

**Dear Prayer Team:**

Have you ever felt at loss for the right words! As I am sitting here at my desk trying to write this update, that is how I feel. Having been half way around the world in the last month... words cannot express all the experiences in just a couple of paragraphs. But let me try by sharing some of the highlights:

## HIGHLIGHTS OF KUWAIT



The church in Kuwait consists of 25,000 believers in one church with over 70 different congregations. Kuwait consist of 2.2 million people, 80% of whom are workers or ex-patriots. The church consists of over 60 nationalities and is a taste, I believe, of what heaven will be like.

During this trip I spent the majority of time working with about 60 youth workers assembled from around the Gulf region... taking them through the Life of Christ and focusing upon building disciple-making ministries.

It was a great joy hearing stories of young people coming to faith in Christ... even against all the fearful reality of the Muslim faith, for to come to Christ as a Kuwaiti is illegal. Anyone who professes Christ must stay

underground and/or leave the country.

We had a great time of prayer and training with many new friendships. Plans were made to continue to grow the alliance of youth workers in the Middle East.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF ISRAEL

The sign over the door of the Garden tomb said it all... He is not here, He is Risen!



At our GYI meetings, this year we had a daily tour visiting different places in Jerusalem. One of the highlights for me, next to the Garden Tomb, was getting to know our tour guide Andre. A Russian Jew, Andre had a great grasp of the OT scriptures and a good understanding of the NT. As he was showing us the Wailing Wall, one of the men asked what the Orthodox Jews were praying for?.



He quickly said, "Probably two things... that the Messiah would come soon, and that the Shekinah glory would return to the Temple".

He then went on to explain the reason for praying at the Wailing Wall. It was the closest point to the site of the original Holy of Holies on the Temple Mount.

"Jewish people do not know where the Shekinah glory departed to, or when it will return." Andre said, "but before the Glory can return, if it ever will, it needs a Temple to enter."

Immediately my mind raced to I Corinthians 3:16-17 "Don't you know that you



yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you." Also II Corinthians 6:16, which so clearly says that, "we are the temple of the Living God.

At a break, as Andre and I looked at these New Testament scriptures, it was clear that Andre was hearing some new truth from God's Word. His response was, "If that is true, it puts a whole new meaning to the concept of a temple." We discussed the significance of the veil in the Holy of Holies being torn from top to bottom at the death of Christ... making it possible for everyone to have access to the Living God.

**Pray with me for Andre that he will come to know that Living God.**

## HIGHLIGHTS OF BETHLEHEM

For the first time, I had a chance to visit Bethlehem and meet with a number of Palestinian pastors, hearing of their struggles living behind the wall that Israel has built over the last couple of years.

This wall, while providing security for Israel, has produced 60% unemployment in Bethlehem. Visiting the refugee camp, we heard stories of the struggles to survive, and saw real live examples of the radicalization of Muslim terrorists.

It was an emotional experience... especially seeing that over 80% of the 40,000 in the refugee camp were under the age of 30. **A seemingly hopeless and complex situation which needs our prayers.**



## ISRAEL 2008 SUMMIT

As twenty plus leaders from around the globe met for our Global Youth Initiative meetings, we had a glorious time of touring Israel in the afternoon and then meeting each morning and evening. Our meeting times consisted of sharing "best practices", evaluating each other's ministries and giving helpful input, along with praying for specific regions of the world.

However the major part of our GYI meetings in Israel were to plan our 2008 Israel Summit. Scheduled for March 8-12, 2008 we anticipate over 60 countries participating and 200 leaders coming together.



By invitation only, this Summit has been a part of our dreams for over 5 years. Each year at GYI we gather with about 30 national leaders... but we have wanted to conduct a movement conference designed to connect emerging leaders, champion the values of GYI, and help younger leaders be resourced with new connections.

Israel 2008 is designed to accomplish that very purpose.

Scheduled to run from March 8-12, 2008, the Summit will consist of three modules. The first module will consist of a pre-conference on March 6-8 for 125 Indigenous leaders... each of whom is leading a movement of multiplying disci-

ples in some part of the world. The second module will be a 4-day conference designed to champion the values of GYI and then tour Jerusalem to experience first hand the Life of Christ on site. We've identified the theme of the conference as "Jesus on Location".

The last module will be an optional 6-day study tour of the rest of Israel. Since the major cost of attending GYI is always the airfare... we wanted to add a study tour to continue to allow these Indigenous leaders to build relationships and continue to learn from each other and the Life of Christ on location.

By a lengthy process of selection, we have also have invited ten North American schools and 5 International schools to each bring, along with the leading Youth Ministry Professor, 3-5 students who have a passion for global youth work. This will allow for a new generation of emerging leaders to see first hand how God is working around the globe.

Needless to say, this Summit is a major undertaking... bringing 200 young leaders together from around the globe. Challenges such as administering the conference (with only me on staff at GYI©), getting all the needed visas, raising the finances, identifying the key leaders to invite, and planning the tour and conference... can at times be daunting. But God has proven Himself again and again as I am watching God put together a great team to accomplish what He has laid on our heart.

I have also been amazed at how God has also provided over 80% of the needed funding of almost \$200,000. I am so grateful for so many of you who share my passion for that next generation. As you know... most of the developing countries could never participate in a gathering like this if it was not made possible by God's people. **I firmly believe this significant investment will be worth every penny, as a "once in a lifetime" event for these proven young leaders.** I still remember the impact my first trip to Israel had in my life... and I know this investment will pay great dividends long-term in these leaders lives.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

### For the 2008 Israel Summit...

- For the development of the invitation list... we are working hard to get the right people there!
- The additional needed funds... about \$40,000
- A strong administrative and conference planning team

### For writing projects:

- I have been asked by Campus Crusade to develop two new self-study resources.
- Pray that I can finish one of them by June.

## ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

It was Palm Sunday but because of a sore throat, 5-year-old Johnny stayed home from church with a sitter. When the family returned home, they were carrying several palm branches. Johnny asked them what they were for. "People held them over Jesus' head as he walked by," his father told him. "Wouldn't you know it," Johnny fumed, "the one Sunday I don't go and He shows up."

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One Easter Sunday morning as the pastor was preaching a children's sermon, he reached into his bag of props and pulled out an egg. He pointed at the egg and asked the children, "What's in here?" "I know, I know!" a little boy exclaimed, "pantyhose!"

## All I needed to know about life I learned from the Easter Bunny:

- Don't put all of your eggs in one basket.
- Walk softly and carry a big carrot.
- Everyone needs a friend who is all ears.
- All work and no play can make you a basket case.
- Everyone is entitled to a bad hare day.
- Let happy thoughts multiply like rabbits.
- Keep your paws off other people's jellybeans.
- The grass is always greener in someone else's basket.
- An Easter bonnet can tame even the wildest hare.
- To show your true colors you have to come out of your shell.
- The best things in life are still sweet and gooey!

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A male golfer was preparing to hit his ball from the red ladies tee on the first hole, right in front of the pro shop. As he began his backstroke, a voice boomed over the public address system: "Would the man hitting his ball from the ladies tee, please move it back to the men's tee?!"

He glared over his shoulder, then began again to prepare to hit his ball.

The loudspeaker again shattered the silence, repeating, "Will the man hitting his ball from the ladies tee, please move it back to the white, men's tee?!"

At that, the man turned and faced the clubhouse. Cupping his hands on his mouth he hollered, "Will the man in the clubhouse please be quiet, so I can take my second shot?!"

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Finding one of her students making faces at others on the playground, Ms. Smith stopped to gently reprove the child.

Smiling sweetly, the teacher said, "Bobby, when I was a child, I was told if I made ugly faces, it would freeze and I would stay like that."

Bobby looked up and innocently replied, "Well, Ms. Smith, you can't say you weren't warned."

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One summer evening during a violent thunderstorm a mother was tucking her small boy into bed. She was about to turn off the light when he asked with a tremor in his voice, "Mommy, will you sleep with me tonight?"

The Mother smiled and gave him a reassuring hug. "I can't, dear," she said. "I have to sleep with Daddy."

A long silence was broken at last by his shaky little voice: "The big sissy."

### Today's thought...

Good Idea: Finding Easter eggs on Easter.

Bad Idea: Finding Easter eggs on Christmas.



Support for Dann and Char Spader or the ministries of Global Youth Initiative can be sent to: Global Youth Initiative c/o Josiah Venture, P.O. Box 4317, Wheaton Illinois 60189-4317