

by Landa Cope

## To Know God and...

Dear fellow Traveler,

What is the purpose of life? What is the purpose of my life, and am I fulfilling it? It seems that I always come back to these same questions.

This kind of questioning is what brought me into the Kingdom in the first place. A child of the 60's, I could not stand the concept of a meaningless universe; and there seemed to be little meaning to life until I encountered Christ.

In our early YWAM schools here in Lausanne, we spent a lot of time looking at and answering the questions, "Who am I?"; "Where do I come from?"; and, "Where am I going?" God's answers were completely satisfying. My mind and soul were transformed, and the chaos and depression of a generation, was washed away.

Twenty-five years later I am back here in Lausanne, pursuing another generation that is finding this life-changing truth. But I still come back to that most basic of questions: "What is the purpose of life?" Half my life has been lived under the YWAM motto... *To know God and to make Him known*. This is a great purpose and guiding principle, and it has challenged me all these years. But is it the purpose of life?

The purpose of life is not to make Christ known. That is perhaps a little bit of an 'evangelical' neurosis... an aberration of the 'do' generation. The purpose of mankind, as the church fathers have articulated it down throughout history is, To know God ...and to *enjoy* Him forever. If we are knowing and enjoying Him, we will be making Him

known - no matter what we are doing.

Am I knowing Him? Yes. God is revealing Himself to me in mind-boggling ways, all the time. After a quarter century as a child of His, God still 'blows my mind.' I love His word; I love His ways; I love Him! So far so good, but am I making Him known? Yes, I travel six months out of the year, preaching, teaching, telling others what I know. That's great. That's what God called me to do and it is always a good thing to obey. But...

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...am I enjoying Him? Am I taking the time to savor Him? Am I finding my life in Him? Or is some activity, or some desire for activity, giving me life satisfaction? Now that is the question!

Often people will tell me, "Uh, I'm just working," or, "We're just raising a family," or, "Oh, I'm just taking care of my mom." What I'm hearing is a deep longing to be doing something else, perhaps to be back in missions, as though that would bring more satisfaction and a greater sense of purpose. But it doesn't. Even missions won't fulfill - in the end it's a job like any other, with good days and bad days. Ask yourself, "Is this the job I'm called to do?"

At the end of the day, that's the real question, "Am I enjoying God in what He's called me to do?" That's how I make God known; I let the world see Him by enjoying Him right where He has called me to be. Right in what He has called me to do. That's how the world gets reached. If I have that, I have everything. If I have lost my enjoyment of Him as my primary purpose, I have nothing, no matter what I do.

What is the purpose of life? *To know God and to enjoy Him forever!* Am I living it? Some days. Some days I let the work get in the way. Some days I let what I am doing be more important than why I am doing it. Some days I let the speaking of the message become more important than the enjoying and living of the message. On those days I become 'dead works, hay and stubble.' But the light is coming on more and more often... Jesus is the answer. He is my purpose and I love and enjoy Him. And that's central to what He has ordained for me.

Are you living your purpose in God? If not, it's time to get started, isn't it?

Landa Cope



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# Whelmed & Gruntled...

...which is to say I am neither over-whelmed nor *dis-gruntled* at the enormous response to the last *InTouch*. Hundreds of letters, cards, notes, e-mails and phone calls flooded in, as well as many face-to-face conversations; wonderful heart stuff, even including two unsigned memos from folks so deep in their woundedness, that they could only react like an injured animal.

With some, I have had an ongoing dialogue about various issues, and this has been very satisfying to me - and I hope to them. I sometimes wonder if I'm hearing equally from all aspects of these issues. One theme that keeps coming up is the authoritarian leadership style, with a message that comes through as, "I'm right and you're wrong, because I'm the leader. So submit." Another point frequently made, is that there are good and bad leaders in other ministries too. And as you might expect, the majority of those who contacted us, had had thoroughly good YWAM experiences, recognizing too, that some had not.

Time simply does not permit me to answer each contact; so thank you if you communicated with me. Now my challenge is to pick out what you need to read, not what I want to print. And to do that faithfully would take a dozen pages or more.

So, what I have decided is to print most of one long, insightful and I trust, representative letter. I hope I'm not copping out. The writer, whose name I have chosen to withhold because I see little value in finger-pointing in anyone's direction, is now leading a significant Christian ministry.

*"With high expectations, I went to my DTS (Discipleship Training School) in the mid-80s. I will not go into all the specific hurts that happened to me as a result of what I viewed as bad leadership, but I will generalize. I was consistently frustrated with decisions made, the way things were operated, the way DTSers were lower class than the other advanced groups. My outreach was a big disappointment. I always seemed to clash with the leaders and I was always told I was the one in the wrong. 'I had to learn submission.' Although no one else in my group had to, I was required to read 'A Tale of Three Kings.' (Editor's note: after the Bible, this is my favorite book; In my opinion it should be read by every Christian, every month)*

*Every day I would rise early and have my devotional. It was empty. I felt that God had abandoned me. I felt all alone. Faithfully I would read His word and nothing spoke to me. I was dry, empty and barren. I have pages and pages of writings of scripture and my thoughts in my journal from those quiet times. I would go to the teachings and take pages and pages of notes from people like Gayle Erwin, and so many others that were great leaders. I would go to the times of worship and write down all the songs with the chords and play them on my guitar. Worship seemed the only time that I felt remotely close to God.*

*I didn't get along too well with my small group leader and I never seemd to get counsel or guidance from other leaders. Yet, I continued, I never quit.*

*When I returned from YWAM, my words were, 'I had a horrible time, I hated it, but I would never trade what I learned, for anything else in the world.' How could I have gotten anything out of the most difficult and painful time of my life? This is what I discovered: that the testing of our faith produces perseverance; that trials and testings cause us to grow deeper in our faith; and that God never abandoned me, He was right there all the time. I have a deeper and closer walk with God than I could ever imagine, and it is because of my YWAM experience.*

*I discovered that by daily reading the Word of God, even if it didn't 'feel like' anything meaningful was happening, that it went deep down into my soul, and like a hidden spring, the Spirit drew it out when needed. Things that I learned in my DTS teachings, I still apply to this day. I miss the worship, the fellowship and the friends I made.*

*Now, I am a leader in a very challenging and difficult ministry, and at times, my leadership style is called into question. I find that I have hurt others - not intentionally - largely by misunderstandings, lack of communication and insensitivity. I have the difficult task of laying people off, disciplining and confronting - but also the responsibility and privilege of encouraging and loving people. The burden of leadership is at times overwhelming. Confronting and speaking the truth, must always be done in love. For me, this must involve evaluation of my own heart to see if there is a 'beam in my eye.' I have made many mistakes, but His grace and mercy have been there to meet me and lift me up.*

*I have chosen not to remain bitter, not to allow past hurts and unforgiveness to consume the joy God has for me. God works through imperfect leaders - I learned this prior to my present leadership position. Too often we put leaders on pedestals, and too often we become hero-worshippers, idol-worshippers. We should place only Jesus on the highest place.*

*When I left YWAM, the Lord spoke to me to return home, and among other things He asked me to accomplish reconciliation and restoration. My church had a major split, and since then I have made every effort to reconcile and restore broken relationships. I have had great difficulties of hurt, rejection and wounds from Christian leaders; I have tried my utmost to follow the path of crucifying my flesh, and walking in forgiveness; I have no regrets, and my life is not lived with avoiding certain people or subjects.*

*In the light of all eternity, is it worth continuing with unforgiveness, retribution, backbiting, gossip and disunity? The world will know we are Christ's disciples by our love for one another. Who am I to withhold forgiveness, love, mercy, grace and compassion?*

(name withheld by Editor)

***"Take me off your mailing list! It's obvious from reading InTouch, that you come from a novo-Calvinistic, pseudo-dispensational, apocotribulational viewpoint. This is completely unacceptable. OK, I'm kidding. We live in a closed country, where we are undercover missionaries and can't receive missions publications here. God bless you in your work and have a good sleep tonight."*** Terry

# Flying Blind



Recently, Dean Sherman told me that a kind doctor friend had given him free laser surgery to correct his terminal astigmatism, thus relieving him of the burden of wearing eyeglasses. (Can you imagine Dean Sherman without glasses? They were so part of him, it's as though he was born that way!) Anyway, Dean was saying that for the first few days after the operation, he was almost blind, and during that time he had to fly from Asia back to the U.S. In the airports, he couldn't read the TV monitors to find out where and when to board his flights. He had to ask for help. It was an altogether unpleasant experience. He was flying blind, and it reminded me of my flying days.

'Flying blind' is an old aviator's idiom, which really means 'flying without visual reference to the ground or horizon.' This can happen on a dark night with no moon or stars above, and no lights below; or it can occur anytime when flying in cloud or smoke. In the early days of aviation before cockpit flight instruments, this was known as 'flying by the seat of your pants,' a practice with little to commend it. Vertigo, the false sense that could lead the unwary pilot to believe his airplane was flying straight and level, when in fact it was turning, climbing or descending, often followed. Too many pilots dug deep holes in the ground because they trusted their senses. In the colorful lingo and dark humor of pilots, this is known as 'buying the farm' or 'agering in.'

Today, rated pilots scan sophisticated cockpit instruments, which show them everything they need to know about the position and attitude and condition of their airplane. This is called instrument flying, and is mostly utilized when flying

in cloud or when there are no visual references outside the cockpit. Flying blind is a thing of the past. Or should be. Sadly, inexperienced pilots, wittingly or unwittingly, still manage to fly into weather conditions for which they are not prepared. Too often, they - and their passengers - become the subjects of a one-paragraph newspaper column; under the headline:

**FOUR DEAD IN PLANE CRASH**  
 "A private pilot and his three sight-seeing passengers, including his sister and mother, were killed instantly when their rented Cessna dug a six-foot deep crater as it dove straight into a farmer's field 200 yards north of Highway 25. Severe thunderstorms were reported in the area at the time and the airport control tower reported losing radar contact. The pilot, whose name has not been released, completed his initial flight training two months ago."

Is it just possible that some of us are flying blind through our earthly existence? That we continue to 'crash' in certain aspects of our character and behavior? That we don't trust the 'instruments' that are designed to show us our way? Those instruments provided for us - the Word of God and its life principles; hearing God speak to us personally; the wise counsel of others - are all 'instruments' to help us fly safely through the turbulent storm clouds and

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# PROFOUND & PITHY

Jesus didn't come to make bad people good. He came to make dead people alive.

Relationships are only as deep as they are open

Knowledge is the facts. Wisdom is living out the facts in a loving way.

It takes more grace than I can tell, To play the second fiddle well.

Money can't buy happiness, but it sure makes misery easier to live with!

## Thank You!

In the last InTouch our Board of Directors made an appeal for financial partners to help us continue publishing. Many new donors responded and we are grateful for all who sent in gifts, both large and small. We still face major challenges. InTouch, with a circulation worldwide of almost 17,000, costs \$10,000 to print and mail. Would you ask the Lord if you can stand with us?

## INTOUCH RENEWAL CAMPS

- Kona, Hawaii - Nov 16-22 Hurry!
  - Matamata, New Zealand - Jan 4-10
  - Sydney, Australia - Jan 11-17
  - Auckland, NZ - Jan 30-Feb 1
  - Kona, Hawaii - Mar 15-21
  - Fiji (unconfirmed) - May 6-10,
  - Holland (unconfirmed) - Jun 18-21,
  - Restenas, Sweden - Jul 5-11,
  - Idaho (unconfirmed) - Jul 19-25,
  - Singapore - Aug 6-10
- (Contact us for details.)

The church is being shaken. And we as individuals are being shaken, testing that our foundations in the Lord are secure. But we are part of a Kingdom that cannot be shaken. Heb 12:26-29

Out of intimacy with our Lord Jesus, will come our ministry - otherwise ministry will become an ambition. If we really love Him, our hearts will be to spend time with Him and be obedient in detail to His voice so that His Kingdom will come and His will be done. Matt 6:9-10.

Are you wondering, "What is going on, what He is saying?"

Well, He is calling us to walk by faith (Heb 10:35-39); to mature so we can discern what is good and what is not (Heb 5:14); He is getting those who are willing, 'in position' for the great harvest that is going to take place; and for His purposes, He is networking those of His people who have hearts after Him. As God's people, these are great days in which we live, but we must hunger and thirst for righteousness, for the truth, for the Word of God, and we must be willing to do whatever He says, no matter the cost.

Keep your eyes on Jesus and not the circumstances; give Him all the glory - no longer will any man or any woman get the glory. To Him be all the praise, honor, glory and power forever and ever (Rev 4:11; 5:13-14).

Love and blessings,



**Flying Blind** continued from page 3

grim darkness we all surely encounter in life.

Spiritual blindness can lead us to live by the seat of our pants, trusting that our feelings will guide us through life's adversities. And there will be adversities, oh yes! And some of them will be so turbulent as to throw us upside down. Like many a pilot who trusted his feelings and thought he knew which way was up - but didn't and was found in a mangled pile of wreckage - we too, by not consulting our spiritual instruments, can crash our very lives. And do it again and again.

Pilots, in their whimsical, understated

and over-modest manner, say that 'anything you can walk away from, is a good landing.' The implication is, that even if it was a crash-landing with the airplane badly bent, it was nevertheless successful!

Can you, with God's help and the support of others, walk away from the crashes of your life? It requires humility to take at least some responsibility for a crash. Will you commit to fly by the instruments that God has provided? No more blind flying with the untrustworthy help of your feelings. God's instruments don't guarantee smooth flight all the way; but heeded, they will keep you from crashes.

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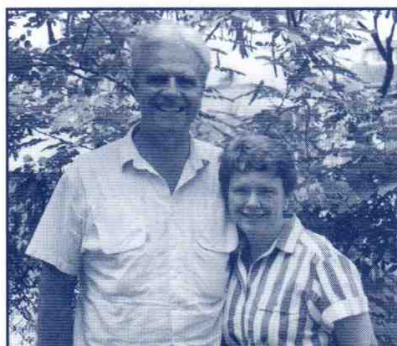
Editorial

## and Finally...

For a year now, we have been airing some issues under what we called, 'opening up a can of worms.' A couple of editions ago I wrote, "Looking ahead, I have the sense that in the next edition of InTouch, we'll be sailing on a different course than these last two." So much for my gift for seeing the future! As long as I am editor, there will always be an openness in these pages to the words of the truly wounded warriors. Our masthead reads, *Encouraging Words for Those Who Have Served*. Some are encouraged to know that others too, experienced hard times in missions. This in itself can be healing.

My heart goes out to...

those who yearn with all their hearts to be back in YWAM, but can't;  
those who left, and wish they hadn't;  
those who feel they were 'edged' out, and shouldn't have been;  
those who never want to hear the name YWAM again; and  
those who left in the will of God, and are finding it tough going out there...  
to all these - and more - you are not forgotten; there are those who care.



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