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Rev. Koji Honda



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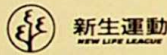
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Rev. Thomas Shaw was born near Kilsyth in Scotland and grew up near Ballymena in Northern Ireland. (Both of these places have experienced spiritual revivals in the past.) He is married to Mabel who is a school teacher and they have a married son, Stephen, and a daughter, Ruth; both are in their twenties.

Mr. Shaw is a graduate of the Faith Mission Bible College, Edinburgh, Scotland, Union Theological College, Belfast, and Geneva Theological College. After working as an evangelist with the Faith Mission in Britain for six years, he became a minister in the Congregational Church in Ireland, where he has served for the past twenty-eight years. (The Congregational Church in Ireland is a strongly evangelical denomination.)

Along with his regular church ministry, Mr. Shaw is President of the Faith Mission in Britain and serves on the Councils of several Missionary Societies.

His ministry has taken him to many parts of the British Isles as well as Holland, France, Africa, India, South America, Israel and North America.



It's a Good Time for the Great Taste.



JAPAN HARVEST

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In This HARVEST...

Lessons From The Leaders

Siegfried Buss, Guest Editor

It must have been a bright, gorgeous morning when Jesus challenged Peter to leave the waters of Lake Galilee to follow Him by stating, "I will make you a fisher of men." Peter knew the exhilarating experience of pushing the boat off the shore and casting down the net for a big haul.

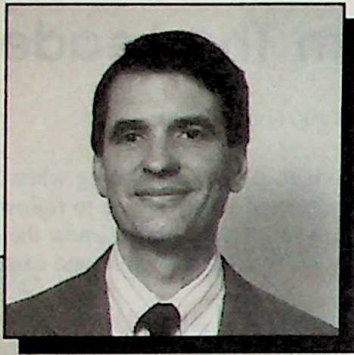
We too have heard the Master's call and have followed Him to be fishers of men right here in Japan. I shall never forget the enthusiasm of early days and the joy of drawing a net filled to overflowing.

As I have been preparing this issue of Japan Harvest during the cold days of February, it occurred to me that nowadays in Japan we missionaries don't engage in deep sea fishing; we sit on the lakes and fish through the ice. Over the years since the end of the War an ever thickening layer of ice has been forming. First there were several centimeters of materialism; to this was added a layer of national pride; then came enslavement to company and society, resurgence of Japan's religions, new religions, syncretism, New Age, sects, etc., etc. By now the ice is several meters thick and it's practically impossible to hack through it with our picks. Fishing just isn't easy these days.

There is, however, a brighter side to this picture. It is the undisputable fact that God has brought about the establishing of a living church, committed, vibrant and forward looking. In the pages that follow, you'll have the opportunity to get a glimpse of what God is doing through the Japanese. Take heart, my friend, God is at work. I have enjoyed translating and editing these articles and trust that you too will find in them something for the head and the heart. Any comments?



Dr. Siegfried & Edith Buss. The Buss family has served in Japan with TEAM since 1961. Siegfried is Professor of Modern Languages at Tokyo Christian University and serves as director of the Ochanomizu Christian Center Language School.



JEMA Windows

Barry Potter
JEMA President

The call came to Bill and Dorothy to pioneer a new outreach in India with their mission. Bill felt a clear call to serve the Lord as a missionary in that needy land. He was anxious to reach the millions in India with the gospel message. There was only one problem. Dorothy did not feel the call that Bill did. To Bill, India represented a golden opportunity for ministry – a huge, whitened harvest field. To Dorothy, however, India represented a disease-infested land far from home – no place to raise the couple's three small children (they were expecting a fourth). If her husband felt called to this work, she reasoned, he would just have to go himself.

But Bill was going to be part of a "team" ministry. If Bill and his family dropped out now, they would let the team down. There was only one thing to do. One of the members paid a visit to Dorothy and tried to reason with her. She *had* to agree to come to India, for the sake of her husband's ministry – for the sake of the team. Reluctantly she determined that any further opposition to her husband's plans would be futile.

The result? Bill flourished in his new ministry, enduring hardship with a steady faith. And Dorothy? For Dorothy, India represented only poverty, loneliness and disease. To top it all off, she had to endure the death of her five-year-old son. It was too much for her. Her health – and her spirit – finally broke.

Dorothy's experience emphasizes the need for us to be sensitive to, and actively caring for, our missionaries – our "human resources" – at the same time as we develop our teams and hone our strategies. For this reason, the important subject of *Missionary Care* was taken up at our recent JEMA Consultation, held at Okutama, Tokyo, on February 14th and 15th.

We used the book *Missionary Care* (Kelly O'Donnell [editor], William Carey Library, 1992) as our resource, with a working definition of member care in missions as "the ongoing commitment of resources and potential resources by mission agencies, sending churches, and related mission organizations for the development and nurture of missionary personnel." Missionary care can take the form of pastoral counseling and crisis intervention, or can consist simply of prayer groups and mutual encouragement among fellow missionaries.

A survey taken among mission leaders in Japan showed us the need to give more attention to the important area of missionary care. At the Consultation we discussed whether there is a role for JEMA to play in increasing and enhancing the care of missionaries in Japan. A number of suggestions were made, including JEMA-sponsored seminars, a referral service of Christian counselors, and/or a resource list of available materials and tools. It was recommended that a task force be appointed to further research possible areas of JEMA involvement and activity. This was subsequently passed at the JEMA Plenary Session.

It was emphasized that the intention is for JEMA to *assist* the missionary community in networking and identifying resources that are already available, rather than in trying to become a primary member care provider itself. But whatever the result of further research, the subject of missionary care seems to be too important for JEMA – and the missionary community – to ignore.

But shouldn't missionaries be prepared to "go it alone"? Aren't their faith and commitment enough to keep them from any serious problems? What about the missionary pioneers? Didn't they make it without any of our sophisticated resources and assistance? A helpful chapter in *Missionary Care* reviews the experiences of some of the earlier pioneers, and concludes that the need for

care and nurture was as prevalent then as it is now, although the resources were not always available. A good example of this is Bill and Dorothy, the missionary couple mentioned above. Bill's full name was William Carey, who is known as the father of the faith missions movement.

Less well known is that his wife Dorothy, as a result of her unmet needs, eventually suffered a total mental breakdown from which she never fully recovered. Another reminder that we owe it to the Lord we serve and to the stewardship of the human resources he has given us, to be the best that we can be – and to ensure that our fellow workers are also the best they can be. □

JEMA News

Coming in the Harvest...

- **Cults & New Religions**
Guest Editor: William Wood
 - **Crusade Evangelism**
Guest Editor: Kenneth McVety
- JEMA Pioneer Evangelism Seminar**
May 17, 1993 in Tokyo.

Morning session: "Steps the Japanese Take to Making a Decision for Christ and Going on to Discipleship."

Speaker: **Dr. Kazuhiro Uchida**, Academic Dean of Japan Bible Seminary.

Afternoon session: Evangelistic Preaching.

JEMA Summer Conference in Karuizawa August 5 – 8, Union Church

Dr. Dieter Kemmler, professor of New Testament, Aarau Theological Seminary in Aarau, Switzerland. Outstanding teacher and conference speaker.

Special Music Ministry by **Roy & Dorothy Morden**, Director of Music, Community Church of Palm Springs, CA.

Koji Honda, Japan's Billy Graham

by Siegfried Buss
Guest Editor

Koji Honda, Japan's senior evangelist, is a very special person. Short in stature but full of energy, Honda's calendar is filled years in advance and he literally rushes from meeting to meeting, city to city using the time on the bullet train or airplane to write scores of "thank you" notes. His full schedule, however, always leaves room for a person in need of prayer or advice. There is a twinkle in his eyes and a warm handshake. Often a prayer is offered in parting which startles non-Christians but comes as naturally as breathing. Nobody doubts his sincerity, concern and love. This humble servant of the Lord even today is Japan's most effective and successful evangelist. Americans often refer to him as the Billy Graham of Japan. During his 37 years since leaving the pulpit of the Kobe Central Church to accept the challenge of full-time evangelism, Honda has preached to over one million of his countrymen.

From Darkness into His Light

The remarkable life of Koji Honda in many ways portrays the struggles and joys Japanese go through as they are brought from darkness into His glorious light. Honda was born in 1912 in a town of 4,000 in Fukui Prefecture. His father had just opened a restaurant which expanded rapidly. Koji from an early age was drawn into the family business, washing dishes, arranging rooms and welcoming customers. Not much was changing in this little town. It was big news when young Pastor Sakamoto came and said that he would start a church. Since there were twenty temples in the area and the region was known as a Buddhist stronghold, Sakamoto was met with considerable opposition. The merchants in town conspired to starve Sakamoto out by ruling that Christians would not be served in the stores. Koji's grandparents could not agree and kept supplying Pastor Sakamoto with rice, fish, soy sauce and other necessities of life. Koji himself ventured to Sunday School when he was five. This did not meet with the approval of the grandparents, however, who confiscated the card with the Bible verse and poured salt on Koji's head in order to cleanse him from exposure to Christianity. Koji was forbidden to listen to the "evil teachings of Jesus." Actually there was much evil right in the premises of the eating establishment. The drinking, partying and geishas made Honda sick.

Stunned by Scripture

Soon it was time to commute the twelve kilometers by train each day in order to attend the

commercial school in the next large city. In Koji's class there was a sharp fellow by the name of Yoshida who invited him to go to Bible class. One evening the Scripture passage was from the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:28. "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." The second passage was Matthew 5:8, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Honda was amazed and stunned by these Scripture verses. They stared him in the face as he thought of what was happening at home where geishas had become an integral part of the restaurant business and where foul language prevailed. Koji himself was not entrapped by his surroundings and in town had the reputation of a youth who was going straight, neither smoking nor drinking as a minor like the rest. Koji was known for his politeness. He would bow deep when meeting people on the street and say, "Thank you for your patronage," as if everyone in town were a customer at his father's restaurant. This even caught the attention of the local newspaper.

The Yoshida Encounter

It was during the fourth year at the commercial school when his classmate Yoshida once more talked him into attending church. By then a lovely building marked the meeting place and Pastor Sakamoto's personal interest led to a friendship. Strangely Pastor Sakamoto hardly ever talked to Koji about the Christian faith. This gave Koji confidence to attend church freely. Koji developed a very positive attitude towards Christianity. In school, on the debate team, he chose the topic "Read the Bible!"

One morning on the way to school, fellow student Yoshida shared with Koji that he had been born again and that he had followed the Lord in baptism. So after school Honda went straight to Pastor Sakamoto with the request "I want to be baptized, too." Actually Honda was struggling with a problem. He had gotten into the habit of embezzling school club money for personal use. He hoped that getting baptized would rid him of this evil habit. Honda was baptized at age 17.

Plans Tripped Up

On New Year's day of the following year Honda prayed earnestly for the Lord's future guidance. His parents were counting on him to take over the family business. Graduation time was approaching. Koji had to make up his mind. He decided to secretly leave home to take the

Koji Honda, the Evangelist



entrance examination at Kansai Bible Institute. A telegram from his father intercepted his plans. "Mother critically ill--return immediately," it read. Honda hurried home only to discover that he had been tricked.

Honda gave up on Bible school and headed for Tokyo in order to become a salesman. One day when explaining a sales transaction to his boss, he was reprimanded. "Honda, I thought you were a Christian, but you are not telling the truth." Deeply troubled at heart Honda found refuge in a nearby church where he spent much time in prayer and Bible reading. Galatians 2:16 and 18 stood out and griped him. Honda left church a new creature in Christ.

Just about then back home the restaurant business had come upon hard times and Honda's parents along with three children came to Tokyo to look for work. Because of these circumstances, Honda had to drop out of college preparatory school in order to support the family. He found comfort in the fact that he was able to work for the Japan Bible Society and thus advance the cause of Christ even though hopes for ever attending Bible school were crushed.

Restitution and Peace

Pastor Sakamoto, who continued to be Honda's spiritual mentor, told him one day, "You will never experience God's rich blessing until you make full restitution, no matter how small, no matter how

long ago it may have been." Honda immediately thought of the money he had embezzled from the school club fund at the commercial school. A letter was sent to the school principal with the money. Honda also repaid a friend, a bookstore, and a confectionery store. With this step Honda experienced absolute peace and forgiveness. Soon the door opened to attend Bible school when Honda was 22. During his studies he spent much time in prayer, asking God to visit the islands of Japan, naming them one by one on his knees. It was then that he heard a distinct voice saying, "Go forth and proclaim the kingdom of God; spread the gospel across Japan."

In 1937 Honda was assigned to pastor his first church. God blessed this ministry. Then came WWII and military conscription. Honda was stationed in Aomori Prefecture in northern Japan. The local church consisted only of three on his first visit: the pastor, his wife and Honda. Soon many of the soldiers of the garrison joined Honda in attending church. This surprised the local community since Christianity was considered a hostile religion.

Shocked by Son's Death

When the war came to an end, Honda supported his wife and children by fixing shoes while continuing to witness for Christ. Income was meager. The death of Kenichi, his oldest son, came as a great shock. Honda built a coffin with his own

hands and placed the body in it.

Once, at a special alumni meeting of Honda and his classmates, God worked in a wonderful way. It had turned into a time of prayer. One by one the alumni rose from their knees, determined to make their lives count for Christ. Honda was one of them. When the U.S. military made available a quonset hut, it was turned into the Kobe Evangelism Hall. In the intervening years the congregation built its own church nearby. There was visible blessing with about 50 baptisms a year. Church attendance averaged from 200 to 250.

*"Fervent in spirit,
serving the Lord."
This is the hour for
evangelism!*

From Pastor to Evangelist

Just about that time Billy Graham was ministering in Japan. One day a missionary friend challenged Honda to leave the pulpit for full-time evangelism. Strangely enough an hour later two missionaries called on Honda with the same mandate. Was this God's will? Honda entered a period of forty days of prayer during which time he took no breakfast. Each day the Word of God spoke to his heart. On the second day it was Isaiah 43:19 and on the fifth day Matthew 16:14. Honda rose from his knees and tendered his resignation as pastor of the Kobe Central Church. Thus in 1952 began the Honda Crusade, known in Japan also as the Japan Gospel Crusade. Kobe became the site of the first major effort with over 40 churches cooperating.

During the intervening years Honda has preached to over 1.25 million people. His evangelistic fervor took him to twelve countries around the world. In most he sought to reach Japanese, but he has also been guest speaker at international crusades and congresses. Honda recalls with joy his participation at the Liebenzell Mission Missionsfest in the large tent seating thousands. He challenged his German listeners to take an active part in world evangelization. One of the young people stepping forward and committing his life to missionary work was the son of Liebenzell Mission Director Pflaum, who now serves in Africa.

Personal Glimpses

It was in 1959 that Koji Honda embark-



Kobe Central Church 40 Years Ago

ed on his first evangelistic tour to North America. I was associate pastor of the Chicago Avenue Japanese Church in Chicago, USA then, and our church was among the Japanese churches that participated in Honda's Crusade. Edith and I found seats near the front, and I eagerly looked forward to my first encounter with the evangelist. He opened with a few jokes which included some observations about American life. He complained about the bathtubs in which one has to lie down to get wet. As he continued, his eyes caught us and he abruptly stopped and said, "There are some *gaijin* in our midst. I better be careful about what I say." After the meeting we were introduced to the speaker and I pointed out to him that in America he was the *gaijin*, foreigner, even in a gathering of Japanese. "I am sorry," he replied in English. Honda Sensei is fond of this phrase to this day.

God's leading would have it that in the intervening years of missionary service in Japan Brother Honda, as Board Chairman of Ochanomizu Christian Center, would become my "boss." It has been my privilege also to interpret for him at many occasions both in Japan and abroad. An unforgettable experience was the World Prayer Assembly at Seoul, Korea, in 1984. One evening Koji Honda was the speaker at the all-night outdoor prayer meeting attended by tens of thousands. A temporary platform was bathed in flood lights and, as far as the eye could see, people sat on the ground below. Honda Sensei had been introduced but before beginning to speak, he prostrated himself on the platform and begged his Korean listeners to forgive Japan for the crimes committed by the Imperial Army. Then he slowly rose, composed himself and began. "I am Koji Honda from Japan. Perhaps you wonder why I am so short. Well, I have an answer. When I was trying to grow up, my dad used to hit me on the head all the time..." I saw Bill Bright laughing on the platform. Honda had caught the rapt attention of the audience and was ready to launch into his message.

February 3, 1989 is another date I shall not forget. The Ochanomizu Christian Center Board was meeting at Yamano Hotel overlooking Lake Ashi in Hakone. Early that morning I had gone out to take a few shots of Mt. Fuji. But I never got to it since I slipped and ended up with multiple fractures of the ankle and other complications. When I finally was carried to the

hotel lobby on a stretcher, all the board members had gathered and Honda Sensei knelt down, touched my leg and prayed fervently, "Oh, Lord, help my dear brother in this hour of need. Oh, Lord, heal him right now." I continued the prayer in my heart, "Lord, right now may not be possible, but I really need your help." I must have prayed in Japanese because I remember concluding with "*yoroshiku*."

Koji Honda, now 81, has slowed down little. His evangelistic fervor takes him from city to city. He literally lives by the verse he chose for the main lobby of Ochanomizu Christian Center, "Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" Romans 12:11.

In addition to his teaching and preaching ministry Honda is a prolific writer. This January he came out with his latest book, *On Fire for Evangelism*. When I asked him when he found time to write it, he replied, "During recent illnesses while in the waiting room at the hospital." A sentence leaps out from the pages, *Aa, dendoo no toki wa ima desu*, "Oh, this is the hour for evangelism." It is a challenge that you and I must take seriously. □



Honda giving a blessing.

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Proclaiming the Good News...

In the Shadow of Ise Shrine

by Nobuji Horikoshi

Rev. Horikoshi pastors the Yokkaichi Presbyterian Church in Mie Prefecture.

The material has been transcribed from a lecture series given at the 1992 Annual Pastor Missionary Conference of Domei in November, 1992.

Called to Yokkaichi

Permit me to share how God led me to the Yokkaichi Church and what He is doing in our midst. We now have a membership of 200, but to become a church of this size wasn't easy and we learned many lessons and went through failures as well.

A turning point in my life was reading Acts 18:9,10. "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." Paul spent a year and a half in Corinth, and here I have already been 30 years in Yokkaichi. It reminds me of how ineffectual I am.

Right at the start, I hadn't been there more than two months when I ran into trouble relating to my proposed church growth plan. My predecessor had quit the church in disgust. It was under such circumstances that I was called. I came to fill the shoes of a pastor originally from Iwate Prefecture who fought the good fight for four years. I myself hail from Gumma Prefecture. People from there have a reputation of starting out strong but fizzling out. One can blame the *karakaze*, dry wind, for that. They tell me that the 15th Regiment of Takasaki had a reputation as shock troops, effective in breaking through enemy lines, but the rest of the battle was left to Osaka's 66th Regiment. I wound up thinking that if someone from Iwate stuck it out for four years, perhaps my period would be one year. But the letter of invitation included a veiled threat that if I did not accept, the church would dissolve. Just at that time discussions of my becoming the chaplain of Ochanomizu Student Christian Center (now OCC) had been finalized. Nevertheless, when my wife and I got married we agreed that we would dedicate our lives to planting churches which would please the Lord. So I found myself in the dilemma that not accepting the Yokkaichi call would amount to a death sentence for the church. Of course, that really wasn't my responsibility but that would be the outcome, which I could not let happen to my Lord. We packed up and moved to Yokkaichi even though this also meant leaving behind my personal pursuits, including my research in evolution which I thought would be my life's work, or at least putting them on back burners. I wasn't indispensable at OSCC because many qualified persons were interested in the chaplaincy, but Yokkaichi's future depended on us. It took three months to arrive at that decision. Today, thirty years later, I know that it was correct.

Trouble Begins Early

When after only two months troubles arose, I thought in my mind that it may be only a year for us after all. The confrontation related to building program plans. A seeker for many years caused the controversy. As a local resident, he had more power than the newly arrived pastor. I decided to call a general meeting. I read the names of all the church members and said that only they had the right to speak. The upset troublemaker, angrily shouting "you will regret this day," left the church. For years he was the thorn in the flesh, but in retrospect I am thankful for that experience.

Two months ago he came to me with a request. His wife was dying and he wanted me to conduct the funeral. I accepted and took the opportunity to ask him straightforwardly, "What about you? You have turned eighty. Isn't it time to make things right? Do you believe in the Lord Jesus?" He replied with a "yes." I encouraged him to take the normal steps to become a church member. Then I invited him to lead in prayer. He was biding his time and I suggested that perhaps he could read his prayer and offered to write it. I asked him if he was willing to attach his seal to it, and he agreed. Then he read what I wrote: "Lord, I have been rebellious for a long time. Forgive me. I believe that Jesus Christ is my Savior..." Then he attached his seal to his confession; thirty years had passed. "I am at last at peace," he said. I think I matured greatly because of my dealings with this man over the years.

Back to the general meeting – after the troublemaker left, the congregation agreed on the location of the church building. That summer construction began and the building was completed by the next March. From April services were held in the new sanctuary. Eight-and-a-half years ago we had our second building project for a seating capacity of up to 350. For our first building project we had around 30 church members and it was my task to shepherd this flock. Here we were, located in the shadow of Ise Shrine. This place was "foreign soil" for me. I knew nobody, the troublemaker continued to harass me, and I asked myself how I should proceed in evangelistic efforts. It was a trying time.

We had borrowed to build. The man, who was a local resident of considerable influence, went around telling people about this debt-ridden church. "Don't go there," he warned, "they will press you into repaying the debt." Therefore, new people could not be brought into the church during the five years it took to burn the mortgage.

Rev. Nobuji Horikoshi



They just didn't come.

God's Promise is Real

Now the debt was behind us and I encouraged the congregation to spread the word, but really deep in my heart there was a struggle. I myself am the son of a Shinto priest, and I know the hardships a Japanese Christian goes through, and I knew the fight through the battle to victory. Yokkaichi is difficult soil and there was empathy in my heart for my young Christians. I asked myself whether they would pay the price. For some time I found it hard to tell people to repent and to believe in the Lord. I just felt so sorry for them for there would be family quarrels; there would be all kinds of trials.... But then reading Acts 18, I came to understand that my outlook was wrong. It wasn't like that, for in verse 10 we read, "I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you."

Of course, especially those of us who serve in the countryside have had experiences of opposition. A month and a half after the new church building was completed, windows were broken in the new and old church buildings as well as those of my house. I went through the experience of being screamed at one night at one o'clock. There are such radical people around. I was prepared to serve here with the realization that this was the kind of place where one perhaps couldn't do evangelism without getting beaten up.

While thankful for God's promise for protection, I received great encouragement from the second half of verse 10, "I have many people in this city." My eyes were opened; I received courage to do evangelism in the town of Yokkaichi. This verse changed my perspective on evangelism. God's people were in this town. My task was to call them out. This is the strength of those who believe in predestination. You hear it said that predestination deters evangelism; that's a lie. Since I believed in predestination, this made it much easier to do evangelism. I had the assurance that God had many people in this city. No matter how much resistance existed or how closed society was, that did not deter from the fact that I came to this city where there are many, let me stress, many of God's people. I now minister to 200; that's not yet many in proportion to the town.

My part was to call out God's people as God's spokesman. That gave me courage. This led me to go through the Bible in my messages, beginning with Genesis, chapter 1. If one speaks with an assumed voice, like an impersonator, a strange crowd gathers. If you want to bring together sheep and imitate the voice of a goat, you draw goats not sheep. So it is in our work. Since we are calling God's people we must do it with the voice of God. Rather than jabbering we must adhere

firmly to God's Word. That's why I always start with Genesis. I also follow this principle now. When I speak to the parents of my kindergarten children, I begin with the creation account. Parents who have gotten used to my approach have come to me and asked me why I begin with a passage that stirs so much resistance. I tell them that this is where the Bible begins.

Let's recapitulate. God says "I have many people in this city." My task is to call out God's people. Since these are His people I must call out using God's Word. In addition, we must establish an interpersonal relationship that makes it possible to proclaim God's Word. Without the interpersonal relationship people leave the church. It takes effort on our part to win the trust without which the Word cannot be proclaimed straightforwardly.

We are thankful to the Lord that the kindergarten training was successful in this respect. We teach the children, and this places the parents into a position where they are indebted. Parents say, "*Osewa ni narimasu*," "I am much indebted to you for your kindness." One advantage in a nursery program is that if they register for two years, we have them for two years; they won't get away. A three-year program assures continuity for three years. If the family has two children, the relationship can be from two to six years. During this time we have the opportunity to diligently teach God's Word. A relationship is established between the home and the church. It becomes a pity to sever such a relationship after the children have graduated and the parents give serious thought to ongoing ties with the church. Of our church members about 60% are the result of our program for children.

There are many churches with kindergarten programs that have relatively few end up in

"I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, ... I have many people in this city"

Acts 18:10



Man from Monkey, or from God?

by Nobuji Horikoshi

When we talk about "what is man," we need a common denominator. There are two interpretations. Evolution teaches that man gradually evolved, that a monkey evolved into man. That's the teaching children receive in school. The Bible, on the other hand, teaches that man is the supreme handiwork of God, the Creator of heaven and earth. I am convinced that man is God's masterpiece. Which is better, being considered a member of the monkey world or being God's supreme creation?

Education is bringing up man, but we cannot do this without knowing what man is. If our orientation is wrong, a corresponding misoriented person is the result. Therefore, we must have a firm basis on which to educate our children. If this matter is clarified, people don't come and say "ours is a Buddhist family" or "we are Japanese you know" because it's irrelevant. In order to overcome the many religions in Japan we must have a proper understanding of what man is. During my thirty years, the response I have received has been very positive. When a person really understands that he has been created by God then his attitude when listening to the sermon changes. People discover how ridiculous idol worship is. □

church, I hear. The reason is that these churches base their pedagogy on humanism. Evolution is accepted at face value and the program is one of humanism. That is an impossible situation. We stress continually that man is God's masterpiece. If things are not going right today we emphasize that we must return to the Biblical position. Such an emphasis is well received. In a way, I put systematic theology into everyday language and teach it as simply as possible and this approach is accepted positively. I am not talking at random and without planning but follow the Biblical outline, and this I think is the right approach.

Five-Year Evangelism Plan

After the five-year construction plan was completed, I formed a five-year evangelism plan. Because I was going through a period of trial and error, it took me three years to come up with the plan. Wisdom is important. In this sense how much we need to ask God for wisdom. When reading about Solomon's wisdom I became envious, but James 1:5,6 states, "If any of you lack wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the sea." When reading that God gives wisdom generously, I exclaimed, "Shimeta!", which means "All right!" I prayed, "Lord, give me this wisdom!" In retrospect, I can say that this prayer was answered, but I have done some more reflecting on my prayer. I had told the Lord that it need not be to the extent that Solomon was blessed with wisdom, so now I am not as wise as Solomon. Anyway, God answered my prayer and all sorts of ideas go through my mind which are from God and I am thankful. If any in the audience lack wisdom, I suggest that they pray, because He promises to give generously. Perhaps you should pray to receive wisdom like Solomon, but be careful because near the end Solomon failed.

I prayed for wisdom in the planning of five years of evangelism. We started out with 30. The target for the first year was to go up to 40 and during the second year the target was 50. The third year was set at 70 and the fourth at 90 and the fifth to go over 100.

Phil. 1:6 states, "He who has begun a good work in you will complete it..." The order was to: 1. Make a plan. 2. Call out a people. 3. Decide what kind of church was to be formed. The Scriptures say that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" Heb. 11:1.

Targeting Youth

I recalled what happened to the children of Israel during their wilderness wandering. When

those aged over twenty died, God promised that the little ones would enter the promised land (Nu. 14:29-31). Is not there a promise that those under twenty would lead the next generation?

Since the community had requested that the church include early childhood education in its program, we decided that we should target those under twenty in our church growth effort. In this group we placed emphasis on the high school age. We found that inasmuch as children eventually become adults it was inevitable that in due time children who are reached for Christ will contribute to the church formation. Aichi and Mie Prefectures have many poultry farms. To main-

I prayed for wisdom in the planning of five years of evangelism. We started out with 30. The target for the 1st year was to go up to 40; during the 2nd year the target was 50... and the 5th to go over 100

tain a poultry farm of 10,000 it is essential that one raise an equal number of chicks. These fill the ranks of the chickens that no longer lay eggs. They are so to speak on reserve.

In the church, unless we plan ahead and bring up the younger generation, the church will die off. That's the reason why we made those under twenty our number 1 target. We further discovered that the prime period for repentance was around age sixteen, and we concentrated on high schoolers. I don't think we have changed in this.

We began high school student meetings. The start was very difficult, and we ended up asking a Hi-B.A. teacher to come and hold meetings on Saturdays. High school students would accept the invitation to come to the Sunday service but they would come only once and no matter how often we tried, that was the end. The reason was that the images high school students had of church were drastically different from what they found on Sunday. We didn't give up and kept on inviting them.

Finally, we rented a room in the middle of town and continued the youth activities on the fourth floor of a bookstore. This time we didn't invite them to church. This became the meeting place for the young people, and members from the church joined them there and befriended them. After a period of time the church members proposed that they go to church together. This was successful. In a way we were doing the same thing as in the past except that we did not rush them. As high schoolers joined us in church, it seemed strange, but the attendance of young adults increased. I do not know why.

Aiming for 100

Let me give you a little background on church procedure. The plan first was discussed and approved at the church committee level and then presented to the annual meeting. Our proposal left some flexibility. We suggested that we would aim for 100 but if this should prove unattainable, be satisfied with 80 or even 70. The purpose was to get out of our present circumstances.

Just as the entire church participated in paying off the debt, this project too was to involve everyone. This plan was approved and we focused our weekly prayer time on this subject. We asked the Lord to increase our fold from 30 to 40 and within the third month we went beyond 40. Keep in mind that for 13 years before this the church was unable to break the thirty barrier, but now our prayers were being answered.

One Sunday meeting had an attendance of 39. I suggested that someone go next door and borrow a baby. Do you see the enthusiasm that was generated? The engine had started. We adjusted our target as we went along. It was in the second year that we changed the goal from 50 to 70. What

is needed in such an effort is spiritual infusion, not an obsession with numbers. This we had right at the start.

When a target is reached, look out. That's the most critical point. When we reached 100, we became entangled. There is no new challenge. We are overcome by the thought that we made it. Then trouble sets in. In our case it was then that I had a heart spasm. So we stopped making annual plans and instead called them long range plans. That was a big mistake. There is no target so people lose their sense of responsibility. Therefore, a schedule and program must go hand in hand. We learned that all must be involved in striving towards the target. I repeat that spiritual infusion is necessary as the church moves forward.

Looking to the Future

I have been asked to say something in closing about our future plans at Yokkaichi. It is always good to dream and we certainly want to go beyond 200 and aim for 300 or 350. I personally want to devote more energy towards the kinder-

“When a target is reached, look out. That's the most critical point”

God, Nature And Thankfulness

by Nobuji Horikoshi

In our church we take seriously the topic of thankfulness for the blessings nature bestows. In Psalms 19 we read, “The heavens declare the glory of God.” I believe we don't sufficiently thank God for His blessings through nature. Nature is God's handiwork, so we must receive it with thanks.

We Japanese are a pantheistic nation that worships nature as God. Therefore the term *kami* (god) gives me a lot of trouble. You see *kami* is used for pantheistic gods. When we tell people that God is love, they want to know which god we are referring to and we get exhausted just defining terms. In Korea they use the term *hananim*, the only God, and from the start they can enter a meaningful discussion. Could this be one reason why the church in Korea has succeeded? For us Japanese, trees, mountains, just about everything becomes god: human beings too become god.

No matter how many honorifics we give to the name, as long as we Japanese use *kami* we have a big problem on our hands. The serious issue is that the name of the person we want to proclaim is incorrect. Because of this dilemma I myself use *Tsukurinushi* (Creator) and feel this way I can express myself better. Japanese Shintoists worship the sun, the moon, locate their shrines at scenic spots which attract people and make money. The scenery however was created by God, the Creator. Doesn't it follow that we Christians should make use of nature to praise the Lord? When we thank God for His beautiful creation, couldn't this be one step in evangelism? I think

of rebuilding the education building used for nursery school/kindergarten. I plan to have a very, very beautiful garden. I will plant trees (they don't cost much). If you go to Ise Shrine, what is it that attracts you? It's the scenery. It's the cedars. If a typhoon should topple the cedars, there wouldn't be much left of Ise Shrine--just logs. It's the cedars that attract the Japanese. Now tell me who created the cedars? They're products of the Creator. We should not let the Shintoists use the trees to their advantage only when we are the ones who should be thanking God for His nature and use it to His glory.

I have had strong feelings that we in our ministry make use of God's special revelation while our appreciation for God's natural revelation is neglected. I took this into account in the building plans. Windows at the Yokkaichi church reach down all the way to the ground; there is no baseboard. You can walk directly out to the veranda. The church is halfway up the hill and faces south. It is a magnificent view. People look out and enjoy the scenery during the worship service. It was planned this way. When people gaze at the panorama and are refreshed by God's creation, it makes preaching easier. Preaching becomes half the effort. The veranda is used on summer evenings for social gatherings. The Honda plant is located across from us, and in the summer they have fireworks. They are in full view from the church. We should give more thanks to God for nature's blessings. I always refer to Psalm 139.

“Please pray for us at Yokkaichi that Christ may be glorified as we minister in the shadow of Ise Shrine”

garten. In this humanistic society the kindergarten outreach should not be overlooked. I want to make a greater impact in this area. A further step is community service through a church-related counseling center. My son will soon complete his schooling in this field and I very much look forward to working with him. I am also dreaming about establishing a museum which is dedicated to the Creation Story as you can now find in the States. Please note that I said creation, not evolution.

I am also interested in starting an internship program for seminary graduates and for those who have spent some years in the ministry. You could call it a leadership training course.

My busy schedule has kept me from engaging in research of comparative religions. I would like to put the findings into practical use in moving from a defensive position to an aggressive approach in confronting Japan's old and new religions. Finally, I would like to pass on my learning experiences of many years through writing.

Please pray for us at Yokkaichi that Christ may be glorified as we minister in the shadow of Ise Shrine. □

Our Future Plans for Yokkaichi:

The Kindergarten Outreach

Counseling Center

Museum Dedicated to the Creation Story

Internship Program

Research of Comparative Religions

Glorifying Christ
In the shadow of
the Ise Shrine

Humans Stop Growth

From The Editor's Notebook

In a book published by New Life League called *Church Growth Symposium* (1990) the participants were discussing the familiar question of why the Korean church has grown so rapidly, while the Japanese church lingers in the 1% range. Rev. Nobuji Horikoshi pointed out that the Korean society was based on principles, while Japan put human relations first. To oversimplify the statement, if a Korean comes to believe something is true, that becomes a guiding principle. A Japanese can be convinced that something is true and still fail to move, if the flow of human relationships is going the other direction.

How can we apply this insight? Certainly we dare not tamper with the truth of the gospel. However, this idea brings prayer modification. Whenever we pray for people we can line up the whole household and friendship webs before the Lord. Learn the names and needs of the family, and intercede for them. Challenge believers to also remember the connected community; prayers should minister throughout the web.

This concept also intersects our ministry programs. Are they inclusive or exclusive? Are they door-slammers that block the Christians and seekers from their natural relationships, or do they slide the doors open with the grace of a lady in kimono? Perhaps, even the message we convey about the importance of regular Sunday attendance (seldom commanded in the New Testament) creates division and stress in the believer's relationships outside church.

A third emphasis can be the characteristics of the fruit of the Holy Spirit which polish even the worst human relations. Love, joy and peace are universal lubricants. A person who has recently trusted Christ said that from childhood she has been at war with her father, but lately something is changing.

Human relationships are the concrete foundations of Japanese society. An important agenda item is how we can better build on that, instead of trying to smash it with our rubber hammers.

dw □

The Day to Quit the Pastorate

a testimony by Mikio Yokoyama

The book case in my small study is crammed with envelopes which have been arranged thematically. I just "file" various information in these envelopes. This helps in my writing and sermon preparation. I also have a string run from one side of the room to the other above my desk. To this string are attached 50 clips with memos of urgent items of business. One of the memos dangling before me has always troubled me. On it are the words, "The Day I Quit The Pastorate." Then follows this outline:

1. When I lose my faith...quit immediately.
2. When I cannot love or forgive.
3. When God's Word doesn't have its freshness.
4. When I see only the rough edges of others and am full of dissatisfaction and complaints.
5. When I no longer feel honored to be a pastor and start just making a living.
...A pastor with such a state of mind just inconveniences others.

My wife saw this memo and said emphatically, "You should add point six; 'when your wife walks out on you.'" She hit the nail right on the head. As I added her comments to the memo, they alone stared at me realistically. Could it be that the reason why I have been able to serve as a pastor was that my wife quietly endured



Rev. Yokoyama is a frequent contributor to Christian publications. He pastors the Uchinada Bible Church in Ishikawa Prefecture. This testimony has been taken from the December, 1992 issue of *Gospel for The Millions Magazine*.

without walking out? Thank you, *Kaachan*.

There was once an occasion when my wife and I prayed, thinking that it could be our last time together. A woman had accepted the Lord. As her life radiated her new-found faith, her husband burned with anger. "Have the pastor come; I'll kill him," he screamed. The lady phoned me. "Pastor, my husband insists that you come; he is shouting that he'll kill you." I replied, "I see. I'll be right over." My wife and I prayed together. It was a prayer of farewell. I turned to my wife and said, "I better go now. I'll leave the rest to you." I entered the foyer and said, "I am the pastor; I have come to be killed." From the inside of the house came a reply. "Shut up! I don't even want to see you. Beat it!" So I replied, "I understand; I'll excuse myself." What a pity that I didn't become a martyr.

There actually have been a few times when I felt like resigning. Being of sensitive disposition, again and again there were occasions when I felt that I could not work effectively among the people of the Hokuriku region. No matter how much I told myself that I was here as God's messenger, for around four or five days I would get very discouraged and think only about giving up. At such times it was only my wife in whom I could confide. I would tell her, "I can't take it any longer. I don't want to stay here any more." She would reply, "Do as you please." Her answer was so simple and plain that it had the reverse effect, of reducing my desire to resign. I must have rebelled at the thought of being a quitter.

Only once during the morning wor-

ship did I declare my intention to leave. It was when I returned from a trip to Indonesia. I was overwhelmed by seeing first hand the missionary work and deeply touched by the fellowship with the Christians of Indonesia. I was serious about asking to be relieved so that I could serve as a missionary. I said, "Please permit me to go to Indonesia as a missionary. I am prepared to continue as your pastor for three more years during which time a replacement can be secured." My sudden announcement caused a commotion among church members. The vacillating pastor had failed. I deeply bowed at the next worship service and said, "Last week I made a rash statement. I take back everything. I shall direct all my energies into this church and serve here until you and the Lord tell me otherwise." How thankful I am to the folk at church for putting up with me and my family's shortcomings for 19 years, sustaining, encouraging and forgiving me.

A pastor is not qualified just because of his academic record, degrees, ability or pastoral qualifications. There must be God's call and a character suitable for such a high calling. □

"The Day I Quit The Pastorate."

1. When I lose my faith...quit immediately.
2. When I cannot love or forgive.
3. When God's Word doesn't have its freshness.
4. When I see only rough edges of others and am full of dissatisfaction and complaints.
5. When I no longer feel honored to be a pastor and start just making a living.
...a pastor with such a state of mind just inconveniences others.

When your wife walks out on you!

The Ten Commandments For Church Planters

by Rev. Hideo Ojiro,
Japan Evangelical Free
Church retired church
planter. Translated
from his book, *Kaitaku
Seyo! Atarashiki
Koochi Wo*

I. Make Sure of Your Calling.

Discouragement always comes with church-planting. Often we pass out many tracts but see no response. It is easy for Satan to work in a discouraged soul. "What in the world am I doing?" we cry in despair. At times like that if our calling is not clear, we fall into the worst possible situation, defeated to the core.

I have been involved in three different church planting projects, and each time I have received a sure sense of calling, both from the Word and from circumstances. Afterwards at times things have happened that made me question that call. For instance, at the Fujisawa project the Friday after the first worship service we found out that my wife had cancer. And then three years later, Mrs. Nomura, who had sold her house and moved there to help in the church, died of the same sickness. If I had not had a clear calling, I really don't know if I could have continued on.

II. Carry an Optimistic Attitude.

A gloomy person is not cut out for church planting. No matter how dark the circumstances look, the leader must always have a bright face. A discouraged pastor with a dark countenance will have a large influence on the small group. In church planting there are few believers who are able to gain sufficient spiritual strength just from their private devotions. Therefore, it is important for the pastor to guard his daily time with the Lord, gaining strength and encouragement from the Lord, so that he can share that with the seekers and believers. There is nothing more important for a group just starting than the leader's bright smile and powerful proclamation.

III. Always Reach Out

For an established church the pastor needs to give effective, appropriate instruction, but for the new church the pastor himself has to be involved in everything. Whether it is passing out tracts or personal evangelism, if he doesn't do it, it doesn't get done. So the church planter must be light on his feet with lots of energy.

For a church to actually get to know its community, there is nothing better than actually getting out and distributing tracts. By passing out material in the area with dogs barking at you, and occasionally being able to talk to people working in their gardens, you can begin to get a feel for the community, its characteristics, desires, etc. You can't get that by sitting at your desk; you have to go out and get it directly.

IV. Remember That the New Church is a Prototype of the Established Church

When there are few believers it is easy to neglect training them. For instance, you might overlook it when many come in late to the worship. Habits developed as a child are very difficult to change when the person becomes an adult. It is the same with a new church: customs whether good or bad, will be very hard to change later. The bigger the church the more the early faults will be magnified. So the church planter has a great responsibility here.

"Evangelistic strategy for church planting depends on the situation, the gifts of the church planter, the availability of financial resources, etc. Just because a strategy was effective in one place does not necessarily assure its success in the next place."

Hideo Ojiro

V. Find the Evangelistic Strategy that Matches the Community.

It is important to research the community well to find the right strategy for the area. Where there are many young families the Sunday School program will go well, and areas with many adults will profit from an English conversation outreach. In Nagoya we made a special effort to reach the Jr. High students by recruiting college students to teach free *juku* classes. Those students who were reached at that time later became the backbone of the church.

We used English conversation at Nagoya, Hamamatsu and Fujisawa, but there was a marked difference in the response of the three places. It was most effective in Fujisawa where there were many highly educated people. In the four-and-a-half years we had 21 baptisms with 10 of them directly or indirectly related to the English program.

VI. Maintain a Physical and Spiritual Support Line.

My church planting was all carried out as a home missionary with the support, prayer and direction of the Japan Evangelical Free Church. Here was my physical and spiritual support line. Because of this relationship thankfully I didn't need to take outside employment, like so many

church planters have to do. Of course, I am not criticizing Paul's earning his way as a tent maker while doing evangelism. However, practically speaking, many have fallen into a vicious cycle of having to take part-time jobs, limiting their evangelistic efforts, and thus hindering their effectiveness.

The advantage of having denominational support is not just limited to the financial benefits, but also includes a steady prayer support. For the church planter in the midst of the battle it is very comforting to know that there are forty churches praying for you during worship and prayer meeting times.

VII. Get Close to the People of the Area.

When the group gets larger there is a tendency to become busy with the pastoral work and get lazy about making community contacts. I would encourage you to become involved with children's clubs and PTA. You don't need to be the chairman, but take responsibilities like being secretary; people will appreciate your work and you will make good contacts. In our Nagoya work through becoming a member of the children's club committee I met some very wonderful people.

Also, it is good to patronize the local stores. It is nice to get bargains from stores farther away, but for the sake of the work it is better to pay a higher price in your

local area. Recently I was surprised to learn that a store-keeper in the community where I only go occasionally had a strong interest in our church.

VIII. Preach Easy-to-Understand Evangelistic Messages.

Generally speaking, the people who come to a new church have a low level of Bible knowledge. You must remember that as you preach your evangelistic messages. For me, the first year of a church I continually preach on the themes of God, sin and salvation.

IX. Be an Example in Personal Evangelism.

There are two areas which are much talked about with many books written on the subjects, but practiced too seldom. They are prayer and personal evangelism. But for the church planter you can't make any progress without personal evangelism. Every meeting of the church, the worship, prayer meeting, special meetings, etc. must become a place for personal evangelism. One more important step is to get people to sit near the new person, and then have on-the-job evangelism training right there.

In Florida, USA, Dr. Kennedy's church is famous for its rapid growth. Their secret is that 10% of the church members are actively involved in Kennedy's evangelistic program.

X. Have A Large Vision.

If week after week only around ten people come to the worship it is hard to paint a large vision. One pastor in his first year of evangelism only had about ten coming, but he received a vision of starting five churches and reaching the whole city of Yao with its population of 200,000. Twenty years later the church has five branches with an auditorium that seats 500, and has become a great example in aggressive evangelism.

"Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" Philippians 1:6 (NIV). □

I. Make Sure of Your Calling

II. Carry an Optimistic Attitude

III. Always Reach Out

IV. Remember That the New Church is a Prototype of the Established Church

V. Find the Evangelistic Strategy that Matches the Community

VI. Maintain a Physical and Spiritual Support Line

VII. Get Close to the People of the Area

VIII. Preach Easy-to-Understand Evangelistic Messages

IX. Be an Example in Personal Evangelism

X. Have a Large Vision



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A Helping Hand for Your Ministry

Reviewed by
Harold A. Netland

Harold Netland is an Evangelical Free Missionary and Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Tokyo Christian University. From September Dr. Netland will become Assistant Professor of Missions and Philosophy of Religion at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He is the author of *Dissonant Voices, Religious Pluralism and the Question of Truth* (Eerdmans, 1991).

Have you ever wished that you could have the benefit of sitting at the feet of a veteran missionary to Japan and learning from him or her invaluable insights into effective ministry in the Japanese context? The next best thing to being able to interact personally with such a person is to have those insights available in written form. And thanks to Mr. Henry Ayabe and the JEMA Publication Commission, that is just what we have in this short but excellent book, *Step Inside, Japan: Language, Culture, Mission*.

Born and reared in Hawaii, of parents from Fukuoka, Japan, Henry Ayabe is genuinely bicultural. As a child he attended three schools – an English public school, a Japanese language school, and a Buddhist Sunday School on Sundays. This unique background, combined with a lifetime of study and experience, has provided Ayabe with a degree of fluency in the Japanese language and understanding of the culture which few missionaries attain. While serving in the U.S. Military in Japan Ayabe gave his heart to Jesus Christ, and after theological training in the U.S. he returned to Japan as a missionary. Ministry in Japan has included church planting, as well as teaching at Tokyo Christian College and Japan Bible Seminary and writing several books in Japanese.

Step Inside consists of twenty-seven short chapters which are grouped into five general headings: An Important Start; The Social Step: Social Relationships; Step Inside: The Language and Idioms; The Gospel Step: Preaching the Word in Japan; and The Mission Step: Building His Church in Japan. The chapters were originally published as short articles in the Japan Harvest, from 1976 – 1990.

Ayabe deals with a wide variety of issues – from questions of authority and how it functions in Japanese culture (chapter two), to the very practical matter of how to prepare for and carry out a Christian wedding in a church (chapter seven), to the more theoretical issue of the meanings of *tsumi* in Japanese (chapter seventeen). Throughout, there is a healthy balance between theoretical and more practical concerns. I was pleased to note that Japanese words and expressions are given not only in *romaji*, but also in *kanji* and *furigana*.

Each chapter is worth careful reading, but those dealing with the Japanese language were especially interesting to me. The five chapters dealing with Japanese idioms provide fascinating insights into the richness of the Japanese language and culture. New missionaries undergoing the tedium of language study (as well as veterans who

wish to sharpen their language skills) might gain a new appreciation of the language through studying these idioms. In chapters thirteen through nineteen Ayabe carefully considers the meanings of key terms such as *kami* (God/deities), *inochi* (life), *tsumi* (sin/ crime), *gi* (righteousness), and *aganai* (ransom/ redemption). Ayabe notes differences between the biblical concepts and the prevailing meanings of the Japanese terms and offers helpful tips for communicating biblical truths through these and other related terms.

Step Inside is written in a clear and readable style and offers many helpful insights into the Japanese language and culture. It is essential reading for anyone desiring to be a more effective minister of Jesus Christ in this fascinating but complex culture. □



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Retired missionary of
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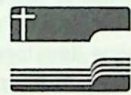
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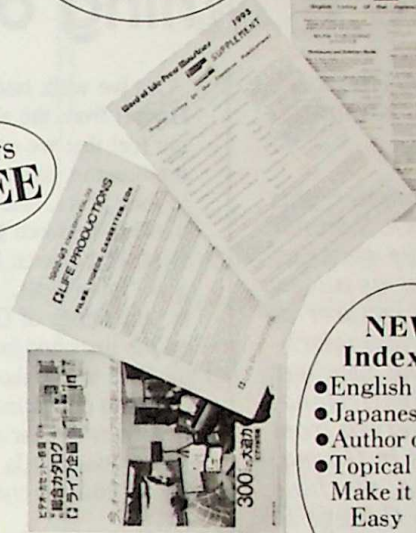
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The Dawning of a New Way

by Dr. Dieter W. Kemmler

Dieter Kemmler, this year's JEMA Summer Conference speaker, serves as a New Testament lecturer at the Theologisch-Diakonische Seminar Aarau in Switzerland.

He served from 1973-78 in Ghana, West Africa, teaching at Trinity College in Legon.

His popular conference preaching and teaching ministries have taken him to many parts of the world.

He and his wife, Elisabeth, have three children in college.

As we walk into the first chapter of Luke's Gospel from the side of the O.T. we cannot help but feel that we are entering an epoch dawning on the horizon, where a tremendous change is going to take place, and this change affects the relationship between God and man; it concerns the "traffic" between heaven and earth.

A "movement," even more a "new direction" in "the things of God's Kingdom," is being felt on the lines and between the lines as we go along the path which these verses form. Is there a common denominator, a common factor, which integrates the various pieces, the revelations, the interpretations? Is there something like a red thread bridging the gulf between the O.T. and the N.T.?

There are indications that in chapter one some kind of an "end" and the new beginning is being announced. We ask: Could it be true, that the whole history of O.T. religion is coming to some kind of an end or fulfillment – but is at the same time continuing, now in an upside down form?

As we enter more into the realm of Luke 1, we note that we are standing immediately before the entry of some kind of a "saviour," whose "way" into the world is being prepared by this chapter. We ask: What are the clues which this chapter is giving us as to the meaning, the significance of the one who is about to appear on the stage of world-history? In what terms is his "mission" to be defined?

A Look at Luke 1:5-25

In order to find answers to our questions we will concentrate on chapter 1:5-25 concerning the

revelation given to Zechariah.

Luke 1:5-25 :Time, place and occasion of the revelation made to Zechariah.

Verse 9 and following tell us that it was while he was burning incense in the temple, immediately preceding the burnt offering, that the angel appeared to him. What does God want to tell him, and through him tell all the Jews? In Zechariah we have a man before us who as a priest represents the three-fold way of any Jew to find peace and reconciliation with God.

Obedience: In v. 6 we find that both he and his wife were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly.

Sacrifice: He is daily bringing sacrifices. He does this because he knows that even the best fulfillment of the commandments of the Law of God will not reconcile him with God. Therefore the whole sacrificial system was developed to compensate for what was lacking in their works. But even then they had no certainty that their sins were forgiven and that they had peace with God and could die in peace.

And so we have...

Prayer: The prayer by all the people asking God fervently to accept their sacrifice and grant them pardon/forgiveness (1:10). Zechariah and Elisabeth represent the best of what could come out of the religious setting of Judaism. In this they stand side by side with "saints" like Simeon, Hanna and St. Paul. They are not "sinners" like the tax collectors.

We meet Zechariah at the very moment he brings the sacrifice to God, making up for the deficiencies of which they were all aware. The burnt offering was made for atonement, as we can read in Lev. 1:4 and 17:11. But still they would know quite well that the blood of dumb animals could never really atone for the sins of people. God could not be satisfied with this. In reading the Epistle to the Hebrews we get an understanding of the dilemma in which the Jews were with regard to their whole sacrificial system (cf. Heb. 9:55, 10:4).

Luke 1:13-17: The Revelation Made to Zechariah.

It is very important in biblical exegesis to note at what particular time, place and occasion God gives his revelation. For it is only in the light of that particular context that the specific meaning of the revelation becomes clear. It was at the very moment when this incense and burnt-offering

The Kemmler Family



JEMA Summer Conference Speaker

was brought into the presence of God to make up for the people's deficiencies and to find reconciliation with God, and it was particularly to this righteous person who had fulfilled all the commandments in order to find peace with God that this revelation was made, a revelation which was remarkable in two ways:

1. "God calls into existence..."(Rom. 4:17).

He was to receive a son at the very moment, when humanly speaking there was no possibility whatsoever. Elisabeth was not only barren, but they were both already advanced in years (v. 7). As far as their physical situation was concerned, they were dead.

It was into this situation that the announcement was made, God will give them a son. By this it would be clear to everyone, God is a God who brings the nonexistent into being. He is the Creator who creates *ex nihilo* (out of nothing).

2. "God has shown grace."

And then the name is given by God himself, a name not to be found amongst any of his family (59,63). And what was the name which God himself felt necessary to give? God exercises his right in just this case – and in no other – except for the name of Jesus. His name should be "John." And what is the meaning of this name? "God has shown grace, has shown mercy." Here we must ask the question: What is God going to do? Why is he intervening again in history – in such a way? Could God not reveal himself in world history in at least a hundred other ways? Why should He do it in such a way – by giving a son to a physically dead couple and giving that son this particular name?

This baby, in such circumstances with such a name given expressively by God himself stands for a "new program," which God is going to "perform." God is about to reveal and perform "grace" – in a completely new dimension upon the stage of world history. Indeed the program has been officially announced by the representative of God's government, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God (this is my authority as the speaker for the government of God) and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this Good News" (1:19).

The "Meaning" (Interpretation) of the Revelation

When we take the two points together (the baby given in this miraculous way and

the name, both given by God), then we are probably meant to understand:

1. God is about to intervene in human history.
2. He will introduce the "new way" of grace.
3. And the new way of grace would be seen/experienced in the birth of John the Baptist.

The grace which God would perform would take the form of creating new life within an impossible situation, humanly speaking. These people could not contribute the slightest bit towards that new life. This new life was nothing less than a present, was literally given to them. Therefore we could even say: The way John was given to his parents is so to speak confirmed by the name given to him.

It is very interesting that at the very moment, when Zechariah is introduced in connection with his righteousness and law-abiding and in connection with his service at the altar – both of which show man's attempt to be reconciled with God – right into this situation comes this revelation: God is about to reveal his grace in the form of the gift of new life within a totally impossible situation.

Therefore we ask: Does the Lord want us to understand that even as in the realm of creation God discloses himself afresh as a God who creates new life *ex nihilo* (out of nothing), so also in the realm of salvation God will create new life out of sheer grace, i.e. within a situation where man cannot contribute the slightest bit. It is for this particular purpose that God introduces himself into human history precisely in such a way in order to open our eyes to this amazing dimension of grace – in the form of "new life coming from God."

It appears that God chooses this way to make us aware of the fact that He is the God of creation and he creates physical new life in a situation where men cannot bring or contribute anything. We can contribute nothing whatsoever to become alive.

This seems to be meant to be an illustration, a parable which God uses in his wonderful wisdom to open our eyes to a new world altogether and to his wonderful work of salvation. This is the salvation which he is about to reveal; basically the same thing will happen but now not on a physical, but on a spiritual level.

He will give his people new life out of sheer grace, new spiritual life, where man cannot contribute anything to this new life. It is only God's gift – and nothing else! □



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Potpourri & Promises

by Janice A. Kropp

*"Failure is never fatal. Success is never final."
~ It's.....that counts. ~*

What We All Need

You've gotten everything together — ski suit, skis, boots, poles, hat, gloves, sun glasses, chewing gum, chair-lift pass, and now you're on the slope. The conditions are just right! You have all you need to do it, but your experience is, shall we say, lacking. You need what it takes to get down that slope!

You're a new missionary and JAPAN is so different from anything thus far in your experience. The language, spoken even at normal speed, sounds like a machine gun. Will you ever get to the place where those words will just tumble right out right? You need what it takes to get good in this language!

Moving into a new neighborhood, what a challenge it can be! Some neighbors greet you as you come and go, others know you're a foreigner, that's obvious! Just the noise floating out your windows and house cracks gives you away. The garbage bags you put at the near-by collecting point, and the "foreign smell" of your cooking slipping from your kitchen lets your neighbors know you're there without your ever appearing. But, your neighbors don't know your name or why you are here. You just know you have to go around and meet each one. You need what it takes to do that.

Or, you're giving your first or fiftieth message/talk in Japanese, with or without notes. Your heart flutters, your mouth goes dry, you want to stay seated at the moment of truth, but you must take hold of what it takes to give that message.

Then, you find yourself in church planting, something most of us find ourselves involved in. The task before you seems immense! "How can I ever make a difference?" you wonder. Where does one start? How long will it take to build a church? Will you succeed? Can it be that

you might fail? You need that special ingredient which good church planters have.

Did you see the cartoon in the Yomiuru Shinbun? There was a large Venus's-flytrap with those long sensitive "feelers" which react in a split second to any stimulus and entrap its prey. In the cartoon the flytrap is wide open, ready and waiting. Across the open mouth of the flower is a tightrope, upon which stands an ant ready to cross — carefully balancing itself with a long pole. The question is, will the ant make it safely? We all conclude it has not a chance, but it's headed in that very direction — across the open mouth of the flytrap. What this insect shows is what we all need!

I've been a missionary here for a long time. I've had a lot of wonderful experiences, but I've also had a lot of scary moments.

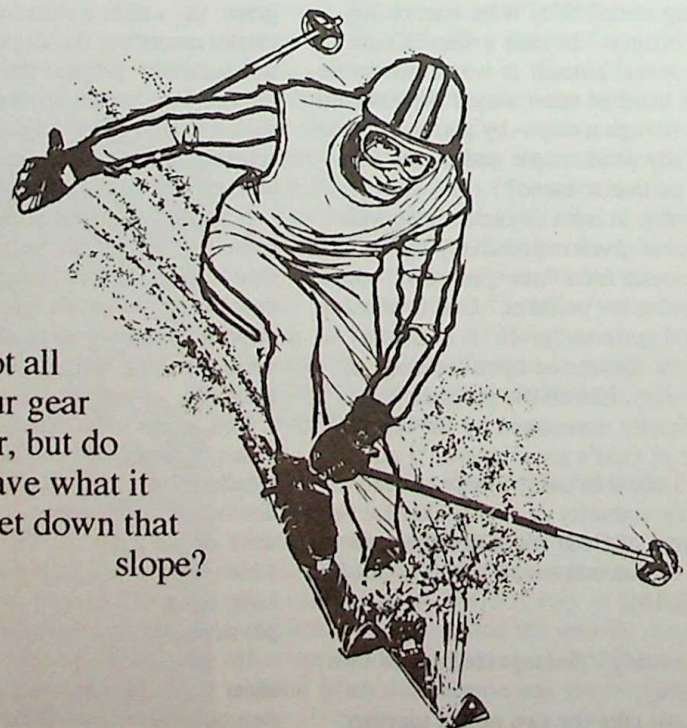
I have had many, many special Japanese friends! In those friendships I have struggled, however. "Struggled?" you ask. Yes, and my pain has been the quandary — just who I am in this my

adopted culture. In a land of much pessimism, my optimism sticks out like a sore thumb. In a culture of quiet peoples, my frequent laughing somehow seems like an intrusion. Seeing serious faces all day long, my smile sometimes brightens, sometimes frightens! I know I will never be 100% Japanese, and I probably would rather not be, but the struggle goes on....

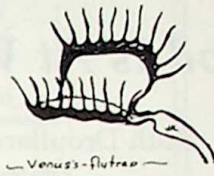
*I know I will never be
100% Japanese, and I
probably would rather
not be, but the struggle
goes on...*

How do I "fit," and do I feel comfortable with the way I "fit"? In this land one must have what it takes to be one's self and not be a thorn OR be torn!

I shall never forget one fall day taking the train to Higashi Kurume to a school-related activity. I wore a beige suit! That was fine, and I felt good about it; after all



You've got all
your gear
together, but do
you have what it
takes to get down that
slope?



The question is, will the ant make it safely? ...it's headed across the open mouth of the flytrap. What this insect shows is what we all need!

it was a sunny day! But, when I got to the platform of the train station everyone, I'm sure everyone, had donned black, dark blue and brown. I had forgotten the day had arrived for summer things to go into storage and winter clothes to be brought out. There I stood in beige! I wanted refuge. I wanted to run home, to change! And wouldn't you know; that train came right on schedule!

Then there was the unforgettable occasion I was asked to prepare the reception for a wedding of two Bible College students! "Sure," I responded, "I'll be glad to set things up and decorate!" Now, I had never been to either a wedding or reception in Japan. To my horror, five minutes before the ceremony was to begin there came a knock at my door. "Sensei, Sensei, the reception arrangements won't do!" my friend panted. "Oh, really," I gasped, "What's the problem?" I was told that the Japanese gather around tables as opposed to going through reception lines, thus a change in layout was a must. I thank the Lord that I had an open heart and mind to say, "Well, then, let's go fix it the way you are used to." And off we ran! I had no time to think, only time to act. I needed a good dose of what it takes to manage here!

At a summer English Teacher's Seminar held at the Shalom Center in the wonderful city of Hiroshima, I decided to illustrate the Bible study. Now, an artist I am not, but when the ideas come, I go with the flow! My plan was to draw a rooster on a fence to illustrate Peter's denial of Christ. Do you know what it takes to draw a rooster on a fence in proper perspective? Well, I found out and I took hold of what I knew I had to have in order to do it and do it right.

"Failure is never fatal. Success is never final." Now, I would agree with that. We certainly have experienced both and we have survived! But it was the third sentence of this saying that caught my eye, and it is just that which we need for survival here in our adopted land.

What is it that we all need? It's COURAGE! Yes, COURAGE. Courage

A Word from the Wise

"Lord, does it honor You when I take even one small step not knowing where I go, except that I am following You?"

I ask no blazing path of miracles to lead me on.

In the dark, knowing You are both ahead and close behind is light enough for me."

"Light Enough"
by Nancy Spiegelberg

to step out. Courage to try and maybe even fail. Courage to do what seems impossible. Now the act of having courage doesn't sound very spiritual, but, wait a minute. Doesn't it take courage to have faith? Just where courage ends and faith begins, I do not know, but I know that it is an important ingredient in life and in faith!

Have you ever thought in the terms of our Lord having courage? Let's consider the possibility. Our Lord was the God-Man. There was the divine; there was the human. Just how this all fit together, well, we have His wonderful life which gives witness to the fact that He, indeed, was perfectly both!

Think for a moment of Jesus' baptism. John the Baptist, well known and busy about his work, tried to "deter" Jesus from being his candidate for baptism. Yet, Jesus convinced him it should be so. Most certainly, this conversation took place with all the crowd watching and listening! Christ courageously stepped out, insisted and received.

Attitudes toward demons were probably as varied then as they are now, but Jesus put aside all fear and accepted the challenge of

This Issue's Promises:

Be strong and COURAGEOUS, because you will lead these people to inherit the land.... Be strong and very courageous.

Joshua 1:6,7

And we are His house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.

Hebrews 3:6

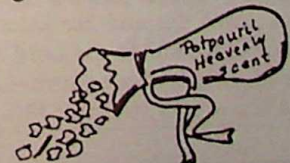
God bless you
and fill you
with
HEAVENLY
COURAGE!

jk

confronting demons. He did it as no one before or after Him had done!

He touched the lepers, unthinkable in His day! He walked on water, scientifically impossible. He fed many with little, unreasonable. He called men to follow Him whom He had never met, in human terms, unwise. He obeyed His parents and served His disciples, unkingly! He associated with women, how risky. He knew He was to die on a cross and headed straight for it, how non-victorious. Now, did He show COURAGE?

This same Jesus is my example, my model, my mentor. I accept from Him the challenge to be courageous! Looking back over my missionary career, I have not regretted any course of action into which the act of courage took me. And with all my heart I say to you, "Exercise courage!" It's the stuff of real L-I-F-E. □





God Is At Work In Japan!

by Ruth Drouillard & Katie Sisco

Meet... Living Stones

Sipping up the stairs, Seiyu bags and co-op milk in tow, I shake my head in amazement. I count off apartment numbers as I always do, 201...202...203...204 and my heart races...I can't wait to tell Brent.

"*Tadaima* - I'm home," I yell, flipping off my shoes and littering the narrow hall with bags on my way to his study. "You'll never believe it," I begin, "Sei san's mother just told her whole family that she believes in Jesus!" Brent's eyes widened with amazement. As I told him the details we marveled together.

Tokyo's Sugunami-ku, or more specifically, Takaido became our home five years ago. Our ministry has had two areas of focus - Japan King's Kids and our neighborhood. From the *yochien* to the elementary school to the stores and train station, these people have become "our" people and our desire to see them know Jesus has grown increasingly strong.

Take the Sei family for example. Five years ago they had never heard the gospel. They knew only that the Bible was a book which "sold well in Japan" but that "no one ever reads." It all began with the three ladies' once-a-week English class/tea time that has over the past five years become a one hour class/three hour tea time. First, the Sei's and Tsujimoto's high school daughters came to the Lord. Then Mr. Sei became deathly sick with esophageal cancer and after having his esophagus removed, found that the only thing which brought hope was the Bible. He, too, believed!

But I was starting to despair of ever seeing the three women *really* understand. Just as I began heaving long sighs of exasperation over four years of four hours a week...Mrs. Sei and her sister and brother-in-law came to the Lord Jesus! (See Mrs. Sei's photo above - *ed.*) It was just a few weeks later that Mrs.

Sei's mother, suddenly found to have cancer, called the family to her bedside. "You've all changed so much," she told them. "I believe too. Jesus is the Truth. If I don't live through surgery, have a Christian funeral for me. Tell my friends I made a mistake. Buddhism isn't the truth."

...these people have become "our" people...

It was this news that had sent me racing upstairs to tell Brent. Mrs. Sei's mother did live through the surgery but never woke up. Three days later she drew her last breath, smiled and died. As Mrs. Tsujimoto and Mrs. Katsube listened to the story later, they took their first steps toward believing.

Five years sometimes seems like such a long time...especially when I look at the number who have come to Jesus and the **Number** who have yet to come. But there's the Sei family, the Naritas and their two daughters, Mrs. Suzuki and her daughter Shona (who went with King's Kids to minister in Romania last

summer), Mrs. Matsuoka with her son and daughter and six more neighborhood children who've caused much rejoicing in heaven in the past two years!

Now there are others...thirty or so I've been cultivating friendships with. Dear friends that I pray for, love, listen to, share with, cry and laugh with, raise my children with, join with in working in the PTA, helping in the kindergarten birthday parties, dividing up the food for the co-op... and then there are those countless hours spent drinking tea together. But above all following the Example of examples, who humbled Himself and lived **among** us, we live here in Apt. 204.

It does take commitment and there is a cost, but it fades in comparison to the treasure of living stones being added to His temple.

The Drouillard family. Ruth and Brent have been missionaries in Japan with Youth With A Mission since 1987.





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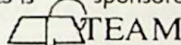


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日本語研究所 · From the Language Lab

by Miriam Davis, OMF Japanese Language Center in Sapporo

Be A Good Learner

There is no one right method to teach or learn Japanese. What matters is rather that we gather insights and ideas regarding what works best for each of us personally. The following is given not to overwhelm you, but to stimulate you.

The Characteristics Of A Good Language Learner

1. Good language learners find a style of learning that suits them. When they are in a learning situation which they do not like, they adapt it to their personal needs. They believe they can always learn something, whatever the situation. They also know how they prefer to learn and choose learning situations that are suited to their way of learning.
2. They are actively involved in the language learning process. Besides regular language classes, they create opportunities to use the language. They know practice is very important. They are willing to take risks, to appear foolish if necessary.
3. They try to figure out how the language works. They try to come to grips with the language as a system. They pay attention to form and look for patterns. They develop good techniques for improving their pronunciation, learning grammar and vocabulary. For example, some learners try to imitate the sounds of the language without using real words. When learning new words other learners make a picture of the object in their minds. They compare the words in their native language to see how they are different.
4. They know that language is used to communicate. They pay attention to meaning. They have good techniques to practise listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In the early stages of their language learning they do not worry about making mistakes. They speak and
5. They are like good detectives. They are always looking for clues that will help them understand how the language works. They make guesses and ask people to correct them if they are wrong. They compare what they say with what others say. They keep a record of what they have learned and think about it, i.e. they monitor themselves.
6. They learn to think in the language.
7. They realize that language learning is not easy. They try to overcome their feelings of frustration and their lack of confidence. They are realistic in their setting of study goals.

The above is based on A.Wenden's 'Helping Language Learners Think About Learning' in *Currents of Change in English Language Teaching* ed. by Rossner and Bolitho, OUP, 1990, p174.

Sermon Illustration For The Busy Missionary *Inochi no Visa*

It is August, 1940 in the tiny Baltic state of Lithuania. Japanese consul, Chuune Sugihara and his wife, awake to the disturbing sight of row upon row of Jewish refugees clamoring at the gates for transit visas to Japan. They have barely escaped with their lives from Warsaw. Now all escape routes except Japan are closed. Sugihara makes the agonizing decision to issue visas on his own authority against the express wishes of the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

Ordered by the Soviets who have annexed Lithuania to leave by 31st August, Sugihara works night and day to save thousands of Jews from certain death at the hands of the Nazis. Even as his train pulls out of the station, he is still writing visas and passing them through the windows to stretching, pleading hands below. Twenty-eight years later, after much searching, a representative of the Jewish survivors fulfills a lifelong desire to meet Sugihara in Japan and express his thanks to the one who saved several thousand Jewish lives. Repeatedly he calls Sugihara 'miracle worker' - *Kiseki no hito*.

Sugihara's offer of life cost him his diplomatic career. Jesus' offer of life cost him everything. The Jews' *inochi no visa* cost them money. Jesus' *inochi no visa* is free. Sugihara's way of salvation was imperfect. Even with the precious visa some Jews did not make it to Japan. Some died on the way across Siberia, others had no money to board the Trans-Siberian Express. But Jesus' *inochi no visa* is perfect and everlasting. If we take his offer, all fear of death is gone for ever. Sugihara was merely a man, albeit a humane one. The true *Kiseki no hito*, Jesus, is God himself made flesh for our sake. We do not need to spend 28 years searching for Him to thank Him. He is "Emmanuel" - God with us.

Inochi no Visa is the title of a film based on the biography of Sugihara written by his wife, Yukiko Sugihara, called *6,000 Nin no Inochi no Visa*.

Helpful Vocabulary

生き残った人 (Ikinokotta hito)	Survivor
外務省 (Gaimushoo)	Foreign Ministry
領事 (Ryooji)	Consul
領事館 (Ryoojikan)	Consulate
併合する (Heigoo suru)	Annex (verb)
リトアニア (Ritoania)	Lithuania
ビサを発行する (Bisa o hakkoo suru)	Issue a visa
通過ビサ (Tsuuka bisa)	Transit visa
シベリア横断鉄道 (Shibiria Oodan Tetsudoo)	Trans-Siberia Express

The Church on the Move

First Baptist Lay Missionary To Leave In 1993

The Japan Baptist Church Association at its twenty-eighth General Assembly held in Shizuoka on November 2-3, 1992, approved the sending of Mieko Kakuta as a medical lay missionary to the Philippines, scheduled to leave in April, 1993. Miss Kakuta, a member of the Kokubunji church, was also commissioned at that time. (1/3/93)

Presbyterian Groups Combine

The Japan Presbyterian Church and the Japan Evangelical Presbyterian Church held meetings recently to discuss the details of the formation of one new church body. It was agreed to call the new group the "Presbyterian Church of Japan." Discussions about merging began in 1980, and in 1990 the two groups agreed to form a committee to chart the way forward. The committee's work was recognized by the General Meetings held in March and May of 1992, and it is expected that the new group will have its first meeting in May, 1993.

Little Shepherd Groups

The training of believers is a very important subject for church leaders. Jae Chan Byun, an OMF missionary from Korea, has set up the Little Shepherd Training program to meet this need. Over 400 church leaders are now taking part in

these courses which aim for church growth through the discipling of believers. There are several levels: basic nurture discipleship, little shepherd beginners, advanced level, etc. People from Okinawa in the south and Hokkaido in the north and most points between are now in training. (12/6/92)

Billy Graham Tokyo Crusade

In preparation for Mission 94, the Billy Graham Crusade to be held in Tokyo in January, 1994, a rally of 1000 people was held at Hibiya Public Hall on January 23. The chairman of the prayer committee, Akie Ito, urged people to pray for revival in Japan, and asked people to think of the crusade not so much as an event, but rather as a spiritual battle. The budget is ¥450,000,000. Training sessions for counsellors will be held between May and the end of September. It is hoped that everything including the formation and training of the choir will be ready in time for a special preliminary meeting planned for December 5. Rev. K. Honda, Honorary Crusade Chairman, told how Billy Graham had said that he cannot perform miracles, but it is only God who can give new life. Billy Graham has urged people to pray that God would use him. Rev. Honda spoke with his usual vigor and power in spite of the fact that he'd only recently been discharged from the hospital, after a bout with angina.

Company Wins Awards

The construction company, Hitotsubu Wallace, founded in the Meiji Era by Wm Wallace who came to preach the gospel has recently been awarded a number of prizes in recognition of its work. Nagoya honored it for a church building completed in 1991. The citation said, "The building has a sense of majesty and dignity without being overwhelming, making it easier for seekers to understand and feel at ease."

The company has also received awards for a middle school building in Hiroshima, and a women's college building in Osaka. (2/7/93)

Osaka Supreme Court Ruling

The Supreme Court in Osaka rejected an appeal brought by a Holiness pastor and others that the erecting and moving

of two statues of Jizo, the "patron saint of children," at city expense violated the constitution's separation of church and state. The court ruled that the city's action did not exceed normal cultural provisions. Statues of Jizo in places other than temple grounds are not so much religious objects as part of the culture and customs of Japan, and their religious significance is small. The neighborhood association in arranging the move and re-erection of the two figures on land donated by Osaka had not acted with a religious objective.

Rev. Matsusawa said it was a strange judgment which argued that a statue of Jizo put up by a neighborhood association had no religious meaning whilst presumably a Jizo statue in the temple grounds had. (11/29/92)

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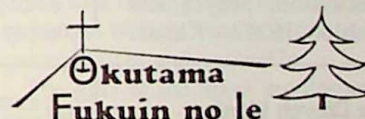
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KANSAI NEWS

compiled by Nancy Sorley

All Japan Revival Koshien Mission (11/5,6,7/93) rented a large ferry, the Sunflower Kogane, and sponsored a cruise along the Inland Sea for 1000 people. It was a day given to prayer for revival as they sailed along some of the major ports of Kansai. Hours of prayer and praise included messages, a classical music concert, and special activities for children. Many prayer chains, meetings and marches are also being conducted.

JEMA Kansai sponsored a Pioneer Evangelism Seminar on November 24, 1992 at YWAM headquarters. The speakers were Vincent Stubbs, Bernie Marsh and Bruno Jacobsen. Forty people attended the seminar which, in addition to the presentations, included time for discussion, prayer and fellowship. JEMA Kansai

will meet to elect a new committee and make future plans on March 16, 1993.

The Kansai Evangelical Harmony held its first "Evening with the K.E. Harmony" on September 25, 1992. After the concert Rev. Koji Honda gave an evangelistic message. The K.E. Harmony is a large choir and ensemble composed of Christians from various churches in the Kansai area, a result of the 1990 Luis Palau Crusade choir and ensemble. The churches realized the effectiveness a large Christian choir and ensemble could have for evangelism, and in April, 1991 plans to organize the K.E. Harmony began. It provides a good opportunity for Christians to participate in a large musical group and to evangelize Japanese who enjoy concerts.

Help For Church Planters

The 8th Pioneer Evangelism Seminar, cosponsored by Kokunai Kaitaku Dendo Kai (KDK) and the Japan Evangelical Missionary Association, was held at Megumi Chalet in Karuizawa from November 30 to December 2, 1992. About 100 attended, with missionaries accounting for over 25%. Designed to provide practical instruction and information through a schedule of combined meetings as well as small sharing and discussion groups. Topics ranged from "Sermon Preparation" to "Bringing Families into the Church through Home Bible Studies." The seminar also provided much encouragement and challenge through sharing and testimonies. Those who wish to learn more can get the

cassette tapes (in Japanese) of the key sessions through KDK or JEMA. The KDK Pioneer Church Planting Seminar is held every other year and is open to both pastors and missionaries.

Help for Bulk Mailers

Just a reminder that organizations wishing to send announcements, fliers, etc. to the missionary community can use JEMA supplied mailing labels and forego the expense and hassle of maintaining their own mailing lists.

JEMA can supply labels with addresses in romaji or kanji, including/excluding geographic areas, mission groups, etc. It is also possible to exclude missionaries from the list who are currently known to be on furlough.

Contact JEMA for details.

An Image Problem?

Why do Japanese attend church for the first time? What are their first impressions? We are indebted to Phil Fondaw, TEAM missionary, for helping to answer these questions. In preparation for a recent JEMA Pioneer Evangelism Seminar, he constructed a survey on these topics, and received answers from 70 Japanese in 6 churches, 30 pastors and 30 missionaries. The two groups of leaders answered the questions as they would expect the first group to answer. The survey lacks precision and suffers from the small number of the sample, but it does give interesting inside glimpses.

"What motivated you to attend church?" Approximately 1/3 said "Because a friend/relative attends." Both the pastor and missionary group also picked this as the highest reason. The second highest with 18% was "Attendance in Sunday School/church-related kindergarten as a child." The missionaries picked this as third choice, but the pastors failed to catch the significance of these childhood experiences. Both pastors and missionaries ranked English, cooking, or English Bible as their second choice, but the Japanese group ranked this as sixth.

The question, **"What image did you have of church before you ever attended?"** showed that most people don't have a negative image of the church. Missionaries (45%) said that outsiders feel church is just for Christians, but only 13% of those attending listed that as a concern.

When asked, **"When you first decided to go to church, how did you decide which church to attend?"** about half chose the one close by, and the other half said that a friend had invited them. Pastors and missionaries ranked "fliers" high, but only 2 in 70 listed that as a factor.

The complete survey can be found on the JEMA Net computer bulletin board, 03-3295-1953.

Briefly Noted

Peter Horne of Christian Literature Crusade has been appointed International Secretary Designate of CLC, and will be located in Sheffield U.K. from April.

Dan Keller (Campus Crusade) has accepted a position on the Campus Crusade International University Resource Team. The Kellers will be moving in June to their headquarters in Orlando, Florida, USA.

Donald Hoke, former President of JEMA and Tokyo Christian College, was the special speaker at the Tokyo Christian Institute's commemorative celebration on March 9.

The **Rollin Reasoners** (newly retired SEND missionaries) will move to Kiev to minister as facilitators for new SEND missionaries, and to assist the Russian Association of Independent Baptists in church planting.

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International Partners

Many partners around the world are dedicated to reaching Japanese as they leave home for unfamiliar shores. Christians entertaining homestay guests, people befriending the traveler and the student; others conduct Japanese services either in cooperation with another church or as a "full-service" Japanese church. Don't forget to pray for them.

The **STEVEN YOUNGS**, former Japan missionaries with Japan Presbyterian Mission (Mission to the World) are ministering in church planting in Victoria, Australia. He writes, "God's Spirit is moving amongst individuals and in faith we believe there are many more Japanese who need to hear the gospel, and in God's time His children will come to Jesus."

Rev. **EDWARD YOSHIDA**, Senior Pastor of the Wesley Chapel Japanese Church in Scarborough, Ontario, Canada,

after starting a Free Methodist church in Sukagawa, Fukushima, left his home country in 1960 to reach Japanese in North America. He submitted a report of his trip back to Japan after 32 years ministry there. The title was "Pay-off of the Gospel Ministry." He talks of the blessing of meeting people around Japan who have come to Christ at their Scarborough Chapel. He closes with, "When we got to Narita for our return flight, we considered our final meal in Japan. But behold! Young Mitsuko Suemori arrives at the terminal. She had been baptized at Wesley Chapel the year before while a Working Holiday youth in Toronto. So she insists on more soba at the airport. Thus we started our Japan tour with a meal of soba and finished it with more soba! Truly, the gospel ministry does not reward with wealth and fortune, but its payoff is exceedingly greater than dollars and cents."

From The Mail Box

I read this issue ("Turning From Idols") with great interest especially as I could relate to so much in it. I went to Japan in 1950 & finally retired in 1985, but having had an extended furlough, was only actually in Japan for about 27 years.

With hind-sight I realize now how "ignorant" and "unaware" I have been of Satan and his "devices"/"schemes," and how he has so often "outwitted" us and taken advantage over us (II Cor. 2:11 AV & NIV). There is certainly "another world in action" with which we were not dealing adequately and about which we did not have enough knowledge.

Why is it that Japan is so hard and unfruitful? When so many evangelistic missionaries have worked there why is there so little to show for it? Having heard missionaries from other countries tell of demon possession, why is it that we never see typical cases of demon possession in Japan? With so much ancestor worship etc. surely many have some form of demon possession. Satan does not walk around Japan as a roaring lion, but flies around as an "angel of light" making things appear quite pleasant and agreeable.

The gifts of the Spirit are desperately needed in Japan. The gift of discernment is so necessary to diagnose the problems, revealing the spirit behind it, enabling one to deal with it correctly (I Jn 4:1). I believe many missionaries have been sent home for "medical" reasons when really a Satanic attack terminated their ministry.

"Baptism in the Spirit" is fiercely opposed for Satan knows that it is the key to blessing and power to overcome all the powers of darkness arrayed against us.

E.G., Clarke, Bristol, England

Thank you for an excellent issue of Japan Harvest on "Turning from Idols." Please send me the checklist.

Pamela Cooper, Osaka

The Ecumenical Bible

The New Interconfessional Translation (*Shin Kyoodooyaku*) was published in 1991 by the Japan Bible Society in cooperation with Catholic and Protestant scholars. This translation joins several others in seeking to minister to the Japan community. The most popular among Evangelicals is the New Japanese Bible (*Shin Kaiyaku*).

Ernest Faber, Church of Christ missionary since 1954, is concerned about this new cooperative translation. He sites that even though some have said that it is easy to understand, we should avoid using it because of its ecumenical intent. His second reason is that it causes confusion, since the Apocrypha is included in the Catholic edition, which appears in bookstores along side the Protestant edition. Third, the translation of several passages shows a strong Roman Catholic influence. Rev. Faber would appreciate comments and reactions to his concerns.

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20. English - a Bridge for Teaching the Gospel: (Prices do not include P.O.) (Maxey) - ¥500

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New Mission Headquarters



SEND International has completed their new SEND Center in Tokorozawa, Saitama Ken. The new Center is a four story building with a 100 person meeting room, mission offices and five apartments for missionaries and guests.



The Japan Evangelical Free Church Mission headquarters in Higashi Kurume has also been completed. Sixty-seven volunteer carpenters from America worked on this 430 sq. meter building that consists of an office, guest apartment, conference room & missionary residence.



Team's offices and guest facilities have been in use since the spring of 1990. It is located in Mitaka, Tokyo. The facility is also used by a new church for area residents pioneered by missionary Bill Friesen.

JEMA Conferences

JEMA Leadership Consultation took place at Fukuin no Ie at Okutama on February 14 & 15, followed by the 26th Annual Plenary Session the next day at Ochanomizu Christian Center. "Missionary care" was a major theme of both meetings (See JH p2). A task force will be formed to bring specific proposals on how we can work together in this area.

Prayer, fellowship and strategy discussions made the consultation profitable.

At the Plenary session a new purpose statement was approved. It reads as follows: "The Japan Evangelical Missionary Association exists to assist and promote cooperation among evangelical missions and missionaries in partnership with the national church (Japan Evangelical Association and other evangelical groups with whom Japan Evangelical Missionary Association members cooperate) in reaching Japan for Christ." JEMA is committed to fellowship, and will continue to maintain the mutual help ministries of the

past, but the purpose statement clearly emphasizes the evangelization of Japan. This is why there is a JEMA!

Japan Church Growth Institute will be sponsoring a Cell Group Seminar July 6th to 8th at the Yamazaki Bread Company's "SUNCITY" in Chiba Ken. The seminar will be conducted by Dr. Ralph Neighbour, Jr.

Highlighted will be key principles to building dynamic, cell-grouped based churches, specifically covering 1) Theological basis for cell group structure; 2) How to start cell groups; 3) How to train cell group leaders; 4) how to effectively evangelize through cell groups; & 5) How to grow from cell groups to churches.

This seminar is endorsed by JEMA.

Contact JCGI for details at:

Japan Church Growth Institute
Matsui Bldg., 2F
2-16-20 Shinbori

Niiza Shi, Saitama Ken 352

Tel. 0424-93-4469; Fax 0424-93-4470

Late News

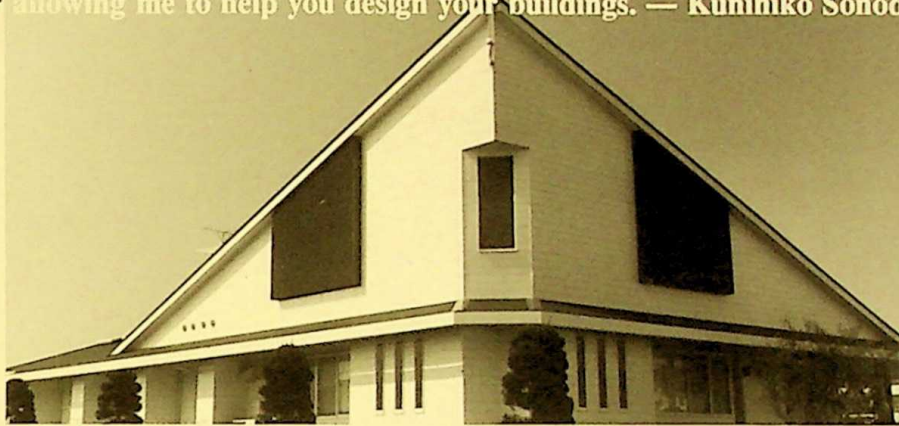
Missionaries Bill and Roberta Rees of Miyota Machi, Nagano Ken have won Japanese citizenship for their adopted two-year-old son. The boy was born to a Phillippine woman who worked in a local red-light district. The woman disappeared after giving the child to the Reeses.

The Japanese government was not willing to grant the child citizenship since the mother was known to be Filipino and the nationality of the father, though probably Japanese, is unknown. Yet without the identity of the mother the Philippine government would not grant the boy citizenship either.

This ruling by the Tokyo District Court sets a precedent and opens the door for other "stateless" children who are born in Japan but have been unable to obtain Japanese nationality if the nationality of both their parents cannot be identified.

Congratulations to the Reeses are in order!

Congratulations to TEAM, Evangelical Free and SEND International for your new headquarters buildings. I pray that God will continue to bless you as you work to help reach Japan for Christ. Thank you for allowing me to help you design your buildings. — Kunihiko Sonoda



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