

by Steve & Marie Goode

Unanswered Questions

At a recent YWAM gathering, we were introduced as having been in the mission for over a *quarter of a century!* Is that possible? Wait a minute... we're still young!

Like Corrie ten Boom once said, "I am an 83-year old *youth* - with a mission." These days we often meet the children of our co-workers, now students in our schools. We have probably met some of your kids too.

We were initially drawn into YWAM because of people who were young in spirit, who trusted in God, whose faith was real and attractive and who were pursuing God and His call upon their lives. These *youth* did not have all of the answers; but they were curious and they asked questions; they listened and then tried to obey God to the best of their ability. What about you? How did you get involved in YWAM? What is your story? Have you remembered lately? What experience most affected you?

We were impacted deeply by the refugee crisis in Thailand from 1979-

1995. We had never seen so much suffering humanity. Thailand was not an easy place... the intense heat; the bugs and viruses; suffering and sickness; injustices; **unanswered questions**; staff being taken hostage; personnel who were caught in between warring factions; watching the seemingly unending suffering of the refugees; and many other factors and incidents that shaped all of us forever.

Yet, what we had learned about God helped prepare us for that most challenging decade and a half. We did not have much experience, and the refugee crisis was a new and pioneering work for YWAM. As staff and leaders we loved each other... grew together... had fun... cried... experienced joy... prayed... worshipped... cried out to God together... made mistakes... asked forgiveness... endured defeats... and in the final analysis, were victorious together. You were then - and still are - our heroes.

Some of us are satisfied with, and have been fulfilled by those challenging years. Others of us have **unanswered questions**. Do *you* still have lingering pain and troublesome, unresolved issues from tough days and years of ministry in Southeast Asia, or elsewhere?

Philip Yancey's books have been a deep source of strength to us. In *Disappointment with God* Yancey asks, "*Is God hidden? With Jesus, God actually took on a shape in the world, acquiring a face, a name, and an address. He was a God you*

could touch and smell and hear and see... And yet Jesus' visibility, his very ordinariness, introduced a new problem for Jews who were raised on the incredible stories of Mount Sinai and Mount Carmel. Where was the smoke, the fire, the burst of light? Jesus did not match their image of what God should be like...

"Is God unfair? Perhaps this lingering question produced the most doubt about Jesus, for Jews believed that the Messiah would set right all that was wrong with the world... Jesus did heal some people but many people went unhealed. He raised Lazarus from the dead, but many others died during his time on earth. He did not wipe away tears from all faces."

Some of us still have **unanswered questions** about God, our world, relationships within the Church; and maybe even our YWAM experience. Take heart. Be encouraged. Don't stop asking questions of God or each other. God is not nervous with those questions and He will answer them, if not today, maybe tomorrow. If not then, eventually.

A discouraged fellow YWAMer recently asked us, "Have you two *ever* considered leaving YWAM?" We pondered for a moment, "Um, let's see - not this week!" He laughed as he caught our drift. Of course we have had our times of discouragement, times of discontent with the organization (or sometimes, lack of it!). Yes, we've had unfulfilled expectations, disappointment in people, questions toward God and unresolved conflicts with leaders and

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Pros & Cons

No more pros & cons. Instead, radical obedience is what God is asking for; *For in just a little while, He who is coming will come and will not delay. But My righteous one will live by faith.* Heb 10:37-38

Late last year, the Lord said to us, "Put the House of Peace up for sale in early February." Within eight days we had four offers, one of which was even *more* than we had asked! And this, in a soft real estate market. All who made offers said they wanted the peace they felt in the

home. That was the presence of God.

We signed the offer, not knowing where to go. Two days later the Lord showed us we would be moving to a 40-acre property in the country, beautiful beyond description. Mountains, trees, birds and a stream running through it. Again, like the former House of Peace, we are to be stewards, not owners.

At the end of March we moved, and as April came to a close, we had our annual Board Meeting. Together with our Board members, we walked the land, prayed

and talked; then we paused beneath a massive 100-year-old fir tree that clings to the steep slopes of the mountain; there we gathered rocks and built an Altar of Remembrance – giving thanks to God for His faithfulness, making a commitment that the land would be used for His glory, and promising that this *pleasant place*, (Ps 16:6), would be a place of His presence where His children could come and walk and talk with Him. It was a powerful moment.

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co-workers. Since this is confession time, we've even considered other lines of work!

Each time, God spoke to us that we were to continue on in *this* mission. God leads in many ways and for a multitude of reasons. The key principle is to be obedient to Him. When *you* left YWAM, God led you in a different path, and you obeyed Him.

We're grateful to God for your partnership in YWAM for however long or short it was. And we challenge you to stop, look and make sure that you are fully engaged in whatever it is that God has called you *to be* and *to do* in this season of your life. And to sense God's smile upon you.

Back in those glory years from the late-'70s to the mid-'90s, God called over 600 precious people to serve Indochinese refugees with us. Many have finished their time in YWAM.

There were many others who joined themselves to us by praying and giving, so that we could directly serve the refugees. Our most precious gift is *people* – those who have joined this mission on a long-term basis; *and* those, who from beyond this mission, continue to shape and influence us as friends, prayer partners, supporters, pastors, teachers... just like you. Actually, the word 'friends,' says it best.

We have been personally blessed to see so many now serving the Lord in

business, on church missions' committees, ministering graciously in hospitality, encouraging us who are still in YWAM. Your life and energy, your love for God, your service, your contribution, your sacrifice and your joy have made this Mission what it is today. We want to say *thank you!* Thank you for your sacrifice, for your labor of love and for your service in YWAM. May you be encouraged by our Heavenly Father today. God is with you.

Our word for you today is – *Don't stop! Keep on keeping on!*

Fresh out of university in 1974, the Goodes joined YWAM for nine months. Six years later, still in the mission, they found themselves in Thailand for a 3-5 month assignment. That was 19 years ago, and they're still there! With the Southeast Asian refugee crisis diminished, Steve & Marie head up Mercy Ministries International for YWAM.



letters to your Editor



YWAM was God's greatest gift to me. I joined in '76 and left in '86 after a decade of grace. I was one of the fortunate ones that didn't experience a lasting trauma.

There were occasional frustrations with immature leaders but we were all so young. Praise God that it is He who works out the good work that He started in us.

Wim Swart, South Africa

I go to a very staid Bible Church and no one here has even heard of YWAM, so I don't really have anyone to share with. My YWAM memories – particularly my King's DTS memories – are indelibly etched in my heart forever. When people talk about Hawaii I know most people think of beaches and romance. I think of God,

because that is where I got to really know Him and His heart for us.

Michelle Bornhouser Luce, TX

Am enjoying *InTouch*... my wife used to be in (another organization) back in the '70s, but it came to an inglorious end. We are part of an alumni cyberspace reunion of that late ministry, and much of what *InTouch* is doing is also going on within this group of alumni. I've directed some to your webpage and they're amazed that you would print those letters! They're amazed that a leadership would have the openness & humility to invite criticism & extend the olive branch. This dialogue is very candid & therapeutic.

John Munro, BC

PROFOUND & PITHY

We should provide for our family, but not covet wealth. In providing, we may even sacrifice for our family; by coveting, we may end up sacrificing our family.

Question: How many champions of abortion (more correctly termed 'feticide,' – as in homicide, suicide and infanticide), are also *pro-capital* punishment?

Answer: Few to none. Think about it.

To be an effective missionary, you gotta 'roll with the punches' (especially those from co-workers)

Question: which of the two sons in Luke 15 was the more prodigal?

YWAM's Foundational Values - continued

YWAM is committed to know God, His character and His ways. We affirm the vital importance of hearing God's voice, seeking His counsel and obeying His instructions.

(Num 23:19-20; Deut 32:3-4; John 10:1-4; 16:13; Is 6:8; Acts 16:6-10)

Like a copy of all 21 Foundational Values? Just ask us.

UPCOMING RENEWAL CAMPS

- Restenas, Sweden - June 27-July 3, with Dr Bruce & Barbara Thompson
- Okanagan Valley, BC, Canada - July 18-24, with Joe Ferrante
- Riggins, Idaho - August 15-21, with Jerry Praetzel
- Singapore - October 23-27, with Paul Hawkins
- Kona, Hawaii - November 14-20, with various YWAM speakers
- Australia & New Zealand - Coming in January 2000

Peter & Donna Jordan host all camps.



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Jesus said to Simon and Andrew, "Come follow Me." At once they left their nets and followed (no weighing the pros and cons!). Sometimes when our daughter Michelle tells her three-year-old son Daniel to do something, he says, "But, but, but..." as he tries desperately to think of an excuse not to do it. We can be like that with God, "But, but, but..."

Whatever Jesus tells you to do by His Spirit or by His Word, *do it*, with no 'buts.' I believe that God is looking for 'friends' who will do whatever He says, trusting Him *without* asking a lot of questions. He is who He says He is – and He will do what He says He will do.

Just trust Him.

Donna

Our Plan... is to place or build several smaller facilities, so we can:

- 1) be more hospitable
- 2) accommodate more staff
- 3) eventually host retreats & seminars (more on that in the future)

We are determined to be good stewards with what God has entrusted to us. Please pray with us for God's wisdom on how to proceed from here; for the right people to guide us and then help us through the process of planning and construction; for continuing unity on our team; and for new staff to accomplish the vision that God has given us as encouragers to the hundreds of thousands of former YWAMers.

Loyalty and Truth... ...and the greater of these is truth.

When a person encounters YWAM, one of the first things learned is what I call the 'R-word, – *relationships* – the prime importance of relationship with God and others. It's wrapped up in our motto, "To know God and to make Him known."

As deeper and deeper relationships are built, a tremendous love and loyalty develops between individuals, for leaders and for ministries, both in and out of YWAM. Now, loyalty is a good thing, and deep loyalty can even lead to laying down one's life for someone. Who can argue with that? It was Jesus' way of describing ultimate love. (Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13) You can't get any more loving and loyal than that.

But in our love for one another, can loyalty blind us to what is 'the highest good' for the one we love? Can we slide into 'blind loyalty?' Might our devotion and affection for someone, obscure their blindness, their character flaws, their weaknesses, even their sin?

I am blessed with a life partner who doesn't let me get away with too much. Donna is unconditionally loyal to me. I have never once, in almost 39 years of marriage, doubted her love and commitment to me. It is a non-issue. I haven't always handled her forthrightness well, and sometimes the truth that she delivered to me, hurt. But deep down, I always knew she wanted the best for me.

I blew it royally in this area of loyalty. I remember a relationship fracture that occurred between two close friends – one long-time; the other not so long, but still very close. The issue was not even between the close friends, but involved others *close to them*, and was highly emotion-charged. Lines were drawn, the battle engaged. The weapon of choice? Relational divorce. Attempts at reconciliation were made by one party, but rebuffed by my long-time friends.

What to do? I didn't even know the truth because no one was talking about this horrible thing that was alleged to have happened. But with what little I *did* know, I made a judgment in favor of my long-time friends, based on their view of events. I had this unease in me that I should pursue the truth from all angles, but the nature of the alleged offense was such that I felt I would be prying. So, I backed off and chose sides based only on long-term loyalty. That was the wrong thing to do. Judgments of this nature should only be made on the basis of wisdom from the Holy Spirit and open truth from all sides. I bypassed both, by lifting up loyalty as my guiding principle.

By employing human wisdom in the misguided belief that I must be loyal at all cost, I lost any meaningful relationship with some precious friends for a long period of time. So many things get in the way of truth -- our pride, our shame, our stubbornness, our

hurt. The truth brings freedom, but loyalty can be a lock-up.

Knocking loyalty is like knocking motherhood. But while there is a time and a place for both, neither is always appropriate.



Peter