

Both Sides

Sarah Lanier

How can we keep the bond of peace? (Eph 4:3) In my years of working with people, one principle has served me well and often: there is no story until there are at least two sides to the story.

A few years ago, I was in Nairobi for our Leadership Training School during a severe drought. We were allowed two cups of water per day with which to wash. Every drop was precious. One morning I walked into the bathroom to find an African woman brushing her teeth with the tap turned on full blast, liters of water escaping down the drain.

My immediate emotion was anger; then I thought about running outside and shouting, "Do you know what she's doing in there?" I needed support in order to confront her.

Then I remembered the principle: there is no story until you've heard both sides.

But this time the principle wasn't going to work. Everyone was sacrificing to save water and this woman was throwing it away. I was justified in judging her, even before I heard her side of the story.

Yet the principle loomed: ask a question. Find out the other side of the story.

I ran back in, shut off the water, smiled up at her and said, "Excuse me, but do you know about the drought? That we're limited to two cups of water a day for washing?"

She shrank back in horror, "No, I had no idea. I just arrived last night from Uganda and no one has oriented me yet. In Uganda we have lots of water." If I had acted quickly on the apparent facts, I could have wounded her deeply.

I've had the dubious honor of doing a bit of conflict management over the years, mostly with full-time Christian workers. What seems impossible to resolve, usually gets worked out, when one party understands what the other meant.

How important it is to confront, in order to avoid conflict, when it's so much easier to run away, or judge or tell a third party. Simply asking a question, while believing the best until proven otherwise, will open the door to peace. Relationships can be saved. May God grant us the mantle of peacemakers in this unity- and harmony-challenged world.

Let's commit to always hearing both sides.

He who answers before listening, that is his folly and his shame. (Prov 18:13)



Sarah, who is on the leadership team in Richmond, VA, travels and teaches throughout YWAM. She is gifted in 'people skills,' and understands the cross-cultural challenges facing the mission.



"Please continue sending IN TOUCH... it is a lifeline to me! PTL."

Mrs P.J.Hillson, London

"I didn't know you send IN TOUCH to ex-YWAMers... you remind me of my DTS... if you have prayer requests, send them to me."

Esther Oh, South Korea

"A total of 12 1/2 years in YWAM; a longing (almost daily) to return... then along comes IN TOUCH and Dean Sherman's precious article on Grace. We know it was meant for us. Thanks Dean!"

Joe & Helen Garrity, Colorado

"Just want you to know that your little corner (Donna's Corner) always blesses me Mom."

Joy Datoon, Philippines

"Many thanks for reaching out (to YWAM alumni)... we make sure all our staff get to read it too... love to your staff."

Arne & Robbie Peterson, Kenya

"IN TOUCH - a great inspiration for us, an art to write many good things in a short paper, easily read from cover to cover."

Drs. Erik & Josianne Volkemar, Switzerland

"Your ministry ministers to me. Thank you for encouraging and speaking truth."

Pam Watson, Texas

"Really appreciate IN TOUCH, which I read with interest - well done."

Campbell McAlpine, UK

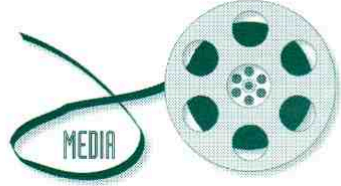
"You guys encourage us with your letters, prayers and articles... keep on the good work."

Solomona & Fiasoso Tuasivi, Pago Pago

"The timing of 'Grace is Sufficient' was so of God... just returned from a School of Intercession in Taiwan and was feeling a bit adrift after such focused intensity... I want more of that but also know He provides times of rest when it is particularly important to understand His grace."

Wendy Evans, Canada

Disciplining A Nation - Three Short Stories



The Fire Below Us - Mount St. Helens Remembered

Michael Lienau, filmmaker

He looks at the earth, and it trembles; He touches the mountains, and they smoke. (Psalm 104:31-32) "Lord! Get me out of this mess and I'll give You the rest of my life." Desperate words from this desperate man, in the defining moment of my brief 20 years of life.

It was May, 1980, the big blast had already wreaked its devastation, and I was with a crew, filming on Mount St. Helens. Then the second great eruption occurred, and because of a compass gone berserk, we became hopelessly lost, stumbling around in a choking, grey and disordered landscape of footblisteringly hot volcanic ash - spread over a horizon of stripped and fallen trees. Unknown to us, we had been declared missing and presumed dead.

All my life I wanted to make films. At nine years of age, in order to buy more film, I charged neighborhood kids admission to see my 8mm productions. By 13, I had a 16mm camera and freelanced local news footage to TV stations all over the U.S. Northwest; and at 17, I worked full-time for an NBC affiliate. In 1979, at age 19, I started my own film production company. I was ready for my 'big break' when it came.

On May 18, 1980 that big break came, as the world tuned in to see what raw and awesome power had torn the top off a very large mountain. Common sense told me not to go - the mountain could erupt again at any moment. But youthful zeal prevailed and I soon found myself, the youngest on a team of five, with camera-on-shoulder,

leaping out of a helicopter into a once-mighty forest, laid low.

For four days we hiked and stumbled our way around, eventually in circles because of a compass rendered useless by magnetism in the ash, and contour maps made meaningless on the altered slopes. The second



eruption caused the ground to shake, but we heard nothing, as the blast rocketed overhead to be heard by people 200 miles away.

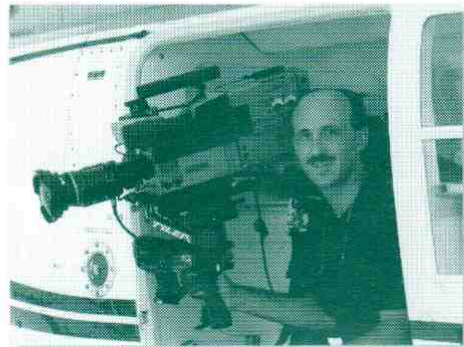
Cold, hungry, injured and terrified, we were a pitiful sight. Morale was way down and the possibility of never getting out became a reality. It was then that I called out to God in my desperation.

Broken trees lay all around me and one of them seemed to be in the shape of a cross. I heard an audible voice say to me, "Michael, look up to your left!" It scared me because no one was near. Minutes later I saw the whirling blades of a rescue helicopter rise

over the hill exactly where the voice had told me to look. We were saved!

For me, Mount St. Helens is a personal monument that graphically reminds me that God is an ever-present help in times of trouble.

Michael (CDTS, HI, 1986), along with his wife Shari (DTS, CA, 1982) and two kids, Jacob and Anna Joy, make their home in Washington state. Their company **Global Net Productions**, is active in the highly influential field of video. The Lienaus come to **Renewal Camp** each year with friends and family. See Insert for details on ordering their exciting hour long video - *The Fire Below Us - Mt. St. Helens Remembered*, featured on *National Geographic Explorer*.



Ups & Downs

Lylas Aust, school teacher

Never will I leave you... Is that a promise? Does God really mean that, even when we fail? He sure does, and though it was never my intention, I put Him to the test!

In 1977 I went to an SOE in Cyprus, which included the Middle East field trip, following which I returned home and completed university in 1980. After graduating, I went back to Cyprus for a DTS, then spent some time on the *Anastasis* in Greece. Those were great days and I felt blessed to be part of what was happening.

Upon my second 're-entry' home in late '81, I started teaching Phys Ed, finding the transition out of missions really hard. I had trouble fitting in, my faith and even my own identity were challenged; I found myself unfulfilled and lonely. I took my eyes off Jesus, and it wasn't long before I fell - despite all the practical Christian teaching my spiritual growth and the team life and accountability I'd experienced in YWAM.

My backslide was a six-year plunge through condemnation, guilt and a sense of total failure. I found myself doing the very thing for which I had harshly judged others. The enemy of my soul was wreaking Olympic-level havoc on me, as I carried his torch through an ever-descending spiral of self-destruction and despair. Nearing the bottom, I cried out with my whole being, "God, please get me out of this!"

He did. He reached in and retrieved my heart. He forgave me and lifted me back into His arms. He gave me courage. He replaced ashes and mourning with a garland and gladness. He proved to me that He had never left me. How did this happen?

Somehow I started receiving *In Touch*. (I suspect the angel who sent in my name was Helen Applegate, former matriarch of the *Anastasis*, who 'hangs on' to people, even

when they're down! Especially when they're down.) I read about the first *Renewal Camp* in 1990, and decided it was for me. The camp was my turning point, and I haven't looked back since - even when I've slipped a little.

Since then, as a school teacher, I've been able to attend camps every year. The Lord has given me year-round relationships, together with positive, growing experiences, that are giving me a stronger foundation in Him.

Even now it's not easy working day-after-day in the lonely 8 - 5 world; but I often claim these words of God, *Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you. (Heb 13:5)* Is God always faithful in His promises? He sure is - I've proved it!



(Lylas doesn't just go to camp each summer; she helps in a multitude of ways, serving as recreational director, registrar, encourager, almost anything. Renewal Camps would not be the same without her.)

Profound & Pithy

The worst thing you can do is to hide the worst thing you do

"Only look to others as much as they listen to Jesus"
Donna Jordan

LUKE 15

... the recently-noted license plate on the car of a desperately praying mother

Think about this: if Christians can backslide, can they frontslide?

Pastor, Missionary, Cop

John Pearson, police officer

I'm just a cop on the beat, in Sacramento, California. What does chasing lawbreakers, arresting criminals, mediating domestic disputes and answering 911 calls, have to do with following 'the call' upon my, and my family's life?

Is the Kingdom of God being advanced when I ticket someone for running a red light? Did the angels in heaven rejoice when I arrested two guys for beating and robbing a Russian immigrant who spoke no English? What about when I hauled a wife-beater off to jail - will the Lord say, "Well done, good and faithful servant"? My wife Diana (she's a helicopter paramedic) and I have wrestled with these and other questions, since leaving the mission field six years ago...

Soon after my conversion in 1969, God called me into full-time service. I remember being deeply convicted and challenged by the Holy Spirit, to follow the Lord, particularly in missions, wherever He might lead. Diana had a similar call on her life, so there we were, two fairly new believers, on fire for the Lord and ready to make a difference for the Kingdom.

We pastored for five years in Oregon, spent five years in YWAM pioneering the new work in Maui, Hawaii, and then I obtained my Masters degree in Missiology at Fuller Theological Seminary. Ready and eager to plant churches, we went overseas with a little team and another organization. God is still healing us from what proved to be a devastating experience. Some of our teammates still have open wounds and are not doing well.

During our years in 'full-time' ministry, we never struggled with matching up our 'call,' with what we were doing for the Lord. There were growing pains within the call, but never any question about the call. It is easy to see quantitative value and worth, as

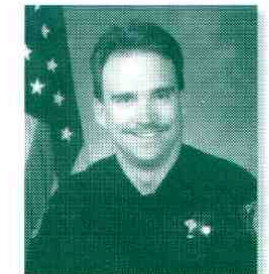
it relates to building the Kingdom of God, in such things as preaching, teaching, leading a DTS, going on a cross-cultural outreach, witnessing to the lost on the streets, counseling Christians or in a multitude of other endeavors.

Recently, I was whining and telling the Lord that I didn't feel that our lives counted for anything of value anymore; just work and pay the bills. What about 'full-time' ministry? Had He forgotten about us? I heard the Lord say, "John, open your eyes. There is ministry all around you."

The Lord was right! I don't know how long we'll be in our present 'ministries,' but I am beginning to see that Jesus views everything we do as 'full-time ministry,' and it is all to be done unto Him. Full-time ministry is all around us.

And you know what? Even 'the call' cannot replace our first and ultimate ministry, which is to nurture our love relationship with Jesus. Diana and I are learning that our full-time ministry is knowing the Lord, loving the Lord and walking with the Lord - these are what add up to the ultimate call on our lives.

So yes, when I'm tense behind the wheel of my patrol car on a high-speed chase; when I'm apprehending a criminal; or when I'm



testifying in court, I now know that I'm pleasing the One that counts, fulfilling my destiny and even in a small way, being a discipler of my nation.



Teen...

Perseverance!

God has been speaking to me to encourage you not to give up. Perseverance develops character (Rom 5:1-5). You need to persevere, so that when you've done the will of God, you will receive what He's promised (Heb 10:35-39).

I am so blessed and encouraged in my spirit, when I meet those who are keeping their eyes on Jesus and His promises, not looking at the circumstances or the people, but running the race with perseverance (Heb 12:1-3). They're the ones who've heard from God and have faith to believe what He said.

Time means nothing to the Lord - it's our obedience He wants (2 Pet 3:8-9). You know (don't you?), that the testing of your faith develops perseverance, and perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything (Jas 1:2-7).

God is preparing a people, a bride that He can trust, without spot or wrinkle; one that has a heart after Him to do His will, so that Jesus the bridegroom, will be glorified.

Be encouraged! No matter what you're doing, do it unto God (Col 3:12-17; 23-24).

Love & Blessings - Donna



...Today



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Then...

...and finally, a few words from Ed

Someone said, "It's too bad that youth is wasted on the young." Man has always hankered to splash around in the fountain of youth, to stretch his life out longer.

A recent little real-life drama had a big impact on me, even though I was merely a spectator.

Flying from Denver to Seattle, it was announced that this was to be the Captain's final flight. At age 60, airline regulations were forcing him to retire, even though he may have been in perfectly good health; and even though his experience and maturity would be just what I would want in the left seat of the cockpit, should the weather turn bad, or an emergency come up.

Gazing out my window, I began to reminisce about 'what might have been,' for me. You see, being about the same age, I too would be ready for the 'pasture' now, had I pursued a career in aviation. Today, I'm thankful I didn't.

As our big jet taxied to the gate, we paused briefly as two fire trucks joined up and led us in, spewing enormous jets of water, that arched high over and in front of the giant DC 10's nose. It was a moving salute to a veteran aviator.

As a young pilot in the Air Force, and then the Navy, my heart was set on flying with an airline - my heart was not yet set on doing God's will! When I left the military, there was a vast over-abundance of pilots, and though I came close to being hired by Canada's national airline, I never realized that dream.

What might have been!

Though for a significant portion of my life I didn't really care about pleasing God in the details, I'm grateful that He was - and is - patient (2 Pet 3:9). Occasionally I still fall into the trap of 'beating myself' about those wasted years; those years when I would only reach out to Him with frantic pleas for help in times of trouble. I still find myself thinking, "If only I had made Him Lord of my life when I was young, how much more could I have accomplished?"

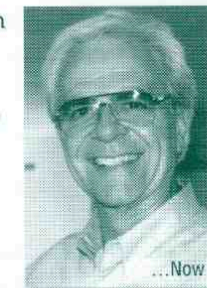
Such speculation is fruitless. *Do not call to mind the former things, or ponder things of the past. (Is 43:18)* What's past is gone, and if it was bad, we're to simply repent, put it behind us, and move on... *Behold, I will do something new...*

God is bigger than our past and He wants us to think no more about our 'what-might-have-beens.' Dwelling in the past only leads to dissatisfaction with the present - and hopelessness for the future. There's lots to learn from the past, especially from our mistakes; they too, are part of life experience and have helped to make us what we are.

For myself, I want every day to count and I never want to retire. I'm a grandfather now, and I'm enjoying that. My role is changing, and though in age I'm getting up there, I'm full of blessed hope (Titus 2:13); and I'm not nearly ready for the pasture! There's lots more to do - and be.

Ed

P.S. If you want to stay young, hang around young people. (If you want to die young, try to keep up with them!)



...Now



Speaking of young people... Lilo Ainuu has joined us and will be helping me as a special assistant. Lilo has served in YWAM Guyana and Brazil, following his DTS in California nine years ago. He is gifted in administration and people skills, and is an answer to several years of prayer.