



AT THE RISK OF BEING MISUNDERSTOOD

After two years of seeking to document how God is working in Global Youth Initiative... I have decided to open my journal and let you read a recent entry I made this last week.

For a variety of reasons... I believe our time is short before the Lord's return. This entry best expresses my heart as I approach this season of celebrating the birth of our Savior... who entered our world and with clarity of focus and I believe with great joy (Hebrews 1:9)... made disciples who could make disciples... and then told us to do the same.

Journal Entry... November 27, 2006



"There have only been a couple of times in my life when I have experienced joyful exhilaration. The type of exhilaration, which comes with a strong sense that says... "I was created for this purpose!"

This first happened in 1993. God had sovereignly implanted a vision of seeing 10,000 youth ministries mobilized to evangelism and discipleship. For over 10 years at Sonlife, we had labored under this joyful burden.

In 1992, when Josh McDowell asked me to help him create the "World's Largest Pizza Party"... a live satellite-linked party all over the United States... I initially laughed at the thought and brushed it off... until the Holy Spirit clearly showed me this was His idea.

For two years I traveled the country... recruiting involvement with denominations, para church organizations, and youth pastors. I felt that every gift God had given me was operating at 100% efficiency. As never before I sensed "this is what I'm on this planet for... this is my calling... the culmination of the initial vision the Lord gave". I felt Holy Spirit exhilaration... I sensed I was created for this task... I saw God powerfully enabling my gifts.

When the event was over in March of 93... over 10,000 youth groups had participated... over 1.5 million students were involved with over 500,000 non-Christians hearing the gospel. But more importantly... thousands of students had the privilege of leading one of their friends in a decision for Christ that night.

It was an exhilarating moment... not because of its size... but because of its impact in students' lives and the fact that God had orchestrated the event. I was exhausted... but full of Joy!

During the last few months I have felt a similar sense of purpose.

I have just completed two years of helping lead Global Youth Initiative. I have felt that all of my 35 years of studying the Life of Christ and walking with the Lord have been for this moment. For me... I feel again that the gifts the Lord has given me are hitting on all cylinders.

In February of 1998... in Edmonton Alberta... while speaking at the North American Baptist Tri-annual conference... God sovereignly laid on my heart the vision of seeing 100,000 emerging young leaders trained. Over the last 8 years I have prayed consistently and in faith for this vision to become a reality. But I have to admit... while I know He has always laid this on my heart... I could not see any way of it becoming a reality... until now!

Within the last few months... all of that has changed. God has miraculously opened doors with partnering organizations... such as the GYI alliance of ministries... Campus Crusade... ELIC and others... all of which have provided opportunities to multiply the passion of my life... equipping emerging leaders in the character and priorities of Christ". This is what God has created me for. I can now see a pathway for that vision to become a reality... personally training over the next 10 years 100,000 young emerging leaders in the character and priorities of Jesus... and they in turn impacting another million young leaders. With confidence, I can now see it happening. Not by my wisdom, or strength, or power... but by God's Spirit doing the miraculous. It is an exhilarating moment.

It will take great work... focused energy... and much prayer and sacrifice. I cannot do it alone... it will take a team of people who believe in the vision and are willing to sacrifice to make it happen. But that is how God has always advanced His Kingdom.

With tears in my eyes, with a deep passion in my heart, and in fear and trepidation... I have told the Lord I am willing to lay down my life for this cause... seeing young emerging leaders equipped in "walking as Jesus walked... doing what Jesus did" (John 14:12).

It is because of this... I feel a deep sense of exhilaration! I was made for this moment. All the forces of my life seemingly bringing convergence on the gifts God has given me. May I prove up to the task... may I be faithful to the work ahead. This is something I am willing to die for... it is what God has made me for... it is His plan for my life. "

November 27, 2006

GOD HAS DONE IT AGAIN

In preparing a year-end executive summary for the elders of my sending church, I was amazed as I summarized all that God has done in just two short years. Let me give you just a highlight of what I listed:

- Saw at least 17 new countries establish ministries for training emerging leaders in just two years
- Had over 100 personal appointments with young leaders seeking God's direction
- Personally saw over 5000 leaders in 22 countries trained in the Life of Christ, plus had thousands others trained through the partnering ministries
- Traveled over 200,000 miles and visited every major continent
- Developed and field tested two new International training manuals on the Life of Christ, plus developed with a partnering ministry a web based training delivery option
- Saw God graciously provide and exceed the \$125,000 budget established for GYI each of the last two years.



THE CHALLENGE IN 2007

As I enter 2007 two major challenges are before me.

First: I need prayers as I write two major self-study guides on the Life of Christ... these need to be finished in 2007

Second: Due to the finishing of my partial salary as Founder of Sonlife and some increased expenses at GYI, I will need to increase the GYI budget from \$125,000 a year to \$175,000 a year. (45% is salaries and 65% is administrative and travel). This will require a 40% increase... or \$4000 a month additional support.

YOUR RESPONSE

God has done all that he has in GYI because of the prayers and sacrifices of many... **you are a valued team player at GYI.** However, it has been 2 years and I want all of you to feel free to move forward as the Lord is leading you.

If you would like to be removed from this GYI Update... please let me know. If you would like to begin supporting GYI financially...increase your monthly support... or give a year-end gift, please contact me. All gifts can be made out to Josiah Venture (designated to GYI), P.O. Box 4317, Wheaton, IL 60189. All year end gifts will be used toward next year's budget increase.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE:

Two young boys are spending their night at their grand parents. At bed-time, the two boys knelt beside their bed to say their prayers when the youngest one began praying at the top of his lungs.

"I PRAY FOR A NEW BICYCLE...I PRAY FOR A NEW XBOS... I PRAY FOR A NEW DVD PLAYER..."

The older brother leaned over and nudged the younger brother and said, "Why are you shouting your prayers? God isn't deaf."

To which the younger brother replied, "No but Gramma is!"

SOME THOUGHTS:

The four stages of life are:

- 1) You believe in Santa Claus.
- 2) You don't believe in Santa Claus.
- 3) You are Santa Claus.
- 4) You look like Santa Claus.

SIGNS IN KITCHENS:

If you don't like my cooking, lower your standards.

This is a self-cleaning kitchen - you use it, you clean it yourself.

There are two choices for supper in this kitchen - take it or leave it.

Don't criticize the coffee. You may be old and weak yourself someday.

Kitchen closed due to illness...I'm sick of cooking!

A messy kitchen is a happy kitchen and this kitchen is delirious. (Char's favorite)

OOOOPS:

