

Values Matter Discovery Starters

We Are a Global Missions Movement

7. BE DECENTRALIZED

YWAM is a Christ-centered, faith-based global volunteer movement, united by shared vision, core beliefs, foundational values and relationships. We do not have a centralized structure. Every YWAM ministry has the privilege and spiritual responsibility to develop and maintain healthy relationships with appropriate authorities and circles of elders.

[Exo 18:13-26](#); [Num 1:16-19](#); [Num 11:16-17,24-30](#); [Deu 29:10-13](#);
[Jos 23:1-24:28](#); [Act 14:23](#); [Act 15:1-31](#); [1Co 3:4-11](#); [Tit 1:5-9](#); [Heb 13:7,17](#)

Value #7 – Be Decentralized: Authority Dispersed

Biblical Foundation:

The next day, Moses took his seat to hear the people's disputes against each other. They waited before him from morning till evening.

When Moses' father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he asked, "What are you really accomplishing here? Why are you trying to do all this alone while everyone stands around you from morning till evening?"

Moses replied, "Because the people come to me to get a ruling from God. When a dispute arises, they come to me, and I am the one who settles the case between the quarreling parties. I inform the people of God's decrees and give them his instructions."

"This is not good!" Moses' father-in-law exclaimed. "You're going to wear yourself out—and the people, too. This job is too heavy a burden for you to handle all by yourself. Now listen to me, and let me give you a word of advice, and may God be with you. You should continue to be the people's representative before God, bringing their disputes to him. Teach them God's decrees, and give them his instructions. Show them how to conduct their lives. But select from all the people some capable, honest men who fear God and hate bribes. Appoint them as leaders over groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten. They should always be available to solve the people's common disputes, but have them bring the major cases to you. Let the leaders decide the smaller matters themselves. They will help you carry the load, making the task easier for you. If you follow this advice, and if God commands you to do so, then you will be able to endure the pressures, and all these people will go home in peace."

Moses listened to his father-in-law's advice and followed his suggestions. He chose capable men from all over Israel and appointed them as leaders over the people. He put them in charge of groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten. These men

were always available to solve the people's common disputes. They brought the major cases to Moses, but they took care of the smaller matters themselves (Exo 18:13-26).

Discovery Starter:

Though Moses had a heart to serve his people well, his father-in-law Jethro recognized that he had unwisely centralized decision-making around himself. This centralized leadership style was clearly "not good" and would have negative effects on both Moses and the people (vv 17-18). Jethro urged Moses to disperse authority, not concentrate it. Today's leaders should likewise think of how to empower others, instead of amassing power unto themselves.

To this end, Jethro encourages Moses to do several things that every leader should take to heart:

- 18:19 – Continue to stand before God, interceding on behalf of the people. Prayer for those whom you are leading is a hallmark of every godly leader.
- 18:20 – Teach, teach, teach. To lead people into godly decision-making, godly leaders must take time to instruct them in the ways of wise living. When people are governed by a clear internal understanding of what is right, then the need for centralized, external government is diminished.
- 18:21 – Select and appoint other responsible leaders, delegating authority to them. These leaders must be people of competence and character. Competency has to do with their capabilities and skills. Character has to do with their integrity and trustworthiness

Psalm 119 is the only other chapter in the Bible which uses the same Hebrew words used by Jethro to describe these "honest men who fear God and hate bribes" (Exo 18:21). The Psalmist...

1. prays for the integrity/truthfulness which comes from being shaped by the Word of God, saying, "Do not snatch your word of truth from me, for your regulations are my only hope" (Psa 119:43).
2. prays that he will align himself with all those who fear God. He says, "Let me be united with all who fear you, with those who know your laws" (Psa 119:79) and "May all who fear you find in me a cause for joy, for I have put my hope in your word" (Psa 119:74).
3. prays that the love of walking in God's ways will keep him from the covetousness that would make him susceptible to bribery, saying, "Give me an eagerness for your laws rather than a love for money!" (Psa 119:36).

Keep Going:

A phrase the Bible regularly uses as a shorthand description of a life of integrity is "the fear of the Lord." It is used most often in the book of Proverbs, a very practical book about how we should live. Consider the following passages: Pro 1:7,29; 2:5; 8:13;

9:10; 10:27; 14:26,27; 15:16,33; 16:6; 19:23; 22:4; 23:17. As you read through them, ask Holy Spirit how he wants to grow these character qualities in your life.

Belief #7 – Be Decentralized: Appoint Elders

Biblical Foundation:

I left you on the island of Crete so you could complete our work there and appoint elders in each town as I instructed you.

An elder must live a blameless life.

- *He must be faithful to his wife, and his children must be believers who don't have a reputation for being wild or rebellious. A church leader is a manager of God's household, so he must live a blameless life.*
 - *He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered; he must not be a heavy drinker, violent, or dishonest with money.*
 - *Rather, he must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must love what is good. He must live wisely and be just. He must live a devout and disciplined life.*
- *He must have a strong belief in the trustworthy message he was taught; then he will be able to encourage others with wholesome teaching and show those who oppose it where they are wrong (Tit 1:5-9).*

Discovery Starter:

In his letter to Titus, Paul skipped the prayer of blessing which was characteristic of first century correspondence. With urgency, he got straight to the point. Titus had been slow in appointing elders and Paul wanted that situation to be corrected as quickly as possible! What should these leaders look like? They should be "blameless." It is the only word repeated in these brief instructions. Paul outlines three major points:

- A. Blameless in relationships. Paul talks about family issues: monogamous marriages and well-disciplined children. It's in the home that the rubber meets the road. If the person can live out their faith in the day-to-day challenge of family life, they can be trusted with caring for God's family, the church.
- B. Blameless in character.
 1. First Paul details 5 things a leader must not do. These are best understood in the light of the "Law of the King" found in Deu 17:14-20. The king is told to not multiply for himself horses, wives or gold. These were emblematic of power, sex and money. A godly leader must stand against authoritarianism (the love of power), hedonism (the love of pleasure) and materialism (the love of things). Paul's list of 5 "must nots" expand on these three points from Moses. Arrogance, temper and violence are related to authoritarianism; drunkenness to hedonism, and financial dishonesty with materialism. God's solution? Instead of power,

servanthood. Instead of pleasure, purity. Instead of materialism, generosity. These are the hallmarks of godly leaders.

2. Next Paul describes 6 things a leader should do. The first two are about activating godly passion, to love the stranger and to love that which is good. The last four are about keeping your passions under control. Self-control is a high virtue for a godly leader.
- C. Blameless in cultivated leadership skills. Not only must the leader be rooted in the Scriptures. The leader must know how to encourage AND correct those being led. Some of us love to encourage others, but avoid correcting them. Others of us love to correct, but find it hard to encourage others. Godly leaders develop the skill to do both – all based on God's Word.

Keep Going:

Paul did not expect Titus to lead all the churches in Crete, but to raise up other leaders who would do so. Take time to read the whole letter – it only takes 7 minutes! What do you most like about this book? Why? What implications are there for how we do leadership today?

16. PRACTICE DEPENDENCE ON GOD

YWAM is a volunteer movement called to practice a life of dependence upon God for financial provision. For individuals and for any YWAM team or community, this comes primarily through His people. As God has been generous toward us, so we desire to be generous, giving ourselves, our time and talents to God with no expectation of remuneration.

[Gen 22:12-14](#); [Exo 36:2-7](#); [Num 18:25-29](#); [Mal 3:8-12](#); [Mat 6:25-33](#);
[Luk 19:8-9](#); [2Co 8:1-9:15](#); [Php 4:10-20](#); [Tit 3:14](#); [3Jn 5-8](#)

Value #16 – Practice Dependence on God: A Generosity Contest

Biblical Foundation:

"Should people cheat God? Yet you have cheated me!

"But you ask, 'What do you mean? When did we ever cheat you?'

"You have cheated me of the tithes and offerings due to me. You are under a curse, for your whole nation has been cheating me. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies, "I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test! Your crops will be abundant, for I will guard them from insects and disease. Your grapes will not fall from the vine before they are ripe," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. "Then all

nations will call you blessed, for your land will be such a delight," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies (Mal 3:8-12).

Discovery Starter:

Test God? It seems inappropriate considering Jesus' response to Satan. Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:16, "You must not test the LORD your God" (Mat 4:7). But in Malachi the circumstances are different, and God urges the people, "Put me to the test!" He is challenging them to a generosity contest. People had not been giving the triennial tithe (Deu 14:28-29; 26:12-14), which was designed to create a "storehouse" fund to help the Levites, widows and orphans in times of economic distress. God challenged them to try to out-give God himself.

If you accept God's challenge, know that you are up against the most generous of givers! In Genesis, the three verbs that God uses most frequently to describe his actions are: *nathan* (gives: 26x), *barak* (blesses: 14x), and *'asah* (makes: 11x). Above all else, God wanted us to know that he is a generous God! He is a God who gives to people lavishly, frequently, unexpectedly, caringly, abundantly, personally, thoughtfully, consistently ... For this reason, even in the leanest of times, we can be generous givers as we accept his challenge and seek to imitate him! This is a (con-)test that God welcomes.

Because of this, I have come to love YWAM offerings! One of my favorites was during the Leadership Training School in South Africa in 1998. There were 124 students from 52 countries. While praying for finances to birth a new ministry one person felt led to give his guitar as a gift. It was an act of unexpected generous obedience that released a remarkable spirit of giving. As people prayed, one by one they slipped away to their rooms and came back, adding their gifts to the growing pile. For nearly two hours people laid their treasures – big and small – before the Lord. The one who first gave wrote:

*I gave my guitar, they gave their shoes.
I have much, they gave their last possessions.
I live a life of comfort with occasional faith, they live a life of daily provision.
I gave with great sorrow, they gave with joy.
I gave my most precious possession, they gave their last.
I know what tomorrow holds, they know God.*

Keep Going:

Take time today to consider how you can accept God's challenge to a generosity contest. Determine to give something to someone you've never given to before, someone who would not be expecting anything from you. Your expression of generosity might involve money or an object, or it might simply consist in an action or a word

which brings unexpected blessing. Make it as lavish as you can. As you give, remember Paul's words, "This most generous God who gives seed to the farmer that becomes bread for your meals is more than extravagant with you. He gives you something you can then give away, which grows into full-formed lives, robust in God, wealthy in every way, so that you can be generous in every way, producing with us great praise to God" (2Co 9:9-11 MESSAGE).

Value 16 – Practice Dependence on God: Paul Thanks His Supporters

Biblical Foundation:

How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me. Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. Even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty.

As you know, you Philippians were the only ones who gave me financial help when I first brought you the Good News and then traveled on from Macedonia. No other church did this. Even when I was in Thessalonica you sent help more than once. I don't say this because I want a gift from you. Rather, I want you to receive a reward for your kindness.

At the moment I have all I need—and more! I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me with Epaphroditus. They are a sweet-smelling sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God. And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.

Now all glory to God our Father forever and ever! Amen (Php 4:10-20).

Discovery Starter:

As a missionary, Paul relied upon God to meet his financial needs. This provision came primarily through the people of God (2Co 11:7-9). He tells us that sometimes he had "almost nothing" and at other times he had "everything" he needed. He had learned to "be content" in every financial circumstance, whether he had "plenty or little," whether or not his stomach was "full... or empty" (Php 4:11-12). This is not metaphorical language; this was the reality of his life. He tells us, "I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food" (2Co 11:27). He was certainly not in the ministry for the money! Even though he did not have a fixed income, Paul had a fixed passion on the things of God's kingdom (2Co 4:18).

Paul taught in 1Ti 5:17 that faithful church leaders are worthy of “double honor” (NIV, NRSV, ESV, NASB, KJV). Paul is calling for more than an attitude of respect. This phrase is an expression in Greek which means to be “paid well” (NLT). Paul makes his intention very clear quoting both Moses (Deu 25:4) and Jesus (Luk 10:7): “Give a bonus to leaders who do a good job, especially the ones who work hard at preaching and teaching. Scripture tells us, ‘Don’t muzzle a working ox’ and ‘A worker deserves his pay’ ” (1Ti 5:17-18 MSG). Paul reaffirms this perspective saying, “Those who are taught the word of God should provide for their teachers” (Gal 6:6).

The Philippian believers gave “more than once” to support Paul’s missionary endeavors (2Co 11:9; Php 4:15-18). Paul considered them “partners in spreading the Good News about Christ” (Php 1:5) because they had once again sent a generous offering to him, hand-carried by Epaphroditus (Php 2:25; 4:18). He writes this letter to thank them for their financial support. He tells them “you have a special place in my heart” (Php 1:7). Twice he expresses, “how much I love you and long for you” (Php 1:8; 4:1). Paul’s aware that they have given sacrificially, so he encourages them, declaring that “this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches” (Php 4:19).

Keep Going:

The well-known Greek word, *koinonia*, and its derivatives were used to describe the relationship between business partners who shared in the costs and results of their joint venture. Four times in this “thank you letter” Paul uses one of these words to describe his relationship with the Philippian church; one time he uses it to share his desire to partner fully with Christ. Consider the following:

Php 1:4-5 Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been **my partners** (*koinonia*) in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now.

Php 1:7 So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You **share with** (*sugkoinonos*) me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News.

Php 2:1 Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any **fellowship together** (*koinonia*) in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate?

Php 3:10-11 I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, **sharing in** (*koinonia*) his death, so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!

Php 4:15-16 As you know, you Philippians were the only ones who **gave** (*koinoneo*) me financial help when I first brought you the Good News and then traveled on from Macedonia. No other church did this. Even when I was in Thessalonica you sent help more than once.

As you ponder these passages, what is Holy Spirit impressing upon you? What are the take-aways from your meditation? What actions should you take to implement what God is saying to you at this time?

Are you a missionary? If so, take some time to write a thank you letter to someone who has supported you in finances and in other ways. Do you know a missionary? If so, take the time to write them a letter to encourage them and send them a financial gift to support them in their kingdom work.

10. FUNCTION IN TEAMS

YWAM is called to function in teams in all aspects of ministry and leadership. We believe that a combination of complementary gifts, callings, perspectives, ministries and generations working together in unity at all levels of our Mission provides wisdom and safety. Seeking God's will and making decisions in a team context allows accountability and contributes to greater relationship, motivation, responsibility and ownership of the vision.

[Deu 32:30-31](#); [2Ch 17:7-9](#); [Pro 15:22](#); [Ecc 4:9-12](#); [Mar 6:7-13](#);
[Rom 12:3-10](#); [2Co 1:24](#); [Eph 5:21](#); [Php 2:1-2](#); [1Pe 4:8](#)

Value 10 – Function in Teams: Mobile Teaching Teams

Biblical Foundation:

In the third year of his reign Jehoshaphat sent his officials to teach in all the towns of Judah. These officials included Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah. He sent Levites along with them, including Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah. He also sent out the priests Elishama and Jehoram. They took copies of the Book of the Law of the LORD and traveled around through all the towns of Judah, teaching the people (2Ch 17:7-9).

Discovery Starter:

Jehoshaphat was one of eight "good" kings of Judah (1Ki 22:43; 2Ch 20:32). Jehoshaphat was commended because he "sought his father's God" (2Ch 17:4) and "was deeply committed to the ways of the Lord" (2Ch 17:6). Not only this, but Jehoshaphat "went out among the people, traveling from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim, encouraging the people to return to the Lord" (2Ch 19:4). But he knew that his singular efforts were insufficient. So, from the earliest days of his reign, he commissioned mobile teaching teams to help him spread the Word of God.

We are told that he appointed three groups of people to these teams:

Officials

Ben-hail = *son of strength*
Obadiah = *servant of YAWEH*
Zechariah = *YAWEH remembers*
Nethanel = *given of God*
Micaiah = *who is like God?*

Levites

Shemaiah = *heard by YAWEH*
Nethaniah = *given of YAWEH*
Zebadiah = *endowed by YAWEH*
Asahel = *God-made*
Shemiramoth = *name of heights*
Jehonathan = *YAWEH has given*
Adonijah = *my lord is YAWEH*
Tobijah = *YAWEH is good*
Tob-adonijah = *my lord is good*

Priests

Elishama = *my God has heard*
Jehoram = *YAWEH is exalted*

The sixteen persons mentioned in this passage mentioned nowhere else. Everything we know about them is found only here. Some were governmental officials, others religious priests. Some were Levites, others are without tribal identity. We do not know their ages, their marital status, their professional skills, nor personality traits.

We do know this. This mobile teaching team had (2Ch 17:9):

- a clear foundation. The Scriptures were their curriculum. Therefore they “took copies of the Book of the Law of the LORD” with them wherever they went.
- a clear strategy. They wanted to make sure that everyone heard, that no one was left out. That is why they “traveled around through all the towns of Judah.”
- a clear purpose. They wanted to see people return to God and his ways. So they spent their time “teaching the people.”

What was the result of their ministry? The consequences were far more transformative and far-reaching than you might expect. We are told that, “the fear of the Lord fell over all the surrounding kingdoms so that none of them wanted to declare war on Jehoshaphat” (2Ch 17:10).

Keep Going:

In the Original Testament 29 persons are named Zechariah; 25 Shemaiah; 15 Jehonathan; 13 Obadiah; 10 Nethanel; 9 Zebadiah; 5 Elishama; 4 Asahel, Nethaniah or Tobijah; 3 Adonijah or Jehoram; and 2 Micaiah or Shemiramoth. Only the names of Ben-hail and Tob-adonijah are found exclusively in this passage. Review the list of 16 names that made up Jehoshaphat’s mobile training teams. Consider the Hebrew meaning of their names. As you reflect on that is there something that stirs in your spirit? How can you respond to God, seeking him and wanting to make him known, like those who formed Jehoshaphat’s team?

Consider finding a few friends of like mind. Spend time seeking God, envisioning what might happen if you were to embark on something together to draw people to God. Something with a clear foundation, a clear strategy, and a clear purpose. What would it look like? Together plan how to form a ministry team that will impact the nations.

Value #10 – Function in Teams: Two by Two

Biblical Foundation:

And he called his twelve disciples together and began sending them out two by two, giving them authority to cast out evil spirits. He told them to take nothing for their journey except a walking stick—no food, no traveler’s bag, no money. He allowed them to wear sandals but not to take a change of clothes.

“Wherever you go,” he said, “stay in the same house until you leave town. But if any place refuses to welcome you or listen to you, shake its dust from your feet as you leave to show that you have abandoned those people to their fate.”

So the disciples went out, telling everyone they met to repent of their sins and turn to God. And they cast out many demons and healed many sick people, anointing them with olive oil (Mar 6:7-13).

Discovery Starter:

When Jesus called his disciples he called them into community. They did life and ministry together as a team. So when he sent them on their first missionary adventure, he sent them out in small teams, “two by two.” Earlier, Mark tells us that Jesus “appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach ...” (Mar 3:14-15 NIV). Discipleship had a dual purpose: They were called to have a relationship with Jesus and to help others have a relationship with Jesus. And they were to do this together, as a team.

In many ways it was an unlikely team. Among them was Judas Iscariot. Not only was Judas known to be a thief (Joh 12:6), but we are told that he indignantly chastised his team leader – Jesus! – in public (Joh 12:4-5). That must have created some interesting team dynamics! But that was not all. Jesus had picked both Matthew (who, as a tax-collector, was a pro-Roman collaborator) and Simon (who, as a zealot, was an anti-Roman revolutionary) to be on his team. They must have had some heated arguments coming from opposite sides of the political spectrum! Even so, Jesus opted to minister with a team, rather than go it alone. He saw diversity not as a liability but as an asset, providing a unique opportunity for “sandpaper discipleship,” as one rubbed against another, smoothing off the rough edges. The unlikely love between natural enemies would be a powerful witness to the transforming power of the gospel. He taught his team, “Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my

disciples" (Joh 13:35). In AD 197, Tertullian would write that the critics of the church recognized in awe, "how they love one another!" (Tertullian, *Apologeticus* 39.114).

We don't grow in relational grace in isolation, nor do we advance God's relational goals ministering as lone rangers. Emmanuel Jesus modeled "withness" as a foundation for "witness." Jesus chose to minister with a team, and Peter – one of Jesus' original team members – reminds us that Jesus "is your example, and you must follow in his steps" (1Pe 2:21).

Keep Going:

The following is a list of over 100 verses in Mark that explicitly talk about Jesus being with his disciples and doing something together with them as his team. The record of his "withness" is found in every chapter. Are you walking with Jesus in this degree of "withness"? Are you doing "team" with your colleagues like Jesus did with his disciples? Consider the following: Mar 1:17-21,29,38; 2:14-15; 3:7,13-14,20,34-35; 4:10,34,36; 5:24,37,40; 6:1,7,30-33,35,45,48,50-51,53-54; 7:17; 8:1-2,6-7,10,13-14,27,32; 9:2,5,8,14,28,31-33,35; 10:10,13-14,23,27-30,32-42,46; 11:1,11,14,19-22,27; 12:43; 13:3-4; 14:14,17-20,22-26,28,33-34,37,40-41,45,47,67; 15:41; 16:19.

8. BE INTERNATIONAL AND INTERDENOMINATIONAL

YWAM is international and interdenominational in its global scope as well as its local constituency. We believe that ethnic, linguistic and denominational diversity, along with redeemed aspects of culture, are positive factors that contribute to the health and growth of the Mission.

[Gen 12:1-4](#); [Gen 26:2-5](#); [Psa 57:9-10](#); [Jer 32:27](#); [Dan 7:13-14](#);
[Act 20:4](#); [1Co 12:12-31](#); [Eph 4:1-16](#); [Col 3:11](#); [Rev 7:9](#)

Value #8 – Be international and interdenominational: Every Every All All

Biblical Foundation:

The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you." So Abram departed as the LORD had instructed, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.

(Gen 12:1-4)

Discovery Starter:

Introductions were – to say the least – awkward, if not downright humiliating. Every time he told someone his name, Abram (“Exalted Father”) must have braced for the inevitable question, “So how many children do you have?” He must have heard people snickering because he had none! He surely felt relieved when God finally said, “I am changing your name. It will no longer be Abram.” No longer would he be the brunt of jokes. But wait ... what followed seemed to make the bad situation worse: “Instead, you will be called Abraham (“Father of Many” – Gen 17:5). When people heard this new name they must have thought that the childless man had gone stark-raving mad!

There are 1,126 distinct nouns in the Hebrew text of Genesis. 42 of them are familial terms: words like father, mother, son, daughter, etc. These 42 familial words are used (on average) nearly 39 times each, while **all** the other nouns are used (on average) only 7 times each! Clearly, family is very important in Genesis! We learn that while Abraham wanted one family (his own!), God wanted many. More insight is gained by looking at the top five most frequently used nouns:

- *ben* (365x – son, child)
- *kol* (342x – every, all)
- *’erets* (311x – country, nation)
- *’elohim* (218x – God, gods)
- *’ab* (208x – father, ancestor)

The frequent use of these words is not accidental. The intentional repetition underscores the primary message of this book: God wants **every** parent and **every** child in **all** the nations to be adopted into God’s family. For this reason God promises Abraham, “I will make you extremely fruitful. Your descendants will become many nations” (Gen 17:6).

Paul understood that God chose Abraham and his descendants in order to include **all** the nations in his redemptive purposes. Paul argues that **all** – Jews and non-Jews (Rom 1:16; 2:9-10; 3:9; 9:24) – have the same problem: sin! (Rom 3:9-12,23; 5:18a) Likewise, they **all** are offered the same solution: Jesus! (Rom 3:22,24-25a; 5:1-2,18b). There is one standard for **all**: faith! (Rom 3:29-30; 4:9). Paul explains that “Abraham is the father of all who believe. That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, ‘I have made you the father of many nations’” (Rom 4:16-17).

Keep Going:

Paul, when he reflects on God’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 12, states, “Clearly, God’s promise to give the whole earth to Abraham and his descendants was based not on his obedience to God’s law, but on a right relationship with God that comes by faith” (Rom 4:13). Consider these other passages that reflect on this promise to Abraham: Gen 18:18; 22:18; 26:4-5; Act 3:25; Gal 3:8-9. How can you align your heart, head and hands with God’s missional dream to reach the **everys** and the **alls** in the earth?

Value #8 – Be International and Interdenominational: Paul’s Missionary Band

Biblical Foundation:

Several men were traveling with him. They were Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea; Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica; Gaius from Derbe; Timothy; and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia (Act 20:4).

Discovery Starter:

Luke notes seven who traveled overland with Paul from Ephesus to Troas on his third missionary journey. These are just some of those who served alongside Paul in the spread of the gospel. According to Eusebius, the famous 4th century church historian, Paul “had innumerable fellow-laborers, or fellow-soldiers, as he called them ... for he gave enduring testimony concerning them in his own epistles” (*Ecclesiastical History* 3.4.4).

Indeed, Paul used nine different terms to identify 39 individuals as his companions in ministry. He described each as an apostle (*apostolos*), deacon (*diakonos*), fellow-servant (*sundoulos/doulos*), fellow-prisoner (*sunaimalotos*), fellow-soldier (*sustratiotes/stratiotes*), fellow-worker (*sunergos*), laborer (*kopiao*), partner (*koinonos*), and/or as a sister/brother (*adelphe/adelfhos*). The passages in which Paul describes his 39 partners in ministry are:

Achaicus	1Co 16:17
Andronicus	Rom 16:7
Apollos	1Co 3:5-9; 4:6-9,12; 16:12
Apphia	Phm 2
Aquila	Rom 16:3
Archippus	Col 4:17; Phm 2
Aristarchus	Col 4:10-11; Phm 24
Barnabas	1Co 9:5-7; Gal 2:9
Clement	Php 4:3
Demas	Col 4:11,14; Phm 24
Epaphras	Col 1:7; 4:11-13; Phm 23
Epaphroditus	Php 2:25
Euodia	Php 4:2-3
Fortunatus	1Co 16:17
James	Gal 2:9
John	Gal 2:9

Junia	Rom 16:7
Justus	Col 4:11
Luke	Col 4:11,14; Phm 24
Mark	Col 4:11; 2Ti 4:11; Phm 24
Mary	Rom 16:6
Onesimus	Col 4:9; Phm 10-13,16
Onesiphorus	2Ti 1:16-18
Persis	Rom 16:12
Peter/Cephas	Gal 2:9
Philemon	Phm 1,6-7,10-13,17,20
Phoebe	Rom 16:1
Priscilla	Rom 16:3
Quartus	Rom 16:23
Silas	2Co 1:19-24; 1Th 2:6-7
Sosthenes	1Co 1:1
Stephana	1Co 16:17
Syntyche	Php 4:2-3
Timothy	Rom 16:21; 1Co 16:10; 2Co 1:1,19-24; 3:3-6; 4:1; 6:3-4; 8:19-20; Php 1:1; Col 1:1; 1Th 2:6-7; 3:2; 1Ti 4:6; 2Ti 2:3-6; 4:5
Titus	2Co 2:13; 8:16-9:5
Tryphaena	Rom 16:12
Tryphosa	Rom 16:12
Tychicus	Eph 6:21; Col 4:7
Urbanus	Rom 16:9

This list illustrates how remarkably diverse Paul's team was. It includes Africans, Asians and Europeans, as well as both men and women. The group includes some wealthy individuals as well as slaves; the politically powerful and prisoners; Jews and Gentiles; the learned and the uneducated. Paul did not just surround himself with people like himself. He reached out to many who came from backgrounds very different from his own and included them in his Great Commission activities.

Keep Going:

Paul, a Jew, championed Gentiles. He promoted others who were not like himself. Spend some time in prayerful reflection. Is there someone who comes from a different background, a different nation, a different ethno-linguistic group, that you could champion? How could you work with them in spreading the good news of Jesus? What concrete steps can you take this week to reach out to others who are not like you?

18. COMMUNICATE WITH INTEGRITY

YWAM affirms that everything exists because God communicates.

Therefore, YWAM is committed to truthful, accurate, timely and relevant communication. We believe good communication is essential for strong relationships, healthy families and communities, and effective ministry.

[Gen 1:3-5](#); [Num 23:19](#); [Pro 10:19](#); [Pro 25:9-14](#); [Zec 8:16-17](#);
[Mat 5:33-37](#); [Luk 4:16-22](#); [Joh 1:1 5](#); [Col 4:6](#); [Jam 3:1-18](#)

Value #18 – Communicate with Integrity: Radical Honesty

Biblical Foundation:

You have also heard that our ancestors were told, 'You must not break your vows; you must carry out the vows you make to the LORD.' But I say, do not make any vows! Do not say, 'By heaven!' because heaven is God's throne. And do not say, 'By the earth!' because the earth is his footstool. And do not say, 'By Jerusalem!' for Jerusalem is the city of the great King. Do not even say, 'By my head!' for you can't turn one hair white or black. Just say a simple, 'Yes, I will,' or 'No, I won't.' Anything beyond this is from the evil one (Mat 5:33-37).

Discovery Starter:

At an early age I learned to avoid telling lies, or – at least – avoid being caught! The punishment for telling lies was to have my mouth washed out with soap. The lye left an indelible imprint on my taste buds. Though effective to a degree, the soap did not cleanse my heart. I soon learned to tell “the truth” with an intent to mislead. For example, when an argument with my younger sister resulted in an “accidental” punch, I knew I would be in trouble. So I would try to dissuade her from running to Mom. If my efforts did not work, and she took off down the hallway, I’d yell after her in an attempt to stop her with desperate irritation. “Ok ... I’m sorry!” I’d fume. Unmoved by my angry and unrepentant tone of voice she proceeded to tell Mom. Soon I heard my name being called. “Yes,” I confessed, “I did hit her, but just barely, and besides she started it.” And then I’d add, as sweetly as possible, “And I said ‘I’m sorry.’” My feigned angelic demeanor covered up the reality. I had mastered the art of being technically honest while being intentionally deceitful. And thus I avoided the dreaded bar of soap.

In this passage, Jesus teaches us about radical honesty – when words, actions and heart match 100%. His teaching is rooted in the Torah: “Do not bring shame on the name of your God by using it to swear falsely.” (Lev 19:12). This is one of six passages in Leviticus which warns against those sins which cause God’s holy reputation to be tarnished in eyes of the lost. They are when:

- \$ one says one thing while intending to do something else (Lev 19:12)
- \$ the people do not keep God’s commands in holy obedience (Lev 22:31-33)

\$ priests do not fulfill their functions with integrity (Lev 21:5-6; 22:2)

\$ anyone sacrifices their child by fire to Molech (Lev 18:21; 20:2-5)

This last point was viewed as the most despicable, unimaginable sin. And the lack of radical honesty is likened unto it. Sobering.

Lord, please apply your soap not only to my tongue, but to my heart as well.

Keep Going:

Psalm 15 details the characteristics of those who live in intimacy with God. From verse 2 through the second line of verse 5, there are ten descriptive statements. Five of them – that's half! – have to do with radical honesty and integrity with the tongue. Read through the Psalm and meditate on the five lines in italics. Ask God to show you any area which you need to make right. Is there something of which you need to repent? Is there an act of restitution that you need to make? Is there someone you need to go to in order to restore a relationship? Listen to God and do as he tells you.

15¹ Who may worship in your sanctuary, LORD?

Who may enter your presence on your holy hill?

² Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right,

speaking the truth from sincere hearts.

³ ***Those who refuse to gossip***

or harm their neighbors

or speak evil of their friends.

⁴ Those who despise flagrant sinners,

and honor the faithful followers of the LORD,

and keep their promises even when it hurts.

⁵ Those who lend money without charging interest,

and who cannot be bribed to lie about the innocent.

Such people will stand firm forever.

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