

"Nobody wants to read a boring newsletter!" That's usually my first thought as I sit down to write an update. So many things happen, life is so busy, yet how do I write about what I consider to just be "normal life"? Well, here goes... in a newsletter I'm calling "THE YEAR OF SEVENTEEN"...



**Seventeen Years Old:** As I realized that the number 17 began to appear in various places throughout this newsletter, I also realized that though it rarely gets brought up in conversation these days, I was 17 yrs old when I felt called to long-term missions. My introduction to missions happened years previous to that and I was already intrigued by the thought of it, but in February of 1997 is when I felt God's clear calling on my life and I knew that I would become a missionary.

**Seventeen Tests (Health Update):** If you recall, in my December newsletter I asked for prayer because (seven years after my extensive blood clotting) I was going off of my blood thinning med's in order to get my blood tested again. The news that came back from Mayo Clinic in January was excellent ~ the results for 17 different tests were completely clean... no blood clotting disorders! I was excited and celebrating! However, just a few weeks later, my leg began to get super achy, swollen, and was quite painful... and my celebration came to a sudden halt. Sparring you all the details, after another ultra sound exam on my leg my doctor and my vascular surgeon together concluded that I have a blood clotting disorder that simply doesn't show up in testing. So back on another blood-thinning medication I went! I felt discouraged and defeated... but after about 3 days of grieving over this less-than-desirable news, I felt convicted to be thankful. So I've been choosing to celebrate that, with some extra care and a few adjustments, I can go about my life as normal, continuing to travel and do many of the things I love. I am blessed!

**Seventeen Schools:** In January I staffed my 17th DTS, coaching Brandon & Aksana as they led their first school. I got to teach for a week in the DTS, helping students and staff understand who God has designed them to be and how to work with each other in teams. We sent teams out to Ukraine, Taiwan and India for 2 months, all of them returning with stories of what God is doing in each nation and how they got to be part of it!



With the Taiwan team

**Asia (x 17):** In April I did a pastoral visit to our outreach teams in Taiwan and India. I spent a week with each team, meeting with staff and students—listening, praying, and advising where needed. We do these pastoral visits from time to time just to help keep our teams healthy. This happens to be right up my alley, and it was a great way to be involved with the outreaches! (Coincidentally, if I add up the number of countries in Asia that I've been to, including multiple trips to some of the same ones, it adds up to... you guessed it! Seventeen!)



With the India team



Me and Pam

When I was finished in India, I headed to New Zealand to visit my sister Pam and her family. It had been two years since last seeing them, and it was a great way to finish my whole trip to Asia!

**Seventeenth Year:** And finally, just to top off all my "seventeens", I'm headed into my 17th year of full-time YWAM staff. God has been faithful!

*That's it for my seventeens!*

*Continue on to read an awesome testimony from one of my recent student's...*



Helping with worship in India

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\*\* For more information on financial donations and partnering with me in ministry, please contact me.  
Donation checks can be made out to "YWAM". include a note with my name, and send to the address above.

One of my students from this past DTS, Sidney, wrote this recently to share the transformation that God did in her heart while she was here in her DTS. It is so amazing that I wanted to share it with you.

*~ God's Story ~*

by Sidney Crowe



*"God, I am sorry."*

*"God, I am hurting."*

*"God, I am dirty. I am a disappointment. I am so incredibly lost."*

*This has been my conversation to God most of my life. I came to Him in my brokenness, over and over and over again. I came to Him for forgiveness, but never for love. I came to Him for healing, but surrendered nothing. That was my "relationship" with God. I had no idea someone like me, with all that I've done, could have it any other way. Little did I know, it just took one small step in obedience for God to show me something incredible.*

*"Let it all go" is what I heard for over a year. A year full of pain, disappointment, heartbreak, and plenty of sin. There I was, fighting for worldly things while Jesus was fighting for me. Finally desperate enough, I let it all go. And that's when every worldly thing I wanted began to mean nothing. I tried not to let my shame and my complete lack of self-worth keep me from saying "yes". So I decided to do a DTS, leave my plans behind, and put my complete trust in what God had for me.*

*The first three months, I expected to learn who God really was. And honestly, I did. But even more than that, I learned about love. Yes, LOVE! Love was always one of those things I talked about, but never really understood. I thought love came from goodness, and I knew that I wasn't good. And I knew that I didn't deserve to be loved, especially by God. I was "too dirty". But then something happened during lecture phase. God completely exposed what I had believed my whole life as a lie. He showed me that I was beautiful, not dirty. He would tell me over and over again "you are loved". Every time I felt unworthy He would tell me "I know you. I see you. You are heard". It was the most beautiful thing. And it didn't stop either. Every day He poured more and more truth into me about how incredibly loved I am by Him. I began to believe it, too. That's what changed everything. It's one thing to hear something, but it's another thing completely to let that become a truth in your life. I am loved!*

*Then came outreach! The biggest thing God taught me during those two months was the act of surrendering. There were many lies that the enemy tried to speak, but once I realized the control those had on me, I gave them to God. There were moments I felt unqualified. Moments I didn't understand. Moments I was heartbroken. And it was in those moments that God showed me His power. In my weakness He was always there to give me strength. The enemy would come, but God's power outshone the enemy every single time I chose to surrender. The peace I found in giving those things to God really helped me own my own story. I began to absolutely LOVE telling my testimony. It was something I was nervous but so excited about! I wasn't "too dirty" at all for those who chose to listen. I wasn't "too weak". I was qualified because it was through God's strength and not my own. It became God's words. It became God's story. And the fact that He can use it for His glory shows just how beautiful and gracious He is! Now that I'm back home, I am so incredibly thankful that I said "yes". I have a relationship with Jesus that no longer consists of just brokenness. I go to Him in LOVE! I surrender anything that tries to capture me and take me away from that love. I am His! He is mine! And this journey has been the best decision of my life!*

*I am loved.*

In YWAM, us staff affectionately call stories like this our "paycheck". Since we rely on \$upport and pay to live the life of a full-time missionary, the greatest "paycheck" we receive is hearing stories of how God is transforming the lives of those we serve! And it is always worth it!

~ Lori