



How the IJFM Got Started: The Early Players What Were They Thinking?

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by Gordon Aeschliman

A journal for Activists? That's what it is. Today the world is experiencing the emergence of thousands of people who intend to pour their lives into church planting among Unreached Peoples. These activists believe that Christ's call to Him is a call to absolute submission to whatever His desires are and they have an optimism that believes every tribe, tongue and nation will be met with the incarnate love of Jesus Christ our Lord.

One thing history teaches us however is that movements cannot be sustained by energy alone. The importance of biblical moorings as the basis for activism is brought home strongly in the example of the demise of the Student Volunteer Movement. What was strong conviction at the turn of the century eventually eroded to an empty system that had no hope to offer. A slow but certain shift from the clear biblical mandate as the basis for action caused an international network of thousands of laborers, who were committed to making Jesus Christ Lord of the nations, crumble into a loose confederation of people unsure of their spiritual heritage.

The JOURNAL speaks to this need. Each issue will present God's unquenching heart for all the nations to know Him and thus constantly build into its readers a firm biblical foundation for action.

A second lesson from history is that zealots are not always quick to receive good training before acting. The JOURNAL intends to encourage the emerging leadership to add knowledge to zeal. Proverbs 19:3 states, "It is not good to have zeal without knowledge; those who make haste will stray from the path."

A hallmark of this new international student movement has to be that its leaders sit at the feet of elders who have gone before. Each issue of the JOURNAL will communicate current missiological thought plus general cross-cultural principles that have been distilled through time.

Third, the JOURNAL will help mold the task of mobilizing laborers into a well thought-out, Spirit-filled discipline. MISSIOLOGY was created to formulate the scattered thinking of cross-cultural principles into a respected, effective science. The same needs to be done in the field of mobilizing. Leaders need to be encouraged to go beyond haphazard, kick-in-the-pants approaches of mobilizing laborers for the field. The JOURNAL will serve leaders who have a passion for God's heart and for the lost and in this regard the JOURNAL goes far beyond a publication that might simply call for cerebral exercise.

And those who believe that God's kingdom will spread to all peoples, and who understand their task as the triumphant work of completing what He set out to do, will find themselves at home, equipped, challenged, stimulated and encouraged as they dive into these pages and those to come in subsequent issues. **IJFM**

Editor's note: Gordon Aeschliman founded the *International Journal of Frontier Missions* and edited its first issue.

Bio from the original 1984 article:
Gordon Aeschliman directs the ISLCFM which publishes the *International Journal of Frontier Missions*. He is also Editor and Publisher of *World Christian Magazine*.