

Digital Tools Build a Dream

Technology is the key to growth for Vision 2020's global-discipleship project

Call it the *Jesus* movie of discipleship. It's a new,  technology-driven movement to raise up a generation of lively stones in spiritually dead places—believers who are willing to walk away from false religions and idols to follow Christ.

The man behind the movement is Berin Gilfillan. When he launched the International School of Ministry (ISOM) 20 years ago, Gilfillan set out to train laborers for the end-time harvest by planting his video curriculum in local churches around the world. Today there are more than 15,000 training sites in 142 nations airing the materials in 70 languages. But he's still not satisfied.

With its new Vision 2020 plan, ISOM is using digital technology to spread an even wider net for its video-training program. It aims to bring Christian training materials to at least 20,000 new locations among the poor and unreached by 2020.

The plan relies on the use of modern technologies such as solar-powered projectors, portable speakers and miniature computer chips to help preach the gospel to every nation, tribe, tongue and people according to Rev. 14:6.

"God didn't give us these technologies for the sake of Hugh Hefner and Ted Turner. It's for the sake of the gospel," Gilfillan says. "In Daniel 11, the Bible talks about people who go to and fro and the increase of knowledge. Technology has to be tapped for kingdom purposes."

ISOM plans to propagate four programs through Vision 2020. The core ISOM program offers more than 160 hours of video

teaching. Instructors include Jack Hayford, Joyce Meyer, John Bevere, Reinhard Bonnke, Marilyn Hickey, T.L. Osborn and many other charismatic Christian leaders who Gilfillan invited to “share the most important message God is giving you for the global church.”

ISOM has also developed Women of the World, a program to empower, encourage and equip God’s daughters; CD BOKS, curriculum to help lift communities out of poverty; and YouthBytes, a resource that gives youth ministers tools to engage the faith of teens and young adults. The Vision 2020 plan challenges believers to sow \$20 a month for 20 months to fund the mission.

“We want to turn every church in the world into a ministry-training center so local churches can train leaders, women, youth and all people,” Gilfillan says.

“About 2 billion people live in remote locations. Many of them are illiterate. Many of them are under deep darkness in terms of the spiritual climate—and they are hungry for equipping. We have a global infrastructure in place and 240 hours of content a facilitator can take from village to village.”

Gilfillan cites translation as the biggest challenge to fulfilling the vision, saying the spiritual opposition to it occurs because after curriculum is translated into any given language, thousands of new believers can be equipped. Gilfillan says translators sometimes fail to realize the level of demonic attacks that come against the ministry. Three ISOM translators have been murdered. And when Gilfillan first launched ISOM, his daughter had a croup attack and nearly died.

“My wife prayed and asked God what was going on. She had an open vision of the back of a man’s head,” Gilfillan recalls. “The face turned slowly and she looked right into the eyes of Lenin. The Lord spoke, ‘The same powers that kept the former

Soviet Union without the Word of God for 70 years now know what you are doing.' Back in those days we didn't have a clue what we were up against."

Today, Gilfillan is ready for battle. And he is convinced that the greatest key to the hearts and nations of the world is preaching the gospel in the hearer's birth language. He notes that in the second chapter of Acts, Peter opened the hearts of his listeners not with signs and miracles, but with the gospel message preached in their mother tongues.

"If you can get the gospel into a person's dialect, you've won that people group. It's not just about Bibles. It's about having the Word taught by full gospel, Spirit-filled teachers," Gilfillan says. "We have the technology. If we move quickly, we can sweep the nations. My greatest fear is that we won't move quickly enough."