

INTOUCH

EN YOUR WORD FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED

YWAM

This is what I'd say...

by Loren Cunningham

Come with me, in your imagination, to a wide and spacious place; a place like Red Square in Moscow, like Yoido Plaza in Seoul or like The Mall in Washington, DC. A place that can contain a couple of million people. I want to speak to you and the approximately two million others who have served in Youth With A Mission over it's 36-year life. Yes, 2,000,000! Or to be right up-to-date, let's imagine we're part of a vast satellite TV hookup linking us all together. Are you ready? Well, this is what I'd say...

Thank you. Thank you for your part in fulfilling the vision of the waves that God gave me in 1956. Perhaps you remember hearing or reading about that vision, that 'mental movie' that I saw as I lay on my bed in the home of a missionary in the Bahamas; *Suddenly, I was looking at a map of the world. Only the map was alive, moving!... I could see all the continents. Waves were crashing onto their shores... (then) the waves became young people... covering the continents* (from my book *Is That Really You, God?*)

You have been an essential part of those waves of evangelism that have swept across the continents for four decades. Because of you, no matter what part you played - as a captain or a cook, as a preacher or a programmer, we are at the final frontiers of missions. Without you we could not have accomplished a fraction of what has been done. Without you, the Book of Life would be a slimmer volume. Thank you.

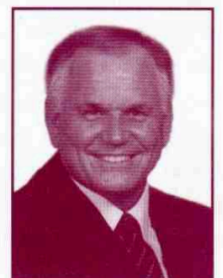
Thank you for the energy you have expended in this thing called YWAM. It has been you - together with many others - who has provided the motive power that has enabled us to reach every country in the world with the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ (though we need to go deeper). Thank you for the resources you have invested in the mission - the car you sold so you could go to DTS, the airline ticket you gave away, the much-loved guitar about which God said, "Give it to Joe."

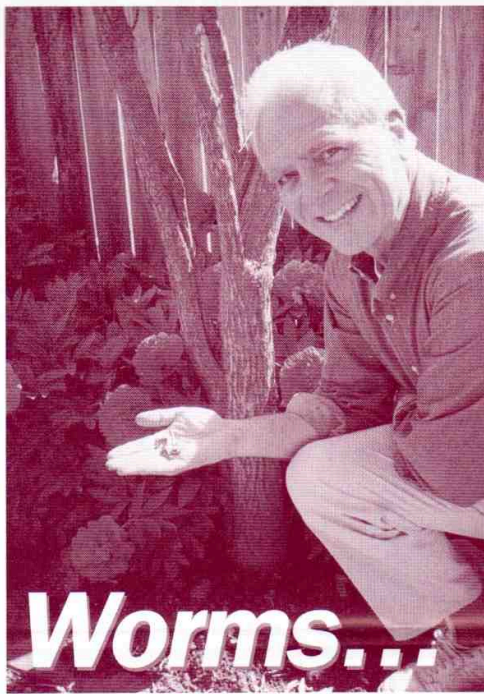
Thank you too, for your sacrifices. I know the price that you've paid, leaving home and security, friends and family, for Jesus' sake and for the sake of the gospel. I know that many have given up dreams that may never come to pass, dreams of an education, dreams of a home, dreams of financial freedom, even dreams of marriage. I also know that several have paid the supreme sacrifice, having died in the service of the Lord.

With all the energy, resources and sacrifices that have been made by two million people, I also know that for the vast majority, there has been a 'life deposit' from God's 'bank' that makes it all worthwhile. But sadly, I know that some have left the mission 'overdrawn' at that bank. A few have not yet been able to prove that, "God causes ALL things to work together for good..." - and it's been because of our frailties and the mistakes we have made. If you are in that category, I would say to you, "Will you forgive me?"

Many challenges remain; many people groups stay unreached; many darknesses prevail into which the gospel light must shine. The Good News is still under wraps for hundreds of millions. God's grand plan for this world is still incomplete. And you are a part of the completion of that Master plan! Having tasted missions - whether for three weeks or thirty years - you are a 'missionary for missions' in your sphere of influence. So I want to encourage you to consider yourself still part of the team, still vitally involved in captivating, with God's love, this world for Christ. I thank you.

Loren Cunningham, the Founder and Chairman of Youth With A Mission, currently lives in Switzerland. His ministry arena is the world, and in this season of his life God is blessing and anointing him with 'words' for the nations.





The response to what I call our 'Can of Worms' issue, has been astounding. There were letters, e-mails, faxes, phone calls, and a lot of face-to-face stuff too. It seems there are three categories:

Right Wingers who basically say, "Hurt? What do you mean hurt? Everyone gets hurt. Tell 'em to get over it."

Left Wingers go something like this, "Hurt? You bet I'm hurt! And someone's going to pay for it."

Middle of the Road says, "Yes, life is difficult and people do get hurt. Isn't it wonderful that we can appropriate God's grace and healing virtue?" This group was by far the largest and their YWAM experience was pretty much positive.

Here's a small sampler of the different points of view. I'm sorry all responses couldn't be included.

"If you think that now you have devoted an issue to "Wounded Warriors," the subject will go away, think again... It's fine to say that the wounded should forgive, but where is the accountability of those who caused the pain? As leaders they have culpability, and need to make things right. (But then, I guess it is still 'bad form' to criticize the leadership. Give me a break!!!!!!) As a leader in my job, I have a responsibility not to misuse the power I have. I take that responsibility very seriously. I found that in YWAM it was perfectly acceptable for

leaders to abuse their power, and the poor plebes under them had no recourse. If you complained, you were 'unspiritual' and most definitely 'not being submissive.'... Christian leaders above all must be held accountable for their actions. My husband and I would love to return to missions some day, but I seriously doubt I would even consider YWAM. God would have to put neon lights in the sky. I expect you will hear from my husband. That will be interesting for you. He thinks things through. I shoot wildly from the hip."
(Still waiting for your husband's letter. Ed)

"Our culture thrives on the victim mentality, and encourages looking for and dwelling on hurts... It's interesting how prone those suffering hurt or bitterness are to blather it around to whoever will listen, when they have never dealt with it between themselves and those whom they feel have caused it. This violates Matt 18:15-16... often those who have caused hurt are completely ignorant of it, and would seek immediate reconciliation if they knew... It is basic good manners to ignore or forgive the unintentional hurt. The Lord commands us to forgive deliberate hurt. Either way, our dealing with it is mandatory for us to be in right standing with God and men."

"Maybe the years have caused me to glamorize my YWAM experience, but I remember them with fondness. Sure there were hard times and re-entry was difficult. But overall I have never found a situation to duplicate the specialness of YWAM. I long for the worship times. I miss the closeness of fellowship. And I yearn for the sense of purpose and destiny in my walk and mission for the Lord. There was such a knowing of being called and being right in the center of God's will... I realize that many of the hard times were because of my own immaturity and unresolved issues, rather than the fault of leadership... it's easy to point the finger at leaders because they are out in front. Maybe that makes their weaknesses more obvious... Yes, there were hurts and even today I don't understand some of the policies and decisions that were made. They still don't make sense to me, yet none of them were life threatening and the Lord was served. And I learned so much. Frankly, I think being in leadership is rather a thankless task and only for the stout of heart."

And from a couple of leaders still in YWAM...

"It was kinda scary to read all about Pain & Perseverance. Scary, because now, after 15 years in YWAM, I'm serving on our base leadership team, seeing some of the conflicts from the other side. I'm telling you it is a really tricky, stretching and painful learning experience to unravel and deal with conflicts. Matthew 5 & 18 sound so cut and dried, but they are guidelines. I haven't yet seen any conflict even vaguely approach the 'cut and dried' category! What I have seen is that principles are worked out much slower than we think in the PROCESS of forgiveness and reconciliation. I would imagine that many of my leaders felt the same as I do now when faced with conflict - scared!"

Belinda van de Loo, Assistant Base Leader, Heidebeek, Holland

"Paul (in 2 Cor 10, 11 & 12), when he was commending his own ministry, didn't commend his strengths; he talked about his weaknesses, and unfortunately we don't do enough of that in my opinion, either in the church or in the mission. I see a distinct difference in scripture between weaknesses and sins. Some of these things were clearly sinful on the part of YWAM and I appreciate that we are hearing only one side of the story; but the thing that is wonderful about allowing this to go on in (*InTouch*), is that it truly shows that the strength in your ministry and the ministry of YWAM comes from the power of God, and not from how wonderful we are as a people or how we've done everything right... I really do believe that I've never seen anything like (this) before, and I appreciated it.

Ron Smith, Director, Schools of Biblical Studies, USA

Still struggling in the battle? Still in pain from your wounds?

FREE cassette message HEALING FOR WOUNDED SOLDIERS by International Bible Teacher Derek Prince. If you are still having a hard time, I will personally send you this tape FREE, if you promise to listen to it and apply whatever God says to you through it. Write to me. Peter

Broken or Wounded?

by Jerry Praetzel

After resigning as YWAM base directors, Linda and I took a year's sabbatical. For the next two years I was flooded with emotions about my time with the mission. Much of what I went through could be blamed on burn-out; the very thought of even a visit to a YWAM base was unappealing; outreach unthinkable. I realized that I was frustrated – frustrated at having been led by less than perfect people; frustrated by having led less than perfect people. I had honestly believed that my style was different, and that as their leader, my people would not be subject to the same leadership deficits that I had seen in others.

How did I fare? I have read the last two editions of *InTouch* with baited breath, waiting to see stories by YWAMers that had been wounded under my leadership!

Recently I read the book, *Broken In The Right Place* by Alan Nelson. It addressed the question of woundedness and brokenness head-on. Following are some highlights.

Just because someone goes through hard times, or even experiences a breakdown of sorts, it does not necessarily mean that he or she will come to brokenness. To quote Nelson, "There is a difference between being broken and being wounded. A person whose hurts do not result in spiritual breaking becomes a wounded person. The neurotic temptation to keep these wounds from healing is motivated by one's desire for an excuse to hate, be angry, or avoid responsibility. This person is likely to become one of the 'walking wounded,' people who may even be functioning in society.

"In our day, which emphasizes self-confidence, self-assertion and self-fulfillment, we need to learn again the lessons of brokenness - of humility and gentleness before God and each other. This brokenness speaks not of self-worthlessness, nor a malformed personality, nor deep clinical depression. It points toward a deeper reality, the response to a prompting of the Spirit in certain circumstances of need, demand, or spiritual yearning and hunger. Brokenness is a yielded heart open before God, a heart emptied of pride and self claims, of all arrogance; knowing our sin, our self-deception, our frailty, weakness and inadequacy. We discover ourselves again to be hungry and thirsty, poor and needy, when we had thought ourselves full and needing nothing. Along with this awareness comes a rediscovery of God's love, mercy and forgiveness - His affirmation of us, care for us, and claim upon us... 'Brokenness is not the opposite of wholeness; it is the continuing precondition for it,' says Roberta Hestenes."

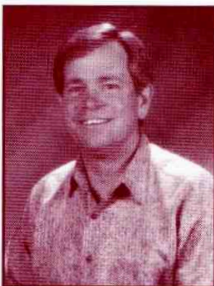
The saying, "Hurting people hurt people" is truer today than ever and to admit to myself that I have been part of the problem is quite humbling. I have undergone major spiritual heart surgery in the past few years, and as I am brought across the path of the dear folks I have hurt, things are being corrected. If you're reading this and you're one of them, please forgive me.

Although Linda and I are no longer on a YWAM base, we still consider ourselves YWAMers. Just about everything we share in ministry and everything we are, came to us through our twenty years in the mission.

To all of the leaders, teachers, co-workers and students who invested themselves into our lives, THANK YOU!!!

If God had raised us and led us in an unfallen world, we would have been different.

Until that day, all I can say is "I need a redeemer!"



APOLOGY

In the last *InTouch*, Peter Iliyn wrote a very sensitive and compelling lead column entitled, 'Wounded Warriors.' As editor, I shortened what he wrote by about 50%. In doing so, I actually added some thoughts that he did not write; and also omitted a key sentence that he did write. The implication from these errors of mine, is that insecure and hurting leaders are far more prevalent in YWAM than indeed they are. (I omitted, 'This may not happen often throughout YWAM, but even one time is too much.') Should you wish a copy of Peter's original article, I would be happy to send you one.

Peter Jordan, Editor

PROFOUND & PITHY

Life should be measured not by length, but by depth.

When your life and ministry speak for themselves, don't interrupt.

Our love grows soft if it is not strengthened by truth. Our truth grows hard if it is not softened by love.

John Stott

Advance Notice

Special Kona Alumni Reunion & Renewal Camp March 15 - 21, 1998

For anyone who has ever, in any way, been involved at Kona since the beginning in 1973. This includes staff, students, Mission Builders, families, donors, teachers. Help us get the word out! Full details will be available in the next *InTouch*, due out in October. If you need information earlier, let us know. This is in addition to our regular camp held November 16-22 this year. Organize your own class reunion.

A WORD FROM THE YWAM ASSOCIATES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HELP! *InTouch* is a huge ministry that is largely built on the efforts of Peter & Donna Jordan. It is like pulling teeth to get them to ask for finances. So at our Board meeting in early May, we decided to step in and ask for them, since they are in real need of financial partners. If this ministry is a blessing to you, would you please help lift the burden? Thank you!

YWAM Associates International Board of Directors – Tom & Mindy Buehring, Viva Doraisingham, Vaeluaga & Julie Eli, Denny Gunderson, Bill McAllister, Jerry & Linda Praetzel, Dan Sneed

The Spirit of God is moving quickly. I'm sensing Him say, "The revelation He is giving to His people today is coming more rapidly than anything that is happening in the computer field."

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Heb 6:12

It is becoming clearer and clearer these days as to whether God's people are speaking and acting according to the Spirit of God - or in the flesh (the soul, the mind, the will and the emotions). Do you respond to the Spirit of God, or do you react in the flesh? Here are three 'musts' that will help you know the difference between Spirit and flesh:

1. Worship and love God.
2. Read, study and meditate on God's Word.
3. Practice discernment (Heb 5:14). The natural (soulish) man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor 2:14

We are in a continuous battle between the flesh and the spirit. People who are led by the Spirit of God (Rom 8:14-18), must allow Jesus to be the absolute Lord of every area of their lives.

As Jesus' mother told the servants at the wedding, *Do whatever He*

tells you. So we must also do and then we will see His glory. (John 2:5&11)

The time is short and God is preparing a bride for His Son. Our ministry in life will only come out of intimacy with Jesus and trusting God and His Word.

Love & Blessings,



and Finally...

It has not been my experience in YWAM to be wounded by others. Hurt a little, but not wounded. (You may well ask, "What's his problem - denial? Thick skin? Hard heart?") To which I answer, "No, it's probably because I'm perfect!") Really though, it must have to do with a number of factors - my temperament and personality; my life experiences, including my wrongful tendency towards independence; my particular giftings; even my age. All these parts of me, go to make up who I am.

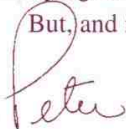
Perhaps the quality of forgiveness keeps me unwounded. I believe I 'inherited' this grace, but claim little credit for it. My missionary mother was a forgiver. All her life she oozed grace and forgiveness to those who mistreated her. For example, while locked up in a Japanese prison in Shanghai with the rest of our family for three and a half years, suffering from cancer, and with treatment denied, never once did she complain or grow bitter. Surgery had to wait until the end of the war. It was her greatest test as she walked consistently in forgiveness.

A few years later, on her deathbed with a recurrence of the cancer; abandoned by her nearby friends and relatives who were traumatized by fear of contact with the dread disease; and far from her immediate family, she wrote what proved to be her last letter to me, her distant 18 year-old son. The flimsy, pale-blue aerogram came brim-full with encouragement and admonishment ("You aren't thinking too much about girls, are you?" - to which, my honest answer would have been, "Yes.") Only mentioning her 'illness' in passing, she penned, "I'm not unhappy, and have so many kind friends." This was the first inkling to me, the 'baby' of the family, that she was sick. Two weeks later she was gone.

Alone and forsaken by those who might have provided comfort, my mother remained forgiving to the end. Though physically unhealthy, she was spiritually and emotionally well and unwounded by the 'slings and arrows' of life.

So perhaps forgiveness is the antidote for woundedness. I believe it is. Once we stop trying to 'cure' those who have harmed us, we will the more quickly be healed ourselves.

But, and it's a big 'but,' we have to want to be healed.



P.S. - I've noticed something about YWAM leaders: firstly, the very qualities that make them good visionary, pioneering, missionary leaders - their faith level, their gung-ho-ness, their ability to attract followers, their 'I've-heard-from-God, now-let's-go-do-it' attitude - all of these qualities may blind them to the fact that others are not built the same way. Which may make them insensitive to the needs of others. And, I have never known a YWAM leader to maliciously hurt anyone. Many have been wounded, but not with evil intent. Remember, it's not the things that happen to us that affect us; it's our perception of those things.

P.P.S. - Remember the worms from the last *InTouch*? Some of those beauties, along with their compost, are happily tucked into Donna's bed of roses.



Grandma
for the
5th time!