

# Training *FOR CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRIES*

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## Beyond Basic Competencies FOCUSSING TRAINING TO REACH THE UNREACHED

by Bryan Johnson

Evangelical training theologies and practices have been greatly helped by the activities of the World Evangelical Fellowship Missions Commission. For many years, I have used the research of this Commission to develop the curriculum of New Covenant International Bible College in Auckland, New Zealand, as an international school of urban mission and church planting. Our primary focus is to train pioneer church planters for transformational ministries in the least evangelised cities of the world. This is a very complex task that many have tried and failed.

It seems that we Evangelicals have been singularly unsuccessful in church planting in the areas of the world dominated by Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism (D. Wagner, 1996). At least 100 cities in the 10/40 window have a Christian population of less than 0.01%. The few churches in these cities have been there for centuries and have faced such severe persecution that they have a fortress mentality. The likelihood of renewed approaches to evangelism and church planting coming from these churches is remote. In 200 years of mission in India, there are still 583,000 villages (out of a total of 600,000 villages in India) that have no church (Vargis, 1999).

A factual analysis of the current progress in the evangelisation of the globe will conclude that in the last 200 years the modern Evangelical move-

ment has largely focussed on the easy-to-reach animistic peoples of the world in rural contexts. In spite of the fact that the global missionary force has grown to 420,000 (Barrett & Johnson, 2000), the resistant Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist societies remain mostly untouched. The 2 billion people of the world locked in the prisons of these religious systems continue to remain unmoved by God's love.

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If those we train are unable to do the work needed to develop indigenous churches amongst the least evangelised unreached peoples, then our training is missing the mark.

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There are several reasons for this lack of response, one of which is our training methods and the resultant approaches to evangelism. Grappling with the reasons that we have failed in this most important area of modern mission, I had to conclude that our training was missing the mark in some areas. If those we train are unable to do the work needed to develop indigenous churches

amongst the least evangelised unreached peoples, then our training is missing the mark.

### Re-Focussing Training

How can we re-focus our training? Through close observation and research of our graduates in the last few years, I have identified four areas that are missing in most training programs:

#### 1. Loss of ethnocentrism

The supervised loss of ethnocentrism is a challenging aspect of training, because the trainer wants trainees to value the role of culture in evangelism and church planting, yet on the other hand, the trainees need to lose their ethnocentrism. The loss of ethnocentrism brings about such a powerful change in trainees' lives that they become open to change in most other areas of life. Cross-cultural, contextual church planting amongst Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists is so challenging that it requires people who think outside the box of past experience.

In the May 2000 issue of this newsletter, Thomas Schirmacher (2000) discussed the lack of holism in Evangelical training. Dr. Lee Wanak (1999) also discussed this

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Bryan Johnson

Missions  
Commission



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## BEYOND BASIC COMPETENCIES

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important issue in his paper presented at the Fourth General Assembly of the Asia Pacific Theological Association in Sydney, Australia, September 26 to October 1, 1999. Perhaps we are missing the importance of studying biblical social values and their meaning (Pilch & Malina, 1993) in the biblical subjects of our training centers. The Hebrew culture was—and still is—based on a holistic worldview (Pilch & Malina, 1993). Students of the Bible should make this discovery. The historical setting of Evangelicalism, distinguishing itself from other Christian theologies, has placed an over-emphasis on the role of doctrine in one's life and experience. Beliefs not lived out remain cognitive only. It is only when beliefs become values in the affective domain that our lifestyle starts to reflect what we believe (Neighbour, 1989).

### 2. Teaching of world religions

A practical example of the unbalanced approach has been our method of teaching world religions. Most seminaries I have dialogued with teach Islam for the purpose of assuring the student that Christianity is superior to Islam. This is a cognitive approach and is alarmingly susceptible to arrogance. The mission approach to Islam must surely involve the development of a mutual respect for the reasons Muslims believe in Islam. The Islamic worldview gives millions of people an explanation for every aspect of life (Cooper, 1993). A genuine appreciation of this belief system will enable a Christian to create a common understanding about aspects of the spiritual world (D. K. Smith, 1992).

From this point, relationship can develop until differences can be discussed in the context of loving understanding and appreciation of one another. The resultant inter-religious dialogue will build mutual appreciation of one another's faith. At the appropriate time, the Christian can give good account of why he or she believes in Christ, and the Muslim can come to understand the truth about Christianity. The *ummah* of the Muslim world needs to be exposed to the *ummah* of Christianity (Parshall, 1994), and the reality of the love in the community

will be revealed (Acts 2:41-47; 1 John 3:1-24). Confrontational cognitive methods of sharing faith with Muslims do not develop relationships with Muslims.

At New Covenant International Bible College, our model of teaching world religions involves cognitive study, followed by supervised inter-faith dialogue in both the mosque and the college. Students learn how to build a relationship with Muslims and then dialogue with them in a way that is sensitive and appreciative of their religious worldview. Only people who have learned to lose their ethnocentrism and religious-centrism can do these things successfully. The resulting friendships form relationships that can cross over even the most difficult barriers. Such friendships also fulfill Jesus' second commandment (Matt. 22:38-40).

### 3. Areas of restricted access

The least evangelised cities of the world are in countries that do not issue missionary visas. Tentmaking skills and marketplace ministries are essential for missionaries to these cities. Prospective church planters must learn to live in the tension between family time, devotional time with God, work time, and the ministry of church planting which may be taking place in the workplace. New Covenant tries to emulate all these factors in its training program by requiring students to work 10-15 hours per week, study 25 hours per week, attend lectures 16 hours per week, be involved in small groups for ministry, and participate in prayer groups for unreached people groups. Since the college is not a residential facility, students experience cross-cultural living in the community. They also participate in a church ministry activity each week. The idea that a residential college emulates a missionary team community is a myth. A careful study of most residential colleges shows that most trainees stay within the relationship bounds of their own cultures. A non-residential approach with supervised cross-cultural living arrangements in the community makes for a much more typical missionary experience.

The model described above subjects the trainees to the pressure of prioritising time allocation. Students learn to be accountable for their time over three years,

and graduates testify to the benefit this produces in their lives after graduation. There is no "phasing back into society" in this training model. In fact, in the last year of the three years of training, students begin a church-planting project amongst a people of a different culture and a different religion to themselves. This project paves the way for them to participate in mentored church planting as soon as they graduate. This cross-cultural training activity serves as mission training for graduates moving on to the least evangelised cities of the 10/40 window. Auckland City has 220 nationalities of people amongst its 1.1 million residents (I. Smith, 1999).

### 4. Urban church planting

Training in cross-cultural urban church planting methods is essential for church planters to succeed in the least evangelised cities. Traditional rural church planting models based on buildings and spectator-type activities will make church planting in cities very slow. Students need to actually do the task of church planting under the supervision of experienced mentors. In recent times, this mission strategy is being called "shadow mission." The experienced mentor remains incognito, and the trainees do all the ministry activity in church planting while being trained by the mentor. The urban models accentuate small groups and communities meeting from house to house or in the workplace, together with the development of networks. The form of the church needs to be innovative and indigenous, so it does not attract undue persecution and so it can gain a foothold in resistant urban societies. Trainees need to know how to push the boundaries of contextualisation without crossing into syncretism. During training, trainees need to be able to appreciate traditional church structures which they may attend. Personal critical evaluation is helpful, but if it spills over into open criticism of existing structures, it can become self-defeating.

### Competencies Analysis Process

Research into the training process by my colleagues Viv Grigg and Dr. John Kirkpatrick, both graduates of Fuller Theological Seminary, has assisted New

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Covenant International Bible College in formulating a competencies analysis process that includes four sections not included in the process outlined in the WEF consultations. They are:

1. Inter-faith skills
2. Tentmaking and marketplace skills
3. Linguistic orientation
4. Contextual urban church planting skills

A graduate's report on competencies becomes an additional document to the official transcript of the college and provides a very accurate and detailed assessment of learning competencies.

These competencies have been analysed against a definition of a pioneer missionary as a cross-cultural worker gifted with apostolic, prophetic, pastoral, teaching, evangelistic (Eph. 4:11), and diakonate (1 Tim. 2:1-13) gifts and qualities (Rumble, 1982). These qualities and gifts can be expressed in the contexts of either Christian ministry, community organisations, or commercial organisations. The capacity to develop relationships, evangelise, disciple, plant small groups, and build teams is the funnel—the integrating competency—that these gifts express in multiple styles of ministry.

Further evaluation of the competencies breaks them down into skills, knowledge, values, and character categories, so that the appropriate method of training can be provided. The evaluation documents that are used for this process are 18 pages long and cannot be included in this article. Readers interested in a copy of these competency profiles can download them from the Internet, using the download icon in the middle of the article entitled, "Focussing Training for the Task," at [www.ncibc.ac.nz/htm/articles\\_page.htm](http://www.ncibc.ac.nz/htm/articles_page.htm).

In all contexts, graduates are required to develop skills in creating small groups, larger group dynamics, and team building to the level of forming embryonic communities of faith or organisations. Further development is dependent on primary spiritual gifting. The diakonate qualities listed in 1 Timothy 2 and Titus 1 are the foundation for godly character undergirding any ministry development. The emerging primary spiritual gifts iden-

tify the trainee as an evangelist, pastor, teacher, or any combination of these. The exercise of these ministries will in time identify the apostolic and prophetic gifts of a maturing trainee. The apostle identifies roles of mobilising, overseeing, and leading multi-cultural teams of urban church-planting pioneers or church leaders. The prophetic role is identified through public leadership and publications; discerning strongholds; envisioning directions and guiding cross-cultural communities of faith; and calling forth workers and new structures to facilitate these visions.

In the pioneer mission context, these ministries should reflect the unique adaptation of indigeneity, urbanisation, and multi-cultural processes to produce new expressions of cultural and religious diversity. They should also be able to deliver ministries to a wide range of cultures, empowering the disenfranchised and/or indigenous groups within ministry, service organisation, and commercial contexts.

The ongoing search for training models that are effective in the least evangelised cities of the world has resulted in the development of a two-year undergraduate Diploma in Cross-Cultural Communication at New Covenant International Bible College. We are most interested in dialogue with other trainers grappling with the development of effective training models. **C**

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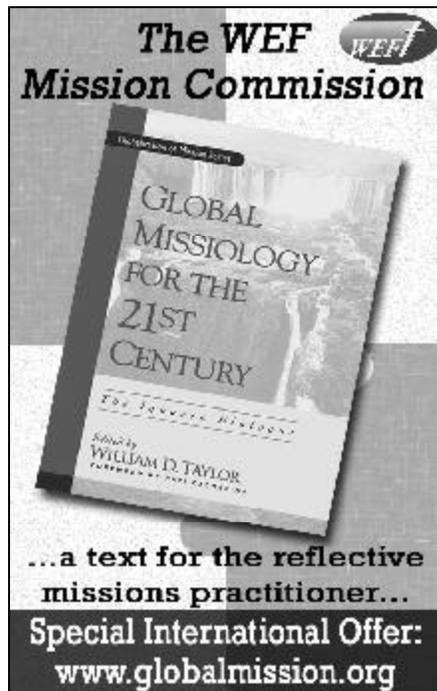
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ordained elders at a surprisingly early stage in the work—usually the first converts (Acts 14:22-23). Typically, he remained for only a short time in one area, for he expected the elders to carry on his work. His longest stay in one area, three and a half years, was in Ephesus, and that was probably punctuated by long interruptions (Warnecke & Schirrmacher, 1992).

The Epistles to the Thessalonians are the most beautiful testimony that not only Paul, but also his colleagues, Silvanus and Timothy, not only preached the gospel, but were prepared to share their own lives (1 Thess. 2:8) as models. Naturally, all three proclaimed with words and with doctrine. Otherwise, how would their audience understand the meaning of their example? These letters demonstrate how Timothy and Silvanus, trained by Paul as their model, became models themselves for the Christians in Thessalonica, who were also to become models in their turn.

Silvanus and Timothy are included, for 1 Thessalonians 1:6 tells us, “And you became followers of us and of the Lord.” Many have found this statement offensive. How can Paul compare himself with Jesus? But the Scripture itself recommends models to emulate God’s example. And is that not always so? A child’s understanding of God depends on that of his parents, whether good or bad. Spiritual children are influenced by the good or bad example of their spiritual parents’ relationship with God. Everyone is a role model. We cannot choose whether we want to be an example or not, but only between being a good example or a poor one. Every church leader and every politician are examples and can only choose what kind of example they want to be. This is particularly true for theological training.

### Doctrine and Life, Model and Imitation in the Letters to the Thessalonians

**1 Thessalonians 1:5-9** – “For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the

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## Paul and His Colleagues

by Thomas Schirrmacher

In the May 2000 issue of *Training*, Thomas Schirrmacher discussed Jesus’ role as a master educator and trainer. In this article, he continues the theme of training in the Scriptures by looking at the training done by the Apostle Paul.

Besides Jesus and the Twelve, the best-known example for a discipling process which includes life and instruction, teaching and counseling, pattern and imitation is Paul’s work with his colleagues, which we know only from a few “chains of role models.”

### Examples of

#### Chains of Role Models

Following are some examples of chains of role models:

- Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges – Moses → Joshua → the elders
  - 1 Peter 5:1-3 – Jesus → Peter → the elders → the disciples
  - 2 Timothy 2:2 – Paul → Timothy → “faithful men” → “others also”
  - 1 Thess. 1:6-7 – Paul → Timothy and Silvanus → Thessalonians → province of Achaia → the whole earth

Paul did not work alone but was accompanied by assistants or colleagues (Acts 17:15, for example), who received spiritual training while with him. Before beginning his evangelistic work in Ephesus, he waited until his colleagues had arrived: “When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ” (Acts 18:5). Even after he, the apostle, had dreamed of a man calling him to Macedonia, he consulted with the others before starting the journey: “Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them” (Acts 16:10). These assistants were generally people he had led to Christ and had trained from the very beginning—Timothy (Acts 16:1-3), Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19). There were “apostles of the churches” as well (2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25), missionaries sent to take responsibility for the churches Paul had founded (Schirrmacher, 1993, Vol. 1, pp. 291-299).

Besides his assistants, Paul concentrated on training other disciples, especially the elders of the new churches. He

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word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God."

**1 Thessalonians 2:7-12** – "But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into his own kingdom and glory."

**1 Thessalonians 2:14** (to the church in Thessalonica) – "For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans."

**2 Thessalonians 3:7** – "For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you."

**2 Thessalonians 3:9** – "not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us."

### Paul's Colleagues

There are many studies about Paul's opponents, but his friends and colleagues have been greatly ignored (Ollrog, 1979, p. 3). There are two publications on Paul's colleagues, both written from a different point of view (Ollrog, 1979; Bönig, 1980). Wolff-Henning Ollrog as-

sumes that Paul's use of many assistants was not made by a random decision but by a deliberate missionary strategy. Beginning with the historical information given in the New Testament and a study of the terminology *synergos* ("colleague"), this revised dissertation arrives at three circles of assistants: the closest colleagues, who accompanied Paul continually; the independent colleagues, who aided him in specific, "chance" situations; and the envoys of the local churches, delegated by their congregations to accompany the apostle in order to take part in his missionary efforts.

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and fruitful training  
occur when spiritually  
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Christians concentrate  
on a small group of  
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life and instruction  
until the children have  
become independent  
adults, themselves  
capable of taking on  
responsibility for others.

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The last-mentioned group made cooperation possible between congregation, assistants, and missions. Ollrog concludes with a study of the theologies of the individual and a discussion of Paul's evaluation of them. The book opens new fields of investigation and uncovers relationships overlooked by traditional studies, but it is unfortunately fragmentary, since the writer rejects 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians, and the pastoral letters (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus) as non-Pauline (Ollrog, 1979, p. 1), thus ignoring quite a bit of material. Many of the questions he fails to resolve could have been answered if a rigorously critical method had not eliminated authentic material. The book of Acts suffers a simi-

lar fate, for Ollrog fails to take it seriously, although he considers it to be the work of Luke. Ollrog always seems to know why Luke supposedly distorted his facts.

This last problem does not occur in Bönig's (1980) book. Concentrating on their relationship to the apostle, the writer describes 16 of Paul's assistants. Although Bönig provides an excellent study derived from a thorough study of all New Testament sources, he fails to consider Paul's strategy in his choice of methods. Again, we encounter the old problem: the liberal critic provides an excellent study which opens new dimensions of the New Testament, but he ignores too much material to break through traditional barriers; while a conservative author gives us a work which is edifying but insufficient. Until it becomes possible to unite academic thoroughness and conservative interpretation, the interested reader must read both books and reap the best out of them.

### Ongoing Discipling

One might object that this intensive sharing of life and work with a small number of spiritual children is restricted to Jesus and to Paul. 2 Timothy 2:2 refutes this assumption, however, by commanding discipling as an ongoing program for church and missions: "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." Jesus' example is made into an obligatory training program. Christ's church expands through the intensive occupation of mature, spiritually minded Christians with small groups of believers, not by the attempts of one responsible leader who tries to do justice to dozens, hundreds, or even thousands at once. True spiritual growth and fruitful training occur when spiritually minded, mature Christians concentrate on a small group of spiritual children, with whom they share life and instruction until the children have become independent adults, themselves capable of taking on responsibility for others. This is the best way to fulfill the Great Commission to "... make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:18-20).

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### Definition of Discipling

The following definition is an adapted version of the definition in Hadidian (1979, p. 29). The book is a good introduction to discipling in the local church. Every line describes a major point.

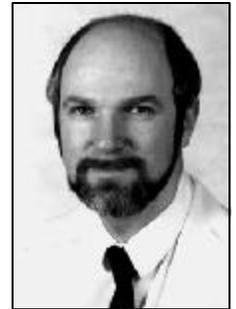
- Discipling others
- is the process
- by which a Christian with
- life worth emulating
- commits himself
- for an extended period of time
- to a few individuals
- who have been won to Christ,
- the purpose being
- to aid
- and to guide
- their growth to spiritual maturity,

- so that they can reproduce themselves
- in a third spiritual generation,
- which they build up through discipling. c

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# Update on Grassroots and Missionary Training in India

by C. Barnabas

The Indian Institute of Missiology (IIM) conducted two consultations in July 2000, one on grassroots level training and the other on missionary training. Below is a brief report on these consultations, along with information about an induction course which will be held in February 2001 for the trainers of grassroots training in India.

### Consultation on Grassroots Training

IIM organised a consultation on grassroots level training on July 5-6, 2000, at Balasore, India, an historical place where hundreds of grassroots level workers were trained in 1993 for planting churches all over Orissa. Forty-five leaders and trainers representing 32 missions and grassroots level training institutions attended the consultation. This consultation was organised to evaluate grassroots level training in India and to identify effective methods of training and empowering workers to plant churches in the rural, urban, and tribal areas.

In addition to being challenged regarding the importance of grassroots level training, the delegates were pre-

sented with curriculum models and were given opportunities to analyse areas such as vision, curriculum, the methodology of training, and the process of evaluation and accreditation of grassroots level training.

The participants recommended that a common curriculum for all the grassroots level institutions be produced. They also proposed core and elective subjects that can be taught in all the institutions. The consultation unanimously recommended that accreditation should be given to the grassroots level training,

and they formed a commission with six members to follow up the recommendations of the consultation. The delegates also recommended that handbooks for teachers and workbooks for students be produced for all the subjects, in stages, in all of the regional languages.

The follow-up grassroots commission met at New Delhi on September 4-5, 2000, and finalised the curriculum for grassroots level training with five core subjects and nine elective subjects, leading to a Diploma in Leadership Training

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Balasore Consultation, July 2000

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from the Senate of IIM. The commission has assigned grassroots trainers to write the course materials for all these subjects. A special seminar for the grassroots level trainers is also planned for February 2001 at Bangalore.

### Consultation on Missionary Training

Forty church leaders, mission leaders, missionary trainers, and theological college lecturers representing 25 agencies, institutions, and churches attended the consultation on missionary training held at Dimapur, India, July 7-9, 2000. The consultation was organised to consider



*Commissioning of grassroots commission members*

the role of churches and of the theological/missionary training institutions in missionary training and in missions in India.

The need for strengthening missionary training in North East India to meet the great needs in India was stressed. Papers were presented on the role of churches in missionary training, on partnership of training institutions and churches in mission, and on the role of theological colleges in missionary training.

Pursuant to recommendations made during the consultation, steps are being taken to form mobile groups in North East India to visit and motivate the churches in Nagaland and nearby states to get mission vision. Soon extension courses, short-term courses, and seminars will be organised in various levels for lay leaders and pastors to raise up people with vision for mission all over that area.

A separate research and library centre for missions will be established in Dimapur, since such facilities are not currently available in North East India.

Praise God for the findings and the outcomes of these two consultations. Please pray for their outcomes and effective follow-up.

### Induction Course for Grassroots Trainers

A special induction course for grassroots trainers is scheduled to be held in Bangalore, India, February 6-10, 2001. The theme of the course is, "Come learn ... Go teach" (2 Tim. 2:2). The main thrust will be to equip the grassroots trainers by exposing them to the new curriculum and the course materials prepared for grassroots training, and to motivate them to teach the subject with the burden of raising grassroots workers with passion and concern to fulfil their task.

The purpose of the induction course is to bring together 30-40 grassroots train-



*Leaders of Indian Institute of Missiology*

ers and enable them to understand the importance of their role in training and empowering the grassroots workers in large numbers. The course will also equip, expose, and motivate them for effective teaching and training.

We expect the induction course to provide a time for the grassroots level trainers to spend time with those who finalised the curriculum and the course materials for grassroots training. We also desire that the trainers gain a vision and burden for training and for planting churches.

We believe that this historic induction course will help to improve the quality of grassroots level training in India and will produce thousands of workers for effective church planting ministry. c



*Delegates of the Dimapur Consultation, July 2000*

# Moving the IMTF From a Mailing List To Pro-Active Membership

by Jonathan Lewis

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IMTF Coordinator

If you received this bulletin by mail, you are probably considered to be a part of the International Missionary Training Fellowship (IMTF). Dr. Ray Windsor initiated the IMTF following the WEF Missions Commission global consultation on missionary training held in Manila in July of 1989. In addition to editing the first *Training* bulletins, he also compiled the *World Directory of Missionary Training Programmes*. The second edition of this work (William Carey Library, 1995), listed over 500 programs, 281 of them with detailed profiles. This directory was the first and most thorough effort to identify missionary training programs globally and to catalog them. (The directory is available from the WEF bookstore—[www.wefbookstore.org](http://www.wefbookstore.org)—free for new paying subscribers to *Training*).

To this institutional list, the names of people involved in some aspect of missionary training began to be added. Eventually the list grew to the current 1,400 “members” of the IMTF to whom *Training for Cross-Cultural Ministries* is mailed. If you didn’t know you were a part of the IMTF, it’s because the IMTF has kept a low profile during its initial 11 years. The network has been in place, but it’s time to generate greater involvement and mutual service.

The original plan called for “a series of workshops for missionary trainers to

be conducted in association with national missions movements, and at their invitation.” To carry out this mandate, a number of International Missionary Training Associates (IMTAs) were identified, and these helped national missions movements organize and deliver workshops and seminars in countries throughout the world. Their work provided much of the material for this bulletin in the early years. I came on staff with the Missions Commission in 1992, and in addition to serving as an IMTA in Latin America, I was assigned the task of editing the *Training* bulletin.

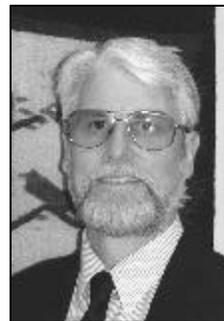
It is my growing conviction that it is time to move the IMTF from a mailing list to a proactive network of people involved in missionary training. There is no question that the research, training, and publications of the IMTF and its Associate corps over the past 10 years have contributed greatly to the development of missionary training around the globe. Unfortunately, it has been difficult to maintain the momentum exhibited in the first years of the IMTF’s existence due to increasing demands on the Missions Commission’s two-member staff, as we have sought to address other critical areas of need of the global mission enterprise. The 14-nation, Reducing Missionary Attrition study (ReMAP) was initiated in 1994 and absorbed much of our attention through those years to the ensuing publication of *Too Valuable to Lose: Exploring the Causes and Cures of Missionary Attrition* (William D. Taylor, Ed., William Carey Library, 1997). More recently, the Missions Commission has begun to address critical missiological issues (see *Global Missiology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, William D. Taylor, Ed., Baker Books, 2000). In addition, a

number of other task forces have been launched that have also required attention.

The solution to increasing the work and effectiveness of the IMTF is to have more of you involved in the work of identifying felt needs and addressing these through consultation with others and dissemination of the ideas and solutions that are generated. The *Training* bulletin is one vehicle for sharing your questions, findings, and comments with others in our global training community. As the editor of this bulletin, I have found the most difficult part of my job has been to gather enough qualifying material for each edition. The primary criterion for submissions is that the author be involved in the missionary training enterprise and that the material focus on practical aspects of this work. Although the recognized IMTAs have most often been the contributors to the bulletin, it has also been good to harvest the occasional, voluntary contribution of reports and articles from other trainers who have entered into contact with us. We welcome these initiatives and always hope for more material from our brethren in the Two-Thirds World.

In the coming months, we will consolidate our IMTF list and will begin to define it by membership categories. We will use the Internet not only to help keep this list current, but also to deliver support and materials in a number of different languages to our global membership. We will also be conducting international consultations in Asia next year and exploring ways to strengthen our other regional partners. A major publication on international missionary training is also planned for the near future.

To repeat: It is time to move from a mailing list to a proactive membership, and you can help make it happen. Contact us with your comments, suggestions, and contributions. If you wish to visit our new web site, please do so at [www.missionarytraining.com](http://www.missionarytraining.com). We are here to help you serve each other. ☐



Jonathan Lewis

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