

YWAM Co-Founder Says 'Values Matter'—and They Hold Us Together in the Spirit

Darlene Cunningham believes that, especially as we face an ever-changing world, our values shape our lives. Cunningham, co-founder with her husband, Loren, of the international missions organization Youth With a Mission, says she wrote her new book, *Values Matter: The Story of the Beliefs & Values That Shaped Youth With a Mission*, primarily because of her concern for the future.

“For us as a mission, it’s extremely important that we absolutely stay mission true,” she says. “And we’re in a time and a season where knowing what our values are, and if they truly matter, is extremely important. ... We want to be a people who know what we believe and why we believe it. We want to be a people who know what we don’t believe in and why we don’t believe it, what values really matter—and live our lives accordingly. So it’s my desire to be able to give those tools for the future.

“Your values are always based on your beliefs. You then see out of your beliefs, your values, clarify those, and they inform every one of your decisions,” Cunningham says. And she offers an important insight about YWAM itself: “We’re really a viral movement. But we are held together, not by our rules or our regulations or by a central headquarters. We’re held together by our shared vision, values and beliefs. So that’s why this knowing what our beliefs and values are is so important, because it is actually what holds us together, along with this call to go into all the world.”

One day, Cunningham says, she spoke with a businessman who told her, “I just don’t get you guys at all.” She had a simple

answer for him: “We are people who believe in listening to God, obeying Him and then not quitting. And we are people who are held together by the Holy Spirit, because He speaks to all of us.”

