

# My Vision for a Ministry Dream Team

by Frank Viola

*"Teamwork: when you run alone, you run fast. But when you run together, you run far!"*

In May 2015, I asked my blog readers to select two people who they thought would be a good fit to be part of a “ministry dream team” in which I would participate.

A little over a month later I shared my vision in [a podcast episode](#).

This PDF document is a follow-up with some additional thoughts. I created it in this format so that it can be easily shared.

With the release of my book [INSURGENCE: Reclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom](#), one of my friends felt it was time to recast my vision for a ministry team. Namely, because the message contained in that book would be the central focus of the team.

That is, they will work together in spreading the explosive gospel of the kingdom in this earth.

## **The Power of Teams in God's Work**

Teams are vital in the work of God. Jesus sent His disciples out in pairs. Teams of two mostly. We often see pairs in the Gospels: Peter and John. James and John. Andrew and Peter. In Acts the pattern continues: Peter and John. Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Silas. Aristarchus and Secundus. Luke and Titus.

Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, NASB)

There were also those precious and unforgettable moments when Jesus took only Peter, James, and John to be with Him for some special task or event.

Teamwork. Colaboring. Coworking. It's written in the bloodstream of God's work.

## **An Example From the Past**

Let's hit rewind and go back to 1974. In that year, five men came together to do the Lord's work. They were teammates, coworkers, colaborers. They were also friends.

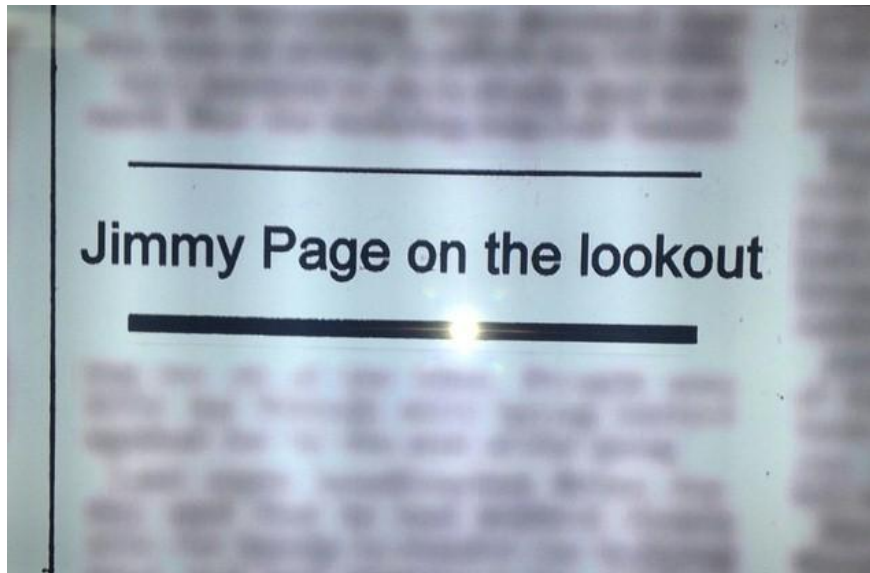
I'm speaking of what was known as Christian Growth Ministries and later (in 1977) the "Fort Lauderdale Five."

### **Their Giftedness**

Before I discuss this "dream team" from the past, let me set the stage by giving an example from the secular music world.

If you know anything about the history of rock music, you are well aware that Led Zeppelin is regarded as a "supergroup" by music critics.

After Jimmy Page left The Yardbirds, he had a vision to create a new "super band." He had in his head exactly what he wanted to do with the band, something unique and powerful. So he began searching for the right people to recruit.



*Photo: Music newspaper article from 1968 when Jimmy Page was looking for fellow musicians to form a new band. The band would become Led Zeppelin, what many experts have called the world's greatest rock group.*

News spread that Jimmy Page was on the lookout for others to create a new band. Through word of mouth, he discovered the other three members and Led Zeppelin was born.

Each of the four members of Zep were extraordinarily talented in the use of their particular instruments.

Page had no peer in his tour de force, titanic guitar riffs. The same is true for John Bonham (a powerhouse drummer), Robert Plant (a seminal vocalist), and John Paul Jones (an incomparable bass guitarist).

But more than that, together, Zeppelin possessed a rare and unparalleled chemistry. It wasn't just four obscenely talented musicians doing their own thing. It was four amazing musicians who had uncanny electricity and undeniable power when they played together. They were musical equals. And when they played together, it was phenomenal, creating a stunning fifth element.

For this reason, Zeppelin is regarded by many music experts as the greatest rock band in history. As such, their music is timeless, being featured in contemporary films even today—some 40 years later.

### **The Fort Lauderdale Five**

In terms of *that* kind of giftedness and *that* kind of chemistry, the members of the “Fort Lauderdale Five” had the goods.

Derek Prince, Bob Mumford, Don Basham, Charles Simpson, and Ern Baxter were a “supergroup” of spiritual ministry. A “dream team,” if you please.

Whatever else that can be said about them (both good or bad), lay that aside right now. I've addressed the problems inherent in the movement they spawned [elsewhere](#). But in this article, I'm exclusively focusing on the coworking dynamic they shared and nothing else.

In terms of sheer spiritual gift, this group was a powerhouse of spiritual ministry (this was especially the case with Baxter, Prince, and Mumford.)

This kind of “super team” has rarely been observed in Christian history, by the way.

Take a look at their ages when they first came together in 1974. (Note that some of them were together beginning in 1968 as “the Holy Spirit Teaching Mission.” But the team of “five” began six years later. And in 1977, they all moved to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, earning them the nickname they bore. Interestingly, Led Zeppelin also began in 1968.)

In 1974 . . .

Ern Baxter was 60

Derek Prince was 59

Don Basham was 48

Bob Mumford was 44

Charles Simpson was 37

I find this interesting. No doubt when Ern and Derek were in their 30s and 40s, they had no idea whom God was going to meld them with when they reached their 60s. To my mind, this should be an encouragement to every person who serves the Lord today.

### **The Shape of the Future**

Why is this important? One reason is because I resonate with it. God has wired me for teamwork.

I prefer not to be a solo player.

Ever since I put my hand to the plow of serving the Lord I've asked Him for coworkers. And I thank Him that I had two coworkers in the past who I'm still in close relationship with. But that was for a specific season which was focused on church planting.

But I believe that in the days to come, the Lord is going to raise up a close-knit team of passionate servants of God, highly gifted but broken vessels, prophetic but marked by great suffering, having a deep history with God, much spiritual experience, a burning vision of God's ultimate passion, and well-schooled in what has gone before them.

They will not be interested in fame, name, or game. Nor will they be jealous or envious of one another.

Their sole interest will be Christ supreme, Christ central, Christ preeminent along with a sacrificial love for others that never attacks back when attacked, never demeans when demeaned, but a love that has gone through the cross and has come out on the other side.

### **My Vision**

The members of this new team will take their stand with the divine insurgence and begin reclaiming and declaring the glorious gospel of the kingdom of God for our generation. A gospel that will produce a massive convulsion in this world.

The members of the team will immerse themselves in that gospel, obey it, and declare it together with gripping power.

They will write articles together.

They will collaborate on books.

They will seek God's mind together.

They will speak in conferences together.

They will fellowship and strategize together.

In speaking about Paul's ministry in Ephesus, Acts 19:23 says,

And the same time there arose no small stir about that Way. (KJV)

In the same way, I envision that this team will cause no small stir in the world.

The people who will make up this team may or may not all know one another now. Yet I believe the Lord will bring them all together in His time. And their common goal will be: *Jesus Christ as All in All.*

The earth awaits that day.

### **Requirements for Responding**

When I created that survey with my blog readers, about five names came up repeatedly. All five are published authors. All five speak at conferences. (I've never worked with any of them, by the way.) Some of them I know, but not very well. Others I don't know at all, but I know who they are because they have public ministries.

Even though I would feel very comfortable teaming up with all five, I don't have the liberty to mention any of them by name because I'd be tipping my hand in putting this team together.

*I want this vision to be initiated by the Lord and not me.*

The extent of my liberty is to put out this PDF (and the supplemental podcast episode that I created in 2015), and that's it.

What follows is a description of what I'm seeking with respect to this team:

- Each person will be undeniably gifted and resonate with the gospel of the kingdom as articulated in my book, *Insurgence: Reclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom.*
- Each person will have public attestation. (Being published by a reputable publisher like Baker, Tyndale, David C. Cook, Thomas Nelson, IVP, Eerdmans, Fortress Press, Wipf & Stock, Cascade, Destiny Image, CLC, Crossway, HarperOne, Hachette, and Penguin is *one example* of public attestation.)
- Each person will be someone I've never worked with before in a deliberate speaking/coworking capacity.

I've simply written this document as a tool for the Holy Spirit to use the way He wishes. So if you are reading it and someone comes to mind who fits the above three criteria, reach out to them privately and share this document with them.

If they are a published author who is inaccessible, contact their publisher. You can send them this document along with an introductory letter from yourself, explaining why you are sending it to them. (Example: “I think you would be a good fit for Frank’s ministry team. Please read this article about it.”)

In turn, if you received this PDF from someone who thinks you would be a good fit for fleshing out this vision with me, or you found it on your own, send an email to [Frank@FrankViola.com](mailto:Frank@FrankViola.com) and express your interest. It will help if you put “Ministry Team” in the subject line.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours in the costly but glorious quest,

Frank