

Excerpts from "The Third Call"

Dr. Ralph Winter

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Overview of the Three Calls

The First Call: In 1910, for the first time in history, mission leaders and missionaries were called together to consider how best to finish the global task of missions. The Conference was called "The World Missionary Conference." No one was invited. The only people attending were *delegates* chosen by legitimate mission agencies. Great things came out of that conference. A Continuation Committee was formed. *The International Review of Missions* and the International Missionary Council (which served effectively for forty years) derived from that committee. This famous 1910 conference also, and unexpectedly, inspired dreams of both Christian unity and a number of other successive but unconnected conferences...eventually resulting in the World Council of Churches. However, none of those later conferences had the distinctive composition of exclusively mission people as had the 1910 meeting.

The Second Call: In 1972, a Southern Baptist professor of mission proposed a repetition of the 1910 conference. In 1974, a group of missiologists under the banner of the newly formed American Society of Missiology...hammered out the working of a Call for a **second 1910 type conference** to meet on the world level in 1980...

When that 1980 meeting took place in Edinburgh in November of 1980, it was called "The World Consultation on Frontier Missions." More agencies were represented than in 1910, and notably one third of all agencies were now from the Third World (none in 1910)...

In 1980 the slogan adopted was "A Church for Every People By the Year 2000." Thomas Wang was one of the plenary speakers and carried the focus into the AD 2000 movement with a clarifying addition, "A Church for Every People and the Gospel for Every Person by the Year 2000." Problem: the 1980 "Continuation Committee" failed to function. No ongoing structure survived.

The Third Call: It is suggested that a global level conference be convened...to confront contemporary issues in Christian world missions with the purpose of establishing an on-going global network of mission agencies. The conference should be constituted by formal delegates of the various Christian traditions on a world basis. The delegates need to be from appropriate agencies which have delegated them to speak for their agencies in regard to the plans for a global network of mission agencies.