



## Leadership Letter

*What legacy are you leaving?*

Max de Pree, says, *'I wish that at a younger stage of life leaders would know in their hearts, that what they're figuratively ready to die for is going to change.'*

Rite and I have just completed a two-day process of discernment facilitated by friends of another mission organisation, along with some of our YWAM team members. It has been a pivotal decision-making time and one that I am sure we will look back on, as helping to establish us with 'focused lives' as Robert Clinton's book is entitled. In these two days, we were not only able to identify what we are good at and what our passions are but also to focus on this important decade of our 60's and think about the legacy that we want to leave.

Part of the preparation for these days included creating a timeline and so I spent time thinking back to my early days in YWAM as a young leader. I saw my life change through the spiritual environment of the DTS, then the SOE. Coming on staff the following year for DTS caused greater growth, where I experienced my leadership beginning to emerge through the basic leadership school. Everything was exciting. The following years were full of leadership roles which helped to shape me and form values to live by. Rite and I started married life running what we hoped would be a discipleship house for the young people in our youth group but it became a rehab for all kinds of people needing help to put their lives in order. By the grace of God, we saw the Lord break into their lives and bring about radical change.

Having received an invitation letter to come back to YWAM, we headed off for Scotland and had involvement in many ministries including local evangelism, leading a mobile team travelling around the nation, working with churches, running youth programmes, starting an urban ministry, setting up another rehab centre, you name it – we did it. What a leadership training that was. Almost overnight we were thrust into a national leadership role as the previous director stepped out of YWAM into church planting. The next few years were amazing as I look back. With so many students wanting to join staff, we were continually seeking the Lord for what ministry to start next - a whole multiplication of teams was beginning. I was only in my mid-thirties and it felt like my life ambitions were being met. I poured so much energy into ministry and it was so very fulfilling. This was a mini-convergence. Everything was flowing so beautifully. I was figuratively laying my life down for the growth and development of YWAM Scotland. That started over 30 years ago now.

I can remember waking up one day soon after this growth spurt and asking the question – What now? Where do I go from here? It was 1992 and I was attending a global gathering of leaders in India. At that conference Floyd McClung advertised a leadership development programme that he was going to run for 7 weeks in California. My spirit was suddenly alert and I spontaneously went to talk with him and basically signed up for the following year. During that 7 weeks, the Lord changed the direction of my life. Rather than building YWAM Scotland, the Lord gave me a new calling to leadership development. I enrolled in a masters degree programme to study leadership development and along with Barry Austin began

forming the present day LDC. The first six week school started in September 1994 in the Seamill centre, Scotland. Next year will be the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

In 2006 we left Scotland, our home for 26 years and where our family had grown up, to start a new adventure in Spain. Our vision was to establish a leadership retreat centre – possibly a better name would have been leadership development centre. For these past years we have poured our lives into thousands of leaders who have passed through our doors being involved in all kinds of training seminars, retreats and of course the LDC. It has been perhaps one of the most fulfilling things we have done and it has been so encouraging to receive so much positive feedback from those who have stayed with us.

As we approached these days of seeking the Lord for our future, I reminded myself of some of the principles I often share with others:

*'The 10 year principle.'* After ten years of doing the same thing, something needs to change in order to infuse new enthusiasm and life, that often requires a transition to something new. Well, we were beginning to feel the cloud was moving on - our 10 years was up!

*'The sigmoid curve'*, like an S sloping forward – the curve of life. It takes energy initially to start something new. Then there is a productive upward curve and at some point, the curve plateaus and dies. So, a new curve needs to take place while the former one is still being productive. This sounds great in theory but when you have to stop a fruitful ministry to start something new, it isn't so easy and doesn't feel so great at the time.

*'You can't take on a new role without adapting or changing the other roles you have been responsible for.'* Nobody told me how much time a grandparent role would take. I didn't actually sign up for it but it happened all the same and requires time and energy and attention. And of course, it has been fun!

Our problem was simple – there just wasn't enough hours in the day, days in the month and months in the year to do all that we were responsible for and had vision for! Something had to change.

All these things that were unfolding encouraged us to enter into the discernment process I mentioned above. Not only did we understand the importance of pruning and cutting back on our roles in order to survive, we understood in a fresh way the importance of focusing on the priorities of our future - our legacy. What do we want to leave behind? What is the one thing for this decade? What do we want to be known for? Legacy is obviously much more than a ministry we perform, it includes who we are and how people will remember us. But we realised that both of us have a desire to impact the world through our ministry and in order for our energy to count, we need to focus in a new way. I like this quote by Dr Robyn Silverman:

*You need not worry about how you will be remembered. Instead, focus on living a life of character, conviction and compassion, and your legacy will never be forgotten.*

Even just a few days after making what feels like a monumental decision to close the retreat centre, I sense the beginning of a fresh conviction and compassion in the area of leadership development. God loves to sharpen us and reshape us and help us to create the boundaries in our lives to enable us to follow his clear calling, receive our inheritance and leave a legacy.

May you too be drawn by the Lord to consider your legacy and make the most of your coming days.

Until next month

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*P.S. If you would like an activity of reflection of this last year of 2017 and to make some resolutions for this new year of 2018, print off the two pdf's and fill out your answers to the questions. Enjoy.*

*'The greatest legacy one can pass on to one's children and grandchildren is not money or other material things accumulated in one's life but rather a legacy of character and faith.'* Billy Graham