

*from the Global Leadership Team, 2008*

1. In 2008 we were coming up to the end of John Dawson's terms as President of Youth With A Mission. As we searched for a name for a new president, we could not get any consensus. It wasn't long until we realized that God was trying to say something to us. He took us to the story of Samuel when Israel asked for a king. The Lord told Samuel that Israel had rejected not Samuel's, but God's leadership over them (1 Sam. 8:7). This word hit us powerfully. We responded to God and embarked on a course that we trust will result more and more in God ruling directly over us as our king. We're well along in our discovery process and things are getting clearer as God continues to speak to us.
2. We're not in the process of abolishing leadership in YWAM. We're looking to grow our eldership circles and these circles of elders will provide leadership to our movement. This process will tend to produce broader participation in leadership.
3. In this process there is a lot of freedom given for the regions to seek God and get guidance as to how to proceed in each place. It would be strange if meticulous orders would come from the "top" to promote a greater freedom and creativity in our movement. Our emphasis is on seeking the word of the Lord at each level.
4. We are a movement. This movement contains many organizations within it, but is not itself an organization. This means that a local base is, for example, an organization within a movement. The University of the Nations, as another type of example, is an institution within a movement.
5. A movement is led, rather than governed. This means that our eldership circles aren't part of a governing structure. They are groups that the movement looks to for guidance and leadership. This is an organic, authentic authority. It is based on acquired esteem rather than organizational legalities.
6. This means that our elder's circles aren't governing bodies or parts of an internal governmental structure in YWAM. The judges, who led Israel for some 300 years, had no governmental authority or structures. They had a great deal of spiritual authority and insight and provided effective leadership.
7. We believe that every individual YWAMer can hear God. This can be abused, but we must deeply respect and promote it, being very reluctant to interfere unless sin is being practiced and promoted.
8. We are coming up to a time of multiplication that will be severely restricted if we try and hold to a traditional power structure with organizational charts and bottlenecks. This would disqualify us to respond to the appeal that the Lord made to us last year, through Loren, to get ready for this multiplication.
9. This is the time to be looking for ways to continually open up the processes that lead to multiplication. It's not the time to hold on to governing control to decide what can be done and

where and when. It's an hour of opportunity and we should seek ways to promote freedom for people to obey the Word of the Lord and create new things.

10. To keep respect and therefore authority, our elders must faithfully seek God. The qualifications for an elder or for an elder's circle are primarily spiritual. We must go first and often into the holy of holies. This cannot be delegated. If we will do this others will follow. It's clearer than ever now that it's not enough to merely hold a position with a title and some assigned power.

11. We should look to encourage the multiplication of elder's circles, looking for appropriate ways to include more and more of the truly wonderful men and women of God that we have all over the globe in this relational process of eldering.

12. The general guidelines for our way forward are already there in our values, which are really a list of the major words of the Lord to us over the decades. These words of the Lord define us and we're not to stray from them.

13. The guidelines are held within the framework of our covenant with God, especially the original covenant formed when Loren saw the vision of the waves. We are a covenant people and should orient ourselves by that covenant.

14. We have powerful promises for growth. We have before us a huge task. As our ministries grow and multiply we will need to see a parallel multiplication of elder's circles. We trust that this will be a dynamic process that will encourage new initiatives and will honor the word of the Lord to even the youngest YWAMers.

15. If any great issues come about that the more immediately involved circles of elders can't handle, these could proceed towards resolution in at least two ways:

a. We could take them to our most experienced elders and our most established circles of elders. This is the equivalent to what Israel did when they took questions to Samuel.

b. We could assign that question as a project to a specially formed group of elders. This group would exist long enough to bring resolution and then would cease to exist.

16. Our normal elder's meetings would primarily be concerned with the big picture, the word of the Lord, the dealings of God with us and through us to the mission, seeking God together, interceding for the movement of YWAM, and so on. The minutia of daily operations should be dealt with whenever possible (and it's almost always possible) at the local level.

17. There are very innovative and promising things happening in several regions, where they are seeking the Lord in detail. This is a growing reality and we can look around the globe to find examples of solutions that can inspire and instruct us as we likewise seek the Lord.