



Leadership Letter

Are your 10 years up?

Is there something special about 10 years? As a general rule, I think so. It seems like a decade is a good time to focus on something, a good time to give your best and a good time to evaluate.

Just look at the last five decades in history. It seems from a brief look that there are trends, mind-sets, ways of life and culture that change over each decade.

1960's - YWAM started in this decade and along with others began a new wave of missionary activity. This decade known for its counter culture and social revolution, also known as the swinging 60's became an era of irresponsible excess and flamboyance and the emergence of the hippies. The Berlin wall was built, the 1st man walked on the moon and the first heart transplant took place. JFK and Martin Luther were assassinated and Mandela was sentenced to life in prison. There was radical change in Africa as 32 countries gained independence from their European colonial rulers. Marilyn Monroe was found dead, the Beatles become popular and Star trek and Sesame Street TV shows began. Films: James Bond, spaghetti westerns, Dr Shivago, Breakfast at Tiffany's,

1970's - YWAM starts training courses, which multiply quickly. Hippies are still around until the middle of the decade. Technology develops with the introduction of the VCR, the pocket calculator and Sony's walkman. In the U.S., the Watergate scandal begins, abortion is legalized and they pull out of Vietnam. Economic growth is slowed by the oil crisis. Tangshan earthquake kills 240,000. Elvis is found dead and we hear of the Jonestown massacre. Margaret Thatcher becomes 1st woman prime minister in UK and Mother Theresa is awarded the Nobel peace prize. Films include: love story, disaster movies like the towering inferno, the Poseidon adventure and Earthquake; Clockwork orange, the Godfather, Jaws and the first Star Wars.

1980's - YWAM worked on project 223 to minister in every nation of the world. John Lennon was assassinated. DNA was first used to convict criminals and a new plague is identified as Aids. The 1st personal computers are launched. A hole in the ozone layer is discovered and we experience the Chernobyl nuclear accident. Developing countries across the world faced economic and social difficulties as they suffered from multiple debt crises. Ethiopia witnessed widespread famine and one of the remembered fund raising efforts was the Live Aid concert of 85. Major civil discontent and violence occurred in the Middle East, including the Iran-Iraq War, the ongoing Soviet-Afghan War, the 1982 Lebanon War, the Bombing of Libya in 1986, and the First Intifada in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Berlin wall falls. Classic films are produced like E.T., the V and VI in the star wars trilogy, Indiana Jones and back to the future.

1990's - YWAM engaged unreached peoples and saw frontier missions come to the fore. The Berlin wall fell in 89 and following was the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war. PC's entered middle class homes resulting in the rise to prominence of the internet which grows exponentially. This also increased economic productivity and personal wealth increased among the major developed nations. The decade saw the end of modernity and the emergence of post-modernity. Operation Desert Storm is launched and Hong Kong is

returned to China. Princess Dianna dies, the Euro appears and we see the emergence of 2G mobile phones moving from bricks to small hand held units! Films like: Jurassic Park, Toy story, the Matrix, men in black, Forrest Gump and Titanic (the most successful film ever) There is panic over potential problems for all the computers in the world as we enter the new millennium!

2000's - YWAM introduced Project 4K and changed the way we look at the world. Globalization continues with the internet being one of the prime contributors. A new way of life emerges with buying and selling online, researching and learning about anything and social networking through interfaces like face book changed the way we communicate. We see the rise of Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups leading to the occupying of Afghanistan and the war on terror. The EU saw further integration and expansion in Europe. The environment became a key issue. Films like: Lord of the rings, Harry Potter, Shrek, Pirates of the Caribbean, The Passion of Christ and Avatar.

Are you convinced yet? Each decade has such a contrast. So if we can see it objectively in the recent decades we have just lived through, it's probably happening in our lives as well. The problem is, we live with ourselves 24/7 and so don't always notice the changes taking place.

If you have read "the making of a leader" by Robert Clinton, and taken time to draw out your timeline, then you have probably thought in terms of decades of your own life already. Here is a very rough outline of the decades:

Sovereign Foundations: Formation years. Understanding authority, love and trust
00's - a time of hopefully being cared for, nurtured and developed in the home environment. It includes the first experience of school and learning, being under authority figures and hopefully having lots of fun activities.

10's - a time of education and learning, becoming an adult, beginning to understand decisions have consequences and making mistakes, growing in identity and understanding who you are.

Discipleship Training/inner life: Learning years. Growing in character and commitment
20's - a time of growing up, no longer a teenager with all the emotional ups and downs, looking to explore a little or a lot, starting to think about what to do and where to go, looking at careers and calling, a season of romance and often meeting the woman or man of their dreams

Ministry development: Contributing years. Using gifts and leadership skills
30's - potentially a time management nightmare, with pressures from a young family and a focus on work or ministry, getting established in specific roles, understand more of who you are and how you function in gifts and relationships

40's - the first birthday in this decade is a milestone, a pivotal mid life reflective moment and decisions are made to continue in what you are doing or move to something new and perhaps completely different,

Wilderness development/life maturing: Evaluating years. Persevering and intimacy
50's - the sandwich decade where you are often caring for aging parents or kids who are now young adults needing support in their development, at a point in work or ministry where there is much wisdom and expertise but feeling the pressure to develop the younger generation and wondering whether there is still a place for you, still lots of energy and vision and can accomplish much, the emphasis begins to move towards influence roles rather than direct line responsibility,

Convergence anointing: Investing years. Calling and gifting working together

60's – a time where the world is thinking of retiring and slowing down, although the priests of the bible retired from the active roles at 50 they continued their eldering roles until their death, this isn't a time to settle down but to impart out to others, an opportunity of being influential without the final responsibility, mentoring, fathering, ministering, training, imparting and blessing others, it's a focus on relationships,

70's – a time to invest carefully with the energy and time you have available, these finishing years can be so fruitful,

Look at your own decades – what has happened in your life? What characterises each decade? Write some words that sum up the decades in your life.

In 10 years we have generally left our mark on the role we have performed. If we continue we will tend to do more of the same – that's not necessarily bad but if the younger generation is to rise, they need to take responsibility. It is important not to work ourselves OUT of a job, but work ourselves INTO new jobs. If you're a pioneer at heart, keep pioneering like Caleb. If you're a prophetic intercessor like the apostle John, take as much solitude and time out to hear from God and then use the platforms that God gives to share and impart what God has given, if you're a teacher like Paul, keep teaching by travelling, sharing one to one in prison or writing, if you're an evangelist, you never run out of people to reach, if you're a pastor, people will beat a path to your door and so you will never be out of a job either. As a parent its good to remember that every 10 years there is a different kind of input that your child needs. If you continue to relate to a son of 18 like you did at 8, life isn't going to be smooth for either of you. Similarly in relating with friends or spouses – every season of life requires a different approach and style that needs to change. The question is, are we aware of how we need to change?

After 10 years doing anything, its time for a major reflection and evaluation so that you can clarify what the next 10 years may hold for you. Here are some questions that may be helpful:

- What am I passionate about? What am I doing that I am not passionate about? Is passion missing and do I need to seek the Lord to get re-fired up?
- Am I on track with life goals and ambitions? What are the words from the Lord that I have received over the years? What is the sense of destiny that I carry in my heart? What dreams are left undone right now?
- What are the priorities in my personal, relational and ministry life right now? What am I giving time and energy to? What needs to change?
- How long have I been in my ministry role and how long should I stay in it? How could it change? What are developmental possibilities?
- Who am I training, influencing and mentoring?
- How am I plateauing? What risks do I need to take to step into the next season?
- Where am I to be rooted?

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

What will this decade hold for you?