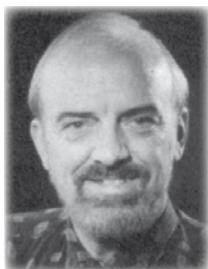


# A Tribute to Hans Weerstra

by IJFM Editorial Staff



Hans Weerstra, who was editor of the *IJFM* for nine years leading up to AD 2000, succumbed to cancer and died on April 25, 2011, at the age of 75. He is survived by Judy, his wife, who worked fully in tandem with Hans on the production of this journal, and by his six children and eighteen grandchildren.

Hans hailed from the Netherlands, where his family had played a significant role in the underground movement that rescued and provided asylum for Jewish families during WWII. They were given prestigious recognition both by Israel and by President Eisenhower, which gained their passage to the USA (Holland, Michigan) when Hans was just 13 years old.

Hans was ordained in the Christian Reformed Church when he graduated from Calvin College in 1964, and received his doctorate from Fuller Theological Seminary in 1972. From 1964–1983 he served in the Yucatan and Oaxaca regions of southern Mexico among the indigenous Mayan, Zapotec and Mixtec peoples in church planting and Bible distribution. Hans then directed the Spanish language school for YWAM from 1984 to 1991. Hans arrived well-equipped to provide editorial leadership for this journal from 1991 to 2000, first as managing editor, then starting in *IJFM* 10:1, as senior editor. He and his wife Judy also served for many years with the Southwest Center for World Mission in El Paso, TX.

Hans stepped into the *IJFM* role when the AD 2000 movement was building steam in the 1990's. To catch Hans' perspective on mission, you simply need to read his last article, a retrospective view of his mission priorities when he was editor (*A Call for Worldview Transformation*, 25:3). Many of his editorial concerns carried into the following decade under the editorship of Ralph Winter. It was Hans who early on saw the need to "de-Westernize" the gospel. Here's a sample of his perspective on Islamic contextualization that is still debated in our publication today:

In the issue on Islamic contextualization (17:1), I felt the urgent need of the hour was to understand Jesus' identity in broader terms than his Sonship. If this critical facet can be resolved (within biblical parameters, of course), it can function like a key that can open the entire Muslim population to the saving grace of Christ. When such vast numbers of people stumble at a term we use, and exclude themselves from the Kingdom, might there be an aspect of the title "Son of God" that is more suited to their understanding and their need? We, after all, hold the keys to the kingdom. Let's choose the right one, for heaven's sake!

There was always a Kingdom-minded scope to Hans' editorial vision that could weave together such disparate subjects as worldview, mission structures, nomadic peoples, and tent-making. And he was the only editor to introduce an entire issue on the Buddhist world. His mission compass was comprised of three clear overall objectives that pulsed through each of the *IJFM* issues under his leadership:

- Theological maturity in the cross cultural setting
- Missiological maturity in the presentation of the gospel
- Spiritual maturity in the fight against the powers and principalities of wickedness

Hans was a Kingdom-minded guy, and he and Judy were a Kingdom-minded couple. (Just read Judy's blog: [talithacumhome.blogspot.com/2011/05/formal-obituary\\_07.html](http://talithacumhome.blogspot.com/2011/05/formal-obituary_07.html) and other entries.) We will certainly miss Hans' perceptive blend of spiritual and missiological insight, and his passion! The *IJFM* staff salute him for his tireless service to this journal, and we praise God for a life well spent. **IJFM**

## IJFM issues during Hans Weerstra's tenure as senior editor

- 10:1 Report of the 1992 ISFM Annual Meeting
- 10:3 Buddhism
- 10:4 Spiritual Warfare I
- 11:1 Training for the Frontiers
- 11:2 Islam I
- 11:3 Church in Missions
- 11:4 World Evangelization
- 12:1 Adopt-A-People
- 12:2 Reaching Non-Literate Peoples
- 12:3 Contextualization
- 12:4 Mission Member Care
- 13:1 Biblical Mandate
- 13:2 Completing the Task
- 13:3 Islam II
- 13:4 Islam III
- 14:1 Worldview I
- 14:2 Worldview II
- 14:3 Tentmaking I
- 14:4 Tribal Peoples I
- 15:1 Tentmaking II
- 15:2 Tribal Peoples II
- 15:3 New Religious Movements
- 15:4 Spiritual Warfare II
- 16:1 Y2K and Missions
- 16:2 AD2000: Completing the Task
- 16:3 Mission Paradigm Shifts
- 16:4 De-Westernizing the Gospel
- 17:1 Muslim Contextualization
- 17:2 Nomadic Peoples I
- 17:3 Nomadic Peoples II
- 17:4 Islam IV