

01 June 2004 International YWAMer

## A Word to YWAM

By John Dawson

On my birthday this year, I asked for something special from the Lord for the mission. I felt a quiet prompting to meditate on Ezekiel 37. Do you remember the story recounted in this passage? God is talking to a young spiritual leader about the state of his nation in his generation. I was reminded that we too can take a position before God like the young Ezekiel. We too can gain the perspective at the throne. Let God carry you up until you are looking down on that ministry, nation or region that you are responsible for.

God asked Ezekiel, "Son of dust, can these bones become people again?" This question makes my heart tremble because I feel God taking measure of my faith. I often need to repent of my low expectations of God Almighty. Ezekiel recounts, "Then he told me to speak to the bones." Remember what we learned in DTS? Loren and others have taught us that we create with God when we speak the words that God has given us to declare by faith. ".and say, 'O dry bones, listen to the words of God, for the Lord says, 'See! I am going to make you live and breathe again!...' So I spoke these words from God.and suddenly there was a rattling noise from all across the valley, and the bones of each body came together.and muscles and flesh formed over the bones.but the bodies had no breath..So I spoke to the winds as he commanded me and the bodies began breathing; they lived and stood up..." (NKJV).

This is a Jewish prophet speaking to Jewish people, however it speaks to my spirit of the season we are entering as a mission. Our "bones" are coming into alignment. This is a time for shifting and establishing the right ministry gifts into loving covenantal teams. Don't cling to your current position; ask God for more. Sometimes the enemy of tomorrow's inheritance is today's possession. As in the biblical metaphor, flesh and muscle and skin are beginning to cover the bones. Meaning: as leadership and organizational structure begin to function with renewed affection, unity of purpose and integrity, the beauty of multiplying life is added by God.

For example, I observed over 500 DTS students at a conference. They were listening to Reona Peterson-Joly giving vision for loving the people of the Arab world. They gave every sign of being totally committed to go. The new generation is beautiful in its humility and zeal and very willing to be joined to our ministries and leaders in the Middle East. However, like Ezekiel, like Reona, we must call to them. Call them in our praying and call them in our preaching. We must not draw back. Great leaders such as Bill Bright have died in the past months. We must call for thousands of visionary leaders to replace them. Call for whole new movements to arise that will surpass us.

We are seeing something demonstrated in international events. It is one thing to topple evil authorities. It is another to secure the peace. Great numbers of troops are needed to hold the ground and real transformation does not occur. That's why we need movements like YWAM. We must recruit missionaries. If young people don't serve in the spiritual army of God, they may end up serving in the literal armies of nations. I don't want that for my children. My father served as a naval

officer, and we love and honor those who serve when it comes to that, however it must not come to that. This generation must not be wasted by physical war. They must be deployed in spiritual war. Recruit them and you will rescue them. God is building ".an exceedingly great army" (v. 10).

What about the older generation within YWAM? The term, "Joshua generation," has been identified with emerging youth, but it also embodies another meaning. It was Joshua in his old age who took on the mountain giants. Julie and I are in our 50's and feeling it, but we are believing God for the greatest breakthroughs now. Look at Loren and Darlene powering on. What an inspiration.

One more thing. Every YWAMer fights an intense personal spiritual battle over finances. There is grace for this. Stick with the constituency that supports you and over time they will respect your fidelity to your calling and become a covenantal part of your team. Be courageous because you are God's servant. "The wicked flee when no one is chasing them! But the godly are as bold as lions!" (Proverbs 28:1). I have to get back to the airport. We will talk again in a few weeks.

Yours always, John Dawson