library ad in this issue of IJFM for more details.