

August 14, 2008

I thought you'd be interested in a piece of communication I just sent out to our senior YWAM leaders who are about to gather together for their annual meeting. Many are facing traumatic things at this time, including my two partners on the executive. You will understand some of the background to the text below if you know that Iain Muir is currently undergoing treatment for prostate cancer and Lynn Green is having to turn aside to his wife as she endures chemotherapy for breast cancer. It may even be that I have to take responsibility for this upcoming event by myself for all or part of the time. Loren and Darlene and many other leaders will also come at a time when they are facing daunting challenges, not necessarily related to health, but things that illustrate our weakness and our need for God's deliverance all day, every day. Thank you again for praying for me. It is a privilege for me to let you look over my shoulder at what I'm doing in my communications with my fellow leaders. I do need your agreement in prayer. Please read the following text thoughtfully and add your faith to mine as we proceed together.

John

Dear Ones,

A few thoughts as we prepare our hearts to attend our gathering in Kona. There is always a battle just to get to the GLT meetings and other such events, so grace to you. May the gift of faith be yours, the obstacles are not insurmountable, just an opportunity to demonstrate the Father's care for you. Let's agree together for one another right now in a prayer of unity and identification with one another.

"Father, we submit ourselves to you and invite the enabling of the Holy Spirit upon ourselves and our brothers and sisters. May every grace be released and every ambush cut off.

The Lord rebuke you, satan. Your lies are cast down. You are not permitted to speak or act against the gathering together of YWAM leaders or their families or their sending communities.

We also put under the yoke of obedience to Christ every soulish fear, appetite or reasoning. Let God be true and every lie refuted.

Carry us, Lord. Your mercy endures forever and we will exalt You among the nations. We will glory in the blood of the Lamb and we now present it upon the doorposts of this gathering. Take Your place, Jesus, as our Prophet, Priest and King. We are gathering to You with joy."

Perhaps you could obtain agreement about these things from those you are praying with on Thursday. From my perspective, I see that many of you are feeling very fragile. Many of you face circumstances that have recently reminded you how little strength you have. That's OK. God is preparing our hearts for the gifts and graces that we will need for tomorrow.

In the year you called me to this role of leadership, the crowning passage that God gave Julie and me was II Chronicles, chapters 19 and 20. This word has been amplified in our hearts again as we have been praying for Iain and Lynn and Marty's health and also the enormous challenges facing Loren and Darlene and ... well, the overwhelming challenges facing all of you.

Headlines from these passages include these words, "A vast army is coming against you from Edom from the other side of the sea.... Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to enquire of the Lord... All the men of Judah with their wives and children and little ones stood there before the Lord and the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jazael... He said, 'Listen, King Jehoshaphat, and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem, this is what the Lord says to you, "Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow, march down against them... You will not have to fight in this battle. Take up your positions, stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you... Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you..."' Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the Lord and to praise Him for the splendor of His holiness as they went out at the head of the army saying: 'Give thanks to the Lord for His love endures forever.' As they began to sing and praise, the Lord sent ambushes against the men of Ammon and Mt. Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated."

One more thing, although the metaphor above is in some ways appropriate for this season in YWAM, I feel I must remind you that our call is not to mere survival. We are missionaries and this is a joyous calling. Our work is essential and our privilege is great. Romans 10:15 "How, then, can they call on the One they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the One of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"

I've spent most of July in Asia and I am thrilled by the works of Jesus in our day. The Kingdom of God is being built among the Chinese, Cambodians, Indonesians, Mongolians, Indians and all the beautiful peoples of Asia. Wherever you labor, know that your seed is not wasted even though it sometimes appears to be lost to the ground.

A few weeks ago, I felt that the words of Psalm 126 were for Steve and Liz Cochrane in their transition and today I want to speak them into your life, all of your lives. These are the words that the Jews sang when they ascended to Jerusalem each year. Nothing could be more appropriate for us as we remember the goodness of God and turn our feet toward the gathering in Kona.

When the Lord brought back the captivity of Zion we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. Then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them." The Lord has done great things us and we are glad. Bring back our captivity, oh Lord, as the streams in the South. Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

See you soon.

With love,

John Dawson