

The Y2K Computer Problem

Youth With A Mission Report

YWAM leaders have been researching the Y2K issue for at least 24 months. Their research has produced this report with the goal to prepare YWAM leaders and missionaries. It has been written so that their mission may better understand the signs of the times and know God's strategy as we move into the new millennium. May this be true of us all!

by YWAM Global Leadership Team

At the August 1998 meeting of the YWAM Global Leadership Team in Brazil, the issue of the Year 2000 computer problem (Y2K) and its potential impact upon YWAM bases was reviewed. We, as leaders in YWAM, want to provide some helpful information as to how we might prepare for this potentially serious problem. We also want you to consider this issue in relation to what God is doing at the beginning of the new millennium.

Loren Cunningham referred to the Year 2000 issue and the Asian economic crisis in the University of the Nations Lausanne newsletter of August 1998. He writes:

What are we to do? I believe we should seek God's view of this crisis, and act accordingly. God says in the first of the Ten Commandments, 'Thou shalt have no other gods before Me'. What are our two major idols in the West? The ECONOMY and TECHNOLOGY. The impending crisis is God's way of getting our attention, showing us just how vulnerable our gods are. It only takes a little 'bug' to topple both at once! God is acting out of His kindness and mercy. He will do anything necessary to bring us back to Himself.

As I constantly travel the nations of the earth, I have watched the growth of Christianity become the event of the century, while the media of the world has virtually ignored it. Look at these remarkable growth patterns...

•Africa 1900, 3% claim Christian-

ity. Today, over 50% of all Africans claim to be Christians, at least nominally.

•Latin America 1900, the evangelical revival begins with 50,000. Today, close to 100 million claim to be dedicated followers of Christ.

•Today in India, 103 million claim to be Christians, with a new church born every seven minutes.

•In China, 1,250 are coming to Christ every hour (30,000 daily).

•South Korea has 7,000 churches in Seoul alone (there were practically no churches in Korea when the century began).

•In Eastern Europe, millions have come to know Christ personally since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

What about Western Europe and North America? Miraculous visitations, refreshments, even stirrings, but no sweeping revival across the nations. Not yet. How will revival come? Only God knows the exact way it will happen, but this we know: in all revivals, idols fall.

What is the Problem?

The Year 2000 problem arises from the fact that many computers will not correctly advance their computers time clocks beyond 1999. This is because most computer systems are not programmed to recognize 4 digit dates, but only the abbreviated 2 digit dates, e.g., 98 not 1998. When the year 2000 arrives, most computers will read the year 00 as 1900 and not 2000. The computer will produce either erroneous results, reject legitimate entries or shut down completely.

Our society has become heavily

dependent on computers. We use them every time we go to the bank, make a phone call, stop at a traffic light or turn on a light switch. Our society is therefore vulnerable to anything that might disturb this equilibrium. The problem will manifest itself in different ways at different times:

•1 July 1999—many companies and governments begin their financial year on this date.

•21 August 1999—another quite separate computer problem (but also connected with dates) will occur on 21 August 1999 when the Global Positioning System (GPS) satellites will function as if it were 1980 again.

•9 September 1999—the code 9/9/99 was used to denote the end of a program. The computer might assume that it is completing the file.

•1 January 2000—this is the most important day on which many non-compliant computers will malfunction.

•3 January 2000—this is the first work day (Monday) of the new year and many problems will become apparent on this day.

•29 February 2000—this year is a leap year but many computers will not recognize it as such.

•31 December 2000—as it is a leap-year there are 366 not 365 days in this year.

This problem can occur at many different levels. Many large govern-

ment agencies and business corporations still use 30-year-old mainframe computers that have millions of lines of code that need to be checked. Many personal computers are also at risk, particularly if purchased prior to June 1997, as well as the software they use. In fact, some current software is not compliant. e.g., Excel 97 as well as some versions of Windows 95.

Getting God's View

We need to seek God's view of the crisis and act accordingly. The impending crisis might be God's way of getting our attention, and/or of bringing the greatest revival we have ever seen. In our planning we need to believe for the best but prepare for the worst. We need to, as far as is possible, get our own computers, programs and equipment repaired and encourage those around us to do likewise. Well in advance, we need to develop contingency plans as a type of insurance policy to cover the possibility that there may be no, or limited, electricity, water, banking, petrol, air travel, phone calls, etc., for a few weeks or even months at about 1 January 2000. Our survival may depend on having a supply of essential items such as food, water, cash and fuel. We also need to be leaders, making our preparations now and leading our civic communities in caring for and trusting one another, in cooperation and collaborating together for the good of all. The issue needs to be viewed from a spiritual, leadership and management perspective, not from a technological one alone. We need to be open to finding ways of ministering through the new opportunities that will occur. Developing neighborhood, community and church networks may be an essential part of our ministry enabling us to serve those around us who are not prepared.

The Scope of the Problem

There are different aspects to the Year 2000 computer problem that need to be examined to gain an understanding of the issue.

Hardware Factor

Many large government agencies and big corporations still use 20-30 year-old mainframe computers that are difficult to upgrade and expensive to replace. Unless fixed, many personal computers purchased prior to June 1997 will not function correctly in the year 2000 (93% failed the BIOS test). Of the computers that came out in 1997 a staggering 47% failed the BIOS test. Many older models such as 286's or 386's are expected to freeze unless the date is set back 10 years.

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Embedded chips were thought to be a major problem in themselves. Of the 25 billion of them worldwide, 2% or 50 million of them are expected to fail, but technicians do not know which 2%. All of them have to be checked and replaced if necessary. They are located in satellites, oil rigs at the bottom of the ocean, planes, traffic lights, ATM's, electricity grid systems, phone systems, medical devices, lifts, cars, etc. Recent developments, however, appear to indicate that embedded chips are not as date sensitive as first believed.

Software Factor

Many of the software programs

written 20-30 years ago have very little documentation available showing what was done or how it was done. Very few of today's programmers understand old computer languages, let alone being skilled in them.

Many of these large mainframe programs have 200-400 million lines of code that need to be checked for date sensitivity. After fixing, each program needs to be tested for errors. Many current programs for PC's on sale today are not compliant, so even newly purchased software needs to be checked for compliancy. Even earlier versions of Windows 95 and 98 are not compliant.

Human Factor

There are not enough experienced programmers in the world today to fix the problem before 1 January 2000. As indicated above, many computer programmers do not understand the older computer languages (up to 400 in number) that mainframes use.

No programmer is perfect and often new problems are introduced into the system while trying to eradicate the old problems. Testing is therefore essential.

Professional surveys of government agencies and businesses indicate many people are still in denial mode. Therefore, they are not even attempting to solve the problem at all. Others are hoping that Bill Gates will find a quick fix and all will be well.

Time Factor

The date by which all computers have to be fixed is set. There is no way of re-negotiating the completion date of this project. But the majority of all computer projects within the industry will not be finished nor fixed on time.

Large organizations commonly take about two and a half years to make their systems compliant. If they had not started their fix by mid-1997, they are already late and they are highly unlikely to successfully finish on time. Many organizations now con-

cede that they are unable to fix all their computers by the deadline. They are now talking about fixing only their so called "mission critical systems."

Financial Factor

The estimated costs of the world wide fix vary, but a figure of US\$ 300-600 billion is often quoted. Other experts say a more realistic figure is US\$ 1.5 trillion. Also the cost of the legal bill arising out of problems associated with year 2000 problems is estimated to be about US\$ 1.5 trillion.

Societal Factor

Those who have completed their work will be impacted by those who do not. Some companies have already said they will cut off non-compliant suppliers or sources of data. Because of our interdependencies, the integration of many systems requires that the whole problem be solved, not just most of it.

There are domino and multiplier effects, e.g., if the electricity goes out, the sewerage works and the water supply will also go out even if other sectors are compliant. The total consequence is thus much worse than if one utility had gone out.

Global Impact

It is not adequate to look only at one's own organization, community or nation. The year 2000 computer problem is a global one that requires a global perspective.

One highly respected international research company, the Gartner Group, predicts that a total of 40% of companies world-wide will experience a mission-critical failure because of Y2K. In the USA, which leads the world in its state of Y2K readiness, it is estimated that only 15% of companies will experience a Y2K mission-critical failure whereas countries such as China and Indonesia are expected to experience a failure rate of 66%. Its predictions on a country-by-country basis are as follows:

•Level 1 (15%): Australia, Belgium, Bermuda, Canada, Denmark, Holland, Ireland, Israel, Switzerland, Sweden, UK, USA.

•Level 2 (33%): Brazil, Chile, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Mexico,

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New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan.

•Level 3 (50%): Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Colombia, Czech Republic, Egypt, Germany, Guatemala, India, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, North Korea, Poland, Puerto Rico, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

•Level 4 (66%) : Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Chad, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Lithuania, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Somalia, Sudan, Thailand, Uruguay, Vietnam, Zaire, Zimbabwe.

The international survey also predicted the rate of Y2K mission-critical corporate failures on an industry basis. Some industries, such as the banking industry are expected to experience a less than 15% mission-critical failure rate, while others, such

as health care and government agencies which are expected to experience a 66% mission-critical failure rate. The Gartner Group's predictions are as follows:

•Level 1 (15%): Insurance, Investment Services, Banking, Pharmaceuticals, Computer Manufacturing.

•Level 2 (33%): Heavy Equipment, Aerospace, Medical Equipment, Software, Semiconductors, Telecom, Retail, Discrete Manufacturing, Publishing, Biotechnology, Consulting.

•Level 3 (50%): Chemical Processing, Power, Natural Gas, Water, Oil, Law Practices, Medical Practices, Construction, Transportation, Pulp and Paper, Ocean Shipping, Hospitality, Broadcast News, Television, Law Enforcement.

•Level 4 (66%): Education, Health Care, Government Agencies, Farming and Agriculture, Food Processing, Construction, City and Town Municipal Services.

Overall, the Gartner Group believes that the Y2K problem will not cause the global business meltdown that some analysts have predicted, but that it will cause a negative impact on the world economy that will be felt for 3 to 5 years. For more details see <<http://gartner11.gartnerweb.com/public/static/home/00073955.html>>

Recently, there has been significant economic, political and social turmoil in various parts of the world which has substantially reduced the capacity of those countries to address Y2K problems. This turmoil is expected to continue and in fact worsen. The possibility of a world recession is being considered quite openly, apart from the consequences of Y2K's impact. Social unrest is also expected to increase as a result of the economic problems in many countries.

Another factor expected to have a strong impact, particularly in Europe,

is the implementation of the Euro back in 1 January 1999. This has been a massive ongoing computer job and has diverted valuable resources away from their Y2K repair programs.

The Business Sector

Many experts agree that 20% of the world's businesses could collapse due to Y2K problems. Another expert says that upwards of 70% of businesses in Asia will either fail outright or experience severe hardship because of Y2K.

Many large businesses in Western nations started their repair program a few years ago. Publicly, they are saying that they will be ready on time, but privately many have grave fears that they will not meet the deadline. Unfortunately, there are some who have commenced their repair program too late and have no hope at all. Many large businesses in Asia and Europe are in that category.

Small to medium size businesses are the backbone of the economy in many countries and yet this sector has been very slow to take up the challenge to become compliant. Many experts are extremely concerned at their lack of awareness and activity and fear many business failures throughout the world.

Some countries such as Cambodia and Burma, will experience minimal direct impact on their businesses as they are not heavily dependent on computers. However, they may be affected indirectly as they encounter difficulties in international trade and banking.

Dr. Edward Yardeni, the chief economist of Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, has now raised the probability of a deep global recession in 2000 - 2001 as a result of Y2K from 30% to 70%. As 1 January 2000 approaches, more and more people are agreeing with him.

The Government Sector

On a world-wide basis government is the sector that is least prepared to face the next century. In many countries the governments are already facing major issues such as social unrest, collapsing stock markets, high unemployment rates and political turmoil, and do not have the time or resources to devote to yet another problem that will not affect them for another year or so. Also, many political leaders see it merely as a technical problem and are not aware of the issues at stake. The American CIA is also now "looking beyond the technical problem and assessing the social, political and economic tumult that could flow from interruptions of essential services in some fragile societies." Major interruptions to government services are to be expected in many countries.

In the USA, the majority of the government agencies are well behind schedule with the exception of the Social Security Administration which says it will be ready on time. A number of experts are extremely concerned that the Internal Revenue Service (tax dept.) will not be ready on time, nor will the vast majority of other agencies. In reports to Congress many of these agencies are stating they will not be ready until 2007 and later.

Many people are heavily dependent on an uninterrupted supply of government services, and are very vulnerable to the slightest breakdown in any of these services. In a time of crisis many people look to the government for help, but this might be a situation where it is unable to provide the required assistance as it is so busy fixing its own problems.

More than 40% of Europe's public sector systems will not be prepared for the date changeover. Being the middle of winter in the northern hemi-

sphere, there will be heavy dependence on public utilities for heating purposes.

Leaders in the West who are aware of the problem are not wanting to cause panic amongst their peoples for fear of the political consequences. They remain silent or make only low-key warnings. Countries such as Bangladesh that have a comparatively small government sector with very limited government services are expected to fare much better in this area as their impact on the lives of people is minimal.

The Banking Sector

In many countries banking is the sector that leads the way in Y2K preparedness. Banks were amongst the first to be aware of the problem as they are heavily dependent on dates and date-based calculations. Many big banks in the West are spending huge sums to fix the problem, e.g., Citibank is spending US\$ 600 million. Many bigger banks are saying publicly they will make the deadline. However, many smaller banks are not taking the issue seriously and many are expected to fail or to merge with larger compliant banks.

Peter de Jager, a world Y2K expert, reports that a World Bank survey shows a low number of its members are even aware of the problem. Other countries such as Japan publicly "say that they do not have any major problems and how they achieved that happy state of affairs is something of a mystery," according to Moody's Investors Services. So unfortunately, many non-Western banks are likely to encounter major problems which could lead to their ceasing operations. Also, banks that are compliant will cease to deal with the non-compliant ones for fear of infecting their own data.

Many experts fear that bank runs could destroy the banking system as

people withdraw their money for fear of losing it. Most banks keep less than 5% of the deposits in cash. Only a relatively minor panic could thus cause a banking collapse. Some analysts are predicting a global stock market crash before 1 January 2000, possibly as early as the middle of 1999.

The Three Pillars of Society

There are 3 basic pillars of our urban social structure—the banking system, the energy system and the transportation / communications systems. If one or more of these systems were to fail, then our whole social structure is threatened. No one knows what degree of failure is necessary before a total meltdown will occur.

•Our whole society has come to depend on a highly technical and extremely complex banking system. Our economic growth depends on it.

•Just as important to the survival of our society is the continuous flow of energy in one form or another. An electricity failure occurred in Auckland where the central business district was without power for 5 weeks and caused massive dislocation to the whole city. Without electricity, banks and ATM's will cease to operate, businesses will close, lifts will not work, water pumps will not work, buildings cannot be heated, nor will traffic lights operate. Modern cities become virtually unlivable, particularly if combined with fuel shortages which are also an extremely critical part of the system.

Rick Cowles, a Y2K expert on the US electricity system, stated in August 1998 that "I am convinced that there is a 100% chance that a major portion of the domestic electrical infrastructure will be lost as result of the Year 2000 computer and embedded systems problem. The industry is fiddling whilst the infrastructure burns." Unfortunately, the

situation is similar in Australia and in other countries that are much further behind in their repair project.

•Modern cities depend heavily on adequate transport and communication systems. We need food to be transported to cities, people need to

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get to work, businesses need supplies and deliveries of products. Phone calls and data transmission need to occur to enable our cities to function smoothly. If the production of oil is interrupted or the supply reduced, then many domino effects will follow.

Possible Scenarios

There are four broad outcomes that could eventuate:

—Minimal Impact

The first possible outcome is what could be called the "official view." This is where leaders and heads of organizations are saying that there will be minimal disruption resulting from minimal numbers of technical problems. The official word is "Don't worry, be happy."

—Moderate Impact

A moderate impact is where the electricity grid goes down but only for short periods of time, or there is systematic shutdowns of parts of the grid, the banks get some of their entries wrong, there are some problems with the fuel supply and ration-

ing might occur, some people die as medical equipment malfunctions, traffic lights behave erratically, people get trapped in lifts when the power goes out, aircraft traffic is curtailed as airlines try to get their planes and airports operational again, etc.

—Major Impact

A major impact would be where months before the turn of the Century, banks start limiting cash withdrawals to prevent bank runs, stock markets fall dramatically as well as real estate prices, and the government starts warning of expected major interruptions to essential services. Once the New Year arrives the power grid goes down and remains down for a few months; the banks are unable to provide any international transfers to non-compliant banks (of which there are many) while some banks close down altogether; large production lines such as car assembly plants grind to a halt as they do not have the parts to keep the lines going; petrol is severely rationed; supermarket shelves become rapidly empty; and government departments resort to writing out social security cheques by hand and imposing a flat rate income, goods and services tax in order to simplify the system.

—Meltdown

The last possibility would be where the 3 basic pillars of society are so disrupted for such a lengthy period of time that the whole social system collapses. This would be considered a 'meltdown.' No-one knows at what point this could happen, but some analysts consider that this is a possibility that cannot be ruled out.

The question is which of these scenarios is the most probable. The minimalist scenario is not really an option. We already know from the lack of preparedness of many businesses, government agencies, and countries that this scenario is not possible.

The most likely consequences of Y2K lie between the moderate and major impacts. However, this is not expected to be uniformly distributed across the world or even within a nation. Two cities only 50 kms apart might have quite different repair programs and contingency plans, and be impacted by Y2K quite differently.

How Will YWAM be Affected?

This as an opportunity for you and your ministry to be able to be prepared so that you can minister to others who might not be prepared. There might be many people and organizations that will need practical assistance.

Overview

YWAM can be seen to be particularly susceptible to Y2K related issues on five grounds:

1. It is a charitable organization, dependent upon donations for many of its programs and activities.
2. It is built upon "volunteers", people with a high sense of personal commitment.
3. It has an international mission agenda.
4. It is dependent upon transport and communication technologies.
5. It is located in major urban centres.

A Y2K crisis as described above will include a deflationary global recession. Even if banks are open for business, cash will be in short supply. It is highly probable that international telegraphic transfers will be impossible and that international check clearance will take several weeks or months. Donations for YWAM programs and activities can therefore be expected to be dramatically reduced (either finance will disappear, donors will have more critical causes for their finance, or banking services will fail).

While many YWAM staff are completely 'sold out' and fully committed

to the people they serve, we can expect some (especially those with families in the field) to choose to return home just before the crisis arrives. Some staff might see this as 'home leave' (at an opportune time) or as part of their own personal emergency contingency plan.

Under its international mission agenda, YWAM has placed a large number of staff in foreign countries. In doing so, YWAM has relied heavily

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upon international travel, communications and banking, which are likely to experience major difficulties at the turn of the century.

YWAM also has a significant percentage of its staff located in major urban centers where the impact of the Y2K problems will be felt most severely. Some experts are advising that, if at all possible, people should relocate themselves to safer, smaller communities which are less dependent on modern technology.

Individually, Y2K problems may last for only 2-3 months, but their combined effect is expected to restrict YWAM's ability in the short-term to place and maintain staff in countries other than their own.

In our planning we need to be careful of going to either of two

extremes. One is of predicting a doomsday scenario while the other is one of complacency. We need to seek God's view of this crisis and act accordingly. The impending crisis might be God's way of getting our attention and/or of bringing the greatest revival we have ever seen. In our planning we need to 'believe for the best but prepare for the worst.'

We also need to be leaders, making our preparations now and leading our civic communities in caring for and trusting one another, in cooperation and collaborating together for the good of all. The issue needs to be viewed from a leadership and management perspective not from a technological one. Each YWAM Base should keep itself informed on the compliance state of its surrounding community (but beware of listening only to the "official view" that may be conveyed to the public).

Many people are planning to fix their computer problems late this year such that a bottleneck at that time seems inevitable. Many wiser people are aiming to complete their repair program and contingency planning by mid-1999 as significant Y2K problems could well start appearing by then.

As circumstances are likely to vary significantly from one operating location to another, each operating location should implement its own Y2K planning, incorporating the following recommendations as appropriate.

Recommendations

We recommend that leaders make hard copies of accounts, loans, registers, bank records, etc. Obtain certified hard copies of all licenses, registrations, agreements, etc. Keep them in a safe location (but not in a bank). Check computers (hardware and software) and other technological equipment and ensure compliance. Be sure to check for embedded chips.

Write letters to organizations providing critical supplies to check their compliancy, e.g., banks, telephones, electricity, email, postage system, water, fuel, transport system, and donors. Change banks (or service provider) if your bank (or service provider) is not likely to be compliant in time.

Avoid doing business on and near Y2K significant dates. Plan schools and travel schedules conscious of limited air travel on or about 1 January 2000. If travelling, check which airlines will be flying, which air traffic control centres will be operational, which airports will be functioning, etc. Include an indemnity statement on issues relating to Y2K in school application forms, staff forms, outreach proposals, etc. Read local and major national newspapers as well as recommended web sites, keeping informed of major developments both locally and overseas.

Assess your local area's dependence on technology and generally how compliant is it. Develop plans to provide for on-going ministry during the crisis. Inform all staff, including those working in a foreign country, of the possible consequences.

Many Y2K commentators are advising people to establish a storehouse of essential requirements should the worst scenario eventuate. If located in a large city, some commentators suggest developing contingency plans. As much as is practicable reduce your debt. Keep minutes of staff meetings informing staff of Y2K issues, copies of staff memos re Y2K issues, copies of letters sent to suppliers, etc., for evidence in case of legal action being taken against Base or Ministry.

Be available to assist staff as required in their personal decisions. Establish a plan for repatriation in case of emergency. Promote 'localization': ensure that local staff have the

organizational capacity to maintain and operate the project/program.

Legal Liability

A Year 2000 litigation specialist, Warren S. Reid, has provided guidelines to assist businesses in preparing for possible legal challenges. Many experts are saying that the cost of litigation will in fact be greater than the cost of the repair program, so leaders

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need to be aware of the possibility of legal problems. YWAM leaders will be in a strong position to contest legal action in the event of Y2K incidents if they can produce the following as defence:

Evidence they undertook to educate themselves. Evidence they established a committee to oversee a Y2K repair project and encouraged staff to get involved. Evidence they directed that a software inventory be compiled. This inventory should also include a legal audit, i.e., the location and review of all license and maintenance agreements relating to third party licensed software to identify vendors and their responsibilities. Evidence they had conducted a risk assessment and produced a statement of impact. Evidence they had communicated the nature of the problem and action steps to all levels of staff. Evidence

they had developed a detailed plan to address the problem, including all resources necessary, a budget and critical path analysis. Evidence that the plan was executed on a timely basis. Evidence that all approaches to addressing the problem were considered (outside consultants, specialized training, etc.). Warren Reid also explains that there is no requirement that Y2K solutions be perfect. Human error will be allowed for by courts when considering failed solutions, so long as a well-accepted process was followed.

Ministry Challenges

Opportunities for mercy ministry and other projects serving the poor and distressed will abound. Self-reliant community development projects are likely to be more sustainable than those requiring considerable input from outside. Prepare for opportunities for outreach, counselling and service to economic refugees (either internally displaced or from abroad) or those poor in your community who will be affected. Networking will provide many opportunities for ministry. If the crisis is prolonged, physical preparations alone would not be enough. Many people will be dependent on the following types of networking:

1. Neighborhood networking. Build strong relationships with your immediate neighbors for pooling of resources for survival and protection.
2. Community networking: Christian leadership (statesmanship) in networking with government, churches and other community leaders in the development of community disaster and relief plans. Such plans will require Christian leadership in the pre-crisis formative stages as well as in the time of crisis itself.
3. Church networks: can distribute essential commodities, create sup-

port groups, and use the opportunity for evangelism providing hope and meeting people's physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

4. Supply networks: Plan where to obtain a supply of essential goods to be able to minister to those who need assistance.

Physical Preparation

These preparations can be made well in advance of the arrival of the new century as some items which are readily available today may not be available at any price during the second half of 1999. Commentators suggest that we obtain supplies of the following, sufficient for at least a few weeks.

Food: Staples that are non-perishable. Water: Store drinking water in bottles if no other alternative is available for heating and cooking purposes, and emergency car usage. Seeds: Use non-hybrid type in case there are food shortages. Medicines/First-aid kit: Procure essential ones. Cash: Get enough for a few weeks .

In conclusion, may we all better understand the problem and the signs of the times and know God's strategy and blessings as we move into the new millennium.

[Editor's note: This article is a reprint from the YWAM web site (www.ywam.org). It was prepared by Stephen Goode of the YWAM Global Leadership Team. You can contact Stephen Goode at ywammmi@loxinfo.co.th]

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Editorial

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our nation, as well as for the peoples God has called us to serve in His name. It is a call to renewal of faith and cooperation with God and with each other as we face the crisis .

Perhaps as never before, and especially for us in the West, we are going to have to trust (lean on) God's Word, and learn how to live in times of crises, deprivation and confusion, in times of want of ease, luxury and plenty. Could it be that God is calling us back to simplicity, helping us get off the treadmill, and fully trusting in Him who stills the storms and feeds the bird of the air—trusting in our Sovereign and Benevolent Lord?

This is not to say we don't need to fix our computers or that contingency plans are irrelevant. Rather it means being guided as Joseph was, who not only saved himself and his family, but saved Egypt and the world from their crisis.

The last two articles in this Special Edition are reports by two major mission players regarding Y2K. Jason Mandryck writes about "The Millennium Bug and Missions" which is written from a WEC perspective. The other is the Youth With A Mission statement on Y2K. Both articles are very revealing since they give us a model of what mission agencies (at least two major ones)_ are telling their people what to do in this crisis.

Much more could (and will be) written about Y2K, including as it relates to missions. You will notice that the articles in this edition are replete with resources on this topic. Our prayer is that the Lord would guide you, and all His mission efforts, to assess the Y2K crisis, make the appropriate preparations and come through it with renewed faith, hope and strength in order to finish the task of world evangelization in AD 2000 or soon there after. So be it, for the glory of our God.

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