

The ISLCFM: Back to the Future

The International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Missions: A New Generation?

by *Emily Lewis*

Dear readers of the IJFM and fellow watchers/anticipators of what God is doing among the nations in this generation,

If you read the small print that regularly appears on the fourth page of this journal, you may have noticed a couple of paragraphs with the words *Who We Are* set behind them. If you have read those paragraphs, even once or twice, then you are familiar with the International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Missions, or the name, at least.

The fact is (as the small print will tell you), the ISLCFM is “a fellowship of younger leaders committed to the purposes of the twin consultations of Edinburgh 1980.” The ISLCFM, like the IJFM, has been and is committed to:

Promoting intergenerational dialogue between senior and junior mission leaders.

Cultivating an international fraternity of thought through the development of frontier missiology and strategy.

Highlighting the need to maintain, renew, and create vehicles for frontier mission.

Encouraging multidimensional, interdisciplinary studies.

Fostering spiritual devotion as well as intellectual growth, and

Advocating “A Church for Every People.”

With these purposes in mind, the ISLCFM has been linked to the IJFM for nearly 20 years. That means, though, that the original founders of the ISLCFM are no longer students; in fact, some have become leading missiologists and strategists of our day.

A New Generation?

A new generation is now rising up to follow in their footsteps, to learn from those who have gone before. The torch is being passed, and we are inviting you to be a part of it.

There is a problem, however. Missions is becoming more and more of a fad these days, with youth being sent off to mission conferences and short-term mission trips. But this temporary ministry, although getting them interested in missions, does a poor job of either exposing them to the vast needs of totally

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unreached peoples or discipling them to live their lives for advancing the kingdom into these areas.

Among these youthful enthusiasts there are the few who sincerely desire their lives to be a part of God's greater plan for the nations and their passion is to give their entire lives to see the Gospel established among every tribe, tongue, and people. But these disciples, with the blood of Romans 15:20 running in their veins, are relatively isolated. One student put it this way:

I'm not sure if I would have felt permission or had the courage to continue traversing an unknown path based on nothing but a naive, idealistic desire to see 'Revelation 5:9' someday, and believing that was God's heart, too.

They're needing tangible comrades to journey in the same direction with them, and advice, wisdom and guidance from those who have marched out that path before them.

That's where the ISLCFM comes in.

Our vision is to see those key connections made, to gather younger leaders who are *already* committed to the frontier mission cause—to band together to see something more for our generation and Christ's war. Furthermore, we desire to establish II Timothy 2:2-type mentoring relationships between this generation and those who have gone before. Rebecca Lewis (author of "Insider Movements: The Surprising Role of Women's Networks" in the IJFM Fall, 2004) describes the strategic gap the ISLCFM would fill as

raising up a new generation of leaders that can stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before, to make key breakthroughs in advancing the kingdom at the edges.

We are not mobilizers, such as SVM2 (www.svm2.net) or The Traveling Team (www.thetravelingteam.org), who seek to connect people to the cause. Nor are we like the Rightnow Campaign (www.rightnow.org), whose purpose is to connect people to

an opportunity. We affirm what these groups are trying to do. Our niche is to seek to *connect people to people* and one generation to the next.

So much for our past and our present . . . what about our future? This September, the ISLCFM will be hosting two Student Mission Forums in Denver, CO and Minneapolis, MN (see ad below). These will be valuable times of dialoguing, brainstorming, connecting and strategizing. Please join us in praying that God would bring the right students leaders to these events and give participant leaders the words of wisdom to speak into their lives.

If you're interested in learning more about the ISLCFM or in banding together with us as we pursue the purposes of God in the next generation, check out our website at www.ijfm.org/islcfm, contact us at islcfm@gmail.com or come join us at one of our September forums! **IJFM**

pulling together
passionate
disciples to
dialogue
about
the Kingdom
and
cultivating
longterm
connections
between the leaders
of today and
tomorrow

International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Missions
Student Forums: Sept. 13-14, Denver, CO • Sept. 24th, Minneapolis, MN
www.ijfm.org/islcfm • islcfm@gmail.com