



"YOLO" is an acronym for "You Only Live Once". It is along the same lines as the much older Latin term "carpe diem" ('seize the day'). It is a call to live life to its fullest extent, even embracing behaviour which may carry a sense of inherent risk, danger, and possibility.

Over the last couple of years, we have all experienced the effects of a global pandemic with the uncertainty, unpredictability, and opportunity that this has provided. This has caused many of us to think more deeply about how we live and how we can make sure that our lives count for God.

This week I received an email from Open Doors quoting their research from the newly released 2022 World Watch List revealing that, on average, 16 Christians were killed for their faith every day last year. That is almost 500 each month.

Another note from one of our partners in Pakistan informed me of a group of Pakistani pastors that were recently ambushed by gunmen while driving home from church. One of them was killed. While I probably will not experience martyrdom for my faith, I will only live once. So, my question is, am I making the most of the life that God has given to me?

The Scriptures encourage us to live lives that count for God. Ephesians 5:15-17 says. "So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do." (NLT).

As I reflect on this verse, four actions jump out at me about how I should live.

Firstly, I am to think about my life. To make my life count for God, I must live my life in a meaningful way. Everything I do should count for God. My home life, my work life, my leisure life all count for God. Second, I am to live wisely. God has given us His wisdom to live by. I seek to live my life in accordance with His Word which guides me in a life that counts for God. Thirdly, I am to make the most of every opportunity. Each day provides opportunities to use my time, my finances, my intellect, my gifts, and my experiences to count for God. Lastly, I am to find out what God wants me to do. God has plans and desires for my life. I need to be pursuing God and learning about how He wants to use my life so that it counts for God.

I understand that as a Christ follower, I will live for eternity, but I only have this one life that I can live for God. I want my life to count. I want to use my life for God's purposes. My life will count in my obedience to Christ and in using each day for His glory.

My question to you, "Are you making the most of the life that God has given to you?" YOLO!

Michael Hanson

Partnership Facilitator – Pakistan & Afghanistan

Just two weeks ago our team held our annual 'Gathering' in Nelson. We've been meeting at the wonderful Bridge Valley Camp and have had wonderful weather for about seven years in a row!

This year we held a different style of meeting. It was less formal, less strategic, and more focused on simply talking through every one of our partners and praying for them individually. That took quite a while but was very much worth the time.

It was wonderful to just connect as a team of likeminded people and prepare for the year ahead.

The recent changes announced by the government also mean we are now seriously looking at visiting partners within the next few months. We are currently investigating the logistics of doing so and have discovered that there is no travel insurance for countries that are on the official 'do not travel,' list...which is all of them! Let's hope that changes soon.

We are all very keen to travel to spend time with our dear friends around the world. To hear their stories, share their burdens and pray (and probably cry) with them as we work through all the things that have happened since we last visited. We will need much prayer for this!



The Sisters Training Centre (STC) serves young women from local villages by providing life skills such as sewing, tailoring, hygiene, cleaning, and instruction in how to read the Bible.

The life of women in these rural villages is incredibly difficult. At about five years old girls begin to draw water from the well, make rice and food for the family, and clean the home. They frequently get up well before sunrise to complete all their duties, which rarely leaves time for any sort of study.

Most girls do not attend school past 10th grade, because education for a girl is seen as useless and without benefit to the family unit; the girl will soon be married regardless. Child marriages are still common and girls as young as 13 are given in marriage. There is high infant mortality among these child wives as their bodies are just not physically ready.

Most girls arrive at the STC programme malnourished, timid and afraid, but leave having grown in confidence, knowing what's right, and having skills to earn a livelihood which results in a positive change for all women and children in each of the villages to which they return.

Karen* is a 17-year-old girl who was raised in a small village. Her father was the first to come to know Christ and was immediately kicked out of the home as a result.

Karen is passionate about others knowing Christ the way she has come to know Him. She wants to learn sewing and bring it back to the families in her village where men are absent, and families are often left without a source of income. She hopes to teach them this skill in order that the women have a way to provide for their children as she shares the gospel with them along the way.

**Name has been changed.*

This partnership is not online for security reasons.

1. Pray that we would all use the life that God has given us to the fullest. Pray that we would have the courage to take risks for Him.
2. Pray for Karen and all the other girls who are being given hope for the future by the training they're receiving at STC. Pray that God would protect this vulnerable group, including from COVID and an increasingly anti-Christian government.
3. Praise for a great time together as a team in Nelson last weekend. Pray for God's protection over our team this year as we potentially venture back out into the world.
4. Pray for wisdom as we contemplate the complexities around recommencing overseas travel. Pray that God would keep our team safe as we look to reconnect with partners and that none of our team would get stranded while overseas!