



JAPAN Fall 2001
HARVEST
Japan Evangelical Missionary Association

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hear me, my nation:
The law will go out from me;
my justice will become a light to the nations."
Isaiah 51:4**

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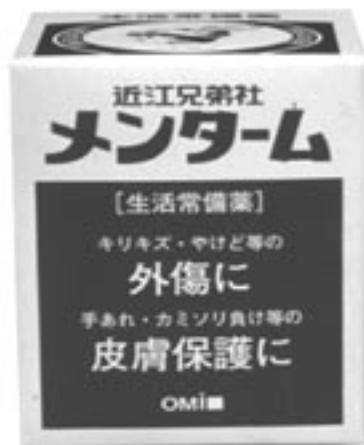




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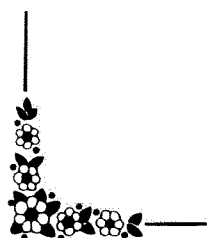
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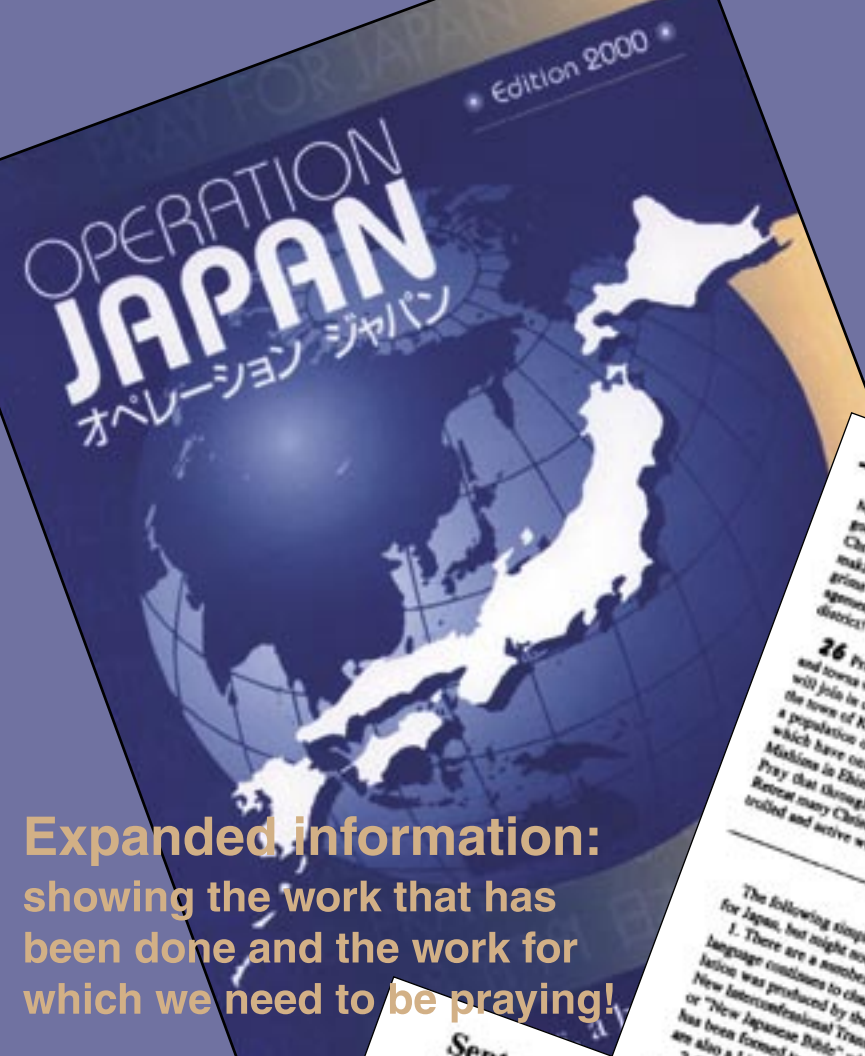
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OPERATION Japan 2000

Expanded, Updated and Revised

Expanded information: showing the work that has been done and the work for which we need to be praying!

September 25-26

25 Pray for many pilgrims who come to Mt. Taungri and Mt. Ishizaki to worship the god, Komeiri. What they seek can be found in Christ. We Christians can gladly follow Him, making at least the level of sacrifice these pilgrims make. Pray a special blessing of encouragement on the 17,000 Christians in the Shikoku district!

26 Pray that the 115 unchurched villages and towns will hear the Word and that believers will join in church fellowships. One of these is the town of Kagawa in Kagawa prefecture with a population of 24,000. There are three cities which have only one Protestant church: Iyo-Matsun in Ehime, Tosa and Munto in Kochi. Pray that through the Shikoku ASI-Christians Recent many Christians will become Spirit-controlled and active witnesses.

The Word
"I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty" (John 6:35). Pray for the people of Shikoku that they come to know Jesus, the bread of life, and that they never know spiritual hunger or thirst again as they concentrate their lives to know, love and serve Him.

The Bible
 The following simple explanation attempts to inform those of you who are praying for Japan, but might not have much background information concerning the church language in Japan. There are a number of Japanese Bible translations available. As the Japanese language continues to change, new translations will be needed. The most recent translation was produced by the Japan Bible Society, called the *Shin Kyuwa* or "The New International Translation." The most popular translation is the *Shin Kyuwa* or "New Japanese Bible" which was produced by evangelical scholars. A committee has been formed to prepare a newer translation to replace the *Shin Kyuwa*. They are also a *Living Bible* translation and several translations made by individuals.

1. There are several copies available. The total number of hidden heat is 178,000 of the over 845,000 in 1998 alone. copies, most have potential begin to read

New Features
The Word
 Each area has God's Word and promises applied to encourage prayer

September 25-26

Shikoku Region

Population 4,209,749
 Size 18,806 km²
 Density 224 people/km²
 Cities 30
 With only 1 church 3
 Towns/Villages 186
 With no churches 115
 With 20,000 pop. & no churches 1

Churches

Protestant Churches	321
One-Year Increase	1 (0.3%)
Two-Year Increase	279 (2%)
Change since '98	1/13,114
Evangelical	-365
Ecumenical	
Lutheran	
Presbyterian-Reformed	97
Baptist-Missionary	8
Independent	23
Wesleyan-Holiness	19
Other	34
Protestant-Charismatic	23
Other	41
Independent	42
Missionary	17,030
Members/pop.	53
Attendance/pop.	4/1,000
Attendance/church	7,953
Attendance/pop.	25
Missionaries	24
Missionaries/pop.	1/175,406

Compared with the other districts in Japan, Shikoku has a relatively high number of churches, 321 in all. In fact, all four prefectures in this district have a better ratio of church-per-population than the national average. Ehime and Kagawa are second and third in the nation for the largest number of churches per population in the nation. However, the district growth is the worst in the nation. It is the only district added in the nation.

result of efforts by Ralph Cox (TEAM) and his cooperating missionaries. They have been able to begin these churches successfully over the years. During

The Story
 Each area has a testimony of God's faithfulness and work in the hearts and lives of Japanese

Be sure to order your updated and revised version of **Operation Japan 2000** on the JEMA order form found on page 28 of this magazine!

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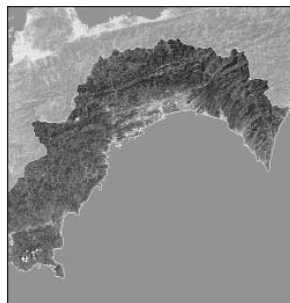
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Holiness for Tainted Souls

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. Proverbs 9:10

We come into the presence of God with tainted souls. We come with our own concept of morality, having learned it from books, from the newspaper and from school. We come to GOD dirty...and do nothing about it!

If we came to GOD dirty, but trembling and shocked and awe-struck in His presence, if we knelt at His feet and cried with Isaiah, "I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:5), then I could understand. But we skip into His awful presence. We're dirty, but we have a book called *Seven Steps to Salvation* that gives us seven verses to get us out of our problems. And each year we have more Christians, more people going to church, more church buildings, more money—and less spirituality and less holiness. We're forgetting "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). I tell you this: I want God to be what God is: the impeccably holy, unapproachable Holy Thing, the All-Holy One. I want Him to be and remain THE HOLY.

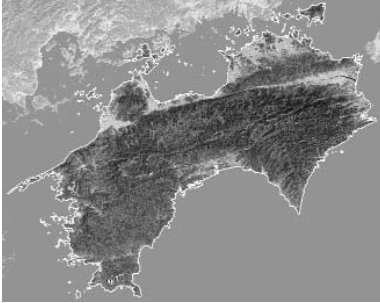
Lay aside the garments that are stained with sin
And be washed in the blood of the Lamb;
There's a fountain flowing for the soul unclean;
Oh, be washed in the blood of the Lamb.

*Taken from the August 23rd reading of
Tozer for Today
Tozer on the HOLY SPIRIT
A 366-Day Devotional
Compiled by Marilynne E. Foster
Publisher: Christian Publications
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania
www.christianpublications.com*

Prayer Focus

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone.

Shikoku



I was in Shikoku last year for a mission leaders' meeting. It was in Takaoka, so I flew to Koichi and was met at the airport and driven to the venue. The countryside was beautiful with trees, rivers, and hills, and there were even stars in the sky on

very quiet nights. The contrast to Tokyo was striking and very refreshing. *"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the end of the world."* Psalm 19:1-4. Pray that the voice of God in the beauty of creation will speak loudly to the people of Shikoku.

The Ehime Maru, which was hit and sunk by the USS Greenville in February, comes from Ehime prefecture in Shikoku. Grief could have been felt by many here. This would have given the church much opportunity to minister. *"...the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble..."* II Corinthians 1:3. Pray that God's people will be able to bring compassion to those affected.

"Operation Japan" tells us that Shikoku has a higher church per population ratio than most of the rest of Japan. But only 27 churches have been added in the last 10 years, and most of these have been through the ministry of Ralph Cox working with TEAM. *Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored.* 2 Thessalonians 3:1. Pray for the work of Ralph Cox and other missionaries working in the field of Shikoku.

I attended Ralph Cox's presentation on his work at a CPI meeting. It was impressive especially in that churches are being multiplied. Then the Lord said, *"If as one people...they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them."* Genesis 11:6 Pray this may be true as the CPI movement continues to multiply and impact the island of Shikoku and the nation of Japan.

JAPAN

The power of the media to focus national attention was shown again in the recent tragedy of a mentally ill person attacking first grade children. When it was reported that 1.7% of Japanese are listed as being mentally ill, I reflected that the Christian population stood at about that same percentage. While abhorring the nature of the tragedy reported, I could see the possibility of God using the media to focus the nation on His people, although not many in the land, for His glory. But the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. Pray for Japanese Christians to know God and do exploits that will capture the attention of the media and bring glory to God.

ASIA

Workers from all parts of Asia gathered at our mission's yearly field meeting in May. They came bearing burdens for the people with whom they work and for the works of God which they yearn to see realized. The intensity of these burdens came out in a session in which we cried out to God for the people of our field. Few words were spoken; it was similar to when the Israelites shouted down the walls of Jericho. *"...My heart cries out over Moab..."* Let us cry out to God each day this week for the walls of Communism to fall down in North Korea and China; the walls of Islam in Afganistan, Bangladesh, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Pakistan; the walls of Buddhism in Bhutan, Myanmar, and Thailand, and the walls of Hinduism in India and Nepal.



John Somers-Harris and his wife, Rhonda, serve with Youth with a Mission. They live in Adachi-ku Tokyo. John came to Japan in 1985.

**Women in Ministry Day of Prayer will be held
October 29, 2001, from 10-4
at the Christian & Missionary Alliance Center
in Higashi Tokorozawa.**



POWER

by Steven Tarter

This year, Tokorozawa Megumi Church's memory verses are being taken from John 15:1-12. In the first eight verses of John 15, the word "fruit" is mentioned seven times. Starting from verse 9 the emphasis shifts from "fruit" to "love". So, I see verse 8 as being pivotal.

Why does Jesus tell us to bear fruit? There is only one reason for us to bear fruit, and it is clearly stated in John 15:8. We bear fruit so that God may be glorified. We can read in Matthew 5:14 and 16, "You are the light of the world. (Therefore) let your light shine before other people so that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." We are the light of the world and we are to do good deeds, but not so that people will praise us. We do it so that people will praise God. We are to bear fruit so that God will be glorified.

What does Jesus mean when he says we should bear fruit? One interpretation teaches us that this fruit is the Fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The second interpretation of "fruit" as it fits John 15 is to produce new believers.

How is each believer to produce new believers, that is, fruit? By witnessing, being light and doing good deeds and expressing in our lives the Fruits of the Spirit.

To do this kind of witnessing we need power. Luke says we get this power from the Holy Spirit. Luke, the educated physician who became a convert to Christianity, set down his writings in an "orderly" way for one main purpose: so that the reader would know the truth and the certainty of the things being taught. Luke's first book in the Bible is "The Gospel According to Luke". His second book is "The Acts (or in Japanese, the 'Works') of the Apostles".

"Acts" begins with, "In my former book I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach." There is, to me, a wonderful nuance in that sentence. While Luke was yet writing his second book "Acts" Jesus was still "doing" and "teaching". And one of

the things that Jesus was "doing" was filling his disciples with power.

On the night that Jesus was betrayed, Peter had no power. He was in the courtyard of Caiaphas and was afraid even to tell a servant girl that he knew Jesus. Now we read in Acts 4 that Peter was arrested by "priests, the captain of the temple and the Sadducees", and that the next day he was set before "Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and all of the high priestly family". In first century Israel that would be like standing before the Supreme Court of today. What did this man who formerly was afraid of a servant girl do?

Verse 8 says, "At that time Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit" and he witnessed. His entire audience was made up of people who had crucified Jesus for saying exactly what Peter was about to say. When Peter was asked, "By what power or what name did you do this (healing)?", he answered, "It is by the name of Jesus Christ." Now, Peter could have stopped there. In that short statement he had already answered their question. But Peter, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, went on to point out their sin. What a change the power of the Holy Spirit had made in Peter. This was no longer the man who was afraid of a servant girl. This was a man filled with power.

Verse 13 says that the Jewish leaders saw his courage and could tell that he was an uneducated, ordinary man, but they noted that Peter had been with Jesus.

I think the Jewish leaders could see something out of the ordinary in Peter. Peter had been with Jesus for about three years before the night he was confronted by the servant girl in Caiaphas' courtyard. But on that night Peter was scared and lacked power. Now Peter was changed. Yes, Peter had been with Jesus before the crucifixion, but that had not given him the power he now had. It was being with the death-conquering Jesus that gave Peter the power he now had.

Let's think about power for a few moments.

First, power must not be confused with authority. If I park a large,

loaded truck over a fire cistern, a police officer certainly has the authority to move my truck: but one man hardly has the physical power to push a big truck, especially if the brake is set. Conversely, if a Shinkansen is stopped at the station platform, I have the physical power to open the door and get into the motorman's compartment: but I do not have the authority to do so (and would be in trouble if I tried).

Second, to be effective power must be the right kind, in the right amount, at the right place and in the right time. When I want to go out a door, I could use an explosive charge to open it, but that would not be the right kind of power. Even though my breath can easily move a piece of paper, if I blow against the door it would not be enough power to open it. If I run at full speed and hit the door with my hand it could be too much power (and might damage the door or injure my hand, or both). If I push along the edge that has the hinges (opposite from the handle) it would be the wrong place and would be impossible to open (I tried it). And if I had left during the offering, instead of presenting this sermon, it would have been the wrong time to open the door and go out.

I believe that God, through his Holy Spirit, gives us the right kind of power in the right amount at the time and place we need it. There will be times when we need one kind or amount of power, and other times when we need something else.

I just recently read a book about the construction of the first trans-continental railroad in the United States. On April 28, 1869, the work crew put down over 16 kilometers of track. That is the distance from Ikebukuro to Hibarigaoka. That was the first time in the history of the world that so much track was laid in one day by a crew using no machines; it was all done by hand. That kind of work required a specific kind of power. On a different day the same railroad was working on building a tunnel through a solid granite mountain. In 24 hours they made only 30cm of progress. At that rate it would take

a whole month just to move across a room. Obviously, that kind of work required a different kind of power.

You may feel that evangelism in Japan is a lot like the railroad making a tunnel—that it is very slow, and is very hard work. If you feel that way, be encouraged by knowing that, at least in a spiritual sense, we have the same power as the railroad did. For you see, the railroad was using what was then a new invention for blasting away rock. This new power source was invented by Alfred Nobel. Nobel based the name of his invention on the Greek word “*dunamis*”; he called his invention dynamite.

In Acts 1:8 the original Greek quotes Jesus as saying that “You shall receive *dunamis* (power) when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”. Then in Acts 4:7 the Greek words used are “They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: ‘By what *dunamis* (power) or what name do you do this?’” And Peter answered “It is by the name of Jesus Christ.”

It is by the name and the *dunamis* (power) of Jesus Christ that we witness. The name of Jesus gives us the authority to do it, and the Holy Spirit of Jesus gives us the *dunamis* (power) to do it.

As a church we need to be praying and asking Jesus, “Where and when should we be doing evangelism”, and then asking Jesus to supply the right kind of power in the right amount. Jesus will answer. It may be like the day of laying over 16 kilometers of track, when the workers could not keep up with the progress by walking; the men actually had to run to keep up with the advancement of the track. After all, there was a day when about 3,000 became believers in one city (see Acts 2:41). Or it may be like blasting out the railroad tunnel, when progress was so slow. But remember, they did progress; they kept moving forward, slowly, to be sure, but always moving forward.

People should see our courage, and they should realize that even though we may be ordinary people,

we have a *dunamis*, a power, because we are abiding in a resurrected Jesus and He abides in us. To the Father's glory.



Steve Tarter came to Japan in August 1972 as a musician in the US Air Force Band, Fuchu Air Station, Mitaka. He was joined in October by his wife Martie. Soon Martie was teaching music at

CAJ, and Steve began doing the same in the fall of 1973, while still serving in the military. In 1974 Steve was granted an early release from his military enlistment, and the Tarters joined the Far Eastern Gospel Crusade (now SEND International) here in Japan. Since 1994 Steve has been working in the SEND office, assisting at Tokorozawa Megumi Church and teaching part time at CAJ.

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By Eric Haugrud



A Catalyst for Revival

What if? *What if* 130 Japanese young adults in their 20's and 30's—nearly all non-Christians—attended an evangelistic meeting? *What if* they were not pressed to attend, but actually begged for an invitation? *What if* over one thousand people applied for tickets in a lottery drawing for only 130 people? *What if* nearly half of these young adults were men (perhaps the most difficult gender to reach)? *What if* everyone delighted themselves with several Christian songs performed by a Christian choir, explanations of their meaning spoken by the conductor, and three brief evangelistic messages preached by a pastor? *What if* the pastor also led everyone in repeating, phrase-by-phrase, the verses to Psalm 23? *What if* everyone stood and rejoiced along with hand clapping to the last two numbers? *What if* the audience's exuberance compelled them to applaud until the choir reentered the sanctuary to deliver an encore performance?

Certainly this can only be a "pipe dream"! Well, believe it or not, it actually *did* happen. A special kind of gospel music known as Black Gospel has captivated the Japanese.

Evidences of a boom

This has taken Japan by storm, reportedly following the release of the *Sister Act II* video, starring Whoopi Goldberg. Hundreds of thousands of Japanese are learning to sing Black Gospel music in cultural centers, community halls, music schools, and churches. Karuizawa Kougen Kyoukai, the busiest of the Karuizawa wedding chapels, has been hosting Black Gospel worships nearly every Sunday afternoon (from 1:45 PM) since April of this year. "Powerful! It really touched my heart," exclaimed my Japanese wife to me after attending her first worship there.

Local choirs organized by the Voice of Japan Choir (or "VOJA") come to lead the audience in singing. The pastor also delivers brief messages between songs, and leads the congregation in responsive Bible readings, phrase by phrase, e.g., 1 John Chapter 2:1-6. On the first Sunday in August 150 people overflowed the chapel.

A concert becomes a crusade

Saturday evening, Aug. 11, however, was a special concert. Somehow, my wife and I beat the seven to one odds and secured two free tickets by mail. Of course, the event was not billed as an "evangelistic meeting;" rather, it was designated as a "concert." Moreover, it was *fun*. I wonder why so many of us seem to have forgotten that Christian meetings and evangelism can be just that.

VOJA's talented main choir of 20 came, including their famous leader, Ms. Yuka Kamebuchi (known as "Big Mama"). The concert lasted 2 1/4 hours, with a 15-minute intermission. Songs included, "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen," "This Little Light of Mine; I'm Going to Let It Shine," "Amazing Grace," "Down by the Riverside," "Glory Alleluia Since I Laid My Burdens Down," "Oh, How I Love Jesus," "Just a Little Talk with Jesus," "God Is My Protection, My All in All," "Glory Alleluia, You're the Reason Why I Sing," "I Surrender All," and "People Get Ready." The last song before the encore was "O Happy Day," with all of the singers scattered up and down the center and side aisles beaming their joy-filled faces. Most of the songs were sung in English, while others were sung in both English and Japanese. Their English pronunciation was excellent, and the freedom with which many moved their hands and bodies was impressive. Moreover, the genuine passion I observed on many of their faces deeply inspired me.

VOJA's web site is:
www.tmp-voja.co.jp

Pastor Kiyoshi Kanase dressed in an off-white jacket. He held his Bible in his hand when preaching, pacing up and down the center aisle, speaking extemporaneously and with passion. All eyes were glued to him. His preaching grew in power with his second and third brief messages. Pastor Kanase told me both before the concert and during the intermission, "I can't do it alone!", indicating his reliance on the Spirit to lead him.

A change of image

Certainly, the pastor's presence did much to correct the unfortunate "katai, kurai, and tsumaranai" (strict, gloomy, and irrelevant) widespread image non-Christian Japanese hold toward Christianity. We can learn a lot from Pastor Kanase's approach of integrating evangelism with Black Gospel music. For information on the Black Gospel worship schedule, the church's web site is: www.karuizawachurch.org.

What's the attraction?

Ms. Yuka Kamebuchi noted that all of the choir members are either Christian or have come to believe in Jesus. I can certainly understand why many become believers after joining. The words of the music speak empathy and comfort to people of an oppressed culture. This is most suitable for Japan, where burdens of obligations are heavy and personal freedom is stifled. Gospel music is the continuation of an evolution that started with the religious music of slavery. It sends a message of anticipated glory to console suffering and pain. The sorrow and freedom songs of Black Gospel speak to the despair of the Japanese.

In addition, the music of hope in an eternal home in Heaven answers their unconscious soul longing for meaning in their seemingly insignificant lives. Black Gospel music transmits messages of hope, wholeness, and deliverance, in light of the continual suffering millions of Japanese people face.

Furthermore, Black Gospel music

is full of passion and allows for a freedom of interpretation, unlike most western hymns. In the African tradition of gospel music, one improvises upon a song already in existence. Form, content and technique give way to any means of creative expression. Last but not least, deeply-felt need for belonging to a group is met through both the work it takes and in the fellowship enjoyed.

Evangelism aplenty!

The opportunities for evangelism are unsurpassed, due to the following five reasons: (1) Non-Christians are drawn like a magnet to Black Gospel music. (2) The lesson material itself, i.e., the words to the music, is evangelism! (3) Repeated contact is established for building relationships. (4) The movement of their hands and body to the music serves to impress the words deeper on their hearts, applying the teaching principle known as *total physical response*. (5) Most choir members are likely to sing the gospel music to themselves during the week, e.g., in their *ofuro* (Japanese bath), reinforcing the impact of the gospel words. Could Black Gospel music become a catalyst to sweep a million or more Japanese people into God's Kingdom?

My challenge to you

My challenging questions for you are: *First*, can you become involved in using Black Gospel music to evangelize the Japanese? *Second*, are you and your mission willing to adapt your ministries to teach Black Gospel music classes in your church building or local community center room? (Such rooms can often be rented for around 500 yen an hour.)

Ken Taylor, a missionary in Niiza City, Saitama, has taught Black Gospel conducting workshops. Ken wrote to me, "Up to 90% of choir members are non-Christians. The church in Japan is only now coming to realize that Black Gospel is a unique way of direct evangelism. Unfortunately, there are simply not enough Christian choir directors. Hence, many choirs learn only about the style and technique." He added

that 1,500 yen an hour per person is the standard fee that churches charge for teaching black gospel choir singing. The Taylor family is on furlough in America, and expects to return to Japan by March of 2002. The Taylors' web site is:
www.kenandbola.com

Resources

I found three affordable books on conducting choirs at <http://www.amazon.com> that may be of interest to you:

O for a Dozen Tongues to Sing; Music Ministry with Small Choir, by Deborah K. Cronin, \$10.00.

The Wednesday Workout: Practical Techniques for Rehearsing the Church Choir, by Richard DeVinney, \$8.00.

Conducting Techniques for Beginners & Professionals, by Brock McElheran & Lukas Foss, \$11.95.

Videos and music books from one of America's most famous gospel choirs, the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir, can be ordered at <http://www.brooklyntabernacle.org>. Also, <http://blackgospel.com> lists materials of all kinds, as well as links to other sites.

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Erick Haugrud has been a missionary in Japan since 1987. He lives with his family in Karuizawa, and is studying towards a Master of Divinity degree with Trinity Theological Seminary (Newburgh, Indiana) through correspondence. His e-mail

address is: erickay@blk.mmtr.or.jp

Shikoku Island in 1990 had a population of 4,240,265. The island covers an area of 18,770 square kilometers, and is separated from the islands of Honshu and Kyushu by the Inland Sea. Do you know anything else about Shikoku? Here's a little quiz!

1. Shikoku has _____ prefectures (counties). A)1 B)4 C)7
2. The only way to get to and from Shikoku is by hydrofoil & ferry. True or False
3. The two largest cities in Shikoku are: A) Kochi City B) Takamatsu City C) Matsuyama City
4. Copper used to be mined on this island. True or False
5. The name of the world's longest suspension bridge is: A) Snake Bridge B) Akashi Bridge C) Chesapeake Bay Bridge
6. Charges for crossing the world's longest suspension bridge are A) 1,500 yen B) 4,000 yen C) 2,600 yen
7. The suspension bridge length is: A) 3,554 meters B) 3,000 meters C) 3,911 meters
8. Shikoku has _____ churches. A) 321 B) 299 C) 401
9. There are still _____ unchurched villages and towns in Shikoku. A) 115 B) 200 C) 99
10. TEAM's well known church-planting couple is _____. A) Richard & Janice Kropp B) Ralph & Stella Cox C) Don & JoAnn Wright

Blessed Journey by Stella Cox
Fifty years is such a short time by God's timetable. Soon I will be beginning my fiftieth year in Japan. The years have gone by like a whirlwind. It seems like only yesterday that our

ship pulled into the Yokohama Harbor following a five-week voyage on a freighter which sailed from Mobile, Alabama (USA)!

My call to Japan was a firm one. Before my senior year in college, I prayed for a definite sign for direction. I told the Lord, "If you want me to go to Japan, please give me a Japanese roommate." A Japanese gal from Hawaii, Grace Watanabe, became my roommate. Also, there was another Japanese across the hall and one next door! The signal was CLEAR.

Ralph and I met shortly before our graduation from college. We became engaged and I came on to Japan arriving in the fall of 1952. Ralph went on to graduate school and arrived in Japan a year later when we were married. One year later we moved to Takamatsu and began ministry, which continues to this day.

At that time there was no way I could have imagined that I would be involved in a ministry of cooking to reach women. It all began when women would come for a visit and ask me to teach them what they had just been served. The first class was started about 36 years ago, when my youngest child started kindergarten.

Some type of Bible lesson was presented with each class, giving the ladies the "Bread of Life". A lending library was available and each month the ladies received a Christian pamphlet or newspaper.

With urging from the students to publish a cookbook, I went to the publishers. Today three cookbooks have been published by *Shufu no Seikatsu*, one of the largest publishing companies in Tokyo. This is something I never dreamed possible! These, however, have become great tools for bringing in new contacts by the dozen. When Jesus told the disciples to follow Him and He would make them fishers of men, I believe He equipped them. One always needs some kind of bait for fishing, and I call my cooking classes the BAIT for catching women!

At the start of a church plant, I am there with a cooking class. This has proven to be a non-threatening way of presenting the Gospel. The monthly classes see as many as 60 women in attendance. Then in December there are more than 80 for the four-day consecutive class. Women have come to Christ and reading their testimonies would thrill the heart.

The next two steps from the cooking class are the weekly Bible class in the home and then church attendance. Women have been a catalyst to reaching their husbands and their children.

The yearly Ladies' Luncheons in Takamatsu have born much fruit. We had our 38th luncheon this year with 250 women attending. For more than 10 years the luncheons have also been held in Okayama and Hiroshima, on Honshu Island.

I can only say, God has been very, very good! "This is the LORD's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes." And, not only that, it has been very, very enjoyable! TO HIM BE THE GLORY!

Books—Books—Books—Books—Books—Books—Books—Books—

Author's note: The following books are available at some Christian Bookstores or may be purchased from Takamatsu City:

Stella Obaa San Yasashii Cake no Hon (Grandma Stella's Easy Cake Cookbook) written in Japanese with English *Stella San AMERICAN RECIPE* is only in Japanese.

From the Valley of the Blooming Dogwood, our life story, only available in Japanese.

Our e-mail is: rcox@teamjapan.org

ANSWERS: (1) B (the Japanese word *shu* means 4) (2) False (3) B & C (4) False (5) B (6) C (7) C (8) A (9) A (10) B

Long Term Service: 50 Years in Retrospect

By Ralph Cox

2002 will make our 50th year in Japan, most of which has been in church planting in the Shikoku area.

Q: What has happened since 1954 when we and several other TEAM missionaries moved to Shikoku to begin TEAM's work here?

A: First, let me give an encouraging word. Admittedly, evangelism and church planting in Japan is difficult and most conversions still come one by one. Churches are small and too often characterized by the 3 K's, kurai (dark), kibishii (strict), and katai (hard). After 150 years of evangelism carried out by thousands of dedicated missionaries, still less than one percent are active Japanese Christians.

When we came to Japan in 1952 it was widely stated that approximately one percent of Japan's 84 million people were Christians. Today the same percentage is quoted but Japan's population has grown to 125 million, so church growth, it would seem, has just barely kept up with population growth. This is not a bright picture. I am convinced, however, that the percentage quoted in 1952 had to be a greatly exaggerated figure. The truth was probably closer to 1/10 or 1/20 of one percent—at least in Shikoku.

In 1950 there were only five small churches in Takamatsu City and only 17 churches in the entire prefecture. Today there are over 30 churches in Takamatsu and over 70 in the prefecture, in spite of the fact that population growth has been almost static. I am convinced that what has happened here has also happened to a great extent in most of the prefectures of Japan. This is growth, so let's not be discouraged! It speaks well for the future. May God help this new generation of missionaries to raise the percentage above 1%. And should the Lord tarry, let's double the number of churches in Japan from 8,000 to 16,000. It can and should be done!

A: **Shikoku and West Japan**—Starting in Takamatsu from ground zero in 1954, TEAM missionaries have expanded church planting into nine West Japan prefectures. Over 50 churches have been planted. Thirty-five of these have their own buildings and are in the hands of Japanese pastors. Most of this growth has taken place since 1970 with a base of seven small churches. Attempting to follow the Biblical models portrayed in the Gospels and the Book of Acts, we are convinced that growth has been in direct correlation to Biblical principles. Here is how the ministry has been carried out:

Evangelism and church planting have been over a BROAD area, not just in one town.

Large numbers of people have been touched with the Gospel through various means.

A number of churches have been planted simultaneously.

Novices (STM; Short Term Missionaries) have been used. Little English "synagogues" have been used to start a church and these provide "tent-making" income.

The Japanese churches and the believers have been used as back up.

"Foundations" have been turned over to Japanese leadership to complete the building process.

Not only have all these resulted in more churches, but also it has produced churches throughout Shikoku and West Japan and they all, with a few exceptions, first worked as novices (2 year STM's) in the ministry. (Jesus saw the same results from using fishermen and tax collectors for three years, didn't He!) Likewise, an equal number of Japanese Christians have become career Christian workers.

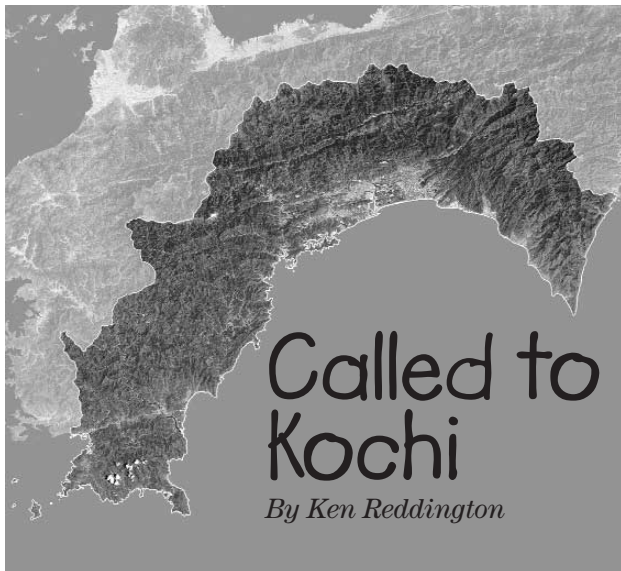
A: **Shikoku and our present work** The need for a training institute found fruition nine years ago in the establishment of NISHI NIHON SENKYOU GAKUIN (West Japan Institute for Evangelism) in our small five-story Takamatsu Christian Center, which also houses several other ministries. God has blessed the school and it has grown to 15 students and a faculty of 13 local pastors. Pastor Kushida, our very first convert, serves as principal and I serve as chairman of a five-man board of directors. It is a three-year Bible school (4 years for high school grads) emphasizing evangelism and church planting. It is a night-school meeting five times a week for three hours each night and regular Bible School subjects are taught. The students are able to work part-time in order to attend.

Stella, my wife, continues her exciting cooking ministry, each month teaching almost 100 ladies American cooking and the Bible. Once a year a luncheon for 250 ladies is held with a special Gospel speaker.

We are presently heavily involved in planting five churches simultaneously in Takamatsu and its environs. These are cell-type churches, but each with its own Sunday worship service, etc., staggered so that all can be covered each Sunday. Our Bible school students, our mature believers, and a young Japanese pastor all assist with preaching and other responsibilities. The STM are involved in this effort and help with interpreted messages, music, English teaching, etc.

My wife and I are active Short Term Missionary recruiters. We ask for a two-year commitment. Just in case you were wondering what happens to the STM's, 85% of TEAM's present career missionaries came through the STM route—50 coming from our work alone.

We are asking God to give us many more years of fruitful service, if it would please Him.



Called to Kochi

By Ken Reddington

Honshu, November in Kochi was like summer! The people were open and friendly, too. Maybe this WAS “God’s Country”!

Up until now, my brother and sister and I had attended CAJ (Christian Academy in Japan, Tokyo), but when we moved to Kochi, we were given a choice. If we wanted to attend CAJ, we could, but that would mean coming home only for Christmas and summers, as we would be 7-day boarders. The other

choice was to take correspondence courses. We opted for the latter. I chose taking correspondence courses and stayed in Kochi, but it wasn’t really my choice to be there. I much preferred Yamanashi!

LEAVING KOCHI (1973)

In my three years in Kochi, I had done a lot of teaching with various schools, organizations and individuals. But I had not felt particularly attached to Kochi or its people. I enjoyed Kochi (the warm winters were nice!), but if asked, I would tell people I was from Yamanashi. In June of 1973, I left Kochi to go to America to pursue studies and a career in architecture.

A Short Time in Kochi—1976

As chance (actually God) would have it, I was given an opportunity to return to Japan the summer between my junior and senior years as an architecture major at Oregon State University (USA). I returned to Japan to help out in my dad’s absence, as he was finishing up his Ph.D. in Psychology in the States.

It was an interesting summer. Being gone for several years, I was really apprehensive about my return. I knew I had changed a lot after three years in college. And I had a sneaking suspicion that Japan had changed, too! I wondered how hard it would be to relate to Japan again. I wanted to find out.

As it turned out, coming back to

Japan felt SO natural. I felt at home (and I was!). During that summer, I realized how easy it was for me (an MK) to be in Japan. I didn’t have to pretend I knew what others were talking about (movies, fads, fashions, etc.) when I didn’t. I didn’t have to live in fear I would make a mistake or something. The Japanese accepted me for who I was—warts and all! In America, people were always forcing me into a mold. But in Japan, I never fit into the mold in the first place! So, I was accepted as different. In America, with my American face and accent, it was hard to be different. But here in Japan, I could be “different” and it was OK. What freedom!

In the process of teaching English at various places that summer, I ended up helping to start a new church. They even let me name it “The Living Church”! I not only taught English there, but I was asked to preach in their afternoon worship service, with the pastor of the mother church interpreting for me. I had been quite active in my college group at church in Oregon, being on the leadership team, teaching Sunday School and leading Bible studies. But I didn’t consider myself a preacher (I doubt if I am even now!) and was surprised when I was asked to preach. But God was giving me more of a caring heart for the people of Kochi.

The Call—Summer of 1976

I had never felt a call to world missions. I had even liked the title of a book, *I Don’t Feel Called, Thank the Lord!* Of course, I was concerned for missions. I had even taught a term on missions for one of our college Sunday School electives at church. But I had wanted to be an architect since the age of 12!

Over the summer, however, my thoughts began to change as I saw the need for more churches, pastors and missionaries. When we had come to Kochi in the fall of 1970, we were the only missionaries in the city of 200,000. The only other missionaries in all of Kochi Prefecture (population 1 million) were the Burneys in Noichi, a town over an hour away by street-car. Even now in 2001, there are only

I grew up in Japan as a missionary kid, having come with my parents, and later joined by a set of twins several months after our arrival. We docked at Yokohama in November, 1956. Those were the days of restful ship travel. I spent most of my early years near Mt. Fuji in Yamanashi Prefecture. With all the mountains, though, we could only see Mt. Fuji each summer when we vacationed at nearby Lake Yamanaka.

A shift in policy, from rural to urban evangelism, led us to leave our mission affiliation. But we still felt God wanted us in Japan as missionaries. This decision was to affect my life drastically!

Taken to Kochi—1970-1973

We arrived back in Japan in late summer of 1970. While we stayed in cabins at Lake Yamanaka, my dad was out looking for a way to make enough money to support our family as independent missionaries. We prayed that we would know where we were to go by the end of October. On October 31, Dad arrived in Kochi to check out Kochi Gaigo Gakuen, a boarding school for junior high and high school kids on the mountainside in the western part of Kochi City.

It wasn’t long before the whole family was on our way to a new part of Japan. The ferry ride (our first!) to Takamatsu, Shikoku, reinforced the total strangeness of this new experience. After chilly Yamanaka on

6 missionaries in the prefecture. The city has grown to 320,000 while the prefecture has shrunk to about 800,000.

One day, I went up on a big stone mountain on the high school campus overlooking the city of Kochi. There my thoughts turned into prayers. I began to pray for Kochi, both the city and the prefecture. I began to ask God to send someone to this place. Before I knew it, tears began streaming down my face for the people of Kochi. They certainly weren't MY tears! It seemed like they were the LORD's tears, just as He had wept as He prayed over the city of Jerusalem in Luke 19:41. I was being moved to tears by the immense need for workers in Kochi.

In view of this need, I began to think of becoming a "rich" architect and supporting someone else as a missionary to Kochi. I knew how hard it was to raise support (I had seen that first-hand!), so I thought that if I could support a missionary, they could get out to the field quickly and stay until their work was done.

As I was thinking, though, I began to realize that someone who knew Kochi and who knew the language (especially the Tosa dialect) and the culture would be the best missionary. They wouldn't need much language study, thus saving time and money for "real" ministry. And they would be able to fit in quickly. It was as though all the fingers pointing at others began pointing inwardly—toward ME!

Gradually, what was a vague "notion" became a clear call. God wanted ME to come back to Kochi as a missionary! I think two passages really confirmed that call. One was Ezekiel 22:30, *And I searched for a man among them who should build up the wall, and stand in the gap before Me for the land.* I had always wanted to "build up the wall and stand in the gap", but now God was confirming the location. Isaiah 49:1-2 says: *"Listen to Me, O islands, and pay attention, you peoples from afar! The Lord has called me from the womb; from the body of my mother He has named me. And He has made my mouth like a sharp*

sword; in the shadow of His hand He has concealed me, and He has also made me a select arrow; He has hidden me in His quiver." To me, the "islands" were obviously Japan, with Shikoku Island more specific. Also, I had always felt that God had called "from the womb", but for what, I didn't know.

You see, I was born with a brain tumor. Six weeks after birth, I had an operation to remove it. After four hours of the operation, the doctor came out to tell my parents that he doubted I would live and even if I did, I would assuredly not be able to see. Upon hearing that, my father called the school he was attending, Columbia Bible College, South Carolina (USA) and asked for prayer. Seemingly, all classes stopped and everyone prayed for me. Two hours later, the doctor came out of the operating room. He said he was not a believer, but he had "felt God" in the operating room! That day, I neither died nor became blind. God had miraculously kept me alive.

So, as I reflected on God's working in my life, I began to wonder whether God had really kept me alive "just" to be a rich architect. I concluded that God had done so in order that I could serve Him in a more direct capacity. By the time my father returned to Kochi at the end of the summer, I knew that God wanted me to be a missionary in Kochi. When I asked Dad what I should do, he recommended that I finish off my architecture degree and then proceed to Bible School.

Returning to Kochi—1978

It was not as simple as it might seem to return to Kochi as a missionary. Finishing my architecture degree went OK. I was also accepted in the just-started Master's program at Multnomah School of the Bible in Portland, Oregon (now Multnomah Biblical Seminary). But when I began to ask around at various missions conferences, etc., about which mission organization I could come back to Japan with, I was in for a surprise! No one wanted to help me go!

Of course, the WAY I asked was

rather naive, I guess. I just told people the facts—God had called me to Kochi and I was looking for an organization to send me there! I knew first-hand how hard it was to be an independent missionary. And since I wanted to be involved in church planting, I felt it imperative to have spiritual and physical support in order for an ongoing work to be established.

Each agency I approached would ask, "Are there any other missionaries in Kochi?" (meaning, of course, are there folks who can help you through culture shock, etc., when you need it?). When I answered that there were no other missionaries (except my parents, who were not in church-planting), they would say they couldn't send me. From my point of view, one of the main reasons to go to Kochi was BECAUSE there were no other missionaries there. Now I was being told they couldn't send me BECAUSE there was no one who could help me!

Afterwards, I heard from missionaries in Japan that approaching the International headquarters and asking to be sent to a specific location like Kochi wasn't practical. If I had just told them I felt called to Japan, and when I got here, if I said I felt called to Kochi, the Japan field would probably have sent me there. But I didn't know that. SO, if God WAS calling me to Kochi, I had to find a way to get there—by myself.

By the time I came back to Japan (in December 1978), my father had gotten his Ph.D. and was looking for work in a college in the Tokyo area. That was perfect timing for me, as I was able to take the job he had, teaching English at a private junior high and high school in Kochi. I studied Japanese at Japan Missionary Language Institute in their "Shinkansen" (bullet train speed) Course where we studied 1,500 kanji (Chinese characters) and did 1 1/2 years worth of work in only three months. I then helped my father for a year and from April, 1980, I was on my own!

In May 1981, after two years of working in a local church (finding out

how a Japanese church really worked), I started a church in my house on the west side of Kochi, with the help of TEAM missionary, Ralph Cox from Takamatsu. The next year, I started another church, on the east side of Kochi. Both churches now have Japanese pastors and are completely on their own. Now we are in the process of starting another church in Ino, the town just west of Kochi City, with a population of 26,000 and no church. There are 60,000 in the "gun" (county) with NO witness!

Looking back on God's call, I have no regrets. I would have enjoyed being an architect, but I am too much of a "people person" to last long behind a desk (or even a drawing board, for that matter). I WAS able to design our present home (with its small chapel). But more than anything, I'm glad to be back home! While in language school I met a Japanese woman who became my wife four years later. We have five children, two of whom are presently attending high school in the States.

One of my favorite passages is my continual prayer, Isaiah 6:8-9, *Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?' Then I said, 'Here am I. Send me!' And He said, 'Go!'* I praise Him for leading me back to Kochi and for His faithfulness in guiding, protecting and being with my family and me all these years.



Ken and his wife, Toshiko, are independent church-planters in Kochi Prefecture, Shikoku.

Christian Data Book for 2002

The number of attendees and members of the church has slightly increased in 2000, but the number of churches tends to decline in big cities where the population is increasing. There are 7,772 protestant churches in all of Japan, an increase of 74 churches since the last count. The prefectures with the most significant increase are: Fukuoka with +12, Akita with +9, and Nagano and Gifu with +7. Whereas there are some decreases, -8 in Okinawa, -6 in Chiba, -4 in Miyagi, -3 in Ibaraki and Kagoshima. The five prefectures with the greatest number of churches are Tokyo with 966, Osaka with 571, Kanagawa with 511, Hyogo with 432 and Hokkaido with 404.

The overall ratio of churches to individuals is 16,221 to one. The following cities are without a church: Akahira and Utashinai in Hokkaido, Obanazawa in Yamagata, Namerikawa in Toyama, Ryotsu in Niigata, Mino in Gifu, Matsuura in Nagasaki and Kaseda in Kagoshima.

A pioneer evangelism work has been started by missionaries in Shin-minato of Toyama, which was without a church last year. The total number of believers in protestant churches is approximately 520,000, and those who attend church regularly number about 310,000.

Taken from the Christian Shinbun.

Christian, how can we have the mind of Christ, or know the way of the Lord, or be certain of the will of God, if we do not take time to be holy, if we do not permit the Word of God to have access to our mind? People know all about TV personalities. They feel the day is a failure if they have not seen the six o'clock news, but these same people have no time for contact with the Word of God. There is a time every day of our Christian lives that ought to be invested at the feet of Jesus!

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The Short and Long of it...

A phone interview with Monica Boshmann-Klassen serving with IFM (International Friendship Ministries) reminded me again of the beautiful ways in which our Loving Heavenly Father puts just the right people in just the right places! jk



Some special people leave for Japan to remain there for most of their lives. Some special people, seeking confirmation in their “call,” come short term only to become career missionaries, while others remain in their home countries following their experience. Some special people come for only several weeks of ministry or for reasons of their own. Monica came to Japan for three weeks during the summer to visit special friends.

Monica is an Ecuadorian holding German citizenship, and now resides in Columbia, South Carolina (USA). “I’m a full-time missionary seeking Friendship Partners. IFM is a bridge between new believers or interested persons, and churches in their homelands. To make new partners I speak in churches, am on the radio and make great use of e-mail.” Monica helps returnees find Christian contacts and churches in their home countries. The IFM web site in Japan is: www.thejapanet.com

Q: Monica, what were some of the “things” you saw in Shikoku during your recent visit?

A: I realized more than ever that in Japan one person at a time is won to Jesus. Unlike some countries, however, the Japanese do not have a distrust of

the Bible. I felt that the Japanese are searching for something (SOMEONE). I saw that meeting the Japanese in their “world” is effective in winning them. For example, the missionaries in Shikoku are using very creative ideas in ministry. I had the privilege of meeting the Coxes and I was very impressed with their understanding of what the Japanese needs are and then their presenting Christ from there.

Meeting the Japanese where they are seems to present many possibilities for connecting the Christian world to them. Sending Christian Japanese businessmen (living outside Japan) for short-term company service could have a huge impact. What better way could there be than for the secular world to see Christians in the workplace with ethics that are Christian!

I found myself comparing Japan to Germany, for I saw many similarities in the area of life style and treatment of the opposite sex. The only difference between the two was that in Germany everything is out in the open; in Japan much is still kept hidden. Both countries are low morally.

I was sad about several other things, too. It hurt me to see foreigners bowing and praying before idols. This made me very sad. Also, the Japanese idea that Christianity is for the weak was a sad realization. No wonder so few want to become Christians. And yet another, that Christianity is thought of as a religion for women, simply because there are so many more women than men in the church.

I came away from Japan with a new understanding of how to pray!

Q: Would you describe Shikoku?

A: I was there just before the rainy season, so the young, lush green blades of rice were barely peeking through the water around them. The sky reflected in these rice paddy waters was beautiful. I

loved that. Then, as I traveled, I loved seeing the mountains and the sea. The cities were very clean and things seemed to be well organized. Japanese are so efficient! I enjoyed the “fullness” of the cities, that is, the crowds. I guess it reminded me of South America with people everywhere. Oh, the convenience stores—they were everywhere! I loved that too.

There was an obvious absence of Christian presence. I was able to visit one small church and one medium-sized one. I am sure Christians struggle with the low numbers, but I sensed such a nice spirit and the Christians were so encouraging.

Q: Who did you go to Shikoku to visit?

A: I wanted to visit friends, former students of ICU (International Christian University) and USC (University of South Carolina). I’d like to tell you about two of these, Yoshi and Minori.

Yoshi came to the United States as a non-believer. While learning English at USC, one of his teachers was a Christian. This contact, along with other Christian connections, soon found Yoshi accepting Christ and entering CIU, where he received his Masters of Divinity degree. At CIU, he met my Christian Japanese roommate, Minori. These two met, got married and are now serving the Lord in Shikoku, and they work with Ralph and Stella Cox!

And that is the SHORT and LONG of it, God at work on both sides of the ocean in and through the lives of many special people.

Our thanks to Monica for the special moments we spent on the phone. (When I heard that Monica had been to Japan, to Shikoku, I knew I had to give her a call!) jk



Truth & C

Os Guinness, in his book, *Time For Truth*, says, "Truth matters because it is a question of the trustworthiness of God." He goes on to say that truth is vital for two reasons: "To resist manipulation and it is the basis for freedom and fulfillment." "The truth of God's Law helps us to detect lies and without law, there is no freedom," states John Locke. According to Os Guinness, "Freedom is the power to do what we ought." "But if society rejects all absolute concepts of morality, the distinction of good and evil will vanish. If man is driven to manipulating one another it will only sink mankind to the state of animals," states Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

Knowing what communism did to his country, Solzhenitsyn states, "Our history has been concealed from us, entirely distorted; I am trying to reconstruct this history, primarily for Russia." As we know, socialism cost the Soviet Union 110 million lives from 1917-1959.

In Japanese society there has been a complete rejection of the Creator-God and man made in His image. This made the national polity as their absolute. They developed their best possible principles for the Japanese state and society. They placed their highest value as being loyal to one's identity and obligation as a Japanese person. The Imperial family was made the central core of this special family of the Japanese. It was to be a nation with a special destiny, to rule the world. They were a pure race and a pure nation. The emotional ties to the emperor and State led many to their deaths. By 1945, some 20 million Asians, 3.1 million Japanese and 60,000 Allied forces perished in the Second World War. The publisher of a major newspaper in Japan, K. Togasaki, stated,

"Japan's history is a tissue of lies, myths and fairy tales....Find the truth!" If the Japanese are to find the truth and be set free in Christ, they need to know and accept their sins of the past and present.

The Japanese continue to hold strong bonds with the spirits of deceased ancestors. They believe their source of life comes from their ancestors and, as an expression of thanks to life, they respect and honor them with prayer and offerings. Many depend upon them for protection, and others fear the spirits in case they may receive punishment from them. As a family of Japan, there is a great concern for harmony and unity. Great sacrifice is made on account of

**"...if society rejects
all absolute concepts of morality,
the distinction of good and evil
will vanish.
If man is driven
to manipulating one another
it will only sink mankind
to the state of animals,"**

...Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

the group. Nobody wants to be caught doing something that may bring shame upon the individual or the group. Such thinking promotes oneness, inclusiveness, intolerance and conformity according to the guidelines of the national polity. There is no forgiveness for those who step out of line.

The late Emperor Hirohito was educated by special tutors to be the center of the nation's political, military and spiritual life in the deepest sense. He was the commander-in-chief of the military and the highest priest of the Shinto religion. All major decisions came to the emperor regarding national and foreign affairs. He was trained to give his

approval to any decision needing to be made. With his death, there are now new documents available to show that there was a cover-up to protect him from being a war criminal. The concealment came from both the US government and the nationalistic leaders of the Japanese military.

After the surrender of the Philippines in April 1945, General MacArthur and Brigadier General Bonner Fellers worked out an approach to reform Japan once the occupation began. Fellers became the military secretary of MacArthur and was a war psychologist. They decided to separate Emperor Hirohito from the militarists. They portrayed him as a figurehead in a constitutional monarchy. They thought that it was crucial to retain the emperor in order to ensure control over the people. They gave the code name "Operation Blacklist" to this strategy. In a telegram from General MacArthur, General Eisenhower received the following message during the early months of the occupation: "The emperor is a symbol which unites all Japanese. Destroy him and the nation will disintegrate." On September 18,

1945, the US Senate in their Joint Resolution 94 recommended that the emperor be tried as a war criminal. But this was referred to a sub-committee and no action was ever taken. MacArthur and his advisors influenced the committee to such an extent that the emperor was seen as a lover of peace, a pacifist, and a British-style constitutional monarch. But the emperor was never even questioned as to his role in the war.

Emperor Hirohito and the militarists were very pleased with the approach General MacArthur and his advisors directed. The emperor believed firmly that he was a monarch by divine right

Consequences

By Stephen Young

and that he was the essence of the Japanese State. He continued to feel responsible for protecting the three imperial regalia, or mirror, sword and necklace. He felt tremendous responsibility to his ancestors to preserve the purity of the Japanese race, peace of society and preservation of the national polity. He lacked all consciousness of personal responsibility, even though at times his younger brothers and other leaders asked him to abdicate the throne. But to keep his position he did not tell the truth. In the early days of the occupation his secretary recorded his "Monologue," and later an English statement under the guidance of MacArthur.

The emperor claims he made no real direct decision-making, could not avoid approving the decisions of Tojo's cabinet, and that he was virtually a prisoner and powerless. Before the war trials began, all the accused were prepared to protect the emperor, but there were two touchy moments when he was in danger. A former prime minister, Inukai, stood on the stand and said the emperor had responsibility for the expansion of the Manchurian Incident. General Tojo, on the stand, stated, "That no Japanese subject, let alone a high official of Japan, would ever go against the will of the emperor." This was a clear statement to say that the emperor had decided to start the war with America and endorsed many other decisions. Both of these statements were quickly and carefully corrected to remove any war responsibility from the emperor. Herbert Bix, in his recent book, *Hirohito and The Making of Modern Japan*, states: "Protecting the emperor and remaking his image were complex political undertakings that could be achieved only by grossly exaggerating the threat of social upheaval in Japan, rigging testimony, destroying evidence and

distorting history."

As a missionary child and then later as a missionary, my father lived under the Japanese flag in four different islands. He understood well the struggle between the two empires—of Japan and that of Christ. He writes in his book, *The Two Empires in Japan*, "The Japanese Church grew up in an atmosphere of compromise and accommodation certain to doom the cause of the Empire of Christ... The willingness of the Christian forces to accept the government's interpretation of the Imperial Rescript on Education, to do the required obeisance to the emperor and failure to unite in protest against it was

**It is the task of the Christians
to be light and salt
in every society.
We are to uphold the Truth
as revealed in the Bible
and pray that people
will repent
from their hearts.**

perhaps the most tragic failure in the history of Christianity in Japan."

On December 15, 1945 General MacArthur signed the Shinto Religious Directive which separated religion and the state. It disestablished State Shinto as the national religion. He claimed Japan had a theological problem and called for 10,000,000 Bibles and 10,000 missionaries. In six years time only 2,000 missionaries went to Japan. He claimed that Japan would be the oral leader of the world. In a letter to Edwin Reischauer, an advisor, and later to become an Ambassador to Japan, was written, "A thousand years from now, when only a line in history books is


devoted to this recent war (WWII), a whole paragraph will say that this time the ideals of democracy and Christianity came to Japan from America to become the foundation of all future Japanese civilization. We pray and continue to proclaim the gospel so that this day may come."

Japanese military leaders were blamed for the crimes of the war. The emperor became a symbol of unity and the state. The national polity, with high value on loyalty and obligation as a Japanese person, remains the major barrier to the Christian faith. This has created a performance driven people where those who succeed are accepted and those who fail are disowned. The economic recovery of Japan, their high technology and level of education, has given the people a sense of pride and to some, a sense of superiority. Christianity is the western man's religion, they say. Their security in a nationalistic humanism has deceived them to think only weak people need religion. The majority of people remain atheistic and only .037% of the Japanese population could be considered Christian at this time.

The decision to not accuse and pass charges against the emperor in the short term enhanced unity and quick recovery for the Japanese nation. But in the long run, the attachment to the national polity with strong ties to the Imperial family has kept the Japanese from being open to the truth of Christ's gospel.

There is no truth in Satan and this evil spirit is the father of lies. Jesus is the Truth and what He has said and recorded in the Bible is the Truth. For people to believe in the Truth, they must be convicted of their sins. A repentant heart is mandatory along with the gift of forgiveness in Christ to bring true

Truth...Continued on page 31

From the President's Pencil 

By the time that you read this most of us will be fully occupied with the autumn's work. During the summer the prime minister was given a mandate for change by the people, and it now remains to be seen if the much-vaunted Koizumi Revolution will take place. There are many vested interests here, which mean that the possibility for change, even much needed change, is fairly slight. Perhaps this is the beginning of the beginning. Maybe gradually the demand for change will increase and the need to change some of the political structures will be increasingly recognized. One thing is certain; the prayers of God's people can assist the process. We enjoy great peace and liberty to preach the Gospel here and long may it continue. It is not too late to sign up for the Church Planting Institute in November. The dates are November 6-9 at the Lakeland Hotel on Kawaguchi Ko (lake). We shall have special guest speakers, but rather than fill our heads with methods, we are seeking to have hearts

afame with the gospel in all its richness, which drives us out in loving service to the lost around us. Don't miss it!

Kenny Joseph and co-workers have been giving out Pearl Harbour tracts to those going to see the film of the same name. Seed is being sown and there is another opportunity to take people to see a thought provoking film when "Oyabun wa Iesu Sama" (Jesus is My Boss) comes to a movie house near you. This is a commercial film telling the story of some gangsters who are led to Christ. The movie is violent in parts, but not unduly so; after all, it is a commercial venture. This film will certainly give many natural chances to talk to people about the Lord. It gives, I feel, a realistic portrayal of the difficulties some people face when they come to Christ.

We are in the throes of making changes to the Annual Summer Conference, traditionally held in the summer resort town of Karuizawa. Please watch for details on the matter. We trust that all the changes will be for the better. Any suggestions you might have for improvement, please let me know.

Recently I received a letter which ended "Praise'N'Pray'N'Peg Away", which is a paraphrase of I Corinthians 15:58. I am sure that as we continue pressing on we shall see the Lord give us the fruit we desire in this wonderful country.

Yours in the fight,
Paul Pike



Next issue's feature:

HONSHU/Tohoku Region
theme: Working Together

Deadline: November 1
Publication: January 2002

Point Well Taken

We will be including Japan Harvest articles from the past, beginning in 2002.

Thank you for your suggestion! jk

JEMA Datebook 2001-2002

Event	Date	Place
Women in Ministry Day of Prayer	October 29, 2001	C & MA Center
CPI Conference	November 6-9	Lakeland Hotel, Kawaguchi-ko
JEMA Plenary	February 26, 2002	OCC
Women's Retreat	March 6-8, 2002	Megumi Chalet
Prayer Summit East	May 14 - 17, 2002	Okutama Bible Chalet
Prayer Summit West	May 20 - 23, 2002	Hiruzen Bible Camp

Karuizawa Summer Conference...

Ladies' Tea with guest speaker, Evelyn Blom...



JOY was the theme and our experience as the JEMA ladies gathered for the annual Tea at Karuizawa on July 31. We were privileged to be the first group to use the beautiful new addition to the Woodshed at Megumi Chalet, which had just been dedicated the previous day. Thanks to Ellen Bardeau and Jenny Austgen for the invitation to use the new facility, and our thanks to them for making us feel welcome. What a wonderful setting for the special theme of JOY!

Music, provided by Priscilla and Tabitha Kunz on violin, flute and guitar along with piano accompaniment, led us in worship—a true time of joyful praise.



TWO GREAT JOYS

We were greatly blessed by our special speaker, Evelyn Blom, teacher of math and women's studies at Multnomah College, Portland, Oregon (USA). Evelyn and her husband came to Karuizawa for summer ministry at the Karuizawa Union Church.

Quoting from memory a portion of Psalm 145, Evelyn focused on verse 4 which reads, "One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts." She then shared how we pass on the joys from the Lord by mentoring the youth, whether we are single or married.



Joy 1—Listening

Mrs. Blom's very own mother lived this joy before her three children by being there with a snack and a listening ear when her children returned from school. Her words of love during those brief moments before the children ran off to play were seeds of JOY.

Even greater is the wonderful gift we all have in God, the Outstanding Listener! In the Psalms there are over 50 references to God's listening, His inclining to us, and His hearing our voice when we cry out to Him. Evelyn recently experienced anxiety during hospitalization. The Lord gave her assurance through Deuteronomy that He heard her cries, "For what people is there that has a God so near, when we call upon Him!"

Joy 2—the Joy of Written Notes!

There is joy in both receiving and in passing on written notes. Evelyn shared several of these, including notes

of "complaints" from her children as well as those of encouragement and exhortation, realizing they had all been written in love. God, too, has written us a Love Letter in His Word and He is always on time in accordance to our need, always writes in love, even when we need chastisement for bad attitudes or for guidance in difficult decisions.

In the Bloms' first ministry after seminary, Evelyn was feeling "tired of being poor," and wished for another set of sheets, a jelly dish, and dress fabric. Their new church family had a surprise housewarming and what did they receive but exactly what she had been longing for—sheets, a jelly dish and fabric! At that time the Lord spoke to her from Proverbs about wisdom and knowledge being better than gold. She treasures these experiences of His gentle encouragement. Evelyn believes that God gives us counsel and maybe a "kick" when needed, but He gives His JOY always!

We have a God who listens and who writes to us! Two great joys to pass on!



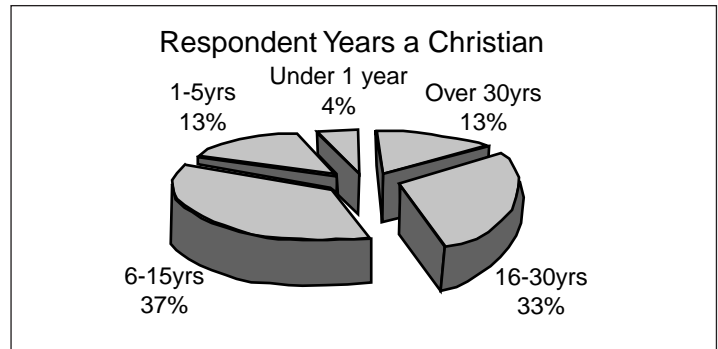
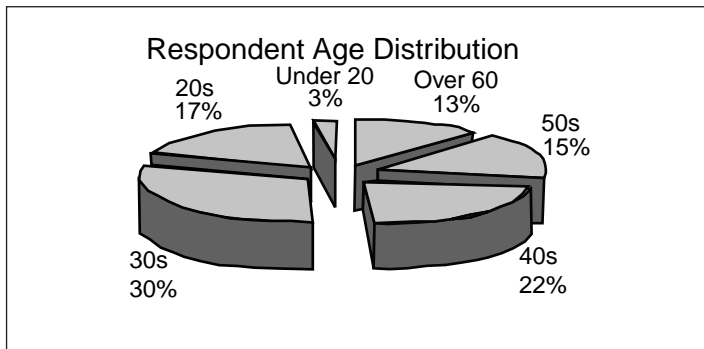
Reported by JoAnn Wright

Church VITALITY in Japan

By Mike Sherrill

Have you ever heard of a 1,000 member church in Japan? How about a church growing from zero to sixty in two years, entirely made up of new Christians. Perhaps you have heard of an inner city church plant growing from zero to forty in two years, ministering to people most churches can't relate to. How about an urban church of one hundred seventy where every social-economic level is well represented, or a rural church of one hundred seventy where nearly one hundred percent of the membership is participating in active cell groups. If you have never heard of such circumstances in Japan may you be encouraged by what follows.

The church in Japan is blazing a new trail. This article summarizes the preliminary findings of a current research project on the vitality of Japanese churches. This project gathered 526 surveys from 22 churches of a wide variety of



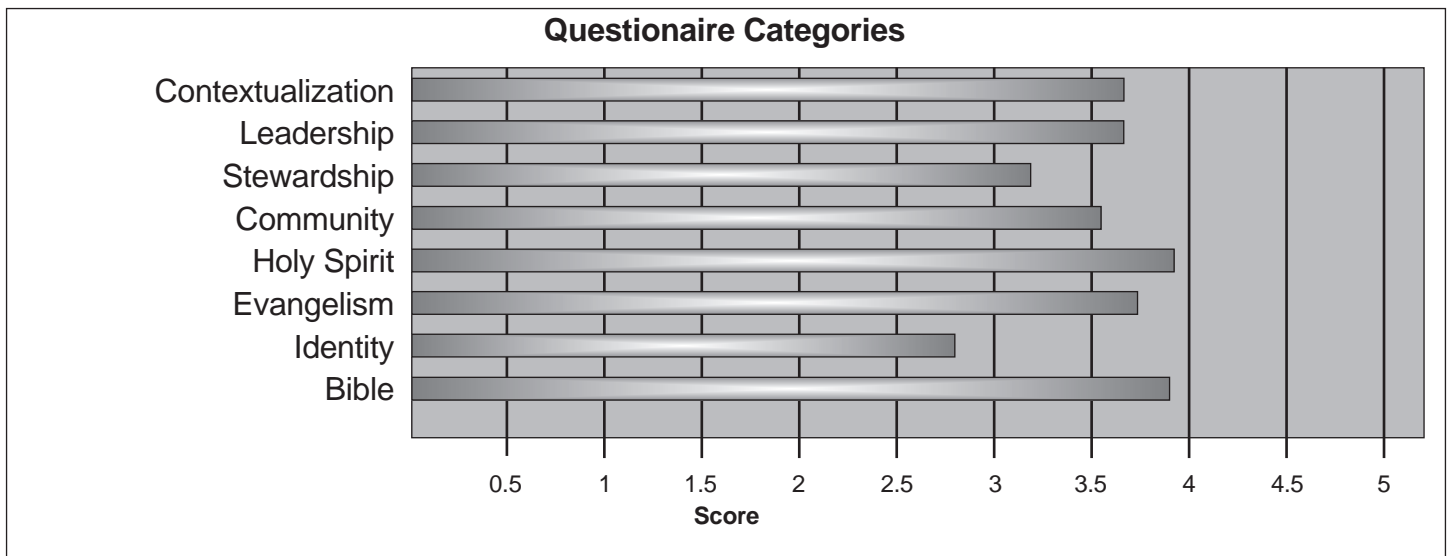
denominational backgrounds all over Japan. The age range of the respondents and years as a Christian were evenly distributed. (See graphs). This gives a good balance to the data. Initially, these churches were selected because they seemed to exhibit an exceptional level of vitality. The goal of the research project was to describe the nature of the vitality found in these churches. We are not simply looking at church growth. Rather we are more concerned with church health and the vital signs that foster it.

The basis for evaluating the vitality of Japanese churches is extensive background research in sociology, theology and biblical studies. Each of these areas contributed to the formation of a model of church vitality relevant to contemporary Japanese society. This model is composed of eight categories: Bible, Identity, Evangelism, Holy Spirit, Community, Stewardship, Leadership and Contextualization. These categories formed the basis of a questionnaire which consisted mainly of multiple choice questions leading to statistical analysis, along with several open-ended questions which probed the respondents' memories for experiences and events that were significant in the life of the church. This method draws out stories that give more depth to the data.

I followed the questionnaires with in-depth case studies of five churches, which helped verify the data collected, but also opened up the possibility of discovering new categories based on the experience of the Japanese churches. This project was not concerned with a comparison of the churches as much as a desire to learn from these churches as a whole.

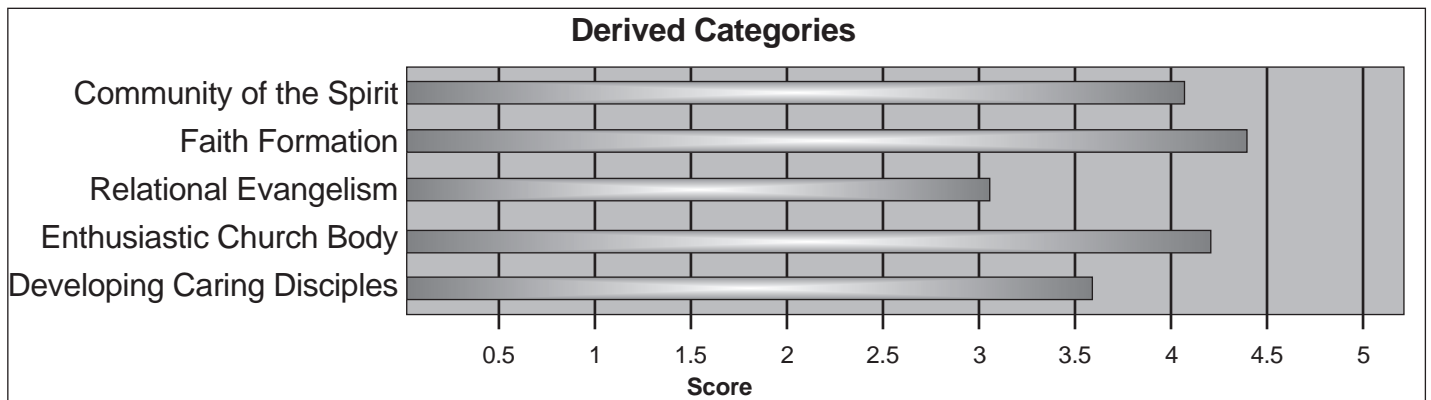
First, let's take a look at how these churches measured up against the eight predefined categories. The graph shows the averages of the churches scored together as a group. Based on a maximum score of 5, we can see that these churches have strengths in all these areas, and their two greatest strengths are "Bible" and "Holy Spirit." What this tells us in respect to the Bible is that these churches have a strong knowledge of the Bible, they give authority to the Bible, and they emphasize Bible study and discipleship. With respect to the Holy Spirit, their strong score tells us that these churches understand the importance of dependence on the Holy Spirit, they sense the direction of the Holy Spirit, and they intentionally seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in worship and prayer. These two categories seem to form a focal point for vitality at these churches.

How would these churches define their own vitality? In order to uncover this we need to analyze the data in two



steps. The first step involves statistics and the second involves carefully reviewing information gathered in the case studies along with all of the hand-written responses in the questionnaires. Factor analysis looks for relationships in the answers to various questions. For example, I found that on average when respondents agreed with the statement “My church provides instruction on how to disciple others,” they also agreed with the statement “My church helps people heal broken relationships in their lives.” Ultimately, all of the answers are divided into groups or categories that tell us what is really important to these churches. From this analysis I derived five essential categories of vitality: Developing Caring Disciples, Enthusiastic Church Body, Relational Evangelism, Faith Formation and Community of the Spirit.

This graph shows how the churches measured up to their own categories. Based on a maximum score of 5 we can see that these churches have strong scores in all these categories, with the strongest one being “faith formation.”



This means that these churches are helping people develop a Christian faith that goes beyond church involvement to developing a completely new way of life. People living a dynamic Christian way of life on a daily basis seems to be the fuel that feeds the fire of vitality in these churches.

“Developing caring disciples” is defined by the case study churches as being an evangelistic community that emphasizes discipleship training and mutual care. In other words, the church is to be a community of believers that cares for each other’s needs and nurtures each other in growth as disciples of Christ. One respondent wrote, “As I sang in the gospel choir I gradually accepted Jesus. Since then, some other members in the choir led me to church and I met the pastor. I am so thankful that I can study the Bible and fellowship with these brothers and sisters.” Many others mentioned how important fellowship in cell groups has been to their growth as disciples. “Thanks to cell groups, not only the pastor, but we also can help other followers.” Another said, “We have learned how to love each other.” When respondents described the atmosphere of their church they used words like “open, accepting, warm and welcoming.” When asked to describe how their church had affected them they used words like, “release, relief, recovery and peace of mind.” This is the result found in churches that are developing caring disciples.

Being an “enthusiastic church body” also involves being a welcoming and evangelistic community. However, this requires a laity that is mobilized to nurture others and members that are aware of their vocation as lay ministers. One

Church Vitality in Japan continued on page 32

クリスチャン新聞 Gleanings from The Christian Shinbun

Statement Against the Approval of The New Textbook of History

Mr. Junichiro Koizumu, Prime Minister
Ms Atsuko Toyama, Minister of Education & Science
Ms Makiko Tanaka, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Yasuo Fukuda, Chief Cabinet Secretary

We, the Japan Evangelical Association, are a cooperating body of Protestant denominations, churches, and organizations associated with 1,799 churches with 115,595 believers who value the Holy Bible and wish to follow its teachings faithfully. We are members of the Evangelical Fellowship of Asia, made up of Christian churches from 16 countries in Asia, and we are also members of the World Evangelical Fellowship, with 180,000,000 believers from 114 countries.

We love our nation, and we admit we are really responsible for the next generation. There are two ways to deal with the historical fact that Japan has inflicted damages on surrounding nations: by covering them up so as to conceal, or by showing them as they are. However, as Mr. Richard von Weizakker, former Chancellor of Germany, said, "Those who close their eyes to the past become blind to the present." We believe that the way to gain mutual trust and respect in Asia and the world is by looking straight at the historical facts and by raising a generation who would not commit another failure, but would lead to the real "national interest" for the present and the future. It is as is written in the Bible: "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people."

However, the Ministry of Education and Science allowed the public use of a history textbook which was prepared by "New History Textbook Publishing Association". We, the board members of the Japan Evangelical Association, protest this decision with deep regret for the following reasons:

1. Our Own Perception of History

We issued "A Statement of the Japan Evangelical Association on the 50th Anniversary After the War" at our 10th General Assembly in 1995. In that statement we reflected that during "the 15 Years of War", churches in Japan, represented by the United Churches of Japan, cooperated willingly with the colonial policy of the nation and supported the invasions of the surrounding nations of Asia; and for 50 years after the war churches in general had not expressed repentance, and have not looked straight at those facts. In the Statement of the Japan Evangelical Association we stated, "We take seriously the situation in which churches in Japan were placed.

We repent before our God the sins of the church of Japan, who committed the sin of idolatry, forced churches in other countries to do the same, and cooperated with the invasion of Asian nations. We humbly beg the neighboring churches of Asian nations to forgive us for our sins."

2. The Perception of the History of Japan's Diet & the Government

Our Diet also made a resolution in the same year of 1995 saying, "We express our deep regret, recognizing the pain given to people of other nations, especially to the people of Asian nations by our past colonial rule and invasive acts." Mr. Tomichi Murayama, Prime Minister at that time, made a speech as follows: "We have made a mistake in our policy during a certain period in the past to proceed with wars to threaten the existence of other nations, but also to give great damage and pain to many nations, especially the people of Asian countries." It was repeatedly confirmed that this statement was the official understanding of the Japanese government.

3. Common perception of history between the governments of Japan and Korea, and those of Japan and China

In the joint statement of Japan and Korea, which was published in October, 1998 when the Korean president, Kim Dae Jung, visited Japan, Mr. Keizo Obuchi, then Prime Minister, stated: "We humbly admit that we caused great damage and pain to the people of Korea by our colonial rule in the past, and we regret this and apologize from our heart." It was also stated, "Both leaders shared the understanding that people of both nations, especially those of the younger generation, should find a new and deep perception of history, and it was stressed that much concern and effort should be given in order to see that happen."

When Mr. Jiang Zemin, the Chairman of China, visited Japan in November of the same year, he and Mr. Obuchi published "A Joint Declaration of Japan and China," in which they said, "Japan will keep the joint statement of 1972 and the Prime Minister's speech in 1995; she (Japan) declared a deep regret and responsibility for such disaster and the damage she gave to the people of China...Both will develop mutual friendship extending for a long period on this basis."

4. The problems of the history textbooks prepared by "New History Textbook Publishing Association"

When we view the above perspective, we cannot dismiss the fact that the new history textbook prepared by "New History Textbook Publishing Association" (Mr. Kanji Nisio, President) has passed the textbook examination. It has been

chosen for use in junior high schools for the fiscal year of 2002. This textbook shows no regret for our colonial rule and invasions before and during the war. Based on this view of history, which glorifies and rationalizes, the text is extremely nationalistic. Although they corrected the texts according to the demands of revision in the process of the examination, they did not change their view of history at all, and we cannot see any deep regret for the colonial rule and invasions of the past. We are afraid that such a textbook cannot obtain understanding from Korea, China and other nations of Asia, and that it will damage the friendship with them fostered in recent years. We understand the text is contrary to joint declarations between Japan and the said two nations, and will damage the relationship between Japan and Korea, and that between Japan and China. We have already seen severe criticisms from Korea and China, and President Kim Dae Jung of Korea stated that he would demand the revision of the textbook. We have voices of concern and protest from churches in Asia, especially the whole church of Korea.

We conclude that the Japanese government neglected the situation, which is contrary to the joint statements of the two countries as stated above, and that Japan is responsible for the outcome. We demand that the government withdraw the approval of the "new history textbook." Even if this cannot be done, we strongly wish that the government take every possible measure to prevent the textbook from being used.

We therefore strongly protest the approval of the "new history textbook," wishing the development of stronger friendship with Korea, China and other nations of Asia, and we also want to nurture relationships soundly for the sake of the next generation.

May 30, 2001

Rev. Dr. Tadashi Tsutada

Chairman, Japan Evangelical Association Board

OTHER NEWS IN BRIEF:

Gospel Music Worship of America (GMWA) chose Mr. Shinya Fujinami, composer of the choir number, "Thank You Lord," as a recipient for an award in choir gospel music. He is the first Japanese to be honored by GMWA.

SUPER GOOD—

Super good defines the renewed OCC Friday Night meetings. After several years interval, the Friday Night meetings have been resumed. On May 18 there were 98 attendees ranging in age from high school to middle-aged office workers. Meetings will be held at 7:00 on the first Friday of the month.



Translated by Mizuko Matsushita, who is JEMA Executive Office Secretary. She has served faithfully since 1984.

Mission-minded Japanese servants live out faith in other lands. Here is Ms. Yoshiko Yamamoto's story...

THE FOOT LADY

*Translated by Junko Nakagawa
New Life Tract*

"The Foot Lady" is the name given by the Canadian media to Ms. Yoshiko Yamamoto, who not only serves warm meals to "street girls," but also washes their swollen feet with warm water and massages the chapped areas with perfumed oil. These young girls are drug addicts and most are infected with Aids and/or Hepatitis C.

"In the beginning, I tried to be very patient with the awful smells, and I tried not to vomit. Now I have gotten used to it all and I can stay calm," explains Ms. Yamamoto. As she ministers to the girls, she waits patiently for their hearts to relax and soften. When finally able to speak, some in broken English and others as the tears flow, they tell their stories.

"Many of these girls became 'street girls' trying to escape life's pain. In order to purchase drugs they became prostitutes."

Ms. Yoshiko, born in Osaka, suffered as a child under her father's relentless violent behavior and heavy drinking. She grew to hate him and, with injured heart and low self-esteem, she fled to Los Angeles, California (USA). It was there at the age of 28 she entered into faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Yoshiko worked as a baby sitter for a warmhearted Christian lady who taught her that Jesus suffered for us and for our sins, and He died on a cross, rising on the third day! This Jesus offers eternal life to whosoever believes in Him and He is the only One who can heal and help us. Bewildered by it all, one night her spirit was quieted by a dream in which Jesus talked to her saying, "Do not be afraid. Trust me." It was then that she made up her mind to believe in Jesus Christ and began her new life in Christ! After attending church for one month she was baptized and then lived in the United States for nine months. She returned to Japan to become a staff member with Youth with a Mission and found joy in helping missionaries. She led many students to faith.

The Scripture, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation," moved Yoshiko to Singapore for a nine-month period for theological training, then on to Hawaii where she worked with youth. She continued to travel and went to Cambodia and Africa, serving in refugee camps. (Traveling was not new to Yoshiko for, prior to becoming a believer, she had traveled widely, visiting some 21 foreign countries in Europe and Australia.) Returning to Hawaii, Yoshiko took up counseling and learned AIDS patient care. She then moved to Canada in 1994, where she learned deliverance ministry for the next three years from a pastor. After gaining a missionary visa, she moved to Vancouver where she joined a counseling team. She did evangelism, cooking meals for the homeless, teaching the Bible to discriminated-against Indians, and caring for poor and sick adults and children.

She started a volunteer activity for some 2,500 "street

Continued on page 25

Language Lab

「から」 and 「ので」

It is some while since a teacher of Japanese language made me aware that I was making errors in the use of 'no de' and 'kara'. However, I have to confess that it was not until recently when reviewing some handbooks on grammar that I got down to comparing these two connectives (also called particles in some reference books) and their usage. Both 'no de' and 'kara' can be translated by 'so; since; or because' but there are important differences in usage.

Book 9 in the Practical Japanese Workbooks series explains the difference between 'no de' and 'kara' as follows.

自然の原因関係を表す (ので) versus 主体的な行為の理由を示す (から)

I.e. 'no de' is used when objective consequences occur naturally from certain causes. 'Kara' is used to express the consequence of a subjective or personal cause such as a command or demand. 「から」は主張を伴うので強く感じられる。'Kara' sounds strong because of the element of personal judgement, assertiveness or will that goes with it, whereas 'no de' is a softer expression.

E.g. 熱が40度近くあったので学校を休んだ。 上司が嫌いだから会社をやめたい。(will)
円高になったので、海外旅行をする人が増えた。 寒いから、まどをしめてくれ。(command)

'A Dictionary of Basic Japanese' clarifies the difference between the 2 connectives as follows: 'no de' is used when the speaker believes that the information he provides in the 'reason' clause is valid and also evident and acceptable to the hearer. 'Kara' clauses do not involve that assumption and 'kara' as opposed to 'no de' must be used in the following situations:

1. The reason clause expresses the speaker's conjecture about something
E.g. 人がたくさん来るだろうから、食べ物をたくさん買っておいた。
2. The main clause is a command, request, suggestion or invitation.
E.g. この映画はためになるから行きなさい。
3. The reason clause expresses the speaker's volition or personal opinion.
E.g. 田中さんが行くからぼくも行こう。

Finally, in case the above all seems too complicated to think about when trying to construct a sentence in the middle of a conversation, here is a simple rule of thumb from 'Understanding Basic Japanese Grammar' If not used properly, 'kara' often sounds arrogant. It is advisable to limit the use of 'kara' within responses to 'naze' (why) questions.

E.g. A: なぜこの大学を選びましたか。
B: いい先生がいるからです。
A: あなたは?
C: 授業料が安いからです。



Miriam Davis came to Japan in 1975 from the UK and taught English in schools and universities in Nara Prefecture, Nagoya and Osaka for eight years. In 1986 she joined OMF International and moved to Sapporo to do church planting and

English teaching. Since 1990 she has been Language Advisor to OMF.

In all the other cases, please use 'no de'. Study the following examples.

1. (O) 昨日はいい天気だったので、子供と一緒に公園に行きました。
(X) 昨日はいい天気だったから、子供と一緒に公園に行きました。
2. (O) 暑いので、エアコンをつけました。
(X) 暑いから、エアコンをつけました。

Books referred to:

1. 'Practical Japanese Workbooks 9 - Particles' by Miyoshi Reiko, Yoshigi Tooru and Yonezawa Fumihiko, Senmon Kyooiku Publishing Co., Ltd., 1997
すぐに使える実践日本語シリーズ9 助詞(初・中級) 三吉礼子, 吉木徹, 米澤文彦, 共著 専門教育出版 ¥1,500
This series of books are completely in Japanese but the explanations are clear and simple. All kanji have furigana on them and there are lots of examples plus ones to test oneself on. A highly recommendable series for intermediate plus learners of Japanese.
2. 'A Dictionary of Basic Japanese Grammar' by Makino Seiichi and Tsutsui Michio Japan Times 1989 ¥2,890 (the intermediate volume is also to be recommended.)
3. 'Understanding Basic Japanese Grammar' by Nishiguchi Koichi, Aruku Press 2000
「基礎日本語文法教本」西口光一 アルク ¥1,900

Church Music



Singing Without Instrumentalists

Church planters are often frustrated by a lack of competent musicians. Since the worship services in their home churches probably included musical activity for up to 50% or more of the entire service time, this can be a significant issue!

Although live music is almost always to be preferred, other options may be necessary. However, the goal always should be to incorporate live instrumentalists as soon as possible. In the beginning, sometimes a cappella singing is the only alternative, but even a beginning guitarist who plays sensitively within the limits of his or her ability can dramatically improve the worship environment. But if all else fails, today's electronic technologies have provided us with a number of options.

Prerecorded music

Many church planters have tried singing along with worship CDs. Even though finding a desired song on a CD is easier than on a cassette tape, it still takes time. But with the popularity of MD players, a better option is to record the songs you'll be using onto an MD in the order of the service. You can even create a musical flow in this way by editing out any gaps between songs. But of course you can't decide to repeat the chorus or sing one less

or one more verse. (If you're concerned about copyright law, under the "fair use" guidelines of most countries a recording that you have purchased may be copied into another medium to use in substitute of the original.)

Audio and MIDI tracks (karaoke)

Many Christian publishers have produced accompaniment cassettes, and now CDs, for their songbooks. Sometimes this can encourage people to sing out more strongly because they are the only ones providing the words. Dubbing the tracks onto an MD can give you more flexibility as mentioned above.

A development during the past few years has been the use of MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) tracks which require a special MIDI player or a properly equipped computer. MIDI files consist of digital signals which tell a "tone generator" (included in the special player or in your computer) how to play a composition and what sounds to produce. One advantage is that you can easily change the key of the song to match the ranges of the voices. A person can purchase entire hymnals of MIDI data on 3 1/2" computer disks from places like Music Mansion (www.musicmansion.com).

In Japan, many people have used the "Hymnplayer," which functions in a similar way to a MIDI player, but is limited to the traditional organ sounds and hymns actually programmed into it.

User programmable tools

The Roland PDA-5 (no longer in production, but still found in stores) and the Yamaha QY70 are small "music computers" which contain rhythm patterns to which you may manually program chord sequences for songs. In about 30 minutes or less you can input the chords for your favorite new worship song, along with an introduction and ending. Just connect it to a stereo system, and you have instant accompaniment. Unfortunately, mem-

ory is limited, so in the case of both tools you can only program a maximum of about 20 songs. Since it is MIDI data, however, you can download it into your computer for storage and playback.

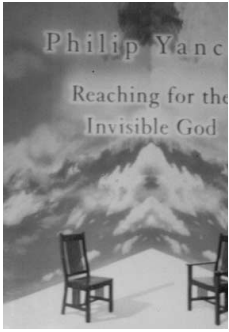
One nice feature of electronic tools such as these is that you can mute one or more of the tracks. For example, turn off the guitar track and let your beginning guitarist play along with the computer drummer, bass player, and pianist. Your budding live instrumentalists can improve their skills quite quickly in this way.

A software option that does all of the same things as the above hardware tools is a handy computer program called "Band-in-a-Box" produced by PG Music (www.pgmusic.com). Choose the music style and type in the chords, and you can have a simple song accompaniment in under 15 minutes. However a computer is larger and more complicated to deal with than the hardware "boxes" dedicated to the one music function.

Although these tools can be quite helpful, a drawback to all of these options is a loss of spontaneity. But if you use these modern advances as another opportunity for service for the technically inclined, and incorporate live instrumentalists into your worship service as they develop their ability, you will gradually develop a competent worship team.



Gary Bauman has been in Japan since 1988. He serves as a worship development consultant with LIFE Ministries. He welcomes questions and comments addressed to gbauman@lifejapan.org.



Reaching for the Invisible God
By Philip Yancey
Zondervan Publishing House, 2000,
301pp.

Philip Yancey authors another award-winning book. "Christianity Today" named *Reaching for the Invisible God*, Book of the Year in its awards for 2001 in the category of spirituality. After reading it I heartily agree with their choice.

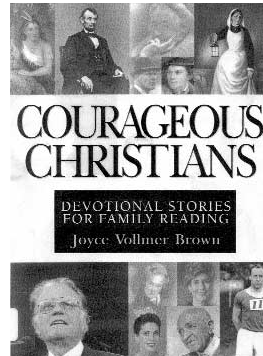
Living in a land where visible gods are part of the scenery, an invisible God may be hard for Japanese to grasp. Yet even Westerners can struggle with an invisible God, as Yancey admits, "How can I relate to a God who is invisible, when I'm never quite sure he is there?" This is just one of the dilemmas Yancey faces in his book.

Beginning with a longing for God and a faltering faith, Yancey takes us on a spiritual pilgrimage to find God. In his honest, personal and down-to-earth way he forces us to deal with the real doubts and questions we have concerning God. This includes the age-old question of a good God and an evil world. Yancey doesn't give pat answers to difficult questions. Through the searches and struggles of life, he comes to grips with who this invisible God really is. He doesn't put his theology in difficult theological terms. Instead it is expressed as it is lived out in the lives of great men and women in history, in art, in literature, and in our neighbors. The book soars to a climatic ending with the triumph of Good Friday and the hope of God's ultimate redemption.

If you only have time to read one book this year, I agree with "Christianity Today" that this is the book. "Reaching for the Invisible God" not only touched my mind and my spirit, but it touched my heart. Why not put it on your Christmas list?



Reviewer: Nancy Sorley and her husband are with the Baptist General Conference, planting a church in Nara City. Nancy came to Japan in 1976 as a single missionary with SEND.



**Courageous Christians:
Devotional Stories for Family
Reading**
By Joyce Vollmer Brown
Moody Press, 180pp.

In his excellent biography of Robert Jaffray, missionary to China and Indonesia, A.W. Tozer said, "Next to the Holy Scriptures the greatest aid to the life of faith may be Christian biography." Joyce Brown has selected 60 Christian heroes from different time periods and parts of the world. They are men, women, and children full of faith, courage, and love, some famous and others not so well known. As a mother concerned for her children to follow good Christian models, she decided to combine family devotional reading and inspiring biography for her family. Each of the 2-3 page readings begins with a Scripture verse, followed by

the story of the person, and ends with questions for discussion. We used the book over the summer and all of our children, from college age to our seven-year old, found the book interesting and inspiring.

Brown has a good balance of men and women (22 of the 60 are women), and includes separate stories on Jim and Elisabeth Elliot as well as three on the Graham family—Billy, Ruth, and Franklin. The courageous Christians she has chosen range from Martin Luther, Hudson Taylor, Kenneth Taylor, and George Muller to Pocahontas, Joni Eareckson Tada, Florence Nightingale, and Amy Carmichael. They come from countries like Holland, Scotland, China, Peru, and the United States, and include sports figures, politicians, and those who have suffered and overcome handicaps. The book ends with a helpful bibliography that gives suggestions for further reading on most of the people she has chosen.

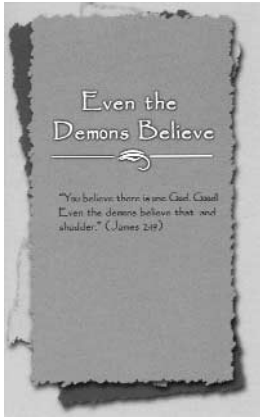
As one who has been deeply challenged and strengthened by reading Christian biographies, I was delighted to find a book that has helped me to introduce many of my heroes to my children in a simple way. Through the stories, not only have we learned about Christians who have faithfully followed and served Christ, we have also been inspired to imitate their faith and to strive to be courageous Christians. What a rich heritage we have to learn about and pass on to the next generation!

Further Reading:
John Woodbridge, *More than Conquerors*, (Moody, 1992).

John Woodbridge, *Ambassadors for Christ*, (Moody, 1994).



Reviewer: Don Schaeffer serves with his wife, Hazel, and is with the Christian & Missionary Alliance, planting a church in Kawaguchi. Don came to Japan in 1984.



Even the Demons Believe
By Timothy Williams
Wine Press Publishing, 120pp

This booklet, *Even the Demons Believe*, (EDB) is basically “how to be saved.” It should be good for both travellers and believers, but having said that it must stand at the head of all booklet classics in its clarity, vision, and purpose. Those familiar with A.B. Simpson or A.W. Tozer will quickly recognise Timothy Williams’ bold attempt to expose the “feel good gospel” and “wide-road” Christianity that many, without even realising it, are presently embracing. EDB is a good hard look at the message of the cross. Quote: “Only those embracing the ‘message of the cross’ are ‘being saved,’ for that is where the ‘power of God’ dwells” (1Cor. 1:18).

I would like to challenge everyone who calls himself or herself a Christian to sit down with a copy of EDB and seriously, prayerfully go through each chapter with his Bible to see if these things are so (Acts 17:11). This is not one of those self-help books. It is on the contrary a book all about dying to self explaining plainly about the crucified life and what it means to “hate your life”.

In my own walk with Christ over the past ten years there has been a great deal of soul searching and growing frustration. As I looked into the Word of God I saw how different my life, my thinking and walk were from the life declared and lived by disciples of the New Testament church. This

dissatisfaction drove me to seek various self-help remedies, all of which proved futile. However, in June, 1999 I heard for the first time the powerful “message of the Cross” (1Cor. 1:18). This doctrine has completely transformed my life. It has opened my eyes and understanding to the true purpose of the Cross being the divine instrument used by God for the annihilation of the self-life within, thus bringing about the much-needed process of change in a person’s life (Rom 8:13). As Jessie Penn Lewis so aptly states in his book, *The Centrality of the Cross*, “...It is not the ‘Cross’ that makes us miserable but the absence of it....” May the Lord give us grace indeed to be brave enough to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to us concerning these things.

This publication comes as a breath of fresh air for a Church so confused and wrought with worldliness, caught up in the “numbers game” and focused on itself. (The recent best-seller, *The Prayer of Jabez*, is a prime example of the ultimate “bless me” book). I strongly encourage you to read this booklet in its entirety, look up every Scripture reference, and pray and meditate on the “terms of peace” that Christ came to bring.

P.S. I have made this booklet available to a number of fellow missionaries, but if you have not already received a copy please email me or write to me at the address below. It will be my joy to send you a copy at no charge (Matt 10:8).

Nicholas D. Sillavan
5-13-1 Ooeyama-cho, Goryo,
Nishikyo-ku, Kyoto
610-1102. JAPAN
Email: sillavan@gold.ocn.ne.jp

The Foot Lady continued from page 21 girls” including some who were only 10 years of age. five thousand drug addict patients, some of whom were Indians, came to the church-related ministry called “Drop in Center.” Nearly 100 needy people dropped in daily for medical and welfare support, along with counseling and remedial reading.

God’s guidance continued to be evident for future ministry. While living in Kelowna, Yoshiko noticed that her friend, a beautician, had very swollen legs because of all the long hours spent on her feet. It was then she washed the feet of her friend with hot water and then massaged them gently. Her friend was so pleased by her kindness and love. The ministry of foot washing was born, and the “street girls” came to mind.

Remember that 2000 years ago Jesus Christ washed His disciples’ feet saying, “Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet” John 13:14. This is just what Yoshiko is doing!

With a desire to know more about counseling and to put what she learns into practice, Yoshiko wants to build “The House for Recovery.” In the future she wants to invite counselors with whom she can continue the deliverance and healing ministry. Ill-treated children, addicts, and the spiritually sick, including the “street girls,” are those she wants to reach with hands that help clean and strengthen, cheer and save. May the resurrected Life of Christ fill Yoshiko. From a past of pain to a life of JOY, Yoshiko is an agent through whom many bewildered and exhausted people are finding hope, healing and help. Just as God’s Word says, “I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water and the parched ground into springs” (Isaiah 41:18). Yoshiko sees herself as God’s helper—no wonder she is known as THE FOOT LADY!

回 転

We all
take different paths
in life,
but no matter
where we go,
we take a little
of each other
everywhere.

By: Tim McGraw

THE PIANO

Author unknown

Wishing to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took the small boy to a Paderewski concert. After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her. Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy rose and eventually explored his way through a door marked, "NO ADMITTANCE." When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that her son was missing.

Suddenly, the curtains parted and the spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway on stage. In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard,

innocently picking out "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano, and whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing." Then leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part. Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child and he added a running obbligato. Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderful, creative experience. The audience was mesmerized.

That's the way it is with

God. What we can accomplish on our own is hardly noteworthy. We try our best, but the results aren't exactly graceful, flowing music. But with the hand of the Master, our life's work truly can be beautiful. Next time you set out to accomplish great feats, listen carefully. You can hear the voice of the Master, whispering in your ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing." Feel His loving arms around you. Know that His strong hands are playing the concerts of your life. Remember, God doesn't call the equipped; He equips the called! And He'll always be there to love and guide you on to great things!

A Nigerian Proverb

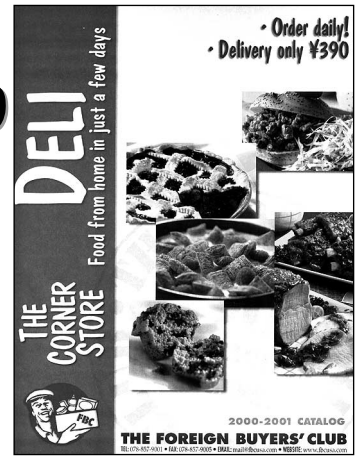
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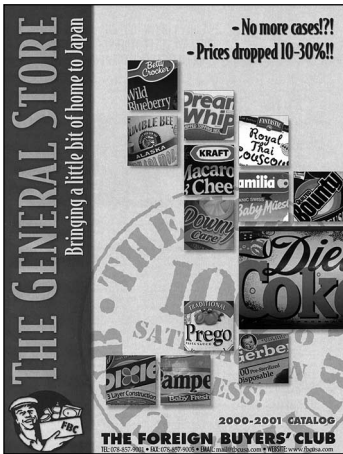
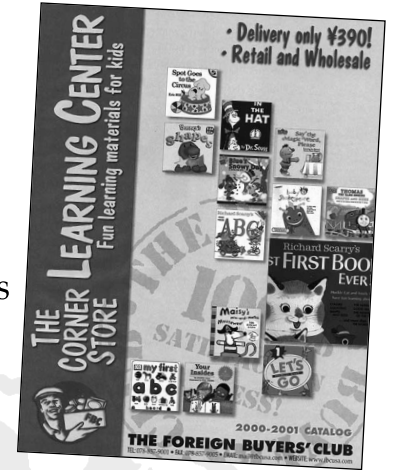


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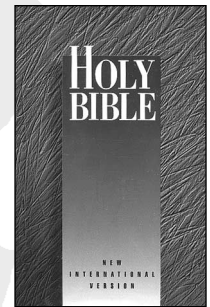
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 George SHIBATA Golden Jubilee + 3 years JLC
 Ronald & Sandra SIMEONSON 43 years BIMJ
 Mrs. Harry SMITH 48 years IND
 Ruth & Gene SPEAR 46 years RPM
 Eulalia SPOOR Golden Jubilee IND
 Anneliese & Christian STOECKER 47 years IND
 Eleanor & Clarence SWANSON 49 years IND
 John TERRY 43 years IND
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 Lawrence TODD Golden Jubilee + 1 IND
 Neil & Peggy VERWEY Golden Jubilee JM
 Philip & Wilma VISSER 45 years JRM

Augrey WEST 48 years ChC
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 Alfres WINROTH 46 years IND
 Froydis & Sakae YOSHITOMI Golden Jubilee IND Luth
 Eugen & Lorna ZOLLINGER 47 years

We honor and congratulate you!

Checking the entire year's honor roll for missionaries celebrating their Golden Jubilee or more, I counted 30 family names. How can we celebrate in a way that would honor you enough, dear saints of God? Hearty and loving CONGRATULATIONS to you and may the Lord give you many more years of service; after all, the best is yet to come! —the editor

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Guarding Your Child's Heart

Prepare your child to meet life's challenges

By Elfriede Schaeffer

An acquaintance of ours was thoroughly devoted to the church and to God. His sons, though they had grown up in the church, were just as thoroughly devoted to themselves and to the world. I imagine that they, like most children who grow up in evangelical churches, prayed to receive Christ. After awhile, however, you could see them slowly turning away from the Lord.

Children like this may still be regulars at church or the youth group, but you sense there is spiritual heart trouble. They have grown cold, indifferent and sometimes antagonistic to the church, if not to God. What happened?

Proverbs 4:23 says, "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the well-spring of life" (NIV). Three things can deeply affect the heart and the life that springs from it: hardness caused by sin, darkness caused by idolatry and bitterness that results from inner pain.

The Hardness of Sin

Sin can cause hardness. "But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you maybe hardened by sin's deceitfulness" (Hebrews 3:13). Sin that is not dealt with hardens the heart. What

can we do to help our children deal with sin?

1. Pray that they will be caught when they do wrong. The longer a child continues in sin, the thicker the callouses will grow over the heart.

2. Never treat sin lightly. Sin grieves a holy God who knows how destructive it is. All of our children's enemies—the devil, the world and their own selfish nature tell them that sin is not so bad. We need to teach them otherwise. A recent survey of 8,600 high school students found that 92 percent had lied to their parents in the past year and 78 percent said they had lied to a teacher. Lying destroys relationships and puts us in the devil's camp, since he is the father of lies (John 8:44).

3. Teach your child, when he or she is still very young, to have a holy fear or reverence for God. "She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her, 'You are the God who sees me,' for she said, 'I have now seen the One who sees me'" (Genesis 16:13). It is not to be a dread of God, but a firm knowledge that the child will someday have to answer to God for all that he has done.

4. When a child has sinned, the chastening must be appropriate. Of course, there must be balance. We

often get angry when our child has damaged one of our possessions, trampled our rights or embarrassed us, while overlooking the grievous sins of disobedience and lying. When the child sins, he knows it in his heart and expects chastening. He feels unclean. Proverbs 20:30 tells us, "Blows and wounds cleanse away evil, and beatings purge the inmost being." When justice is meted out, his conscience is once again cleared and his heart is light again. How important it is to help your child keep a clear conscience and a happy heart.

5. Point the child to Christ and His forgiveness, but not before dealing with his conscience. He needs to know that sin always has consequences. In a recent book, *No Fear: A Police Officer's Perspective*, author Robert R. Surgenor relates how many times he was called to deal with domestic violence cases. In every case where a child was violent toward a parent, the parents stated that they had never spanked their child because it would teach him violence.

The Darkness of Idolatry

The darkness caused by idolatry also produces heart trouble. Romans 1:21 tells us, "For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as

God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened." People move into idolatry either to worship themselves or some created thing.

What are you teaching your child to love? Barney? Sesame Street? Walt Disney? Santa Claus? None of these things may be wrong in and of themselves, but when a child is immersed in them from his earliest years, he often loses the reality of Christ in his life and idolatry sets in.

Perhaps one of the most insidious forms of idolatry is worship of self. Our culture is filled with this form of idolatry. All the messages saying, "You are number one, you deserve it," etc., have clouded our minds and darkened our hearts, and we have forgotten who the true God is. Our minds have become confused, and we don't understand that the reason for our existence is to worship God and do His will.

John addressed this condition in I John 2:15-17: "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If any one loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever."

A good antidote for idolatry is honoring God and giving Him thanks. Make it the practice of your family's lifestyle to honor God in all things and always put Him first. Thankfulness to God should become a daily habit.

Bitterness from Inner Pain

A third source of heart trouble is bitterness caused by inner pain. How delighted we parents would be if we could guard our child's heart from all hurt and inner pain. But that's impossible. Life in a fallen world brings many kinds of disappointments and sorrows: being mocked for having big ears, or being too tall or too short or too fat or too thin; disappointment when a friend turns against you; parents who don't seem to understand; not reaching a goal when you've worked hard. Even if we tried to shield them from hurt, there would be pain from loneliness and the frustration of inner failure.

How can we guard them? We can't insulate them from all pain, but we can protect them from the bitterness it causes.

First, listen to your child so he'll be open about his hurts. Our children were most open at bedtime when, in the quiet, they expressed the feelings of their hearts. Give your child sympathy—not the indulgence that weakens, but the understanding that gives strength.

Second, from his earliest years point him to Jesus; pray with him about his hurts. Guide him to see how he can turn the hurt into blessing by overcoming evil with good. He can be a victor rather than a victim as he looks to Jesus.

Third, share how the burdens in your life became blessings and disappointments became His appointments. Many children never realize that their parents had the same struggles. Let them know how

Christ delivered you.

Fourth, introduce your child to Bible characters and Christians throughout the ages who were overcomers. Let them be your child's heroes.

We can send our children into a cold world with the warmth of the Heavenly Father's love, protection, comfort and strength to meet victoriously all the challenges they will face in life.

Elfriede Schaeffer is the mother of nine children, grandmother of 34 grandchildren and wife of Pastor Donald Schaeffer (member of the Board of Managers, U.S. C&MA). The Schaeffers make their home in Cleveland, Ohio.

IN MEMORY

Mr. Arthur Kunz (1929-2001) passed into the presence of His Lord in June in St. Gallen, Switzerland. Arthur came to Japan in 1952 with the Liebenzeller Mission. He served on the JEMA Executive Committee from 1979-'81 as a member-at-large and then vice-president, then in 1988/89 he served as member-at-large. He is survived by his wife, Ruth, who dedicated much of retirement life to care for him. Daughters, Priscilla and Tabitha, serving with LMJ (Japan) in church planting, and two married sons, will miss their father greatly. We of the JEMA community extend our deepest sympathy.

Mr. John McIntosh (1935-2001), who served in Japan for 40 years, passed into the presence of his Lord. John, sent by the Presbyterian Church of Canada in 1961, served Korean churches and worked hard for human rights. Wanting to share the grief of Koreans in Japan, John refused fingerprinting in 1985 and as a result faced suits and much hardship, all the while carrying on as a pastor. He is survived by his wife, Clarabeth, and his children. We express our deepest appreciation for all John's work for human rights and extend our deepest sympathy to his loving family.



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Truth...Continued from page 15
 freedom. People need to place their trust in Jesus alone as their Savior who died on the cross to take their punishment for them. The true gospel of Christ needs to be proclaimed so that more people can experience the freedom from slavery to sin and from the coming judgment of God. It is the task of the Christians to be light and salt in every society. We are to uphold the Truth as revealed in the Bible and pray that people will repent from their hearts. Christ tells the Christian that we will be persecuted and suffer for the sake of the gospel in this world. But this bodily life in this sinful world is a very brief period compared to an eternity of life with the family of God in our Father's house. Christ has gone ahead to prepare a place for His brothers and sisters. May our love for Jesus Christ be so great that we would be willing to lay down our lives for the testimony of His Truth. This is what Christ is encouraging us to consider as He preaches from Matthew 5:9-16.

Spiritual blessings come with abiding

in the Truth and defending it in love. The consequence of rejecting Truth is God's judgment. It was Alexander Solzhenitsyn who said, "One word of truth shall outweigh the world." And it was Jesus who said, "I am the way, the Truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me," John 14:6.

In his book, *Nothing But the Truth*, John MacArthur says, "The world is a courtroom. Jesus is on trial. The jury is made up of unbelievers who want to pass judgment on Christ and what He claimed. The Holy Spirit is the defense lawyer for Christ and He is to MacArthur says, "The world is a courtroom. Convince the world that the person and work of God's Son are true. The Christian's job is the witness the Holy Spirit calls into the courtroom to testify on Christ's behalf." May it be our desire to give a pure testimony and be ready for the negative reactions in the midst of seeing fruit, which gives all glory to Jesus Christ. For Jesus is God and He is the embodiment of all Truth. We are called to love Christ with His love in a healthy and growing relationship with

Him and share that love in relationships with others. Obedience to His Word, the Bible, is a sign of that love. May we desire to defend His Truth, which is all Truth. There can be no compromise with error, and it is our privilege to be role models for others to see Christ in us. People from all over the world need to be set free from their sins through the Truth of faith alone in Jesus Christ. We are witnesses to that Truth throughout the world.

Note: Herbert Bix's book, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, is being translated into Japanese and published in Japan.



Stephen is a third generation missionary in Japan. He and his wife, Sarah, have been involved in a Japanese church planting ministry in Melbourne, Australia since 1991.

They also establish bridges between the Presbyterian Church of Australia and the Presbyterian Church of Japan.

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Church Vitality in Japan continued from page 19

respondent expressed what it means to be Christian in this way: "My sense of value changed. I had lived without purpose, but now I want to express God's glory." Another reported that their church "has the vision that each of us is a 'pillar' of the church." Many respondents emphasized the importance of being a "cheerful" and "friendly" church. They also indicated how much they valued the opportunity to express themselves freely. These kinds of factors produce a church body that is enthusiastic.

"Relational evangelism" is a given at these churches. It is understood as part of the lifestyle of the members, a lifestyle that is empowered by the Holy Spirit. One person wrote, "I was taught how to practically apply God's words to my life. This has helped me greatly along with the help of the Holy Spirit." Another testified, "In a time of hardship, I was encouraged by prayer and God's words. I want to serve the Lord and I pray that I can obey God's plan both at home and in the office." Interestingly, when talking about evangelistic ministry in the written responses, two of the most frequently mentioned activities are "prayer" and "fellowship." Many also emphasized cell groups. This is an indicator that these churches work at evangelism in a relational way, emphasizing prayer as the energy behind the evangelism.

"Faith formation" is what enables the church members to live the type of life they feel God calling them to. Moreover, it helps them form a solid Christian identity and enables them to engage in lay ministry. The high score in this category gives us the impression that faith formation is at the very base of what it means to be a vital church. When describing how their church helps people grow in faith, one respondent wrote, "Here I find many chances to change myself. In fact, every message is a challenge for me. There are also many events and opportunities to work for God." This reveals that these churches see faith formation as an active part of life rather than simply an intellectual exercise. Another respondent wrote, "Our faith is based on the Bible and we must never compromise with the material world." This shows that developing a strong Christian identity is an integral part of balanced faith formation.

Finally, these churches tell us that a vital church is a "community of the spirit." This means that the church is a place where the members experience life change in various ways, including personal spiritual growth. One respondent wrote, "Everything changed: my personality, my way of life, my way of thinking." Many respondents reported an experience of dramatic change in their lives.

The power of personal life change enables the church as a community of redeemed people to reach out to the world around them as this person testifies, "When we decide to do something, everyone gets together to achieve the goal. Through cooperation we share the joy." Clearly, change and growth as a Christian is something that happens in the context of a community of the spirit.

Although this article cannot cover all the minute details, we have been able to capture a brief glimpse of how some Japanese churches are pursuing vitality. Carrying a spirit of openness and cooperation, they emphasize biblical discipleship, dependence on the Holy Spirit, and they pursue faith formation with enthusiasm. All of this occurs in the context of a community of believers that cares for each other's needs and assists each other as disciples. The result is a church that is cheerful, welcoming, and life-changing to those that become a part of it.

What are the implications of these findings for us involved in church ministry? These churches provide hope and encouragement that we can move forward in our ministries. All of these churches started out small and many of them remained small for many years. Some of them experienced splits and other challenges that many churches face. Change came when the leadership of the church made the decision to intentionally pursue higher vitality.

How did they do it? Each of these churches pursues vitality in a slightly different way that is suited to their context and tradition. However, what they hold in common is intentionally cultivating Christian community through relational groups. It does not depend on staffing or budget. Rather, it depends on at least one leader developing another leader and one disciple developing another disciple. When this happens in the context of small groups, the process becomes part of a new way of life for those involved. It stimulates vitality within the church community and makes the Christian way of life an attractive and viable option for those outside the church community.



Rev. Mike Sherrill, missionary with the Mennonite Church USA, has served in Japan five years. He is married with two children and is currently finishing his Ph.D. in Intercultural Studies at Fuller School of World Mission.

This issue of *Japan Harvest* is going to film the week of the terrorist attacks in the U.S. Warren Janzen of SEND International sent a memo to each of us in SEND urging us to be in prayer. He ended the memo with a verse from Isaiah that I thought was appropriate to share here as we face the uncertain days ahead!

Isa 54:10 "Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you. (NIV)

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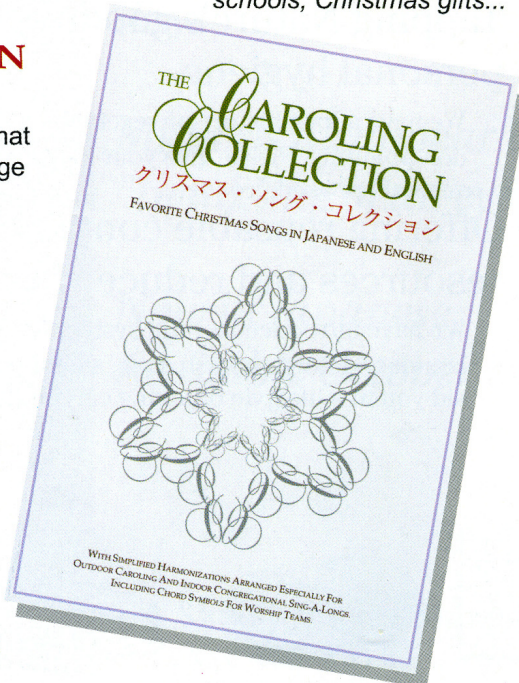
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