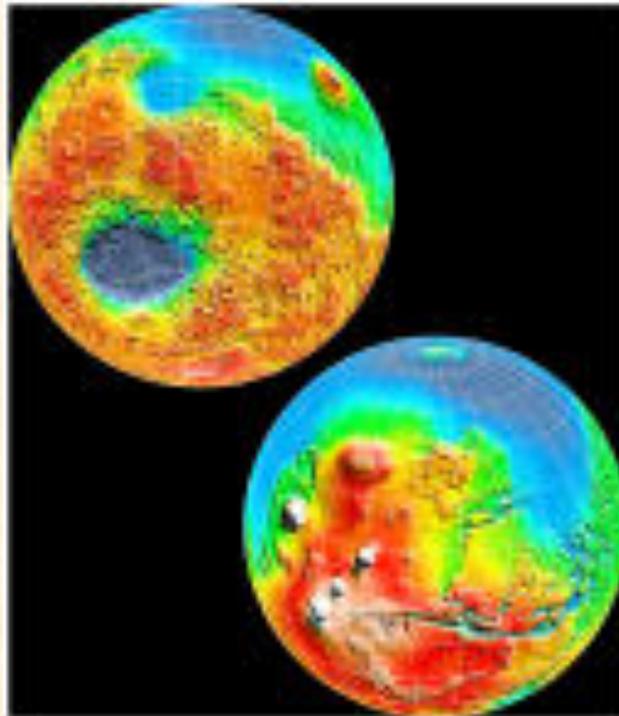


Lesson 7

Visionary missionaries:

Post colonial, postmodern, indigenous and market segmented Para-ministries outside the walls and auspices of the institutional church.

1915-2005



Mission representative of the period



Jim Rayburn: During the post WWII era, Jim joined various other saints in thinking outside of the institutional and denominational box to reach the globe and specific subsets of the globe creatively and effectively for Christ.

“It’s a sin to bore a kid with the gospel of Jesus Christ”

The essence of Rayburn

In 1938, over sixty five years ago, youth pastor Jim Rayburn walked across the street from his church in Gainesville, Texas, in order to reach the kids who didn't come to church. He and his pastor, Clyde Kennedy, worked out a plan whereby Jim would work with disinterested kids instead of those who already attended their church.

As Jim's son recounts in his biography, "Armed with a soft spot in his heart for kids, and a burning love affair with God, Jim headed for the local high school. Little did anyone suspect how far-reaching his efforts would be." This was the beginning of Young Life, which now annually impacts over one million kids.

Highlights of Jim Rayburn's story

1938, Jim Rayburn, a young Presbyterian youth leader in Gainesville, Texas, was given a challenge. A local minister invited him to consider the neighborhood high school as his parish and develop ways of contacting kids who had no interest in church.

Rayburn started a weekly club for kids. There was singing, a skit or two and a message about Jesus Christ. Club attendance increased dramatically when they started meeting in the homes of the young people.

After graduating from Dallas Seminary, Rayburn and four other seminarians collaborated, and Young Life was officially born on **October 16, 1941**, with its own Board of Trustees. They developed the club idea throughout Texas, with an emphasis on showing kids that faith in God can be fun.

By 1946, Young Life had moved to a new headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the staff had grown to 20 men and women across several states. Volunteer leadership began at Wheaton College, Illinois, in the late 1940s. This was a significant move because today we depend heavily on our 26,000 volunteers.

Prior to the 1960s, Young Life had directed its ministry almost completely to suburban high school students. By **1972** it had begun ministries in approximately 25 multiethnic and urban areas. Today, Young Life is in more than 175 urban communities meeting the unique needs of inner-city young people.

Today the goal remains the same -- to reach young people across the globe with the message of Jesus through establishing close friendships and winning the right to be heard. For more than six decades, God has blessed the YL staff, increasing its numbers from five to 3,000 -- from one club in Texas to clubs in every corner of the world. Young Life has grown from a ministry with suburban high school kids to a ministry to middle school kids, as well as kids in rural, multiethnic/urban and international areas, kids with disabilities and teen mothers.

Mission Highlights 1915 - 2005

Mid to late 19th Century – Holiness movement (shift to United states as primary sender)

Vigor amidst storm

2 World Wars and the Great Depression removed human progress

Internalization of Church

Tension between Fundamentalism versus historical criticism

Technological advances and Globalization

Increase Single women in ministry (Mary Slessor, Amy Carmichael)

Mass evangelists emerge (Billy Graham) – tent meetings

Shift to Southern hemisphere as sending center

1906 Asuza street Mission – William Seymore

Rise in Pentecostalism as a result of desire for revival, sense of dissatisfaction with traditional religion, New Testament restorative purity, catalytic leaders calling for reform, desire for greater sense of community, rapid growth and response to movements and lay ministry to meet peoples felt needs. Missionaries empowered by the Holy Spirit experienced phenomenal growth in third world settings.

Mission movements began to apply principles of indigenization and eventually work towards making the church autonomous.

Emergence of the church growth movements and people movements

Ecumenical movements- ecumenism and “non-conventional” approach in mission that pursued a dialogical attitude among cultures and faiths –hindered spread of gospel.

Contemporaries of Rayburn 1915-2005

Gladys Alward – Served with CIM – Internationally known celebrity
cared for orphans, Bible Woman in Chinese church, evangelist

J Waskom Pickett – Missionary to India (administrator, pastor and teacher)
Helped gather funding to build many churches in India, social activist
Researched on mass movements, influenced MacGavran

Roland Allen 1868-1947 Literary missional reformer(indigenous self supporting churches),
Principles: a) hand over the ministry, b) gifted people need to be recruited, c) message must be shared
with neighbors,
d) let Holy Spirit lead leaders (don't recruit from the outside), e) Church happens over time, f) Church
needs overseers

Ida Scudder 1870-1960 Life and Health of Women in India (Her dad John first medical Missionary)
She was from a family of missionaries and was called to mission by Three knocks the night:
(Brahmin, Muslim and High caste Hindu) asking for help for wives in labor, she denied help and
they died)
Entered Cornell med school and went to India
Raised money for hospital in India and trained nurses –developed mobile medical mission

William Cameron Townsend – Summer Inst of Linguistics and Wycliffe Bible Translators
Developed indigenous led translation. Independent and radical. Masked purpose in countries.
Supported religious tradition tolerance, and variety of people, education, sex and race on the field.

Bob Pierce d 1978 – Founded World Vision and Samaritan's Purse

The most effective way to present Christ was through tangible acts of love and compassion
“Let my heart be broken with the things that break the heart of God”

Donald MacGavran – 1897-1990 Standing at the sunrise of missions. Fuller School of World mission

How and why the church grows. Christian Missions as a subject. Mission Paradigms

Homogenous mission principle – communication relatability among groups with things in common

Mission objective – “to reach each culture group by planting indigenous self propagating churches in every population”

Relational ministry – most people become Christians because of Christian friends or acquaintances

Receptivity principle – send people where the winnable are winnable while they are winnable

Francis X Ford – Catholic missionary to China

Emphasis on developing native priests, sisters and lay leaders as a way to convert the native population

Prepared the way for transforming Catholic theology and methodology in Vatican II

Clarence W. Jones – Mission Potential in Radio Broadcast

HCJB from Quito, Ecuador is one of the strongest radio signals in the world and broadcasts round the clock in 15 languages

Karl Hartenstein – German missionary/theologian influence German missiology

Focused on and emphasized the return of Christ as the ultimate basis of urgency of missions –
“missions with a focus on the end”

Pentecostal Missionaries – Driven by the Early Church model and the power of the Holy Spirit

Effectively reached third world countries through the practice of the spiritual gifts, a holistic approach to ministry (including healing and deliverance), tangible experiences with the living God, a sense of urgency believing the immanent return of Jesus, indigenous leadership and attention given to poor and marginal groups.

Mother Teresa 1910 - Born Macedonia, on August 27, 1910 of Albanian descent. At the age of twelve, she felt strongly the call of God. She knew she had to be a missionary to spread the love of Christ. At the age of eighteen she left her parental home in Skopje and joined the Sisters of Loreto, an Irish community of nuns with missions in India. After a few months' training in Dublin she was sent to India, where on May 24, 1931, she took her initial vows as a nun. From 1931 to 1948 Mother Teresa taught at St. Mary's High School in Calcutta, but the suffering and poverty she glimpsed outside the convent walls made such a deep impression on her that in 1948 she received permission from her superiors to leave the convent school and devote herself to working among the poorest of the poor in the slums of Calcutta. Although she had no funds, she depended on Divine Providence, and started an open-air school for slum children. Soon she was joined by voluntary helpers, and financial support was also forthcoming. This made it possible for her to extend the scope of her work.

On October 7, 1950, Mother Teresa received permission from the Holy See to start her own order, "The Missionaries of Charity", whose primary task was to love and care for those persons nobody was prepared to look after. In 1965 the Society became an International Religious Family by a decree of Pope Paul VI.

Billy Graham Born near Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1918, Billy Graham first attended Bob Jones College, but he found both the climate and Dr. Bob's strict rule intolerable. He then followed a friend to Florida Bible Institute, where he began preaching and changed his denominational affiliation ...

For virtually every year since the 1950s, he has been a fixture on lists of the ten most admired people in America or the world. He has received both the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1983) and the Congressional Gold Medal (1996), the highest honors these two branches of government can bestow upon a civilian. Thus, it is hardly surprising that a *Ladies Home Journal* survey once ranked the famed evangelist second only to God in the category, "achievements in religion."

"As an evangelist he has preached to millions; as an evangelical he put a movement on the map". William Martin

Bill Bright The native Oklahoman described himself as a "happy pagan" when he founded Bright's California Confections in 1944, a very successful business venture. The following year, however, he was drawn to Hollywood Presbyterian Church, where he became good friends with Sunday school curriculum pioneer [Henrietta Mears](#) and became a Christian. Turning the day-to-day operations of his company over, Bright went to Princeton Theological Seminary, then to Fuller, to get all the education he could about his new faith. In 1951, Bright and his wife, Vonette, signed their famous "Contract with God" promising to be Christ's slaves, and created Campus Crusade for Christ at UCLA. He soon developed what would become the [Four Spiritual Laws](#), probably the most widely used evangelistic tract in the world (Christianity Today online Jul 21, 2003)

Film – The Jesus Film / The Passion – technology has allowed the message to be seen and heard globally

Uniqueness of this mission period

Life beyond the walls in the Post WWII world realizes what Wesley said so many years ago that “the world is (our) parish”. This period launched many courageous and creative mission efforts globally which took missions outside the boundaries of denominations and agencies.

Talk has become cheap and actions do speak louder than words. Incarnational ministry focusses on letting other know how much we care knowing that is the only way they will care how much we know.

St Francis of Assisi said it long ago “Preach the Gospel always and when necessary, use words”

Thread through Macro mission story

In this period, confident that the lost needed to hear about Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit and enabled through overwhelming changes in technology that shrunk the globe, God's people got out of the saltshaker and out into the world! As we begin the next period which has heralded Postmodern thinking, global insecurity, unique cultural market segmenting couple with a universal blending and a further connected world through technology and transportation improvements, we can look back and benefit from all the innovations (and mistakes) made in missions over the past 2000 years and continue to press on taking up the mantle that Jesus left His disciples and now leaves us with the call to go ... and so we do!

Scriptural Foundations for Rayburn's approach

Go therefore and make disciples

Matthew 28:19 (NIV)

"Walk in wisdom towards those who are without;"

Colossians 4:5 (Darby)

We love each other as a result of his loving us first.

1 John 4:19 (NLT)

Further Research highlights

John Miller, *Back To The Basics of Young Life*, (1991), *YoungLife*, Colorado Springs, CO.

"...without Christ. Therefore, they are without everything that matters. They are without hope, peace, forgiveness, direction, identity, purpose, understanding as to who they are, where they come from or, most of all, where they are going."

As John Miller says, "Therefore, [we] are to be in the posture of teaching...as we provide information that will begin to fill in the gaps and connect up their ideas of God."

Quotes from the Journal of Jim Raybrun assembled and published by Kit Sublett

In his journal in November 1944 Rayburn wrote, "This has been truly one of the great days of my life. Shortly after going to bed last night, about 1:00 a.m., I became very restless. Soon got up, read the Word and prayed. The Lord met me in such a strange and warm way as I bared my heart before him until 5:00 a.m. Then up at 6:30 and out to pray with the men. Came right back here where I spent the whole morning and most of afternoon in prayer and study." What could we accomplish if we did this today?

In his journal in 1941, Jim admonished himself, saying, "Christian fella, you have a great God-given responsibility toward the ones outside God's family, walk in wisdom towards them—behave wisely—this involves so much—remember they are in the dark—their understanding is nil—their senses are dulled—they cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God. To behave wisely towards them will involve being understanding and friendly, avoiding ugliness or criticism—always being gentle and tactful."

Mission innovations of Rayburn

adapted from the YoungLife Web page article by Chris Theule-VanDam

1) Prayer

Obviously prayer is a principle that's as effective today as it was in 1938. In fact, in today's world, prayer is even more important. Jim Rayburn was a man of prayer. In his biography it's recounted over and over again how Jim placed an emphasis on prayer and even took his staff away to solitary places to pray all night and even for a number of days at a time.

2) Walk in Wisdom towards Those Who Are Without

Jim Rayburn encouraged his young staff in the forties to "walk in wisdom towards those who are without" (Colossians 4:5 DARBY). To bring the Gospel to any teen in a meaningful and appropriate way will take time, consistency, wisdom, and God's perfect direction, along with boldness to follow through when God says to move ahead in the relationship. This is exactly what kids need today.

3)—It's a Sin to Bore a Kid with the Gospel

YoungLife Club is a safe place for kids where the adult leaders treat the kids like kings and queens. We play games, laugh a lot, sing a couple of songs that kids might have heard on the radio on the way over, and share the great news of God's love in terms they can understand. Jim once said, "When you talk to kids about the sovereign of all that is, the One who made you and everything else, the One who became one of us, the One who died for us, and the One who is alive for us today—Don't You Dare Bore Anyone With That!" He went on to say, "If you can't do this, then you need to get better acquainted with the One you are talking about."

4) - Earn the Right to Be Heard

Consistent, continual, and intentional contact work is the basis for all we do in Young Life. This is the natural result of principle number two. Adults can have friendships with kids. Teachers and administrators sometimes refute this, but it's true; kids and adults can become friends. These relationships develop over time and are the result of a consistent personal presence in the lives of kids. The outcome is trust. There are two distinct parts. First, the adult must "earn the right" and secondly, "be heard." Sometimes in Young Life we earn the right but are never heard. Sometimes youth ministries never earn the right, but make sure they're heard anyway. We need to find a healthy balance.

5) - Teach, Don't Preach

Many kids today only know bits and pieces about God's redemptive story.

Irrelevance, confusion, apathy, and fear are some of the reactions they have to thoughts about God. Have you ever been with a kid as he understood God's grace for the first time? It's amazing to see the understanding happen. This doesn't come through telling them a moral code or proper use of language or system of right and wrong. It comes through the Spirit of God moving in a kid's life, most often having an adult friend who walks alongside and teaches her about Jesus.

6) Go

A pastor once wrote, "We are no longer fishers of men but keepers of aquariums." One of the most important words that Jesus told us was, "Jim Rayburn said to "go where they are; seek them. We are God's seekers; people who look for those in hiding. We go to their turf as He came to ours. In Young Life we call this contact work and it is so clearly scriptural, so wonderfully Christlike." There are always excuses we can make and reasons we can come up with why we shouldn't go. But, God still tells us to go. Colossians 1:27 reads, "To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of his mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Amazingly, God has chosen to place the hope of Glory within us. We don't completely understand it. It truly is a mystery. But Christ literally goes to kids when we physically go to where they are: at the lunch room, in detention, at practice, in the halls before school, or any of the thousands of places where kids are.

7) Our Best Work with Kids Is Yet to Be Done

There are so many difficult circumstances that can bring us down and cause us to feel negatively about ministry to kids. The bombardment of reasons to quit can seem to come from all sides: parents, teachers, administrators, pastors, leaders, donors, and even kids. We can feel alone, frustrated, tired, and scared. Jim Rayburn and his young staff in the 1940s felt all of these, too. Still, they decided that they'd been called to the forgotten kids and that God would allow them to do their ministry better and better each year. Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 2: 3-5, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ." God can take the struggles we have in working with kids and use them to bring these very kids to Jesus. If our attitude is one of thankfulness to God for the joys and the struggles, then surely our best work with kids is yet to be done.

Movie clip illustrating the principles

Show the scene from Forrest Gump that young Forrest gets on the school bus for the first time and every kid says “seat’s taken” except Jenny who invites him to sit next to her and begins to talk and build a friendship that lasts their lifetime and transforms them.



How can Rayburn's principles be applied to the YoungLife mission today?

In our fast paced Microwave culture that we live in, we must change gears and have a crock-pot mentality when it comes to winning lost kids for Christ, it takes time to get to know kids, to earn the right to be heard and to pray for them.

Despite a rising sense of confidence and a proven history, prayer is still the fuel behind the mission of Young Life and why Jim Rayburn

We should anticipate doing greater ministry with kids this week than last week we do not need to entertain them, we cannot compete with Hollywood but we should never bore them!

So What and Now What?

How can you assure that your best youth ministry will be yet to come? Are you stuck in a YoungLife form that worked well in the seventies? Is relational ministry our focus or is YoungLife ministry our focus?

In what ways are you earning the right to be heard and what ways have you yet to earn the right to be heard?

Where do you need to go to find the teens that go to your school and when do you need to go there – what will you do once you get there?

How will you engage the kids that come to your YoungLife club with the gospel – what means will you use in order to not “bore” them?

Recommended Reading

John Miller

(1991), *Back to the Basics*, YoungLife,
Colorado Springs, CO

Jim Rayburn III

(1985) *Dance Children Dance*.
Morningstar Press, Chicago, IL