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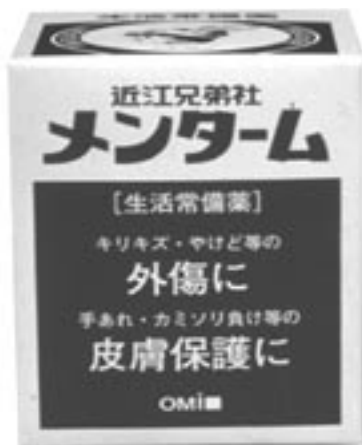




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Table of Contents

DEPARTMENTS

JEMA/JEA

- 20 From The President's Pencil
by Ray Leaf
- 21 Executive Committee Report

Worship & Music

- 24 Celebrate Jesus
by Paul Nethercott

Modern Tech

- 25 Lessons I've Learned
by Missionary Geek

Translations & Language Lab

- 26 Gleanings from the Christian Shinbun
by Mizuko Matsushita
- 28 Language Lab
by Miriam Davis

The Reader

- 31 Book Reviews

Church Planting

- 33 The Church as God's Missional Instrument
by Dale Little



2 Embracing Change



6 Storming Heaven



22 Matching the Church Planter's Role with the Church Planting Model

FEATURES

Inspiration

- 2 Embracing Change
by Lee McDowell
- 4 Fluid Opportunity Ministry in Post Modern? Japan
by Andy Meeko
- 6 Storming Heaven
by Debbie Penner
- 7 Japan's Greatest Need
by Donnel McLean
- 16 What Is A CPI Conference?
by The CPI Leadersip Team
- 22 Matching the Church Planter's Role with the Church Planting Model
by Craig Ott
- 36 Potpourri & Promises



Chugoku

- 10 So What Went Wrong?
by Chuck Burwell
- 11 Walter Wangerin Comes to Japan
by Susan Shibe Davis
- 13 Pulling Rocks in Hagi
by Susan Shibe Davis

Family

- 37 What Rules the Next Generation?
Daniel Clay McGinty
- 38 Aging, Our Loved Ones' & Ours'
by Ann J. Underland



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Embracing Change: *The Pathway to Growth* by Lee McDowell

Life is full of expected and unexpected change. Understanding the anatomy of change and its normal impact on us can help us adjust from what was to what is to what will be. It has been said, “We all experience change and the vast majority of us don’t like it.” For most of my life I was clearly among the “vast majority.” My dream when I married Clyde McDowell, then a seminary student, was to sink my roots deeply into one community and shepherd one flock of people for our entire professional ministry career. I had been privileged to grow up in the same home, among the same people throughout my childhood. In fact, my siblings all still live in the same rural community in Maryland.

However, God’s plan was not that of my dreams. After only four-and-a-half

years in a solo pastorate in New England, Clyde was called to an associate role in a church in the Midwest. Four years later he became the senior pastor of Mission Hills Church in Denver, CO. God’s plan is one of growth, not comfort. With more change in five years than I could have ever imagined—the call from the Mission Hills pastorate of 13 years to the presidency of Denver Seminary, the loss of my ministry position, children’s high school and college graduations, the diagnosis of my husband’s brain tumor, his subsequent death, a new career, the sudden death of a sister, my son’s wedding, empty nesting and the death of my mother—change has come to be a constant companion.

The words of Dr. Archibald Hart, former Dean of the School of Psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary, became especially poignant, “There are really only two types of people—those who accept the need to change and those who don’t. The former grow; the latter stay trapped in a prison of stagnation.” Using organizational change lingo, people are typified by three possible responses to change: the “early adapter,” the “hard sell,” and the “defiant resister.” Which best describes you when change comes knocking at the door of your life?

In the future, change will be dramatic as the economy speeds toward globalization. The Internet continues to revolutionize communication and commerce, and the threat of terrorism is ubiquitous. Current buzz words include dynamic, becoming, process, fluidity, transition. And the words *networking* and *partnership* imply changing organizational systems. One mission agency recently appointed a “vice president for organizational change.”

How paradoxical that the changeless God calls us to live in a world where change is perhaps the only constant. Malachi 3:6 is clear: “I the Lord do not change.” God is immutable. And yet as followers of Christ, it is evident from the language of Scripture—terms like becoming new, transformed, and throwing off the old—that for us change is inherent in the process of becoming more like Christ. In *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, (Simon & Schuster, 1989), Stephen R. Covey writes that, “People can’t live with change if there’s not a changeless core inside them.” For Christians that

changeless core is Christ, who is “the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8)

Some changes or transitions are easier to adapt to than others. Those which we initiate and those which are expected, such as the normal developmental changes we go through over the course of our lifetime, usually require less of our resources for adjustment. For these there is opportunity to prepare. There may also be mentors to guide our change process. It is the transition which comes unexpectedly that may send us into emotional turmoil. These usually begin with a marker event: receiving a dreaded diagnosis, a divorce in the family, an unplanned pregnancy, the death of a loved one, a sudden change of ministry location or job description.

Even mature followers of Christ experience emotional upheaval during times of major change. In *30 Days to Confident Leadership* (Broadman and Holman, 1998), Bob Biehl writes, “A change can make sense logically, but still lead to anxiety in the psychological dimension.” Clearly, the preparation to manage well the stress of change does not coincide with the transition itself. Having a growing understanding of the nature and character of God can help one find solid ground when everything around feels like quicksand. Recently following the passing of my mother, I was encouraged by the words of the British preacher, Graham Cook, speaking about the paradox of God.

“He is consistent but he is also unpredictable. He is consistent in his nature. You always know where you are with God; you seldom know what he is going to do next. You cannot find security in what God is doing. There is only security in who God is.”

In the Old Testament the children of Israel were told to remember how God had revealed his nature at transition points in the past so that their faith would be strengthened for times of facing change in the future. When Naomi returned to Bethlehem from Moab, widowed and bereft of both her sons, she was bitter. Yet she remembered God as Jehovah Jireh, the One who provides. With strengthened faith that God could yet provide for her and Ruth, her daughter-in-law, she sent

Ruth to meet the kinsman redeemer, Boaz, who became God's means of loving provision for both women.

Knowing the "anatomy of transition" also helps in managing the stress of change. Like the seasons of the year, transition has a characteristic pattern. Something is ending, and often before the official "goodbye" there is a Disengagement period, a time to begin the process of detaching. For missionaries, this disengagement may be characterized by orienting one's thinking from the experiences of one's home country to those expected in one's host country. For the teenager anticipating leaving home at eighteen, disengagement coincides with the increased independence afforded by a driver's license, a job and spending money.

The Ending is the letting go stage of transition. It is getting on the plane to go to or from the home or host country. It is the finality of death represented by a funeral, leaving the last child at college, or saying the final "goodbye" to the people to whom and with whom you have ministered. Endings are hard for several reasons. One is that there is something of significance being let go.

All major change involves loss, even positive changes. A new mother said, "But now it seems to me that I crossed some kind of threshold in my life and there is no going back. My old life is gone. How come nobody talks about that? They congratulate you on your new life, but I have to mourn the old life alone." This young woman was willing to grieve, that is to look at the full reality of her loss, feel deeply the pain and seek to trust God to heal the hurt and move her toward that which he had next for her life. The nation of Israel had longed for deliverance from Egypt. But in the desert the Jews missed and grieved the familiar lifestyle of their captivity.

That which is lost in life's expected and unexpected changes is also a sense of one's identity. While nothing can shake our foundational identity in Christ, the way we experience ourselves is altered. We come to identify ourselves with the circumstances of our lives. Who you understand yourself to be is partly defined by the roles and relationships that you have. Our whole way of being, the personal style that makes you recognizably you and me recognizably me, is developed and adjusted to fit a given life pattern. Connection with the setting in which we come to know ourselves is bro-

ken in transitions.

Endings are also difficult as they may involve reliving an earlier change. A Korean American physician spoke of her confusing and strong feelings when a staff member suddenly left her practice. She later realized that with that ending she re-experienced the transition of being left at the age of four with her grandparents in Korea while her parents pursued graduate education in America.

Following the Ending is the Neutral Zone of transition. This is the period between the Ending and the Beginning. It is sometimes a period of confusing emotions, i.e. sadness, loneliness, anxiety, excitement and uncertainty about the future. Normal routines have been disrupted. It is like a tunnel that goes from the known to the unknown. One is drawn to the warm familiarity of the past while the future beckons with a mixture of excitement and fear. In the Neutral Zone questions about one's value emerge, especially in certain major life changes like empty nesting, widowhood, retirement, and language school.

The predictable pattern of change concludes with a new Beginning. This is the exciting stage of new opportunities. When twelve years of raising preschoolers ended, I began the pursuit of a fifteen-year long dream to earn a masters degree in counseling psychology. And after Clyde's death, for the first time in my adult life, I chose the church where my family would worship. Before, churches had always selected us. I now could relate to those people who had chosen to attend the churches where we had served together.

Wherever one may be in the pattern of transition there are benefits. Change clears the ground for new growth. It is an impetus for a new kind of learning. What was needed in the past may be different from that which is necessary now. What new growth is germinating in this season of your life?

No matter how uncomfortable our current circumstances are, they are the only ones we have in which to glorify God. Dr. David Osborn, Director of the Doctor of Ministry program at Denver Seminary, has written, "Too often we try to use God to change our circumstances while he is using our circumstances to change us." While you may wish your life was like the VCR that can rewind or fast forward with the

touch of a button, it isn't. Real life happens in the present. Don't miss what God is doing in the present because of a focus on what you want him to do in the future.

The late scholar and author Henri Nouwen wrote,

The real enemies of our life are the "oughts" and the "ifs." They pull us back to the unalterable past and forward into the unpredictable future. But real takes place in the here and now. God is a God of the present. God is always in the moment, be that moment hard or easy, joyful or painful.

When God spoke to Moses from the burning bush and Moses asked his name, God responded by saying, "I AM WHO I AM."... "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM' has sent me to you." He did not answer, I WAS or I WILL BE. Life's major changes and our experience in them only make sense as we look back over the course of an unfolding lifetime. While God ordained the past and is sovereignly in control of the future, he is our companion whose presence is ever sure in the present and who promises, "He will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Him," Isaiah 26:3.



Lee McDowell lives in Denver, Colorado, USA and will be the speaker for the March 2003 Women in Ministry retreat.

*Women's Spring Retreat
March 5-7
Megumi Chalet, Karuizawa*

New Year's Prayer

Oh, Lord, I pray as this year dawns,
that You lead and guide me each day on.
I surrender my time and wishes known to
Thy great plan and not my own.
As You lead me along the narrow road,
I give to You my heavy load.
Help me lend a helping hand to my brother,
that he may stand.
Thank You for all Your care,
and the time You give me to share.
May I use it wisely in They great Name—
In Jesus' name I proclaim: Amen

by Linda Fischer

There are many ways of viewing the postmodern scenario in Japan. Some see Japan as premodern-as latently archaic and never actually having achieved the status of modernity. Others see Japan as always having been somewhat postmodern. And some others view Japan as a mixture of both, or perhaps even transcending both. The first section of this study looks further into these varied designations of the contemporary culture. It has been said that in Japan, literature has taken the role of philosophy. If this is true, then perhaps the most valid cultural hermeneutic in understanding Japan's situation is in the field of fiction writing. Thus the second part of this paper traces some of the lineage and trends of the Japanese novel, to help gain an understanding of the paradigmatic narrative of Japan and further the understanding of its dialogue with postmodernism. The third part of this paper addresses the ministry of the Church in this unique setting. As Japan reverts from an imported persona, the Church of Japan may benefit in reconsidering its identity as well. The two basic changes considered are: "The Japan Narrative" into "The God Narrative," and the entering of the Church into "The God Experience."

Introduction

The unique blend of openness and closedness makes Japan a fascinating and often frustrating place for Christian endeavors. There are few places with easier access and opportunity, and at the same time few places that have offered such challenge. However, present-day Japan is in the tide of rapid alterations in returning to a dormant identity. The scope of this essay is to consider where Japan stands with regards to postmodernism, identify current paradigmatic shifts and outline measures to be taken by the Church in order to touch such a Japan with new life.

Japan and the "Postmodern"

Designation

Hi-tech Premodern?

Prewar Japan encountered the modernization of the West with a mixture of fascination and reservation. It is perhaps this situation which complicates defining just where Japan is in the process. Some consider Japan highly modern; however there are many who argue that Japan never quite achieved modern status. They point to the evidence that Japan's modernity is imitative, unbalanced and incomplete. They will also insist that while Japan has achieved great modernization in economy and administration, it is lopsided with a backward legal and political culture. Could one consider such an imbalance of development modern?

Playful Postmodern?

Then there is another view that considers Japan as always having been somewhat postmodern. A postmodern society that has, let us say, played with modernity. This view interestingly is almost the reverse of the belief that global postmodernism is merely an epoch within the episode of modernity. But there is much to suggest that Japan has reflected or emanated postmodern/premodern qualities all along. Clammer gives details to this view, "indeed it could be argued that in some sense Japan has always been a 'postmodern' society—one in which the 'meta-narratives' have never been important, a true culture of feeling which capitalist consumption is itself turned into an art form, in which aesthetics is central and in which emphasis on context creates the very relativism so characteristic of postmodernity."¹

Both today and far back into the history of Japan we find the distinctive features of Japanese tradition to be in the centrality of aesthetics, the emphasis of contextuality, and a pluralistic interpretation of orthodoxy. It was this very hostility toward logic and rationalism that has been an embarrassment for

many native philosophers. Maruyama Masao believed that the dominant feature of Japanese tradition was the "absence of structure," an indiscriminate juxta-position of the archaic, modern, and super modern elements.²

Even in recent history we see currents in Japan that echo the postmodern heart and yet predate the Western arrival. Miyazawa Kenji, a children's storywriter, famous for the animated movie of his story *The Night on the Galaxy Railway* (*Ginga tetsudo no yoru*), wrote a treatise titled "Outline of the Essentials of Peasant Art" from which the following is taken:

"I wish to hold discussion where there is communion among the facts of modern science, the experiments of the seekers of truth, and our intuition. One person's happiness cannot be realized unless all the world is happy.

The awareness of the ego starts with the individual and gradually evolves to that of the group, the society, and then the universe.... The new age is headed in a direction in which the world shall be one and will become a living entity.

To live strong and true is to become aware of the galaxy within ourselves...

Let us search for true happiness of the world; the search for the path is in itself the path."³

Though the writings sound very present day, it was written in 1926. Another example of Japan's seemingly postmodern identity in the midst of even the great postwar struggle to modernize is captured in the words of architect Kurokawa Kisho. In 1959 Kurokawa began voicing his "metabolism movement," which invoked a "life principle" as opposed to the dominant "machine principle" portrayed in architecture. He explains that, "The age of life principle is an age of relations. In that age, what governs all is the way of placement and relation rather than the actual substance of things. Such relations are not fixed and stable,

but are always changing in response to passing time, the processes of growth and the exterior environment. It is the age of an adaptable uncertainty, a dynamic stability or a dynamic order.⁴ Elsewhere he states, "life (principle) represents an age of pluralism."⁵

Beyond Modern?

Finally, there are those who view Japan as containing a quality that is beyond modern. Karatani explains that the reason there was an element that resisted modernity was not a premodern condition but something which in a sense transcended the modern.

This is the challenge one faces when aiming to label society in Japan. Japan has had a definite modern element, but likely this has been an imported distortion that has never really existed in its heart. On the other hand, Japan seems to be a slightly different twist on the postmodern paradigm that the West is getting acquainted with. If anything, it is this surge of the postmodern idea in the West, which has merely served to expose elements that were already at the core of Japan all along. Whatever the case, for the Westerner the postmodern definition seems to fit Japan quite well, and perhaps the Japanese can begin to take pride in being somewhat ahead of the global shift.

Cultural Hermeneutic of the Contemporary "Novel"

It is said that, "In Japan literature took over the role of philosophy."⁶ There seems to be a sense in which the narrative style, the nuance and the unvoiced feel of the writing is what has communicated to the heart and unified Japan as an entity. People have a sense of who they are and a sense of being a part of "we Japanese" (*wareware nihonjin*) though they may not be able to voice in words even remotely what that means. But one can begin to grasp the "philosophy" of existence through the shared stories, the storehouse of literature, a body of literature that has characteristically distilled with the essence of "postmodernism." Miyoshi Masao explains that the lineage of Japan's fiction today can be traced back to the Edo Period, a period of literary forms taking shape in kabuki and gesaku. Gesaku fiction is parody, torn between accepting restrictions and contesting them as well. Though it was considered decadent literature, it also contains a postmodern sense in its playful sophistication. Other literary forms such as monogatari, nikki, no, renga, and others also had their influence

in the evolution of the Japanese novel. This unique background has formed the Japanese shosetsu (novel) into quite a different literary form from its Western counterpart. The plot of the shosetsu is open-ended and spacious. The characters seem to inhabit space unbothered by life's constraints. It is the "expression not of order and suppression, as the novel is, but of space, decentralization, and dispersal."⁷ It is honest, intimate, and often a mere reporting of daily routine. The shosetsu is often published in a serialized form, with an unplanned, unfolding narrative, and in both the writing and reading of the work there is a merging with others. This evolving and free quality, as well as the communal bending aspect of the shosetsu fits well with what the West views as postmodern.

This is not to say that Japanese novelists committed to a modernistic style are non-existent. One staunch modernist who bemoans the style of many newer writers is Nobel Prize laureate Oe Kenzaburo. Another interesting paradox is the powerhouse novelist, the late Mishima Yukio. Though Mishima was obsessed with harsh politics, militaristic endeavors and a violent protest by self-disembowelment, he wrote in a way that described true beauty as nothingness. His was an intriguing and vicious joining of the modern and postmodern.

Two landmark books in "postmodern" fiction published in the 80's have quite a different feel. Miyazawa Haruki's *A Wild Sheep Chase* (*Hitsuji wo meguru boken*) is the story of a man who drifts from event to event, living in the present and continually contemplating the past, but without any sense of arriving at meaning or reasons. It is life lived, and the meaning seems to be the path of living it. The other work is Tanaka Yasuo's infamous best-seller, *Somehow Crystal* (*Nantonaku kurisutaru*). The book has been highly criticized as it serves more as a consumers guide to pop culture and chic restaurants than as literature. The vacuousness of its plot and its compulsive attraction to name brands are a significant statement about culture.

Many contemporary fiction writers have been taken with the theme of digression. As the capitalist economy sours in contemporary Japan, there is much writing to convey that it is becoming "progressively more infantile."⁸ Japan's leading postmodernists who follow this theme in their writing are Shimizu Yoshinori and Shimada Masahiko. In *Growing Down* (*Guroingu daun*), Shimizu writes in a way that every day is not tomor-

row, but yesterday, "All I can say now is that I like the way things are now. We're getting poorer, but that doesn't bother me. And it feels great to keep getting younger."⁹

The Legend of Saint Akahito (*Sei Akahito Den*) Shimada describes businessmen and secretaries indulging in rampant mud pie fights and the conversion of the world into a jumbo amusement park called the "Nonsense Zone."

Shimada also delves into bizarre themes which seek to break down barriers. In *Dream Messenger* (*Yumetsuki*) the barriers of self and others are dissolved. One of the characters is a bisexual bilingual prostitute seeking to bridge all gaps and make all happy. In *Rococo-cho* the barriers of reality and dream are broken as the protagonist flies over Tokyo, eavesdropping on pigeons' conversations, is inhaled by people, rides telephone lines and electric waves and enters into others' dreams.

As much as Oe Kenzaburo may bemoan the "decaying" of Japanese literature, there is something to be said about the new writers like Yoshimoto Banana. In her eroticizing the mundane, domesticating the marginal, and hopeful quest for the spiritual, not only has she had even entire issues of prestigious and scholarly journals dedicated to her work, young as she is, she has sold in the tens of millions.

A Church for Today's Japan

The Christian community in Japan is also in an era of change. Just like the surrounding culture, it is beginning to realize its real identity as opposed to its weary imported persona. Here we will examine two key issues which will likely determine not only the balance and health of the Church, but also the influence it will wield. The first issue is fitting the Japan narrative into the God narrative. The second is entering into the God experience.

Japan narrative into the God narrative.

The Church of Japan has not sufficiently reconciled the Japan and God narratives. For the average person there is a seeming great divide between these two stories. Often one will hear the words, "We Japanese are not Christian" (*wareware nihonjin wa kurisuchan de wa nai*). This basic myth is likely at the root of resistance to the Church, the Bible and the Gospel. In other words, the Nipponese identity myth that, "Since I am Japanese, I am not Christian. If I were to become a Christian, I might no

Continued on page 30

Continued from page 5

longer be Japanese." But surely the blood of

STORMING HEAVEN

By Debbie Penner

The
smoke
of the
incense,
together
with the
prayers
of the
saints,
went up
before God....

Revelation 8:3

6 ❁ Japan Harvest — Winter 2003

He was almost seventeen. He was one of the wonderful people. Just being in his presence, one felt somehow whole...healed of sorrow...energized to try harder...be a better person. When company came, he would be cooking with his mother. When any of his friends were hurt or troubled, they came to him. He was always there for them. It was interesting that he never seemed interested in or soiled by the "smut" and pornography or boyish filth that had his friends bound. In fact, it was hard to find any faults at all, except that he was not a Christian. That was about to change, though. He told us that he believed everything he understood about the Bible, and had committed himself to believe and accept whatever we taught him. We laughed, played, and sang all the while attending church together. We talked about what we would do together in Heaven and rejoiced to see the little seed of faith in his heart grow deeper and larger day by day! Why, his very name, Masayoshi, meant "true righteousness." His kanji (Chinese characters) include one picture of 'self' under the Lamb, another of an eye looking up to the cross, and a sacrifice being brought with both hands.

That was before he made the demons angry.

He had been taught to stop, clap his hands and bow to the idols along the roadside as he passed by, but now he was getting closer and closer to commitment to Christ. One day he just couldn't worship the idols any longer, so he told them so. "I'm sorry. I'm going to be a Christian. I belong to Jesus, so I don't belong to you anymore. From now on, I can't worship you. Please understand," he said.

This is when everything changed. Because of some events in his life that had broken his heart, he grew angry and bitter toward God. Then, too, his mother reminded him that he was the oldest son; his was a traditional Japanese family. She threatened to disown him from the family register at the town hall if he failed to please. He was forbidden to leave the country with us on a summer trip, and it was then he began to show less and less interest in coming to see us. He grew reticent and on edge. Sometimes he was downright rude. Finally, I made the mistake of telling him I was praying for his salvation, to which he reacted violently and asked that I not contact him again. I really thought

he would "cool down" and make contact in a few days or weeks, but that never happened!

Sound familiar? Another precious soul lost! Perhaps it can't be helped. This is a heathen country, one of the hardest mission fields on earth, second only to Islamic countries, I'm told. Perhaps God isn't ready to save the Japanese. Perhaps He never will. Maybe He has already judged them as unsavable; "kept under punishment for the day of judgment" like the people of Noah's day, or the inhabitants of Jericho.

Perhaps, but maybe not! I don't think so and neither do you, or you wouldn't still be in Japan. In fact, perhaps the opposite is true!

"You shall be MY witnesses," Jesus stated, "...even to the uttermost parts of the world," (Acts 1:8). Japan is the farthest nation east of Jerusalem. Could Jesus have meant for the gospel to make a major impact in Japan before His return? Isaiah is even more specific when he records, "Behold, the former things have come to pass. Now I declare new things; Sing His praise from the end of the earth! You islands, and those who dwell on them," (Isaiah 42:9,10).

Are we willing to continue losing the Masayoshis in our ministry to some sinister force that snatches them away at the very entrance to God's Kingdom? Are we willing to continue working away year after year maintaining the "less than one percent" of Japan's population that is Christian? Or do we want something bigger, more victorious, more vibrant to happen here?

Keith I. Webb, in his small book, *Overcoming Spiritual Barriers in Japan*, outlines the probable reason for Japan's coldness toward the gospel. He feels that the answer lies in the history of this nation. Nearly 400 years ago the Tokugawa's essentially blotted out Christianity by forcing believers to recant or be martyred. Japan's doors to the outside world were closed. The Toshogu Shrine system was built, which welcomed and established Tokugawa Ieyasu's spirit, supposedly a manifestation of the mythical goddess Amaterasu Omikami. It is quite possible that this act established a spiritual stronghold, and this evil spirit is indeed the spiritual ruler and authority over this nation.

Does this mean our quest for spiritual awakening in Japan is hopeless? No! The Israelites were freed from Egypt after 400

years of slavery. Is there not hope for the Japanese as well? Taking back the authority given to the enemy can break spiritual strongholds. Webb gives a detailed report of the spiritual takeover of Japan and lists specific areas of prayer that he feels are necessary to break the enemy's strongholds.

If you pray and I pray, if our supporting churches agree to pray, will something happen? Of course! Three or four, or maybe even ten or twenty people will accept the gospel and join our churches. Exciting!

But wait a minute! Thinking about all the possibilities, I have begun to imagine something far bigger. I have an image of an extended campaign to bind the enemy to free Japan once and for all of her dark lord. What if a time were set for a certain month, say, MARCH, 2004. This would give about a year for a great campaign of publicity inviting every evangelical church in the world to begin to pray for Japan. Then, what if these churches were to make the week before March, 2004 a week of fasting and 24-hour prayer to bind the enemy? And what if Japanese Christians, along with Christians all over the world, were to meet at Toshogu Shrine, and at the more than 100 related shrines all over Japan to pray down the strongholds of the enemy? What if churches all over Japan were to agree to canvass their communities and hold evangelistic events during the month? What if the world were to cooperate by continuing to pray, and storm this nation with various evangelistic campaigns, Christian concerts, etc.? Would God remain silent? Would He fail to act on our behalf?

Isaiah continues in his passage to talk about the "islands at the end of the earth." "The Lord will go forth like a warrior, He will arouse His zeal like a man of war. He will utter a shout, yes; He will raise a war cry. He will prevail against His enemies...I will lead the blind by a way they do not know...I will make darkness into light before them and rugged places into plains. These are the things I will do and I will not leave them undone!" (Isaiah 42:13,16).

Are we ready to storm Heaven with our prayers? I am! A plan of extended worldwide prayer helped to topple communism in the Soviet Union in just 30 days! I know God would respond to our pleas to topple the strongholds in Japan as well. Will you join me in praying and working to make such a campaign a reality?

Debbie is a missionary with Kurume Bible Church, Fukuoka Ken.

If you share her vision, or have any ideas as to how her vision can be realized, please contact her by e-mail at: obachan@bigfoot.com or call 090-529-56473. Oh, and she would be most grateful if you would say a prayer for Masayoshi as well!

Japan's Greatest Need

By Donnel McLean Part III

In agonizing over all the needs of Japan, I am absolutely convinced that her greatest need today—now—is for intercessors! The call comes to all concerned and committed Christians to intercede for the perishing millions. Time is running out, and it is now or never. Jesus is coming soon and Japan's hope is for a nationwide outpouring of God's Spirit, such as that of Wales and Korea earlier in the twentieth century. Will you, will I, who love Japan so deeply, respond?

But what does responding really mean? What is an intercessor?

An intercessor is someone whose calling and commitment is to prayer. Interceding is what this person does! No, not for just five or thirty minutes a day! This person is so moved by the Spirit that oftentimes awareness of time becomes blurred. Prayer continues until the assurance of the answer comes. This is the ministry. It is much more than personal devotions, hearing of prayer needs, and brief prayers. This is far, far greater than that!

Possibly the best portrayal of the power and importance of the intercessor is found in Ezekiel 22:30. Remember how God Himself was desperately searching for even one person to respond to His plea for dedication in the deliverance and salvation of the nation of Judah? The text states that if God could have found even one true intercessor, Judah might have been spared. God's judgment was coming and it would be terrible! Awesome thought! What a difference would be made through one who would agonize in intercessory prayer for the nation! Do you recall God's words dur-

ing that dark, dark hour of Judah's history when clouds of awful judgment loomed ominously on the horizon, "I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none"?

I think we get the picture! As then, so today the horizon is dark with clouds of coming judgment. Time is running out. God always wants to spare His created people. He always wants to extend forgiveness. This is God's heart. However, the sparing and the forgiving does not take place unless at least one, an intercessor—yes, even one, moves into that awesome spot, namely, standing between His people and the loving but angry God. God must judge sin, but yearns to forgive and spare His people. According to profound truth found in the Ezekiel passage, just one intercessor can turn away the wrath of God to see a nation spared! What an awesome role intercessory prayer plays in the destiny of a nation.

Recall Moses, that great intercessor, who returned to Mount Sinai for the second forty days and nights to stand in the gap for Israel. God was so angry with His people that He intended to destroy them (Exodus 32,33). Relating this account to the next generation of Israelites, Moses records dialogue with Almighty God in Deuteronomy 9:14. Moses, one mere man, so loved his people that he spent forty days without food pleading with God to forgive them. Moses was standing in the gap! God said, "Let me alone, that I may destroy them." (The Japanese Bible translates God's answer as, "Don't stop me!") Almighty God said this to one puny man, BUT the man didn't listen. NO! NO! Moses pled for God to forgive the nation of Israel. God responded by forgiving them. Is that not absolutely awesome?

Beloved, this is what an intercessor's role is! Today this is what Japan needs most of all! We are a host of missionaries and national workers all extremely busy in all kinds of excellent ministries, but in Japan today, the real question is, "How many intercessors are there?" Did we notice in the Ezekiel passage the words, "I sought for a man among them"? The question in my heart today is, "Is God searching for intercessors for Japan today but not finding them?" Frankly, I truly feel that this is our situation and God is desperate to find one, or two, or as many as He can to see



that Japan is spared. Then in the place of judgment there will be a great nationwide outpouring of His Spirit. Is God talking to you today to be that one?

Let me encourage you by reiterating that glorious truth that it is God's longing to pour out His Spirit upon Japan today! Let us understand that revival is not decided by God, but by our response to His promises and commands. So often we feel that the coming of revival depends upon whether or not God sends it. Such thinking is wrong. Rejoice! Revival should be the norm, not the exception. We do not live in revival because we do not do what God commands us so clearly in Joel 2:11-17. Here the path to certain revival is clearly outlined.

Isn't it thrilling to realize, too, that we do not have to be living in Japan to be an intercessor for her? Our prayers for Japan are just as effective whether or not we live

there. Who will become the one to stand in the gap for the needy nation of Japan? The destiny of millions could hinge upon your and my response to the call to prayer! What an awesome fact.

According to Jonathan Goforth's book, *When the Fire Fell*, it was in direct answer to the prayers of a few faithful intercessors in Seoul, Korea, that the nation was suddenly and totally inundated with the very Presence of God. In a few short months virtually countless souls were swept into the Kingdom of God. It was reported that not one village was without some kind of impact. Within six months Koreans all over that nation came to Christ and those revival fires continue to burn. The commitment to prayer has not waned even to this day. No matter where you stay in Korea, you will hear in the early morning hours the patter of thousands of feet heading to places of intercession.

Beloved, this is precisely what God wants to do in Japan, too. Interceding is what we must do. Nothing less! May the prayer of the great prophet Isaiah be our prayer, "Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who acts on behalf of those who wait for him," Isaiah 64:4. May the words of William Carey challenge us to, "Expect great things from God and attempt great things for God."

Donnel McLean, along with his wife, served as a missionaries to Japan from June 1953 to December 1994.



Prayer FOCUS

By John Somers-Harris

WAR & PEACE

When we think of the Chugoku region on the far western end of Honshu, the city of Hiroshima usually comes to mind, doesn't it! Annual prayers for those who died in the atomic bomb blast and the famous Citizens' Flower Festival held on Heiwa Dori (Peace Boulevard) speak of the people's desire for PEACE. Those of us who remember the hippie movement will associate flowers with the peace movement of the 60's. Let us pray through scripture for Chugoku, that those who really hunger and thirst for PEACE will find it in the person of Jesus Christ. "Peace I leave with you..." John 14:27.

More than Numbers

Chugoku is divided into two distinct areas; one faces the Inland Sea on the south (Sanyo), and the other faces the Sea of Japan to the north (Sanin). The population in Sanyo (Hiroshima and Okayama Kens) is growing, while that in Sanin (Shimane and Totori Kens) is decreasing. Yamaguchi Ken is unique in that it faces both the Inland Sea and the Sea of Japan! Let us pray PEACE for each of the prefectures, especially as population is tied to economic prosperity. "Making peace through His blood..." Colossians 1:20.

Hiroshima Ken

In the Chugoku area, Hiroshima has the highest percentage of Buddhist believers. Popular Judo Shinshu Buddhism has spiritual support here and is not just a traditional community organizational system. The church is found mostly in the cities. It has the dual challenge of keeping up with rapid urban growth and reaching out to populated rural areas as yet unreached. One of Japan's national wonders, the Miyajima Shinto shrine, is located outside Hiroshima City in the Island Sea. "You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast..." Isaiah 26:3.

Okayama Ken

Religious interest and the number of Shinto believers are higher than the national average here. Education is deemed to be very important. The people of Okayama seem to have a logical attitude toward life. There are 46 unchurched towns and villages, mostly in mountainous districts. In Asakuchi Gun, along the Sanyo Highway, there are five unchurched towns with a population of 60,000. "(There is) joy for those who promote peace..." Proverbs 12:20.

Shimane Ken

This is one of the least populated prefectures in the nation and, other than Tottori Ken, the people have stronger feelings toward ancestors than in any other prefecture. Pray for Christian hospitals, schools,

campus and bookstores to be raised up. "And He will be their peace..." Micah 5:5.

Tottori Ken

Tottori is actually the least populated prefecture in Japan and has the lowest percentage of Christians. There are 25 towns with no local church. "...And peace for everyone who does good," Romans 2:20.

Yamaguchi Ken

A recent survey showed that 70% of Yamaguchi residents, the highest in the nation, believe that the emperor should be given the utmost respect. Yet, there is only an average interest in religion, with no especially famous temple or shrine. There are few Christian hospitals, training centers and Christian bookstores. "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross," Colossians 1:20.



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.

Three hour

Prayer Guide

"Then the temple of the Lord was filled with a cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the temple of God," 2 Chronicles 5:13b, 14.

We long for the Glory of the Lord to be revealed! Entering into His presence with praise, song, and petition brings great pleasure to our God! How do we use three hours effectively? Maybe the following could be a guide:

Divide three hours into four **worship** sessions, with prayer between each.

Session #1 includes four hymns/choruses with Responsive Readings taken from Psalm 103:8-13 & Ephesians 3:17,18.

Hymns to be sung, "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee," "Praise Him, Praise Him," and "I Stand In Awe."

Session #2 is made up of at least three songs and can include, "For the Beauty of the Earth," "Fairest Lord Jesus," and "You Are My All In All."

Session #3 includes four songs, "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing," "Wonderful Grace of Jesus," "Grace Greater than Our Sin," and the chorus, "I'm Forever Grateful."

Session #4 is made up of four numbers, "Lavish Love, Abundant Beauty," "More Love to Thee," "The Power of Your Love," and the chorus, "I Love You, Lord."

After Worship sessions 1 & 2, pray Scripture from the following passages:

God's Greatness:

Deuteronomy 32:4; 1 Chronicles 29:11-13; Psalm 135:5; Psalm 47:2-4,7; Psalm 135:13; Psalm 145:2,3; Isaiah 40:12,15,17; Isaiah 40: 27-31; Isaiah 42:5,8; Isaiah 44:6,24; Jeremiah 10:6,7; Jeremiah 10:12,13; Jeremiah 32:17; 1 Timothy 6:13-16

God's Grace, Mercy, Compassion:

Psalm 36:7; Psalm 40:5,10; Psalm 63:3; Psalm 86:15; Psalm 92:15; Psalm 116:5; Psalm 135:14; Psalm 145:8,9,17; Lamentations 3:22,23; John 1:14-16; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Ephesians 2:4-9; 2 Thessalonians 2:16,17; Hebrews 4:16; 2 Peter 1:2-4

God's Protection, Shielding:

Genesis 15:1; Proverbs 30:5b; Psalm 3:2-4; Psalm 62:6,7; Psalm 71:1-3; Psalm 84:11; Psalm 91:1,2,9-11; Psalm 105:13-15; Psalm 145:14-16; Proverbs 2:8; Isaiah 46:4; Isaiah 60:19-22

God's Comfort, Favor, Delight:

Psalm 94:19; Isaiah 51:3,12; Isaiah 66:13; Psalm 44:3; Proverbs 15:8b

God as Defender:

Psalm 5:11,12; Psalm 46:1-12; Psalm 59:16,17; Psalm 62:2,6; Psalm 71:7; Psalm 144:1,2; Isaiah 41:9,10

God's Sovereignty:

Genesis 50:20; Psalm 33:8-11; Job 23:13,14; Isaiah 46:9,10; Daniel 2:20,21; Daniel 4:34,35; Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 8:28-30; Acts 17:24-26

God's Knowability:

Isaiah 43:10; Jeremiah 29:11-13; Jeremiah 9:23,24; Hosea 6:3; 1 Corinthians 2:9-12; Ephesians 1:15-19; 1John 5:20

God as Father:

Deuteronomy 32:6; Proverbs 14:26; Isaiah 63:16; Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 3:4; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6,7

Prayer—Help With:

Psalm 3:4; Psalm 4:1-3; Psalm 28:6; Psalm 62:8; Psalm 66:20; Psalm 91:15; Psalm 138:3; Psalm 142; Psalm 143:6; Psalm 145:18; Proverbs 15:29b; Romans 8:26,27; Hebrews 4:14-16

Love of God:

Isaiah 54:10; Jeremiah 33:3; Hosea 2:19,20; John 15:9; Romans 5:5,8; Romans 8:35-39; Ephesians 3:16-19; 1 John 3:1,2; 1 John 4:9,10

Worship sessions 3 & 4 are followed by petition. Begin by praying for the world, then zero in on Japan as a nation, its cities, neighborhoods, ministries, as well as personal burdens and needs.

(This prayer guide was prepared by Jeannie Johnson and Deb Walker for the Women in Ministry Prayer Day, held on October 22, 2002. Over 35 ladies gathered at OCC in the KGK Office. You won't want to miss next year's Day of Prayer. It's always held in the fall.)—the editor

ANNOUNCEMENT

JEMA Day of Prayer

January 20, 2003

Everyone is invited to join in a prayer walk at the Emperor's grounds on January 20, 2003.

Where: Sakuradomon Gate

How to get there: On the Yurakucho line, get off at Sakuradomon Station; on the Marunouchi line, get off at Kasumigaseki Station, Exit A-2 and walk 1 block to Sakuradomon Gate.

Time: 10:00 A.M. The walk will take a little over an hour.

Bring: *Operation Japan* if you have a copy. We will be praying for each prefecture in Japan.

For further directions/information please call Bill Paris at 090-555-88642.

See You at the Gate

Bill Paris, e-mail: bill.paris@agmd.org

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16. Chinese Art Calendars - from each October. Cheaper in quantity ¥150

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So W-H-A-T Went Wrong?

By Chuck Burwell

God is at work in Yamaguchi Prefecture! In our four churches over the past year, 13 people have been baptized and several more new believers are in the process of getting ready. There are some amazing testimonies of God's power and grace in the lives of people here and, Lord willing, I hope to write about them in the future. But for this article I would like to focus on one of our biggest challenges in ministry. The challenge is the "passing of the baton" to national leadership! In the past three years we have lost two Japanese pastors and this has been very painful and discouraging. Both men are dedicated servants of the Lord and we thank Him that both are still in the ministry, pastoring churches. It has become clear to me, however, that we need a better strategy for the transfer of church leadership.

Both Japanese pastors came to our Christar churches as Bible college graduates with ministry experience. Both were from large cities outside Yamaguchi Prefecture. This in itself made things difficult because of cultural differences—large cities versus small towns. Both pastors desired that at least one missionary family partner with them for a number of years before phasing out. They both were willing to help train new missionaries and partner in future church plants. Partnering was important to these pastors and their reasoning made sense. They wanted to decrease the "leadership transition shock." It seemed logical then that the missionaries focus on evangelism while they pastored. The pastors' mutual or common hope was, with missionary help to build church membership so they could be financially independent. The missionary's hope, however, was to see the church grow enough to be able to partner in the planting of a daughter church. **Clash!**

Both pastors left! So what went wrong? The following is totally my personal analysis, so I do not speak for all our Christar

missionaries or churches.

As in all churches, there have been mistakes, misunderstandings and things that have required love and forgiveness, by pastors, missionaries and members. I see, however, at least four issues contributing to the departure of our pastors; things that could be mitigated in the future.

Difference in Vision

The vision of the missionaries and the new pastors were quite different in several areas, such as what the church should develop into and what the goals for reproducing the church were to be.



Difference in Strategy & Philosophy of Ministry

There were vast philosophical differences in such areas as: how to work as a team, how to train believers, how to evangelize, how and when to empower believers, how to conduct small groups and services, etc.

Evangelism became the "Missionary's Thing"

This was not a stated goal of either the missionaries or the pastors, but the message was being communicated to the church, none-the-less. The pastors did the bulk of the preaching, teaching, and counseling, while the missionaries primarily taught English and cooking classes and held special outreach events. As I see it, two problems developed. One was that most of the missionary evangelistic activities were not reproducible by our counterparts. Our believers were not learning natural ways to evangelize in their personal spheres of influence, like the home, workplace, and neighborhoods. Thus, when the missionary phased out, so would evangelism.

The "Paul and Apollos Syndrome"

Another problem was that to a large degree the "long time" church members tended to favor the missionary's way of doing things and would go to him/her with their needs. The "newer" converts tended to bond more readily with the national pastor and embrace his vision and philosophy. I must emphasize that these are general patterns and not all-inclusive. Many of the "long time" members worked diligently at bonding with the pastor. Probably we, the missionaries, stifled the transition process by "hanging around" too long.

Proposals for Future Leadership Transitions

Currently my wife and I are partnered with another missionary couple in planting the Lighthouse Ube Christ Church. Worship services started in January, 2000 and attendance is approaching 30 weekly. We are giving considerable thought to leadership transitioning. We are already experiencing extreme stress! This year we tried to install a "first step" of empowerment to our believers. We have given the term *sewanin* (caretakers) to this step. Our purpose is to give a voice to our members, to enlist their help in planning outreach events, in maintaining and improving our building, etc. Unfortunately, most of the *sewanin* members began to see themselves more as a church leadership group, and this entered into spiritual leadership as well. We have had to dissolve this group and are now planning to install



deacons and then elders as God provides mature believers.

My personal thought in all this is that part of the problem has been us, the missionaries. We do not always explain clearly what we are doing, why we are doing it, and

what the Biblical basis is for it. We need to clearly and continually explain our vision to our believers. My personal hope is that God will provide leaders from within the church, even if it is initially a group of lay leaders who can minister only part-time. Then, as we work together and train these leaders, they will share our philosophy of ministry and be accepted by the believers.

In the area of evangelism, we have tried to teach from day one that as Japanese believers they are better equipped in evangelism than we are as missionaries. Our believers have the language and the networking necessary for the task. Almost every attendee in church has brought a friend or a family member to church activities. This has been our primary means of evangelism and church growth.

In the event, however, that we do recruit a leader from another area, our team will want to make sure from the beginning that we have a compatible philosophy of ministry and vision for the church. Presently, we are getting ready to take our next step of phasing out of leadership. Our hope is for Japanese leadership to begin emerging next year and then the missionaries can phase out physically as we start a new church plant. However, we want to partner with our present church in the next church plant.

These are some of my thoughts. They have come from our mistakes and struggles. I must add that I sincerely appreciate ideas shared by Tom Steffen in his book, *Passing the Baton*, and the seminars on "Coaching" and "Networking" led by Pastor Kawasaki at CPI Conferences. I will continue to draw on these resources as I work out my own ministry strategies. If any *Japan Harvest* readers have feedback or comments on this article, please feel free to contact me.



Background on who we are in Christar

Christar, formerly International Missions, Inc. or IMI, is headquartered in Reading, Pennsylvania (USA) and is working in over 22 countries. Our mission is to glorify God

by establishing churches, primarily within least reached Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Asian communities around the world.

Christar has its roots in the India Mission established in 1930. As the work spread to other countries, our name changed to IMI in 1952 and then merged with the Oriental Boat Mission in 1966. It was through the Oriental Boat Mission that our work actually began here in Japan. Missionaries in China, driven out by the Communists, moved to Japan and began working in the Kansai area before moving to Western Japan. By the 1970's all of the Christar workers were doing church planting in Yamaguchi Prefecture. Over time, our goal became "to plant a healthy, reproducing, evangelical church in every major population center in Yamaguchi Prefecture." To date, we have done church planting in nine cities over these past 30 years. The original three churches started by missionaries are now under national leadership. There are also three missionary-led church plants in progress, as well as a small school for our children.

In the early 90's, Christar Japan initiated the formation of teams for each church plant, thus some works were combined and others were discontinued for lack of personnel. Praise the Lord for the fact that in the last ten years we have been able to push ahead! We continue to need new missionaries!

What's more, we have four churches right now needing Japanese pastors!



Chuck, along with his wife, Jan, and their two children first came to Japan in November of 1990 and attended the Karuizawa Language School until August of 1992. From August 1992, to March 1997, they ministered at the Hofu Christ Gospel Church.

Since then they have lived in Ube City doing church planting with Bob and Suzi Flanders. Chuck is currently the Field Leader. Chuck and Jan's children attend Westmont College in Santa Barbara, CA (USA).

All our past should be dwarfed by our **vision** of the future.

Paul Billheimer

Walter Wangerin, Jr. Comes to Japan

by Susan Shibe Davis

Walter Wangerin, a prolific writer and noted lecturer, visited Japan for the first time last fall. When asked the purpose of his tour, Wangerin said, "First, it's a follow-up response to *The Book of God*, which has sold 700,000 copies in Japan. I also came that I might speak to non-Christian Japanese about some things of great value from Christian tradition—some things, I believe, are not that different between Japan and the United States."

A consummate storyteller himself, Wangerin believes a nation defines itself through epic, and a nation knows itself by creation and the world, or myth. All these stories are in Scripture. According to Wangerin, today humans have lost their stories. In the United States, many people now regard these stories as "mere fictions". They may find entertainment in them, but most do not credit them with any value.

In Japan the Shinto myths, which ended up in narratives regarding the emperor, are *big* stories—not fairy tales, not fables—but stories that tell a people who they are, that tell children what to do. In 1945, these stories were taken from the Japanese people. According to Wangerin, "Today people are really hungry for the big stories that can identify who they are, that can identify the soul's questions, the spirit's questions."

Following a dinner hosted by the International VIP Club in Fukuoka City on November 7, Wangerin demonstrated the power of personal stories. Wangerin and his wife, Thanne, have four children, two of whom are adopted. Wangerin created personal stories for each of his children, which he told them repeatedly throughout their childhoods. On this occasion he told the story of Talitha, his youngest child. The audience heard it just as Wangerin would have told it to his daughter. By telling her in great detail how God had created her, how He had kissed her and blown His breath into her so that her "lungs blew up like balloons," Wangerin was not only establishing Talitha's identity, but he was also creating in her an understanding of how very much God loves her. It was a compelling story.

To Wangerin, a story is most powerful when it is told—not analyzed. Before involving his audience in Talitha's story, Wangerin explained why he believes story is vital for all human beings. Art and story are first an experience, not intellectual knowledge. This experience is very intense because its details are in harmony with one another. "All the details fit together like a Japanese garden," he noted. The story becomes "a whole"; it makes its own world—a safe place for the listener. This, says Wangerin, is the power of art.

When people listen to a story, they identify with the people in the story. Wangerin gave the example of the Apostle Peter on crucifixion day. When listeners hear the story, they see it through Peter's eyes, and it becomes their story. When they emerge from the story, they see the real world altogether new—they bring the story with them. Wangerin said, "If in the story I am a sinner, but I see Jesus touch me, when I leave the story, I bring forgiveness with me."

Wangerin urged his audience to tell their stories to their children, their grandchildren, their friends. People will live in the storyteller's world for a little while because "stories surround the listener." Stories unconsciously create meaning for their listeners. Because scientists and technology have taken away the modern world's stories, many of life's questions remain unanswered. Wangerin believes so many Japanese have bought *The Book of God* because they want a story to replace the story that has been taken from them.

Following his talk, Wangerin answered several questions from the audience. One man asked, "How do I tell the story to my son?" Wangerin emphasized that the story must tell of the "lasting love of God." At the same time, the story needs to include the parents and their unconditional love for the child: "I love you no matter what you do." Wangerin advised the man to find out what his son's interests are—perhaps music, sports—"Whatever your son's interests, tell him the story in his language."

Another man asked Wangerin how pastors can be more effective in reaching their congregations. Wangerin, himself a former pastor, believes speakers should rely more upon story. The Western mind particularly wants to analyze, to make a point. Except for the Epistles, the Bible was originally oral, yet people think the stories are ambig-

uous and need explanation. "Don't say, 'What do we learn from this?'" Wangerin advised. Sometimes it's better to tell the story one week and teach it the next week. "The first thing is not to *teach* Jesus," says Wangerin. "The first thing is to *meet* Jesus, and you meet the Lord in the story."

Prior to speaking before the VIP Club, Wangerin spoke to me about his work. His wife and he seemed surprised when I told them that Amazon lists him as having written 51 books. "Is it really that many?" they asked each other. In 1986 he made the decision to become a full time writer. He wrote his first novel when he was 13 years old, but he was writing before that. Now he holds the Jochum Chair at Valparaiso University, where he teaches Theology, English and Creative Writing.

I asked him which of his books was the most challenging to write. Some, he claimed, were more challenging than others but in different ways. For example, because he had to do so much research, it took him ten years to write *The Book of God*. Another—*The Book of Paul*—took "long and serious research." *St. Julian*, his latest book, and *The Book of the Dun Cow*, his most well-known work, were written in six weeks. *St. Julian* "literally wrote itself," says Wangerin.

I asked Wangerin if he had any advice for would-be writers: "Discipline," he said. For years he wrote from 8 to 12 everyday. "Write! You always write whether you think you have something to say or not. Read enormously, read vastly, and out loud to hear. Above all it's discipline. I tell my Creative Writing students, 'If your desire is to have written a book, you will probably never write. If your desire is to write this sentence, and the next, and the next, then you'll probably get there.'"

In one of his books, Wangerin writes, "Following Milton, I write for the glory of God." I asked him about that quote. He replied, "That applies to *The Book of God*. I don't compare myself to Milton, but he knew he had prodigious talent, and he believed in his talent. He made his talent the handmaid of the greatest stories—*Paradise Lost*, *Samson Agonistes*—stories that define the world." Wangerin claims he did the same thing with *The Book of God*. In that book "I consciously put my craft as a handmaid to my faith—the things I love the most," he says. He realizes that some people think he wrote *The Book*

of God to make converts. Of course, he does not mind if the book makes converts. However, "My most profound reason for writing *The Book of God* is because I love it [the Bible], and artists take the things they love and put them at the feet of that to make it as beautiful as possible. That's what I mean by the Miltonic comparison," Wangerin says.

"So you are writing for a larger audience, not just the church?" I asked. "Oh, yes!" he exclaimed. "I meant it to be a work of art." Wangerin points out that many people who do not necessarily study art have liked *The Book of God*. "Beautiful things are loved by people who seek beauty. Maybe they read *The Book of God* for its beauty. Art works on many levels," he concludes.

In addition to *The Book of God* (*Shousetsu "Seisho"*), three other books by Wangerin have been published in Japanese: *Preparing for Jesus* (*Shu no Rairin o Matinozomu 37 no Mokusou*), a daily devotional designed for Advent; *Whole Prayer* (*Sukoyakani Inoru*); and *Reliving the Passion* (*Juujiika no Michi o Tadoru 40 no Mokusou*), a daily devotional for the Easter season. *The Book of the Dun Cow* (*Bukku obu za Dankau*) has been published in *katakana*. All have been published by *Inochi no Kotoba-sha*.

Some readers may be tempted to choose their favorite Bible stories to read first in the lengthy *The Book of God*, but Thanne Wangerin warns against that: "It's meant to be read from beginning to end." She points out that her husband had a specific reason for beginning with the story of Abraham and putting the Creation story in another part. Readers can learn more about Walter Wangerin on his website: www.walterwangerinjr.org.

***Fifteen minutes a day
devoted to one definite study
will make one a master
in a dozen years.***

Edward H. Griggs

Pulling Rocks in Hagi

By Susan Shibe Davis

Like so many tentmaker missionaries, Pat and Holly Bell came to Japan with no intention of making any long-term commitment. Pat, a Canadian,



and Holly, a Californian, met in 1989 in Vienna, Austria where both were involved in smuggling Bibles and medical supplies into Eastern Europe. The two later married and began attending graduate school at Wheaton College. Pat, who was earning an M.A. in Intercultural Studies, was preparing to serve as a missionary in a Muslim country. Holly was also majoring in Intercultural Studies and preparing to be an ESL teacher.

After graduation, they approached a mission board, but were told to reapply after they had paid their student loans. They began looking for positions as English teachers all over the world. Eventually, they found jobs at a small language school in Hagi City in Yamaguchi Prefecture. Today—seven-and-a-half years



later—Pat and Holly are still in Hagi. They are now owners of their own language school and leaders of a team of Christians involved in a growing ministry.

Bell Language School

Pat and Holly eventually bought the lan-

guage school where they had taught. Today the school has expanded to two locations, the main school in Hagi and the smaller in Nagato City, 36 kilometers south of Hagi. For years, the Hagi branch was located in a few unheated rooms on the fourth floor of an older building near a major shopping center. During the second week in November, the school moved into a new Western-style building on one of the main streets in the city. Holly laughs when she says, “I survived three pregnancies climbing four flights of stairs in the old building. Now we’re located on the first floor and we have central heat!” Two weeks after relocating, ten new students signed up for classes.

Currently, five teachers—both Canadian and American—work for the Bells. Three of the teachers include Holly’s brother, Jim Gilbreth, and his wife, Beth, and Holly and Jim’s younger sister, Elizabeth. “Having family around makes it a lot easier to be so far from home,” says Holly. After serving for one year, Anne Welsh will be leaving in the spring. Gwen Bisset has just signed a



two-year contract, and another couple will be joining the team in March. In addition to the 150 students at the Hagi school and the 110 students in Nagato, team members also teach in the Catholic school as well as a nursery school. In the past year, the Bells negotiated a contract with the city schools for two teaching positions to replace ALTs from the JET program. The teachers have received commendations from the mayor, and the contract has been renewed for another year. Pat says, “We now have teachers in every public school in Hagi.”

In addition to the five teachers, two secretaries work for Bell Language School: Asami Harada works full time in Hagi, and Sonomi Nakahara works in Nagato. Asami first met the Bells in 1996 just before she

went to Vancouver to work. While there, she became involved in an international ministry. She began corresponding with Holly, and when she returned to Hagi a year later, she began working part time for the Bells. Pat and Holly are not fluent in Japanese, so Asami has become their translator in most phases of their ministry.



When Asami first came to work for the school, she was not a Christian. In 2001, Dan Dixon, a former teacher, was in a serious bicycle accident. Asami would often stay at the hospital with him to relieve the family.

She said, “Dan had such bad headaches, but he couldn’t have any drugs. One night when I was staying at the hospital, I questioned myself, ‘Would you be willing to be in his place?’ I felt such love for him, but I knew I could never be in his position. ‘Oh! I’m so selfish,’ I thought. Seeing Dan suffering was kind of like seeing Jesus suffering. It was very visual and emotional for me. Then Dan’s father challenged me: ‘Who is Jesus to you?’ he asked me.” Shortly afterwards, Asami became a Christian, and she helped lead another Japanese woman to the Lord following her baptism. Asami says, “I enjoy spending time with Christian teachers and then sharing with people who come into the school. I can pray for them. It’s a privilege to work here among the Christians.” Holly says, “Asami is our right hand. We don’t know what we’d do without her.”

New Wine Gospel

Although the Bells and their team are involved in various local churches, Pat and Holly realized few people were being reached through the churches because much of the service was “so foreign to them.” At the time, they did not know one Christian in the city who was under 30 years old. Pat desperately wanted to reach the young people of Hagi, so three years

ago he started a band they called “New Wine Gospel”. Consisting of six members—a pianist, guitarists, a bass player,



a keyboard player, and a drummer—the group holds concerts once a month. Asami translates the lyrics and they are projected on a screen above the band during concerts. Approximately 50 people attend each month. The band has become such a success that crowds have outgrown the church where they started. In October, they held an outdoor concert next to a marina, which drew about 120 people.

Last spring Pat says the Lord told him to put his focus on music during 2002. The band always plays Gospel music, but

their repertoire also includes original compositions. Pat writes much of the music. He recalls waking up one night with nine verses of a song in his head. He wrote them all down before going back to sleep. He wrote ten songs last year, and the band has made a CD. Pat says, “My dream is for the band to be the first Christian group in Japan to have a Top 10 song on the secular market. I want something that reaches all of Japan.”

The New Wine Gospel ministry is not limited to the band. Each concert always includes testimonies and a presentation of the Gospel in some form. On several occasions there have been mimes or short dramas. There is also a women’s acappella choral group started several years ago by Annie Barham, a former teacher who had grown up in Zambia. The choral group is called “Echoes of Africa.” Sonomi Nakahara, secretary in the Nagato office, takes an active role in the music ministry.

A New Ministry

Elizabeth Gilbreth has recently taken charge of a developing drama group. It has its roots in the New Wine Gospel ministry. About a year ago, Pat, Annie, and Elizabeth

performed “The Woman at the Well” during one of the concerts. An obvious success with the audience, several people said, “We wish we could do something like that.” The three replied, “If we can do this in Japanese—when we don’t even know Japanese—you can do it, too!” Since then, others have joined the group. They have had four skits, some with as many as ten people participating. Elizabeth plans to have one skit every other month, all at the New Wine Gospel concerts. Skits vary from 3 to 12 minutes. “We prefer shorter ones,” Elizabeth says, “because we always do explanations before and after the skit.”

Secrets for Success

Part of the success of the Bell’s ministry in Yamaguchi Prefecture lies in their willingness to be involved in the lives of the people they meet. When I questioned team members as to what part of the ministry they felt the most committed to, almost all of them responded the same—“the people,” or “the relationships I am forming.” Each of the members attends various churches in the community, and one plays piano during services at the Brethren in Christ Church. Some of the women gave a

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baby shower for a young Japanese woman expecting her first child. Several teachers lead Bible studies, usually composed of students from the school who often express an interest in knowing more about God.

The Bells are quite well known throughout Hagi itself. Holly says, "I meet a lot of people through my children." A mother of three, (five-year-old Grace, three-year-old Sam, and Mark, eight months), Holly says she often finds the children making contacts for them through their schools or just meeting people on the street. Gracie, an extrovert, often serves as Holly's translator.

Holly describes herself as "a party girl." Recently, her sister Elizabeth organized a party for Holly's 40th birthday. Holly declared it a costume party and she took that opportunity to dress as Queen Esther. She was able to witness to the guests by telling how Esther had saved her people. The first year they were in Hagi the Bells lived in a very tiny apartment, but they still had a Christmas party. "I don't know how we did it, but we managed to squeeze 20 people in a 6-mat room, and we all had a great time!" At Christmas parties, they read various portions of the Christmas story and assign specific roles (shepherds, wise men, angels) to each guest. "Every opportunity that we can share—share our life—it's just very natural, a natural outflow of who we are. All of our teachers have been that way. People just respond to that."

The Bells attribute their success to prayer. Pat says, "We never do anything major without a lot of prayer and fasting." Beth Gilbreth leads the women in prayer one morning a week, and all team members get together more frequently when they are facing major decisions. "There are times when we all feel the need to fast—whether it's chocolate, or a meal, whatever. We definitely see results when we fast."

The Covenant

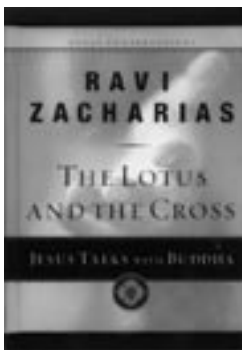
Despite the success of their various ministries, the Bells, like all missionaries, have times of discouragement. For the first 3 _ years in Hagi, they saw no one come to Christ. Two years later, only one person had become a Christian. The following year, Asami was baptized. "As far as I know, she was the first young person in the city in decades to trust Christ," Pat said. Last spring, Pat and Holly, downhearted, drew up a covenant before the Lord, typed it, and signed it. In that covenant, they wrote, "We will commit to stay in Hagi and work with all our hearts for two years, and if You, Lord, give us 24 new Japanese believers, we will continue to stay another year. As long as You give us 12 believers a year, we will stay." After that, as a team, they fasted and prayed for 40 days.

Within five months, five people professed faith in Christ. Of those five, four are continuing in the faith. All of the new

believers are 30 years old or younger, and all have come to Christ through New Wine Gospel. Holly admits she was a little dubious about the covenant at first, but with her husband's encouragement she signed it. Pat says, "We felt that 24 new believers in 24 months is not too hard for God, but it would be big enough that it's not something that will happen by accident. We were a little nervous, but God knows the limit. Prayer and fasting are the keys."

When Pat and Holly first arrived in Hagi, Pat says the Lord clearly told him that if they were willing to stay and work for revival, He would give it to them. Pat asked the Lord, "When?" God replied, "I'm not going to tell you." Pat believes God has recently confirmed His promise. "It's the actual staying and working that is discouraging. The first few years we were here we felt like we were doing nothing but pulling up rocks. Some days we still feel that way," Pat says.

Before leaving the Bells, I asked Pat if there was any thing special he felt the ministry needed. "Intercessors," he said, "at least one intercessor who will stand in the gap for us. We need people to stand for us in serious prayer. I have so many who say they will. Three months later I never hear from them again."



The Lotus and the Cross:

Jesus Talks with Buddha

by Ravi Zacharias,

Multnomah Publishers, Inc. 2001, 94 pages

On a year-long sabbatical, Ravi Zacharias spent many hours in Buddhist temples in India and Southeastern Asia talking with monks and teachers. *The Lotus and the Cross* is the

result of their discussions. Zacharias is primarily concerned with defending the truth of the Gospel against the pluralistic contention that all religions are basically the same. He agrees there are similarities, but they are superficial. It is the fundamental beliefs that set Christianity apart from other world religions. An apologist and evangelist, Zacharias is always concerned with how he can compare Christianity with other religions without offending others. In this book, he succeeds in doing so in an informative, entertaining manner.

The Lotus and the Cross is structured like a meta-drama. It begins with Zacharias himself stepping into a long-tailed boat for a tour of the back canals along the River of Kings in Bangkok. His vivid description of life along the river draws readers into the exotic setting and prepares them for a meeting between Eastern and Western thought. As the boat wends its way through

the crowded waterways, Zacharias imagines himself as the spectator of a drama. The players are Jesus Christ; Gautama Buddha; Priya, a young woman dying of AIDS; and the boatman.

Once the stage has been set, Jesus and Buddha begin a discussion of the fundamental differences between the two faiths. Western readers are introduced to the roots of Buddhism as Buddha recounts his early life and what led him to search for enlightenment. As the conversation progresses, the two discuss such issues as the Hindu concept of reincarnation and the Buddhist concept of rebirth, as well as Buddhist teachings about suffering, desire, self and nirvana. Buddha does much of the talking, but Jesus defends the truths of Christianity by dealing with the contradictions in Buddha's teachings as well as subtly pointing out Buddha's claims to exclusivity. At

Continued on page 29

What is a CPI Conference?

By the CPI Leadership Team



Why did you attend? “I was talked into it. I didn’t have high expectations, but they were greatly exceeded. I’m very glad I came.” *Missionary from America*

“CPI is a vital movement in Japan addressing the needs of church planters, missionaries and pastors in Japan in an honest and innovative way.” *A pastor from Hawaii*

“This is the best, most well-rounded training, inspirational and life-changing conference in Japan.” *A missionary from Canada*

Again God brought rich blessings of quality and quantity to the Japan 2002 CPI Conference held in early November. But just what, exactly, is a CPI Conference? Well, it is several things.

A Spiritual Gas Station

Each year those who attend the conference speak of the way God has used the conference in their spiritual lives. One OMF missionary from the UK attending for the first time said, “I was blessed and challenged greatly. God met me in a real way. He talked to me about the condition of my heart.” Some come with struggles and difficulties. A German missionary shared, “Whenever I came before, my heart was healed, my vision rekindled, the spark in my eyes lit again.” Others find it a focusing time. “I see CPI as one of the major tools God is using to draw me closer to him and his plan for my life,” noted a missionary from Norway. Some see it as revolutionary in their spiritual lives. One highly effective missionary said,

“I entered the conference as a ‘successful missionary.’ I came out with knowledge of my idolatries. PTL.” It should not come as a surprise if a 25-year missionary veteran said the CPI conference is a “spiritual gas station that pumps high grade gas.”

But the CPI conference is not just a spiritual blessing. An OMF missionary from Singapore said the CPI conference is a “good stop to ‘check up’ where we have gone wrong in our spiritual life and ministry, correct it and move forward.” A C&MA missionary said, “It is a great place to be spiritually refreshed. Great place to pick up some new ministry tips. Networking opportunities are abundant.” The CPI Conference is “a fantastic chance for personal renewal, rekindling vision and rubbing shoulders with others who love and serve the Lord,” one missionary said.

A Place for Japanese

As the conference program becomes more Japanese-friendly, more Japanese are attending. This year 140 Japanese attended (another record number), which is more participants than attended any of the first five CPI conferences! Many missionaries appreciate this, as comments one OMF missionary, “The program is becoming more and more tailored for Japanese which is great!”

Many of the Japanese who attended expressed their gratitude for the vision of CPI and the unity it produces. It gets them to think beyond their evangelism field or their particular group. The effect on missionaries is also being felt by Japanese attending. One missionary from Hokkaido said, “I brought some national leaders who I want to share the CPI vision and be helped in their ministries.” One Southern Baptist missionary said, “My church leaders are catching a vision from Him to reach Japan and be used for Him.”

Japanese participants also had a larger involvement than in past years. Both Wednesday and Thursday mornings were in Japanese. On Wednesday, Pastor Ken Mizuno, an Evangelical Free Church pastor, talked about the importance of CPI for missionary and Japanese cooperation. Thursday morning, Pastor Hiroshi Kawasaki, director of the Japan Church Growth Institute, explained how churches could be multiplied by networking. He also had an elective session on this topic and submitted an article in the bilingual

conference supplement, *Japan Evangelism*.

This year God blessed the conference with well-known national church leaders: Hiroshi Kawasaki, the head of the Japan Church Growth Institute; Yoshito Ishihara, the director of Japan Cell Church Mission Network; Dr. Hideo Ohashi, pastor of Christ Community Church (Evan. Free Church) in Osaka; Dr. Mitsuo Fukuda, Director of Research Assoc. for Contextualization (RAC); Jae Chang Byun, Chairman of the Little Shepherds Association.

Broad Participation

One concern from last year’s CPI conference was the size of the facility. This year the Leadership Team made a decision to



move to a new facility. It was more than adequate for the numbers this year and it can hold even more for future conferences. This was (again) the largest conference dedicated to church planting in the history of Japan! There were 467 adults joined by 80 children. People came from all over Japan (over 25 prefectures) from Okinawa to Hokkaido. At this conference, there were missionaries from over 50 mission agencies, as well as Japanese leaders from over 20 denominations and churches.

The CPI conference has always had international visitors, but never like this year. Several joined us from the Philippines and others came from India, Nepal and Nigeria. There was also interest in people attending from India, Nepal and Nigeria. As before, there were people attending from Australia, Europe and North America. Probably next year the CPI conference will look even more international.

One highlight of the conference was the worship music team that reflected the makeup of the attendees at the conference. The team was comprised of two Japanese and five missionaries, one being Asian. The team was able to switch effortlessly from

English to Japanese in a wonderful blend of contemporary Christian music and traditional hymns.

A Gospel Atmosphere

The atmosphere of the gospel was very contagious. One YWAM missionary called it "rich fellowship." Many Japanese commented how the conference is really a "house with open windows" where anyone can feel comfortable no matter what his position or situation. One Japanese said that he would like more Japanese to come, as this is a place to restore relationships.

Being in an environment of unity in the gospel and equality at the cross brings so much hope to people. One missionary affirmed, "It was such a 'hope building' for the future of the working of the Lord in Japan as I saw so many Japanese participating." There were a few who talked about how much we need Christ. One OMF missionary from Europe said, "You meet with the Lord and a bunch of his 'rottenest' servants who know how much He loves them!"

The issue of tension between missionaries and Japanese was addressed directly at this conference. On Thursday evening, Dr. Paul Hiebert shared, like the master teacher he is, why missionaries and nationals tend not to get along. He made an appeal for us all to not focus on the differences between us. Then, later that evening, Dr. Childers shared how the Gospel can help us deal with conflict in our lives. A season of prayer and worship led by worship team leader Tim Johnson and Dave Walker of the JEMA Prayer Commission followed. The response in worship was leading all the attendees to search their hearts for relationships that needed to be restored. At one point, I think you could have heard a pin drop in the session.

Many Learning Opportunities

One highlight of the conference is the



learning that takes place. Along with Steve Childers, the Foundations of church planting and development track for church planting was nearly all taught by CPI leaders this year. Terry Gyger and Dr. J. Allen Thompson, from the growing church planting movement in Manhattan, New York, taught on Gospel-centered church planting movements. Dr. Dan Morgan, formerly of Purpose-Driven Church International, taught a track with Pastor Yuichi Kawano, the Japanese translator of Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose Driven Church*, on how to start a purpose-driven church. Dr. Paul Hiebert, missionary anthropologist, taught the Gospel in Human Contexts. Sonlife, a youth ministry training program in the US, taught a track about strategy to reach youth. Dr. Guy Saffold, returning for his third year, taught on Leadership God's Way, emphasizing the character of the leader.

The number of electives was increased this year due to the added space at the new facility. As usual, they covered material from church planting to raising children. Electives included some new teaching on the cell church and the house church. This year a special session over lunch was held for affinity groups. These are ministry and interest areas where people can network together. For a complete listing of the 42 electives and the affinity groups, see the CPI website (www.jpqi.net).

The translation team was very busy at this conference. All training tracks were available in Japanese. This year saw, for the first time, a training track on the Gospel, lead entirely in Japanese by Bruce and Susan Young.

Something for Everyone

Due to a record number of 193 women attending, for the first time, there was a special ladies luncheon where Mrs. Dorothy Gyger, a pastor's wife, shared discouragements and struggles in ministry. There were also two testimonies from missionaries working in Japan. Many reported that it was a good time for the ladies and tears were shared together about their hope in Christ for ministry.

Eighty children participated in the children's ministry program. As in the past, volunteers from North America came to staff this program. This year saw an expansion of the children's ministry to include a program for teens. This included special

teaching from the Sonlife staff, ministry assignments at the conference, and their own worship and fellowship times. This grew out of a vision of one of the teens who attended the conference last year.

There was also a wall of prayer and vision. The main hall was divided into the various prefectures of Japan and participants were asked to bring ministry updates and prayer information for their various ministries. There were even places for ministry among Japanese outside of Japan, like Europe and Australia.

This conference saw the largest resource center ever, with dozens of tables filled with ministry resources. The conference also saw the largest bookstore ever (see the insert included with this issue.) "Found great resources! The tables were great. Many good videos, tapes," wrote one missionary.

But the Conference Is Not Over

If you missed or want to relive the conference, the main session materials as well as several of the training tracks (Foundation, Paul Hiebert, and Church Planting Movements) are available on bilingual video CDs. There is one set of Japanese videos from the conference. Some of the electives by Paul Hiebert are also available on audio CDs. The order forms are on the CPI website.

The *Japan Evangelism* supplement is bilingual and contains articles by participants in the 2002 conference, including Paul Hiebert, Steve Childers, Hiroshi Kawasaki, Hiroshi Tsukii (on cell churches), Marty Shaw, and Kelly Malone. It is available through the JEMA office.

Next conference will be held at Fuji Hakone Land in early November, so keep an eye on the CPI website for updated information. If you are hesitating to attend the next conference, heed the advice of a Lutheran missionary from Norway, "Please, please go; you will never regret it. It is a God-sent growing, movement for Japan, for the world!" As a SEND missionary said, "CPI is a spiritual life retreat, networking conference, equipping seminar and Kingdom pep rally all packaged into one!" As a missionary from New Zealand emphasized, "We cannot afford *not* to go."

Spring Issue will be featuring CPI.

Short-Term Missions (STMs) NOT Worth the Effort

By Ron Barber

*“STMs aren’t worth the effort,” I thought. “They take all of your time, have little results to show at the end of their stint, and give a poor *ROI.”*

I thought this despite proven effectiveness through English teaching. For years STMs have come to help start churches using English. True, teaching makes it possible to supplement support and pay rent for houses that in turn may serve as the ‘English School’ during the week and then as a place for worship on Sundays. Contacts are made for the missionary and most classes include a chapel time or Bible study. The problem is that with this approach the missionary is left looking for the next English teacher because, whether short-termers come for two months or two years, they do return home. The missionary is left to find replacements. Another problem is that outreach can easily be perceived as something that only native English speakers can do, robbing Japanese believers of their privilege in evangelism. It was for these very reasons I shunned STMs even while my colleagues worked with them effectively.

The Partnership

My eyes were opened, however, when I was given the opportunity to ‘partner’ with FBCN (First Baptist Church of Newtown**). This church was developing a proactive missions strategy by looking into various opportunities for making a significant difference somewhere in the world through multi-faceted partnerships. At the same time, this church was launching a capital program to relocate to a new facility. As they had done in previous capital programs, they were committing a significant percentage of the capital-campaign income to missions, trying to maintain proper focus on world outreach while expanding their local ministry. Because building was to be a significant focus for their church life over several years, they were interested in partnering with a church overseas that was also looking to build or expand facili-

ties.

When the proposal to partner was brought to our field, the remark, “Pitied be the missionary who gets the gift,” was made. He would have a church building, yes, but also the unending envy of all his colleagues who missed out! It was then that we suggested to FBCN that they consider partnering with two churches here. After a survey trip and discussion with missionaries, two churches in a relatively close area were chosen. This way the short-term workers from FBCN could be more easily involved in both.

The Agreement

The FBCN/Oppama-Miura partnership agreement was drawn up. The agreement set out guidelines for the partnership of three churches, FBCN and the two churches here. This was done with the Japanese structure of leadership in mind. Time length and schedule for sending teams was set.

The Numbers

Thirty-five people were sent within two years. Half were adults and the other half teens. These teens were high school seniors and college students.

The Orientation

FBCN has a three-level missions training/involvement program for youth. At the first level teens participate in service projects usually involving physical labor. Upon completion they move to the second level, a week of personal evangelism training with SEMP (a national youth outreach program combining teaching, on-the-street evangelism and powerful worship) followed by a week of children’s ministry and one-on-one inner city evangelism in the city of Philadelphia. Those qualifying for the third-level ministry become part of a short-term, cross-cultural evangelism team that usually took them overseas. The primary orientation for adults is in the area of what to expect in the foreign culture.

Cultural orientation, done before leaving, included the reading of books and discussion with experienced short-termers. Once the short-termers arrived here, they were given practical orientation on train, phone and money use. One such exercise included purchasing a phone card, traveling to a designated station, exiting, calling home, purchasing something they had

never seen before, and getting back home again. There were also visits to shrines, classes on culture, and an overnight in a Japanese home. The reading of Dr. J.R. McQuilkin’s book, *Great Omission*, was required along with in-depth discussion.

What They Did

Following the initial survey team, the first adult group came for prayer. They prayed, gathered firsthand information, and returned to their home country with an understanding of church planting in Japan based on personal observation. Additional groups preformed musically and held craft and flower arranging classes. The youth planned mime and puppet shows, sports nights, craft classes, game nights, pizza nights, etc. Teams also helped distribute literature. They planned and carried out their programs as much as possible. FBCN also sent English teachers twice, one for four months and one for a year.

What I Learned

Through it all my understanding of the role of STMs radically changed! I started out asking, “What can they do for me?” My experience, however, showed me the other side of the relationship and that was, “What could I do for them?” This newfound perspective altered my philosophy of ministry. STMs, in the context of partnerships, has become a major emphasis in my outreach strategy. That’s not to say that no questions remain. I wonder, are we raising the bar or lowering it? That is, are we including more people in missions through STM programs that would otherwise never have been involved? Or, are we inoculating people with the “Mormon” strain so that they put in their two years and are then immune from participating in God’s program? One pastor answered this question with, “Both.” It is fact that many “career” workers had STM experience first—evidence of successful STM programs, or is it the desire to “test the waters,” a kind of “live together first and see if it will work out” attitude?

Partnerships need to be adapted to the situation. In India, for example, when numbers, timing, and task do not fit the need, a two-week effort is only long enough to get disorientated, get dysentery and go home. Large groups doing aggres

Continued on Page 32

Continued from page 18

Dear Co-laborers in Christ,

As our ministry team leaves Japan, we offer our thanksgiving to the Lord of the harvest for your partnership in the Gospel over the past 17 years. The Lord has been most gracious in allowing us to co-labor with you. We count it a privilege to have served together. May the Lord bless your every effort for the glory of Christ.

The OC International-Japan Team (past and present)

*Dr. Marvin and Joni Eyer
Ron and Katie Sisco
Neal and Mari Hicks
John and Kathleen Nelson
Brent and Ruth Drouillard*

*Kirk and Dawn Lewis-Anderson
Tom and Maddy Hardeman
Scott and Kathi Parrish
David and Debbie Walker*

On the Stadium

“In races, athletes are not rewarded right below the stadium, but called up to the stage for reward. In our earthly race, we are rarely rewarded on earth, but will be later!” Taken from Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations by Paul Lee Tan

One day the King of the Universe will speak to His precious servants, who ran their individual races. Scripture records that there will be those to whom He, the King, will declare, “WELL DONE you good and faithful servant!” Could anything compare? No! But in this issue we wish to give honor to some of God’s choice Kingdom workers. The question is how can we begin to explain the ministry of any man or woman, especially in Japan? Taking into account our inability to give justice to the lives and ministries of Elloise Merrill of CBI-FEBI (1964-2002), to Gil and Ellen Bardeau of TEAM (1976-2002), to Lucius and Dona Buttler of SB, BGC (1955-2002), and to Calvin and Pat Junker of TEAM (1954-2002) we wish to honor them for their years of faithful and fruitful ministry here! JEMA gave special certificates of recognition to them upon reaching retirement. We would like you to know a little more about who they are and what they did. We present to you:



do it
out the
your work well” were just some of her challenges and instructions. In addition, she often gave her students Bible verses to memorize with the hope that these would help shape their thinking and behavior. Elloise also memorized Scripture with seniors on an individual basis. In a note written by one of her students, Elloise read, “Not only have I learned from you in the area of music, but I have also learned a lot from your spiritual example.”

Elloise Merrill for giving 39 years to Christian Academy in Japan. As a piano teacher she taught musicality, keyboard harmony, hymns, theory and technique. She had piano parties and/or practice recitals in her studio nearly every month in order to prepare students for their public performances. In addition, she shared life principles from personal experiences. “Do it right the first time;

only one time; do it now; set things
night before; work slowly enough to do

Continued on page 29

JEMA & JEA

From the President's Pencil

We have entered 2003! *Imagined* fears of computer disaster at the turn of the millennium have given way to the *real* fears of 9/11, terrorism, a nuclear-armed North Korea and a growing possibility of economic disaster in Japan. Along with the rest of the world, Japan is slowly working her way into the 21st century. We pray for revival and a great moving of God's Spirit across this nation. Could this be the year? The verse, "For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ. And so through Him the 'Amen' is spoken by us to the glory of God," (2 Corinthians, NIV), meant a lot to me last year. What are the promises of God that we are claiming this year for ourselves and for this nation? In God's magnificent Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, God says, "Yes," and we respond, "Amen."

Thinking about JEMA and the way it functions, I have again realized just how much we benefit from the ministry of JEMA commissions. Maybe some of us are unaware of all we gain because of them. Take, for example, the JEMA Prayer Commission that sponsors the Prayer Summits. Then there is the Commission on Publications that produces the *Directory, Operation Japan and Japan Harvest* magazine. The JEMA Commission of Pioneer Evangelism sponsors the Church Planters

Institute (CPI). The Commission for Women in Ministry holds an annual spring retreat. The commission on Fellowship and Conferences sponsors the Leaders' Consultation, which precedes the Plenary Session held the last week in February. Which reminds me, the next JEMA Leaders' Consultation is slated for next month, Monday, February 24.

This year's Leaders' Consultation will be held at the Ochanomizu Christian Center Chapel, eighth floor, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The morning session from 10:00-12:00 will be introducing a course on personal evangelism developed by Dr. Masumi Toyotome, a close friend of Dr. Akira Hatori. The first session will be taught by Pastor Tatsuo Irikawa. Since it's a sixteen-hour course, only an overview and the first lesson will be given. As a follow-up, however, Pastor Irikawa will be teaching the course on the second Monday of March, April, May and June at OCC. Each lesson will be four hours long and will be in Japanese with simultaneous interpretation. Personally, I wish I could have taken this course when I was a new missionary! Come and learn about Biblical evangelism within the Japanese context.

The Leaders' Consultation afternoon session will be a discussion on the opening up of membership to people overseas. Any recommendation that will be made will then be voted on at the Plenary the following day, February 25. We will also take up last year's recommendation to write a JEMA vision statement. The

day will conclude with a concert of prayer followed by a fellowship dinner in the eighth floor lounge. A program and simple meal are being planned. Why a meal? Because we want to spend time in fellowship and get reacquainted with JEMA friends from all over Japan. Plan on joining us on Monday, February 24. Please be reminded, that if you will need accommodations, to contact JEMA office for recommended locations.

The Plenary Session will follow on Tuesday, February 25 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. I look forward to seeing you all there!

Ray Leaf



Ray and Ruth Leaf came to Japan in 1972 under SEND International. They serve in a church planting ministry in Higashi Yamato Shi.

Spring Issue Deadline: February 10

Please send articles to your editor at: dikropp@gol.com

Please send pictures to your managing editor, Jim Rew, at: Rewster4@aol.com

Snail mail: 344 E. Hawthorne Blvd.
Wheaton, IL 60187
USA

JEMA Datebook 2003



Executive Committee Report

November 6, 2002 OCC Tokyo

David Walker of OC International gave heartfelt thanks and appreciation for the privilege of involvement with JEMA over the years. OC, in the process of closing Japan as a receiving country, has resigned as a member. In appreciation for years of involvement with JEMA, OC International gave a substantial monetary gift. JEMA expressed appreciation to David and Deb for the privilege of working together with them for God's kingdom.

It was also reported that:

- Six attended the JEMA Day of Prayer, October 7, and 36 ladies came to the Women In Ministry Day of Prayer on the 28. The Women in Ministry Ladies' Retreat will be held March 5-7 with Lee McDowell. (The lead article of this issue is by Lee.)
- With David Walker's resignation, Bill Paris will take over as chairperson of the Prayer Commission. A prayer walk around the Emperor's Palace will be held from 10 a.m. on January 20. (Please find details on page 9.)
- The Karuizawa Union Church has taken over the sponsorship of the former JEMA summer and Deeper Life conferences. Under its new name, the Karuizawa Summer Conference will be held August 1-8, 2003. Traugott Ockert and Ray Leaf will continue to serve on the planning committee.
- Don Wright was given approval to proceed with a new addition of Operation Japan. Appreciation was expressed for Don's hard work on this project. Don is looking for a younger missionary to work with who can replace him upon retirement.
- Applications are still open for workshops at the JEA SEND ME Global Missions Youth Congress. (Please contact JEMA office if interested.)
- JMLI will hold its last graduation and 35th anniversary celebration in July. The JMLI

Board is considering a proposal to create a JMLI Language and Culture Commission, which would serve the JEMA community as a language resource center.

- Nominations are needed to fill positions on the Executive Committee, JEMA Commissions and JEA Committees by the Plenary, February 25.
- JEMA will sponsor a Personal Evangelism Seminar to be taught by Pastor Irikawa of the Yazaku Christ Church (Domei), Okazaki City. (See President's Pencil for details.)

Finances: JEMA's financial picture is good, but incomplete as of this date. When the year's bookkeeping is complete we will have a better picture of what plans can be made in the New Year.

- The RISO printer is making JEMA office work easier.
- David Scott was authorized to purchase a good quality OCR software for the office scanner.

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for January 15.

Litt-World 2002 Draws Print-Media Specialists from 39 Countries

Manila, Philippines was the venue where some 115 Christian communicators from 39 countries participated in the Litt-World 2002 international print-media training conference, held November 3-8. Organized by Media Associates International (mai), the five-day conference featured a full slate of plenary sessions on publishing-related topics, 42 different elective small-group workshops, and one-on-one consultations with publishing experts.

Held every two years, Litt-World is the only international print-media training conference of its kind. After successful conferences in the US and UK, MAI decided to convene the 2002 conference in Asia.

Ramon Rocha III, CEO of OMF Literature in the Philippines, and his staff provided strong on-the-ground support for the conference. They also hosted a cultural program and local tour to expose Litt-World participants to Filipino food, music, and history. "We are indebted to Ramon and his team for their strong partnership with MAI in making the conference a success," MAI President, John Maust, said.

Janice Kropp was a delegate sponsored by JEMA.

Memorials



Mrs. Shizu Honda, widow of Dr. Koji Honda, passed into the presence of her Lord on October 12, 2002, at the age of 87. As you may remember, Dr.

Honda went to be with the Lord on April 6, last year, at the age of 90. The Hondas were married in 1940, and in 1950 they started the Kobe Chuo Church. The Honda Crusade ministry was started in 1956, they moved to Tokyo in 1966 to start the Japan Fukuiin Crusade. After Dr. Honda's recent death, Shizu continued to publish the "Good News" flyer they had started in 1973. Japan mourns the loss of Shizu and Koji, while heaven rejoices.



Mrs. Florence Seely, beloved wife of Art, went to be with her Lord on October 22, 2002. A memorial service was held at OCC on November 26 and the internment was in Karuizawa. Florence and her husband, Art, are retired TEAM missionaries. Florence is survived by Art, Aileen Selander, of TEAM, and Rick, of SEND International on staff at CAJ. The missionary community extends our deepest sympathy to all of Florence's family.

The Japan Harvest will update you regularly on business and issues handled at JEMA Executive Committee Meetings



Matching the Church Planter's Role with the Church Planting Model

By Craig Ott

In recent years a number of church planting strategies and models have been produced and promoted. This is a welcome development, which has not only stimulated discussion, but also moved church planting practice beyond the "open shop" approach, which took little account of culture, reproduction, and long term developmental considerations.

A less discussed issue relates to the role of the missionary church planter.

In training, observing, and consulting church planters, I've become convinced that if the church planter does not have a clear understanding of his or her role, he or she is likely to undermine the best methods and models. The church planter's self-understanding must match the church planting model.

Essentially three types of missionary church planters can be identified, which correspond to three broad approaches to church planting: the pastoral church planter, the apostolic church planter, and the catalytic church planter. Each has a different self-understanding, will go about investing his or her time and energies differently, is faced with particular opportunities and challenges, and is suited for a different situation.

The pastoral church planter. The goal of the pastoral church planter is quite simply

to begin a new church and pastor it until it can call and pay its own pastor. The missionary can then move on and plant another church.

The method is straightforward. Initially evangelistic efforts are necessary to gather a congregation of new believers. But once a core of believers has been gathered—often quite small—this church planter tends to shift into the pastoral care giving mode, focusing energy on preaching, teaching, counseling, and various other pastoral duties. If the church continues to grow, it is often through new members who are already believers, so-called transfer growth. The church is considered "planted" when it can call and pay a pastor to replace the missionary pastor.

This is no doubt the most common variety of church planter both in home and foreign missions. I adopted this approach (albeit unconsciously) in the first churches that I planted. I simply wasn't aware of any other approach.

Even missionaries who are committed to church multiplication and lay mobilization almost automatically slip into the pastoral mode. There are a number of reasons for this. Most seminaries train pastors, not evangelists, or church planters; thus most seminary trained church planters feel comfortable with this role. Most western books on church planting assume this method. This is the model of ministry which we have observed and come to appreciate in our home churches, and which has been adopted in many, if not most, denominations abroad. Most of us have never experienced or observed an alternate approach. The members of the church plant often expect this of the church planter: "Be our pastor! That's what you are trained and paid for." Because the missionary church planter usually has not only more training but also more time than lay church members, it is only natural that he, and not they, bear the load of pastoral ministry. This problem is all the more aggravated if several full-time missionaries are serving in the same church plant.

This model of church planting works well under three conditions: (1) high potential for rapid church growth, either because the people are responsive or through transfer; (2) affluence, where the new church can finance its own pastor; and (3) where there are trained national believers available to call as pastor. This is

why church planting in North America has been generally successful using the pastoral church planter model.

Unfortunately these conditions are absent in most places where foreign missionary church planting is happening. If church growth is slow and local resources are limited the church will have difficulty calling and paying a replacement for the missionary church planter. The longer the missionary remains in this role, the more the church becomes dependent on him.

Sometimes the missionary church planter remains faithfully at the location for ten or even twenty years, hoping that one day a national pastor can be called to replace him. Usually frustration sets in sooner. The only solution appears to be for the mission to financially subsidize the calling of a national pastor—if one can be found—so that the missionary can finally move on. This only increases the dependency, which is most difficult to break.

Multiplication of such churches is very difficult and rare.

The conviction which underlies the pastoral church planter understanding is that a church must have a fully paid, expertly trained pastor to be considered a legitimate, planted church. Such a pastor may be desirable in many situations, but this is certainly not a biblical requirement to being considered an established church. The churches planted in the New Testament were virtually all lay-led. Indeed mission history up to our own day has demonstrated time and again that the most dynamic church planting movements were lay led and not encumbered by the "how can we pay a pastor" dilemma.

Furthermore, because the pastoral church planting missionary assumes that one day a professionally trained pastor will replace him, minimal effort is invested in training and empowering the laity for genuine pastoral ministry.

Finally, believers in the church plant can become "spoiled" by having a full-time missionary pastor. The missionary pastor has set a professional standard, which is difficult to follow. Nationals may feel inferior, because they believe that they cannot minister as well as the missionary, and they fear that the church cannot survive without a trained paid pastor. This thinking is perhaps the single most unnecessary hindrance to church planting and

Continued on page 33

Prayer Summits

From the rising of the sun



to the setting of the same—

Prayer Summits West & East

Western Japan

By Ken Reddington

God is doing some exciting things in Western Japan! Here are four newsworthy events:

First, IRM* held Prayer Summit explanatory meetings in five locations throughout Japan in 1999. One was held in Otsu, Shiga Prefecture. The national pastors there caught the vision and set January 2000 for their first Prayer Summit, the first one ever totally in Japanese. This coming February, Japanese pastors will be holding their third Prayer Summit in Shiga!

Second, May 2002 marked our 5th Prayer Summit held at Hiruzen Bible Camp (NLM) in Okayama Prefecture, within reach of the Japan Sea. I always return home with my spiritual “batteries” recharged and ready for another year of walking with the Lord. I really need this time with the Lord and with my brothers!

Third, in October 2002 Akira Mori (EOM*) represented both IRM and JEMA at Prayer Summit explanatory meetings in the cities of Osaka and Kochi, (Shikoku). A pastor in Osaka gave up a “grudge” of 16 years against another pastor to come to the meeting, as well as the Men’s Prayer Fellowship (MPF) in November. Praise the Lord! In Kochi, most of the pastors coming to the MPF here were present. Kochi City is well known for its lack of unity among churches. But after the meeting, one pastor said, “I’m all fired up!” And it looks like some pastors will come to a summit next year from Kochi for the first time. God IS working. Praise His Name!

Fourth, not only do we have annual summits, but we also have Men’s Prayer Fellowships held bimonthly. Men come

from the Kansai Area (Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe) as well as from Hiroshima, Okayama and Kochi. We meet in Osaka.

For Your Information: Kansai MPFs meet at the Light of Christ Church in Juso, very close to downtown Osaka on the Hankyu Line. All are welcome. Please contact me for details at: doulos@d1.dion.ne.jp.

Tentative dates for upcoming Kansai MPFs are: February 24, April 21 (Day of Prayer), May 26-29 Prayer Summit West, July 7, September 8 (Day of Prayer), and November 10. These gatherings start at 9 a.m. and go through noon. Come early (8:30 a.m.) and enjoy a time of fellowship over coffee, tea and donuts. Some of us even stay for lunch. You are most welcome.

In April and September, we plan Days of Prayer. Coffee and donuts are at 9:30 a.m. Prayer will begin at 10:00 a.m. and will go till 3:00 p.m.

The 2003 Prayer Summit for Western Japan will be MAY 26-29 (Monday through Thursday). The location will be Hiruzen Bible Camp. We plan to hold this summit bilingually. Come, invite your colleagues, national pastors and friends! You will find your heart, soul and body refreshed. Please take notice of the flyer included in this issue of *Japan Harvest!*

* International Renewal Ministries based in Oregon USA

** Evangelical Orient Mission



Eastern Japan

Compiled by Akira Mori

Jorg Eymann writes: “It was really an important time for me to be at this Prayer Summit. Most of all, at one --time to have an encounter with God in a special, deep way was really impressive for me. God took care of me like a ‘mother.’ I was really in the ‘mother’s’ lap. (Lord, thank you so much!) By the videos we saw, I was very much encouraged to start to pray for my town together with others. I am asking God now what the next step should be. He will show the way. ‘Lord,

have mercy upon Japan.”

Peter writes: “For me, it was the first time to experience a Prayer Summit. I feel very much blessed and encouraged for my daily prayer life. I’m looking forward to how God will use me, change me and work through me. It was also a blessing to see how God can transform through prayer.”

Gerhard Fuhrmann writes: “At the first evening I had the feeling that the Lord was

Continued on page 34

Continued from page 23

Worship & Music:

Celebrate Jesus— The Seminar for You

Guest Writer: Paul Nethercott

Celebrate Jesus, a bilingual worship leaders' training seminar, took place September 15-17, 2002 at Megumi Chalet in Karuizawa.

What did attendees say about Celebrate Jesus?

- "Thank you again for your good work in organizing the Celebrate Jesus Seminar. It was a great blessing and a great help."
- "Even though I have only been in Japan one year I recognize the significance of this event. It is vital for churches... and hopefully, that will extend to the unchurched as well."
- "The seminar was not about song leading or being a musician but was about being a worshipper [of God]. It was what I had hoped for; it was wonderful."
- "[The] messenger was wonderful. The quality of the content was fabulous! As I said, overall, it was [a] wonderful seminar and was a great start for CAN to meet [the needs of] Japanese Christian(s)!!!"

What was Celebrate Jesus like?

Specifically designed to meet the needs of church leaders in Japan, around 15 Japanese pastors and missionary church planters were among the 90 who attended. Pastor Kenichi Ohashi from the Evangelical Free Church in Amagasaki City (in the Kansai area) shared with the whole group that when he arrived he was very skeptical, that he came to check things out, but his attitude changed once he got involved. He plans to encourage other pastors to attend the CAN Worship Seminar next year and is acting as an advisor for it.

The main speaker, Byron Spradlin of Artists in Christian Testimony (ACT),

did a fantastic job. Using many stories, he spoke eloquently and passionately about our need for an intimate love relationship with God; his spirit was contagious.

Makoto Iwabuchi and the Celebrate Jesus Worship Team provided leadership during the worship times; dramatic readings, visual art that drew attendees' attention to the cross, as well as hymns and praise songs contributed to dynamic, intimate times of worship. Experienced gifted facilitators lead skills oriented workshops; they included keyboard, song writing, worship team building, worship leading and a rhythm section clinic.

One of the highlights of the seminar for many was the Worship Arts Festival. Nine different groups made a contribution to this event that included music, drama, dance and a dramatic reading. Another highlight was the chance to meet and network with others. Networking included affinity groups and time in the Woodshed. The last session of the seminar was a time of open, honest sharing when all participants had an opportunity to connect with one another.

Will there be more seminars like Celebrate Jesus?

Yes! Plans are in place to hold a worship seminar next year, to give it a new name as well as several other improvements. The location will be Tokyo (Yoyogi Olympic Center, near Shinjuku station). The Tokyo location will reduce travel, lodging, food and registration costs.

How will the CAN Worship Seminar benefit my church ministry and me?

The CAN worship seminar will benefit you and your church because music or a particular style of leading worship, is not the main focus. Principles related to worship and providing quality training for those in church leadership in Japan is the priority. Below is part of our planning guide for next year which will help you see how the CAN worship seminar fits into your ministry plans.

CAN worship seminar vision:

To train, resource, inspire, encourage and network church leaders in Japan to be effective lead worshippers. To help spark a

movement that results in many thousands of Japanese bowing down in worship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Target Audience:

Pastors, church leaders, church planting missionaries, shikaishya, musicians and other Christian artists.

Key Words:

Biblical, Teamwork, Unity, Creativity, Worship, Prayer, Practical, Skills Training, Resources, Networking, Local Church

Four focus areas:

1. Worship (principle-based teaching)
2. Networking (ample opportunity to meet, learn from each other & form new partnerships)
3. Skills Training (for instrumentalists, dramatists, power point operators, pastors/worship leaders and others)
4. Prayer

Main speaker: Byron Spradlin of ACT

Secondary speaker: Makoto Fujimura, an outstanding painter from New York who will speak on the theme of "The Arts and Worship."

1. For more information:

General Questions: Paul@japancan.com
To Register: can@japancan.com
ACT (Byron Spradlin) URL: <ACTinternational.org>
IAM (Makoto Fujimura) URL: <inch.com/~fujimura/newhome.htm>

2. CAN Worship Seminar

September 21-23, 2003
Tokyo Yoyogi Olympic Center

3. Announcing a Japan Worship-Related e-mail Group

that was established at Celebrate Jesus (bilingual). To sign up send an e-mail to: worship-leading-subscribe@egroups.co.jp

List Administrators: Karen Ellrick & Koji Hayashi.



Computer Lessons I've Learned

Through the years I've had a lot of problems with computers, and so have many of my missionary friends. Free advice is sometimes worth what you pay for it, so take it or leave it; here are some of the things I've learned along the way:

- Of course, back up your data files regularly. Also, be careful to keep your anti-virus software up to date. See previous issues...enough said!
- Buy your kids a Nintendo, or Play Station, or X-Box, and keep them off *your* computer. Here's a secret no one tells you—games don't work all that well on a PC. To really run well, they need expensive and specialized video cards, and scads of memory. Sooner or later, a drink will be spilled, or an important file deleted, and tempers will flair. There's enough stress in a missionary's life already! Get the X-Box, and YOU can play on it when the kids are in bed!
- If you need to use Japanese on your computer for more than just e-mail, upgrade to Windows XP (or Windows 2000). Microsoft has finally gotten it right for using Japanese on an English-based computer. With XP, you not only can type Japanese into Word (you could already do that with the right downloads), but you can also actually load Japanese programs into your English-based system. Forget separate partitions for dual booting; this is the way to go! The setup is a little tricky, but there are newsgroups and web sites out there to help.
- Buy a copy of Microsoft Office. Sooner or later you are going to have to share a file with someone else in the world, and the whole rest of the world is using Office. Even if you got Word Perfect, AmiPro, Apple Works, Microsoft Works or anything else free with your computer, buy Office and use it. Once you get it, teach yourself to use Excel; it's a useful tool for all kinds of non-accounting tasks.
- Don't buy a notebook computer unless you absolutely have to. If you travel all the time, you have no choice, but notebook computers usually cost more than twice the price of desktops. They have two other big disadvantages. First, they are almost irreparable. Spill a Coke into the keyboard or close the lid on a pencil, and your \$3,000 computer becomes a doorstop. The cost of the repair is very expensive (the parts are all proprietary) and must be done by the manufacturer. Usually, unless the machine is almost new, you're better off "chucking" it and buying a new one. Second, laptops are almost impossible to upgrade. Once you buy it, it will be the same until it "dies". A desktop, however, can usually be repaired easily using off-the-shelf parts, some of which you can install yourself. A cup of coffee spilled into the keyboard means buying another one for \$15 and plugging it in. If you decide you want better speakers, a larger screen, or a different mouse/pointer, then you just change them. All these are impossible with a laptop. Going on home service is a problem that cannot be ignored. However, the new slim-profile desktops easily fit into a carry-on bag, and you can buy another monitor and keyboard on the other side of the ocean for a fraction of the extra cost of a laptop. Better yet, replace your old desktop every fifth year when you take a year in your home country.
- Buy cheaper computers more frequently. Usually our tendency is to want to "pay a little more for something that is going to last." This doesn't work too well with computers. No matter how much you

pay now, in three years you'll be wishing you could change for something newer, faster, and easier to use. Computer years are like dog years; about one human year equals seven computer years! No matter how little you spend, it's impossible to buy a bad, new computer these days. So, don't buy the absolute top-of-the-line computer, but plan to replace it more often. Chances are your kids, a short-term missionary, or an MK school can use the donation of your old one.

- Upgrade your operating system only when you *need* to. There are several good reasons to upgrade your version of windows, such as needing to run Japanese programs (see above). However, unless you need to, don't bother. Probably the new version will require extensive time for setup, and you might find that some of your old hardware (especially scanners) won't work. Also, every new version of Windows has required more hard disk space, more memory, and will usually load slower than the previous version. Windows95 still works fine unless you need USB support.
- Think long and hard before you upgrade your old computer. You can sink a lot of money into hardware upgrades very quickly. A larger hard disk, more memory, and an OS upgrade will cost almost as much as a new computer. Then, even with extensive upgrades, you'll still have an old computer with some new parts, and it won't be nearly as reliable as a new one!

Well, that's it for this issue. Next time I'd like to write about Bible software. Please write me with your recommendations, both good and bad. I'll collect all your information and pass it on. Other feedback would be helpful, too. Is this column too "geeky," or am I just telling you things you already know? What other topics would you like to see me cover? Why not write me at:

missionarygeek@yahoo.com.

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

Christian Doctor Writes Best Seller

Best selling author Dr. Jumei Hinohara is 91 years old. His book, *Ikikata Jozu, (Someone Who Knows How to Live a Good Life)* has sold 1,200,000 copies.

Not only is he an author and medical doctor, but he also writes musical plays and composes songs. October 2, 2002 he conducted a concert at Shibuya Public Hall. He used the opportunity to encourage his listeners to "take care of one's life" even when there are difficulties. His long medical experience has provided opportunity to encourage his patients. Presently Dr. Hinohara is Chairman of the Board and Emeritus Director of St Luke's Hospital, Tsukiji, Tokyo.

In 1970 he was a passenger on the plane hijacked by the Red Army. That experience of confinement in the plane for three nights and four days, with the fear of dynamite, changed his life forever. He is currently active in giving lectures and writing.

LOVE Koshu

A group of Christians, including 28 students from Taiwan, went to Yamanashi Prefecture to carry out evangelism in Ninobu-cho. It is here that the headquarters for Nichiren Sect was founded 750 years ago. Even today this temple gives strong influence to the culture, industry, economy and politics of the town. Many Christians live in secret because of pressure put on them. Rev. Koto, pastor of the Harvest Church Yamanashi, has been preparing since 2001 for this evangelistic effort by studying the sect, visiting the town's people, and praying for the Minobu people. He has visited homes one by one, distributing tracts and the Jesus video. "I thought it was difficult to tell the good

news to the Minobu people, but I realized that many Christians have been preoccupied with the idea of difficulties," he said. Pastor Koto is busy with follow-up.

Abductee

Megumi Yokota's mother finds Christ

Some time after Megumi Yokota's abduction, her mother, Sakie, started to attend a Bible class held by Chalmers and Peggy McDaniel, then TEAM missionaries in Niigata. Weak and wishing to die, Sakie was encouraged by the Word of God and accepted Jesus Christ as her personal Savior. She was changed by God's Spirit and has grown strong in her faith. "She has been chosen by God," one of her friends said. The Bible class friends, who moved to the Kanto area, continue to support her in prayer. The McDaniel's continue to pray for the Yokotas, too, and hope that the family tragedy will be a great witness for the glory of God. The family does not believe that Megumi committed suicide, and they hope she is still alive. Prayer meetings for the Yokotas take place at the Word of Life headquarters in Shinjuku.

Prison Fellowship Japan (PFJ)

The Japanese branch of Prison Fellowship International (PFI) was inaugurated on July 6, 2002. Pastors, evangelists of the Mission Barabbas, prison chaplains, and Christian volunteers met to discuss future activities here. PFI was founded in the USA in 1976 by Charles Colson, then related to the Watergate scandals of the Nixon Administration. PFI is now in 95 countries,

with more than 50,000 volunteers. All the sections of the organization are independent, each forming their own activities. Mr. Maui, from Fuji, headquartered PFJ in the Siloam Christian Church. At the present, members of Mission Barabbas are not allowed to visit prisoners because of their criminal records, but PFJ is trying to get permission for them through the Ministry of Justice. If you are interested in PFJ, please contact: 047-425-7860.



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

RELEASED PRISONERS from Australian Jail coming to OCC for special meeting

On January 25, 2003 a group of Christian supporters are holding a special service from 2:00-4:30 for the four Japanese released in November 2002. (See An Open Letter, pg 10, Japan Harvest Fall, 2002.) Rev. Hirohashi of the Presbyterian Church and Mr. Kazunori Sugano are organizing the meeting. Please contact Mr. Sugano at 03-3595-5685 for details. "It would be good if some of the missionary community could join in the service. Thank you for your prayers. It will take a while for the four to readjust to Japanese life," writes Stephen Young.

Hontoni

I am Loved!

*Taken from Gospel for the Millions,
September 2002, "Little Bread"*
By Ichiro Noto*

Hello! I am Ichiro Noto. Thank you so much for your prayers. When suddenly both my legs would not move, I was hospitalized in March. Within a few days, my lower body was totally paralyzed. Two months later the doctors found a tumor in my lower back pressing against the nerves in my spinal column. I found that I did not need to be overcome by worry and fear because even though some parts of my body didn't work, other parts did. But when the doctors told me that there was no hope for a cure, my spirit became heavy and dark. The tumor would be left in my body.

In Hebrews we find the verse, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...for consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners..." Hebrews 12:2,3. I spent long days in terrible pain. Then I started concentrating on myself and what was happening to me. I was not able to understand God's plan, and worry occupied my heart. I became discouraged and powerless and it was hard for me to think about God. Truthfully, I continued in this spirit of discouragement for some time. I became weary just like the Bible warned, "For consider Him who endured...lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls." It was then God met me through His word. One day when I read Psalm 92:5,6 and Psalm 95:7-9, I suddenly understood that God was talking to me. I had been foolish. I had been stubborn. It was then I determined to start again in newness of life. God started to work. Then I found myself complaining. I knew this was sinful and that God did not like the way I was thinking.

On July 14 I wanted to go to church where I hoped to give my testimony, but I had to return home because of my severe back pain. Two days later at 4 o'clock in the morning, as I wanted to turn just a little bit with Mari's usual help, I was attacked by VERY horrible pain. There was even a sound that we heard, the sound of something breaking. My whole body from the center of my back, the left and right

sides, was hurting terribly. An x-ray showed that the tumor had become so large that when I had tried to move just a little bit, my backbone had broken. The pain was so intense that tears flowed from my eyes. But I found that even then I could praise the Lord, the God of glory. And I want to tell you the reason why I could praise in such a time as this. I felt that I was hanging on the same cross with Jesus, together! I felt as if I were stricken on that cross. I remembered with the pain in my side that Jesus had been pierced by a sword. And in my ceaseless pain, joy sprang up, such joy that I cannot explain. 'I am on the cross now,' I thought. 'I am allowed to bear pain like Jesus did. I can suffer together with Jesus. What a privilege! What a blessing!' Romans 6:8 says, 'Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. And if children, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together,' Romans 8:16,17.

These Scriptures came into my heart one after another and I became so happy, pleased and thankful all at the same time. I thought, "Jesus bore such pain, too. Though I am in this pain without yes or no, Jesus Himself accepted His pain positively for the sake of loving me! Ho.n.to.ni, I am loved! Ho.n.to.ni, Jesus loves me!" Finally, I have been able to accept my pain and sickness. I have started to understand that pain has meaning. Let me use the example of an army. We are the army who serves God, His church. It is here that we have someone who gives the message and good news, also we need someone who will teach the Bible in an understandable way. Maybe that is my role, to feel pain and to suffer. I can then tell in a practical way about it. I cannot do the work for God that I had prayed for, but through this sickness and pain, I can praise God and

give my testimony to people, even to those who don't know me. I am happy I can still pray. I can pray for all the people in Japan. There are many of you who are suffering just like me. I want you to understand that Jesus is always with you; He knows you and He understands you. If you accept His love and trust God's hands, there will be blessing for sure!

Finally, read 2 Timothy 2:8 and following. I have been so encouraged by the words written there. I praise God who gives us our wonderful Jesus, and I thank you very much for letting me tell you my story."

Ichiro Noto went to be with his Lord on April 26, 1997 when he was only 36 years old. He had suffered three years and two months with cancer. It was during those painful days that he put his testimony on cassette tape. This was then passed from believer to believer, spreading the blessing of one man's struggle and victory.

*Translated by Junko Nakagawa

No House Without Sorrow

Among the parables that Chinese teachers use is the story of a woman who lost an only son. She was grief-stricken out of all reason. She made her sorrow a wailing wall. Finally she went to a wise old philosopher. He said to her, "I will give you back your son if you will bring me some mustard seed. However, the seed must come from a home where there has never been any sorrow." Eagerly she started her search, and went from house to house. In every case she learned that a loved one had been lost. "How selfish I have been in my grief," she said. "sorrow is common to all."

*How to Face Life
Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations
by Paul Lee Tan*

Language Lab

Introducing Timothy Boyle's 'Bible stories hidden in Chinese characters'

By Miriam Davis

'Can you suggest any stories to tell about Kanji that I could use on Home Assignment' asked a fellow missionary some years ago. Off the top of my head all that came to mind were ones that seem to have become the regular 'stock-in-trade' of missionaries such as 義, (we become righteous 義 [gi] in God's eyes when we place the self 我 [ware] under the lamb 羊 [hitsuji]), and 船 (a boat 舟 with eight 八 [hachi] mouths or people 口 [kuchi] hence Noah's ark.)

Now with 'Bible stories hidden in Chinese characters' available in English we have a rich and fascinating resource on Kanji to suit a number of purposes: stories to use in teaching the gospel to Japanese; illustrations for furlough talks; and for the learner of Japanese aids to memorizing Kanji.

In Part 1 Boyle develops the hypothesis that there is a link between the original forms of Chinese characters and the first 11 chapters of Genesis. He illustrates this by explaining the derivation of approximately 150 characters grouped by themes such as 'Happiness in the Garden of Eden'; 'Adam and Eve'; 'the Devil'; and 'Punishment for Sin'. Boyle writes 'even if one takes my analysis as being pure speculation with no real basis, that does not really change the main purpose I have in writing this book. **Namely, that these associations can be used as illustrations to help explain and understand the truths taught in Scripture** (p.142).'

Part 2, 'Biblical Association Games with Kanji' takes a further 86 kanji and links them to Biblical themes other than the Genesis stories: e.g. there are chapters on Jesus, the cross and the Lamb of God. In some cases the associations are made without reference to the character's origin.

In part 1 we learn, for example, that the radical 'shimesu hen' (derived from 示) means 'God'. The right hand element of 神 [SHIN, kami] can be thought of as 2 hands reaching down to create and bless man (9, p. 45). 福 [FUKU] or blessing is what the first 一 person 口 found in the garden 田 with God 示. 田 in Japanese is a rice paddy but it originally meant garden. Boyle

further suggests that one might think of 田 as 4 rivers 十 within the boundaries of a garden 口 (19, p.51). Another kanji (37, p.65) with the God radical is the 祉 [SHI, happiness] of 福祉 [welfare]. Literally this means 'God remains' 止 [todo(maru)]. When God remains with us we are blessed and happy.

There are gems of information scattered throughout the pages of this book. Have you ever realized that 謝罪 [shazai, apology] literally means to give thanks 謝 for sin 罪? Boyle gives a fascinating explanation of the differences in Western and Japanese conceptions of apologizing and thanking (p.26). I would use Boyle's explanation of 'holy' with Japanese. In order to be 聖 [SEI, holy], one needs to have a king 王 of one's ears 耳 and mouth 口 (p.155). Explanations of the compound word 十字架 [cross p.167] and 恵 [grace p.200] are excellent.

In some cases kanji stories can be used to highlight the differences between Biblical teaching and Japanese culture. One example is 躰 [shitsuke, discipline p. 158.] This kanji is explained as follows. 'Discipline is like a beautiful decoration on the body and thus 身, body, and 美, beautiful, were combined.' But it is inward beauty that is emphasized in the Bible. If we could make a new kanji it would be by adding 心 heart to beautiful and not body.

There are some minus points. In part 1 some characters are presented in their original Chinese form. Japanese learners may prefer to ignore these to avoid confusion. The Japanese forms below the larger Chinese ones in these cases are small and a little difficult to distinguish. Not all kanji explained are 'jooyoo kanji'. Some stories may be a little far-fetched and more difficult to remember than the character itself. I personally found more of the stories in Part 2 helpful than in Part 1. Having said this it is a book I can thoroughly recommend to anyone wishing to learn about kanji and how to relate Biblical concepts to Japanese culture. An English-Japanese index (prepared by missionary Bob Warrick) to the characters covered in the book is available separately from Tim.

Published by The Tsukuba Christian Center ISBN4-925124-02-1 ¥1,000 + tax. Can be ordered by e mail:za3t-by1@asahi-net.or.jp Also available in Japanese as 「漢字に秘(ひ)められた聖書物語」 although the English version is a rewriting of the Japanese rather than a translation.

Continued from page 15

appropriate intervals, Priya comments on and asks questions about their discussion.

The basic teachings of Christianity and Buddhism are presented simply, yet beautifully. For readers who know little about Buddhism, this book is an excellent introduction to its teachings. At the same time, it shows readers how to present the claims of Christ to those interested in Eastern religions. The dialogue even includes a bit of humor. The boatman, with his wry comments, is often reminiscent of the Fool in the plays of Shakespeare. At one point, Jesus Himself makes a joke: In recounting his early life, Buddha says, "Stop me if you

already know this." Jesus replies, "Well, I do, and actually more than you realize, but I think it is good for Priya to hear it from you."

In keeping with the conventions of meta-drama, *The Lotus and the Cross* includes another story: how the book itself was created. During his travels, Zacharias really did ride along the River of Kings. While doing so, he thought about a story he had read that morning in the newspaper. A young Thai woman dying of AIDS had committed suicide by torching her house. As he rode along the river, Zacharias asked, "What, Lord Jesus, would you have said to Priya, had she brought her decrepit

body and aching heart to you?" Thus, the characters of Priya and the Boatman become active participants in an engrossing meta-drama rather than another Socratic dialogue.



Susan Shibe Davis has her PHD in English from Arizona State University (USA). She is presently a professor in the Department of Modern Education at Baiko Jogakuin University in Shimonoseki City.

Continued from page 19

Elloise was also an active tract distributor. On any given Saturday you could find her in front of local elementary schools handing out tracts. Why pass out tracts to youth? Elloise knew that in middle and high schools bullying and suicide were common! Youth need hope. They need to know the TRUTH. Although she never saw results, she believed that lives were touched. In time the planted seed will bear fruit!

Growing up, Elloise and her sisters learned about worldwide missionary work through the stories their mother read at bedtime. They also learned to pray. In time each one answered God's call, going to Canada, Taiwan and Japan to serve their Lord. Elloise is a graduate of Prairie Bible Institute in Alberta, Canada. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in music from the University of California, Santa Barbara (USA). In May of 1963, under CBInternational, Elloise began her teaching career at Christian Academy in Japan (CAJ).

We honor you, Elloise, for your long and faithful ministry!

which Megumi Chalet has warmed the hearts of Christians and non-Christians alike? Can one ever know the far-reaching influence of beauty and creativity? The Bardeau's have two grown sons.

We honor you, Gil and Ellen, for your high standard in Christian life and ministry!



Cal and Pat Junker

came to Japan separately in November, 1954 and were married a year later.

They have ministered in Matsumoto in church planting from September 1957 to September 2001.

In 1963 they began the Matsumoto Bible bookstore. Cynthia Snyder,

secretary in the TEAM office, had the following dialogue with a family member:

Q: When the Bible bookstore started (in our records, the closest approximate date is December 1963) what was the name of the bookstore?

A: The bookstore's name was Abundant Life Bookstore.

Q: What is the name of the English Center, and is it separate from the bookstore? When did it start?

A: It has the same name as the bookstore, Abundant Life Center, and started about the same time as the bookstore.

Q: What is the name of the church? I have the date of 2/21/60 as the time of dedication.

Continued on page 32



Gil and Ellen Bardeau for their 26 years of faithful service. Gil and Ellen first came to Japan on October 28, 1976 and served in several key positions. As dorm parents for six years, they cared for missionary children in the TEAM hostile and then with Christian Academy. It was then that they moved into ministry at the Karuzawa's Megumi Chalet (conference center) where their creativity and energy made a difference! Ellen's interior

decorating ability made the conference center one of beauty and warmth! Gil's skill in carpentry and arranging set a very high standard! Who can measure the Bardeau's influence on the young MKs they prayed for, helped and loved? Who can know all the ways in

countless thousands of Japanese Christians proves the folly of that mindset. Perhaps no Church in history has endured such long term holocaust as the Church of Japan. In 1637 alone, over 37,000 believers were slaughtered.¹⁰ Surviving two hundred and fifty years of onslaught is a rugged testimony of the truth, which can weave the Japan narrative into the God narrative.

There have been voices in the past that spoke effectively to this need. The late novelist Miura Ayako's stories impacted a vast portion of society, including her rendering of *Shiokari Pass* (*Shiokari toge*). Stories carry mind-shaping power. Thus, the dominant, as well as deficient narrative in Japan needs to be de-constructed piece by piece, and re-authored. After all, people appear to be longing for this God that their current narrative keeps them from. Consider some of the signs. A survey by NHK (Japan National Broadcasting) in the mid-80's showed that if Japanese were to choose a religion over a third would choose Christianity (still the Christian population remains around 1%). Walter Wangerin's *The Book of God* (*Shosetsu seisho*) enjoyed rampant sales a few years ago. The book was merely a rewriting of the Bible in novel form. And consider the countless newlyweds that flirt with Christianity today. Around 70% of marriages in Japan take vows in a Christian ceremony. Clearly, Japan appears to be showing its readiness for this God.

Thus the great task of the Church, which will require immense wisdom from Above, is to show that the Japanese narrative fits perfectly into the God narrative. This is accomplished by effectively and affectively iterating the story of the heart's longing: how the Japanese heart is really longing after God, and in the God Narrative, how the heart of God is longing after the Japanese. Such is the story that the cyber lonely, the materially compulsive and the spiritually clueless pine for underneath.

The God Experience

The second aspect, which will define the health and influence of the Church, is that it must enter the God experience as opposed to its present experience. This, as opposed to the God narrative, is a very simple issue and in most churches long overdue. The need for the God experience refers to the tendency of the Church to idolize words without encountering the Word, acquiring much knowledge of the facts about God while still staying high

and dry from the waves of transformation. In the words of Leonard Sweet, "Any community without the tang of 'realness' is too insipid for postmodern tastes, not to speak of Jesus himself."¹¹ Yet too often we are devoid of the very experience that we, the Church, and also society seek. In the words of R. D. Laing, "It seems likely that far more people in our time neither experience the presence of God nor the presence of his absence, but the absence of his presence."¹² Personally, ministering at Ivy League schools in Tokyo during the late 80's awakened me to this hunger. Students cared little about knowledge of truth but ardently sought after an experience of "life." In this context, my approach to evangelism needed a radical adjustment. The heart experience of the marvelous Mystery now takes precedence over the principles and dogmas of the faith. As Nouwen emphasized, the future depends on our "movement from the moral to the mystical."¹³ Now if the church is actually experiencing God, it becomes a place to encounter God, and in no matter what era or reactionary epoch it lives, souls will doubtless be irresistibly drawn to it.

A common tendency in the Church today is to bemoan the unresponsiveness of society to the message or messenger, as the case may be. We wait for the culture to change, to open, and to come flooding in. But perhaps we are failing to see that change is all around, that this is the epoch of opportunity. The time for waiting has ended. We cannot exist as we have before.

Conclusion

As simple as the God experience is and as challenging as the Japan-God narrative may seem, both exist outside the realm of rational dependence and toss the Church into a continual dependence on God's working. Both the community of Japan and the Church of Japan are finding their true place and experience. Both paths lead away from the imported personality of Enlightenment vintage. It is in a way a reverse Enlightenment. But in this new order of unknown riptides, the Church not only offers total stability in a raging sea but also exists in utter mystery on the Rock of Refuge.

Notes

1. Clammer as quoted in Arnason, Johann P. and Sugimoto, Yoshio, eds., *Japanese Encounters with Post modernity* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1995), 27.
2. See Arnason, Johann P. and Sugimoto, Yoshio, eds., *Japanese Encounters with Postmodernity* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1995), 28.
3. Miyazawa, Kenji, "Challenge of Third World Culture" published in *World Literature Today*, 62, No.3, Summer 1988, 359-369 as quoted by Oe Kenzaburo in Miyoshi, Masao and Harootunian, H.D., eds., *Postmodernism and Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989), 213.
4. Kurokawa, Kisho, *Selected and Current Works*, (Victoria, Australia: Images Publishing, 1995), 17. 5. *Ibid.*, 10.
5. S. *Ibid.*, 10.
6. Kato, Shuichi as quoted by Asada Akira in "Infantile Capitalism and Japan's Postmodernism: A Fairy Tale," Snyder, Stephen and Philip, Gabriel, eds., *Oe and Beyond* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 27.
7. Miyoshi, Masao, "Against the Native Grain The Japanese Novel and the Postmodern West," in Miyoshi, Masao and Harootunian, HI), eds., *Postmodernism and Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989).
8. Asada, Akira "Infantile Capitalism and Japan Postmodernism: A Fairy Tale", in Snyder, *Oe and Beyond*, 221.
9. Snyder, *Oe and Beyond*, 224.
10. Mitsumori, Haruo, ed., *Operation Japan*, (Tokyo: JEMS, 1997), 16.

1 Sweet, Leonard, *Soul Tsunami* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1999), 198.

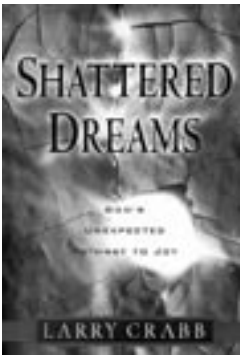
12. Laing, R.D., "The Politics of Experience and the Bird of Paradise," as quoted in Kenneth Leech, *Soul Friend*, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980), 109.

13. Nouwen, Henri, *In the Name of Jesus*, (New York: Crossroad, 2000), 32.



Dr. Andy Meeko is a second generation missionary to Japan whose parents arrived in 1947. Author and conference speaker he also directs Family Life Japan, which seeks to strengthen and bring healing to homes. He lives with his wife and four children in Yamagata.

Book Reviews



Shattered Dreams

By Larry Crabb

WaterBrook Press, 2001, 218 pages

Each one of us has life dreams and ministry goals, dreams for good things that seem to fall under the Jeremiah 29:11 category. But the truth is that many of us have seen those dreams shatter. What should we do when our omniscient and omnipotent Father seems unresponsive as we face these shattered dreams? Why does He allow our dreams to shatter in the first place?

Larry Crabb addresses these vexing questions in *Shattered Dreams*. Focusing on the example of Naomi in the biblical story of Ruth, Crabb explains that God shatters our dreams, or at least allows them to shatter, to awaken within us the realization that the things we think we are longing for are not what our hearts truly crave. “Happy people rarely look for joy. They’re quite content with what they have.... In His severe mercy, God takes away the good to create an appetite for the better, and then, eventually, He satisfies the new appetite...” (p. 57).

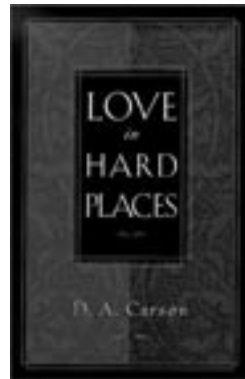
The suffering that accompanies shattered dreams leads to brokenness, and it is through our brokenness that we finally cry out to Him. “We will not encounter Christ as our best friend, as the source of all true goodness, as the One who provides the sweetest pleasure to our souls, until we abandon ourselves to Him. And full abandonment, real trust, rarely happens until we meet God in the midst of shattered dreams, until in our brokenness we see in Him the only and overflowing sufficient answer to our soul’s deepest cry” (pp.180-181).

Shattered Dreams is an excellent book.

It will comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.



Reviewer: Bob Hay is a missionary with SEND International. He and his wife have been ministering in Higashi Tokorozawa since 1992.



Love in Hard Places.

By D. A. Carson,

Crossway Books, 2002, 207 pages

“Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold” (Matthew 24:12). These words of Jesus to His disciples, days before His death, remind us of the importance of keeping fervent in our love. Jesus made love the distinguishing mark of his followers (see John 13:34-35). But what is love? And what is the relation of love to justice, war, forgiveness, and other things we face in this fallen and broken world?

In these superb reflections on love, Carson focuses “especially on those aspects of Christian love that are not easy and may be painful as well as difficult.... To love wisely and well, to love appropriately, to love faithfully, to love in line with biblical expectations of what it means to love, is commonly a very difficult thing to do” (p. 18).

Carson begins by reviewing the different ways in which the Bible speaks of the love of God and then gives a very helpful exposition on the double commandment

to love (Mark 12:28-34). Loving God with our thoughts and with all we are means especially knowing and obeying His Word. The first hard place is “the hardest place of all, the place of love’s origin—our own hearts and lives.”

Chapter two is about the demand of Jesus to love our “enemies, big and small.” Carson works through Matthew 5:43-48 as well as Romans 12:17-21 and several other related passages. God’s love for the just and unjust does not mean that He will not judge. The Bible reminds us that sometimes the worst pain we face will come from other Christians, those closest to us. Not all Christians face persecuting enemies, but we all face little enemies—people whose personalities we intensely dislike! And sometimes love for these kinds of people (other Christians!) is more difficult than love for big enemies. We may bravely face persecution, but be very petty in small slights. Christians should be able to live with a certain amount of injustice because we know that justice will ultimately be done in the end. Carson has some incisive reflections on Christian response to persecution, and also deals with “other” enemies—people who are enemies because they belong to a different race or country or group.

Chapter three looks at different dimensions of forgiveness. Forgiveness may bring reconciliation, but sometimes the other party may remain hardened and unrepentant. God forgives and we must forgive. But forgiveness does not mean that we ignore justice. “Not to be outraged may... be evidence, not of gentleness and love, but of the failure of love.”

Carson next considers “two hard cases” in an attempt to relate some of the Bible’s complex themes to some of today’s complex problems. The first hard case is racism, and Carson looks at some of the ways racism displays itself in the church. While focusing on the North American context, his reflections on justice and forgiveness are important for Christians everywhere. The second hard case is Osama bin Laden and his kind. How should Christians think about terrorists and enemies in a time of war? Carson first looks at pacifism and “just war” theory in the light of the commands to love and forgive. His sensi-

tive analysis and perceptive observations on Islam will help *Japan Harvest* readers as they face questions from people in a post-9/11 world. He quotes C. S. Lewis to expose the shallowness of much contemporary analysis: “The war creates no absolutely new situation: it simply aggravates the permanent human situation so that we can no longer ignore it.” Carson ends the chapter by challenging us not to demonize any Muslim. It is impossible to evangelize people we despise or hate.

Chapter five looks at “Love and the Denial of the Gospel.” Carson shows how the meaning of tolerance has changed in our postmodern world. He examines the famous confrontation between Paul and Peter in Galatians 2:11-21 and shows what Paul was doing when he rebuked Peter. Pastoral reflections on church discipline, another of the hard places, remind us that current ideas of love are often far from biblical.

The final chapter is a searching exposition of a wonderful church (doctrinally

sound, discerning, hard-working, persevering) that was doomed because it had forsaken its first love (Revelation 2:1-7). Carson shows what a church looks like when it learns to overcome its loss of first love. “One day the hard places will be gone. But the love will remain, unalloyed, immensely rich, reflecting in small but glorious ways the immeasurable love we have received.”

Carson has a deep understanding of biblical theology as well as wide knowledge of contemporary culture. For those who want to know how to read the newspaper in one hand while holding the Bible in the other, this book is a great place to start. Carson’s theological reflections on current events and the central realities of our faith will challenge your heart as well as stir your thinking.

Japan Harvest readers will also not want to miss *Worship by the Book* (Zondervan, 2002). D. A. Carson, general editor, gives a biblical theology of worship (“Worship under the Word”) followed by chap-

ters by Tim Keller, pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church on Madison Avenue in New York City; Kent Hughes, pastor of College Church in Wheaton, Illinois; and Mark Ashton, vicar of an Anglican Church in Cambridge, England. They talk about the patterns of worship in their local churches and also include complete service outlines. This book shows how churches in different traditions (Reformed, Free Church, and Anglican) can foster worship that is God-centered and Christ-honoring. For those wanting help on making worship comprehensible to unbelievers and leading them to commitment, Keller’s chapter is especially practical.



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.

sive evangelism seem to do more harm than good there. Another problem can be that of misperceptions. For example, one short-term missions leader reported that his team had planted a church in three weeks even though they could not speak the language. Wrong impressions can be given. We must be careful not to contribute to the myth that short-term missions will win the world.

I hope this is not just the ripping sound of an old wine skin as I have tried to adapt to new wine. I think the questions of career recruiting effectiveness, situational

appropriateness, realistic expectations and accurate task descriptions need to be answered. I also think that answers can be gained in such a way that STMs can make a major contribution in accomplishing the task at hand. God help us.

Thanks to Ellen Livingood for her contributions to the sections on FBCN and, more importantly, she has been the catalyst for my changed perspective. If you have any helpful comments, please let me know: rbarber@yhb.att.ne.jp.

*Return on Investment
**Newtown, Pennsylvania USA



Ron Barber with his wife, Amy, serve under TEAM. The Barbers have worked in Japan since 1988.

Continued from page 29

A: My folks started six churches in all, the Matsumoto Chuo Church, the Toyoshina Seisho Gospel Church now known as Azumino Family Chapel, the Omachi Megumi Church, the Ideda Christ Church and lastly the Abundant Life Church.

Q: It seems like I heard that your parents received an award or recognition for their work done in Matsumoto. Can you tell me about it?

A: My father received an award from the emperor for over 40 years of service with the Boy’s Reformatory in Ariake, Hotaka. I heard that it was the highest award a foreigner has ever received from the Justice Ministry.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about?

A: All three of us brothers are serving in the same area our folks served in. Jon is at the Azumino Family Chapel with a Japanese pastor and another TEAM missionary. Dave is at Abundant Life Church with a Japanese pastor. Dan is also at Azumino Family Chapel and is involved with Northstar Outdoor Adventure (NOA) in the Japanese Alps. Ruth, my sister, is in Petoskey, Michigan (USA) and has a beauty salon. Presently, Mother and Dad live there too, helping Ruth and working with Japanese in the area.

We honor you, Cal and Pat, for your faithfulness, for your example, and for your big vision!

Continued from page 22

multiplication in most parts of the world today. Not only are missionary resources tied up at one location for many years, but a professional attitude toward ministry is instilled, which inhibits full mobilization of local lay believers.

The apostolic church planter. The self-understanding and approach of the apostolic church planter is radically different from that of the pastoral church planter. This church planter models himself after the Apostle Paul—thus apostolic—who rarely allowed himself to become pastor of a church he planted. Instead he focused on empowering the local believers to minister, who would as laymen carry on and expand the work after his departure. Sometimes local believers would be included in Paul's itinerant missionary team, thus instilling vision for multiplication and mission at the very inception of the young churches. Dependencies were avoided from the outset. With this model the question, "Who will replace the missionary pastor?" never arises, because the missionary never becomes the pastor. It is assumed that the nationals can pastor themselves if provided with adequate teaching and models.

This approach has been advocated in a number of current church planting models, perhaps most cogently by Tom Steffen in *Passing the Baton: Church Planting That Empowers*. Steffen was a church planter among the Ifugao in the Philippines. Observing that truly "three-self," multiplying churches were not being planted by his mission agency, he developed a five stage "phase-out" approach to church planting which he successfully implemented.

This model maps out how the missionary must continually change his or her role from learner to evangelist, to teacher, to resident advisor, to itinerant advisor, and finally to absent advisor.

Some suggest that the missionary work in two or three areas simultaneously, thus reducing dependency and forcing local laypersons to develop their churches and ministries. Tent-making church planters also have an advantage in this regard. Because they are not able to serve the church full-time, the church tends to become less dependent upon them.

This approach demands radical rethinking on the part of most church planting missionaries. From the outset nationals must be trained to do all essential ministries—evan-

gelism, preaching, teaching, counseling, etc. The missionary must surrender the desire to have "up front" ministry. His or her primary role is behind the scenes, equipping others. The lay sermons will probably not be as homiletically polished or theologically astute as those the missionary could preach. But the reward will be the development of a truly empowered local leadership, which will serve the church well after the missionary has departed. The missionary is constantly working him or herself out of a job, performing a ministry only so long as necessary to train a national. Indeed, apart from evangelism and initial follow-up, if a national is not available and willing to be trained, the ministry should probably not be initiated. This makes for a slower start, but, I believe, a more solid finish for the church plant.

While most church planters will agree with this approach in principle, difficulties arise when national believers seem to lag in their willingness or ability to bear the responsibility of ministry. The missionary becomes impatient and presses forward, initiating new programs, taking on more ministry responsibility hoping that the nationals will "catch up" with a little time and maturity. The opposite usually happens: the nationals become increasingly dependent on the missionary, increasingly feeling inadequate to minister and convinced that the missionary has no confidence in their abilities. Worst of all, they learn that if they just wait long enough, the missionary will plant the church and run the program without them. The church is viewed as the missionary's project apart from their contribution.

While on a consulting trip, I sat in on the meeting of the leadership of a small new church plant in an Eastern European city. They were discussing how they might move from semiweekly to weekly church services. The main obstacle was the lack of a preacher for the additional services. The language skills and background of the missionary made it impossible for him to preach on more than two Sundays a month. The natural tendency of the group was to request from the mission another missionary or to look for other outside resources to meet the need. As we began to brainstorm for alternatives, it soon became apparent that several of the lay leaders would preach if the missionary were to assist them in their preparation. A solu-

tion was found, which guarded against increased dependency, while at the same time promoting mobilization of the laity and their ownership of the ministry.

The strengths of this model, however, should not blind one to the challenges inherent in it. This missionary church planter normally must change locations frequently, which is difficult for families and long-term relationships. Few missionaries are trained in such an approach, and few are really willing to restrain their ministry or slow the advancement of the church for the sake of developing lay ministers and ownership. There are situations, especially in resistant areas, where local believers just aren't suitable for leadership or are unwilling to bear responsibility. Especially where new believers are illiterate, nomadic, or come from radically non-Christian world-views, the process of developing leaders and churches may be long and tedious. The early departure of the missionary can result in major problems in the new church, as the Apostle Paul experienced with the church in Corinth. Nevertheless, this is the approach which Paul used and which has been used in most rapidly expanding church planting movements in responsive parts of the world.

The catalytic church planter. A third understanding of the church-planting role is that of the catalytic church planter. A catalyst creates or affects a chemical reaction among other elements. The potential was latently there, but the catalyst sets it in motion. The catalytic church planter is a church planter who plants a church, and remains as pastor or resource person in that church to become a catalyst or facilitator for church multiplication.

Considerable energy and resources are usually invested in establishing and strengthening the initial church plant with the goal that it will become a "beach-head" or "launching base" for numerous additional church plants in the region.

The "mother-daughter," "hiving-off," or "cell division" approach to church planting is among the most effective methods for rapid church multiplication. Such movements, however, rarely develop apart from catalytic leadership. Churches need visionary, motivational, and specially gifted leaders to move them from maintenance to multiplication. Apart from such leadership most churches evolve quickly into a maintenance mode, and fail to reproduce.

Ideally a national pastor or laymen provide such leadership, but there can be a place for a missionary church planter to play this catalytic role.

Rick Warren is an example of a catalytic church planter. He pioneered the planting of the Saddleback Valley Community Church twenty years ago. Though Warren did not himself directly plant or pastor any other churches, Saddleback, under his leadership went on to plant twenty-six new churches.

He was no doubt a significant catalyst used of God to ignite that multiplication of churches.

Such catalytic church planters are rare among nationals, and even rarer among foreign missionaries. Mobilizing such a church planting movement demands exceptional gifts and vision. Indeed, perhaps the greatest weakness of this model is the tendency for a church planter to overestimate his ability to provide this kind of leadership, investing much time and energy while failing to, in fact, reproduce churches. Furthermore, the church planting movement may become very dependent on the catalytic ministry of the missionary, which then ceases when the missionary departs.

But a catalytic church planter needn't have the dramatic gifts or success of a Rick Warren to be effective. There is much to be said for remaining with a church plant until it has successfully launched its first daughter church, thus setting a pattern which can be continued after the missionary's departure. Nor is it necessary that the mother church have

thousands of members before it can launch a movement. Even in the moderately resistant cities of Germany, church planting movements have emerged largely through visionary, catalytic leadership in churches with less than 200 members.

Which role is best? At first glance the apostolic model might appear most biblical, because it is closest to Paul's method. A better standard, however, for measuring a method is its compatibility with broader biblical principles and its ability to reach biblical goals of church planting such as spiritual health, multiplication, indigenization, and stewardship of resources. Judged in this way, any of the three models might be the best model depending on the church planter, the setting, and God's sovereign working in the church plant.

As indicated above, the pastoral model works best in responsive and relatively affluent populations where the likelihood of the church growing and being able to quickly call and pay a pastor is great. The catalytic model is best suited for urban areas of moderate responsiveness and with potential for multiple church planting in the region. However, the church planter must be exceptionally gifted and able to make a long-term commitment. The apostolic model is most versatile and suited for both rural and urban settings, affluent and poor populations, and seems to be the approach which God has most greatly blessed in facilitating rapidly growing church planting movements throughout

the world. But this approach demands long-sighted patience and significant rethinking and retraining of most missionary church planters.

In all events, it is essential for the church planter and each member of a church planting team to be aware of the various options, to be unified in their choice of an appropriate model, and to consistently implement the model, being aware of pluses and pitfalls. These considerations will often need to be made in consultation with the national church or local believers to avoid misunderstanding and insure realistic expectations. In most cases, this will demand a reassessment of the missionary's role and self-understanding. The effectiveness of any church planting model will largely depend on the church planter's willingness and ability to adapt his or her role to fit and facilitate the model.

Used by permission, Evangelical Missionary Quarterly (EMQ) July 2001.

Craig Ott is academic dean of the German Branch of Columbia Biblical Seminary in Korntal. He has served in Germany since 1981 with the Evangelical Free Church Mission (EFCM), where he planted several churches. He is currently also Central Europe church planting consultant for the EFCM.

very close and I was glad to belong to His people. *Transformations II** made a deep impression. I want to see something like that happen in Japan, a big bonfire made up of ancestor (Buddhist house) altars. *Transformations I** confirmed this longing for revival in Japan. I expect God to change the city where I am living, Miyoshi. And we shall find ways to get together and pray for our vision for Aichi and Gifu Kens."

Reinhard Berns writes: "It was good for me to take part again (my third time) in this Prayer Summit. I'm thankful to God that He helped me to put everything (myself) in front of Him, and that we could, as a group, confess our needy state to Him. I'm thankful for the peace He gave to me and for new expectations for His ministry in our city."

GZ writes: "It was splendid to be away

from TV, even radio, for four days to go hard after God. The food was great; the fellowship was even better. But best of all was tasting afresh that the worship of God is my purpose for existing. I did not have the great emotional 'highs' of past Prayer Summits, nor did I have battles with issues as acute as those in the past. I just faced the old nemesis, the ME (self), that needed to die afresh. I joined deeply with brothers in their specific struggles and they joined me in interceding for my future direction, for my wife, for my unsaved son, and for personal holiness. The freedom and peace I experienced, together with fresh news of what God is accomplishing in the world, made this summit rival my first ('96) as the best ever!"

The 2003 Prayer Summit for Western Japan will be MAY 13-16 (Tuesday through

Friday). The location will be Okutama Bible Chalet (SEND).

* *Transformations I and II* are two videos put out by the Sentinel Group for the purpose of encouraging us to pray for our communities by showing how God is and has been working around the world to transform the local situation.

Transformations I was mainly about how God changed certain communities in various parts of the world through the earnest prayers of its concerned citizens.

Transformations II expanded this to show that God has worked and is working to transform whole nations and ethnic groups in response to those who take up the burden to pray.

Thinking Theologically About Church Planting



The Church as God's Missional Instrument

by Dale Little

According to the Apostle Paul, it is through the Church that God proclaims His glory: “His [God’s] intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms” (Eph. 3:10 NIV). The Church is therefore an instrument of God’s mission.

The instrumental nature of God’s people can be seen when the broad strokes of a biblical theology of mission are described in terms of God’s progressive consecration of his creation. The Bible begins with the good but as yet unconsecrated creation, and ends with the holy eschatological re-creation. Both discontinuity and continuity can be seen between these two poles. For instance, on the one hand, the rural motif of the ancient garden seems to stand in sharp contrast to the urban motif of the eschatological city. But on the other hand, the eschatological city is very different than a city made by human hands, for central to the consecrated city is its river, which flows down the main street of the city, and on both banks of which is planted the tree of life (Rev. 22:1-2 NIV). This eschatological city, then, seems very much like a garden. The urban and rural motifs seem to be intermingled, implying a kind of cohesiveness, or continuity, between the two. The two motifs apparently do not suggest an exclusive disjunction as do our ideas of the rural and the urban.

It seems the eschatological urban re-creation is a fulfillment of the ancient rural creation. The ancient story of the garden begs for ultimate completion in a place just like the eschatological city. The first solitary couple of the garden contrast with the countless and racially variegated inhabitants of the holy city (Rev. 5:9, 7:9). The citizens of the metropolis are the fulfillment of the command given in the garden to be fruitful and to multiply (Gen. 1:28). They are the redeemed people of God who

have not gathered automatically or naturally, but as a result of the intentional mission of God. (John Stott, “The Living God is a Missionary God,” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*, ed. Ralph Winter and Steven Hawthorne (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1981), 18.) He has redeemed them and they inhabit the city he has built. Furthermore, he has employed them in his mission.

Several implications for the mission of the people of God flow from the idea of divine consecration of creation. For instance, the Bible shows that God chooses his people, that his people respond to him in faith, and that he fulfills his mission through his people. VanGemenen’s study of the development of God’s progressive plan of salvation can be seen as a model of how the hope of creation’s final consecration can provide thematic continuity from Genesis to Revelation. (Willem VanGemenen, *The Progress of Redemption* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988).) His work represents an attempt in biblical theology to understand the story of salvation as a cohesive and continuous unfolding of God’s eschatological purpose of consecrating creation.

Furthermore, and significant for our theme of church planting, mission as consecration of creation carries at least two implications for church planting. First, our model for mission should reflect Paul’s church founding ambition to proclaim and preach the gospel where Christ is not known (Rom. 15:19-20) because Paul stood at the same juncture in the unfolding of God’s mission as we do—namely, between Christ’s first and second comings. The churches he founded were instruments of God’s mission. Like Paul, our priority should also be to minister in places where there are no or few churches. The essence of our task lies in the global proclamation of the gospel of Christ resulting in the establishment of churches, rather than building our own kingdoms or transform-

ing the macro structures of societies. When peoples from all nations respond in faith and obedience to Christ, new communities of God’s redeemed people are created. The people of God so gathered, eagerly await the final consecration of creation, the ultimate mission of God.

Second, the ultimate goal of church planting transcends the daily business of church planting. A theology of church planting recognizes that the new communities being established, rather than being themselves the only and final goal of church planting ministry, are also instruments used by God to fulfill his cosmic design and purpose. The ultimate goal of church planting both includes the local church’s ministry and transcends it. When the transcending purpose is neglected and not conceptualized, church planting becomes too easily viewed as an end in itself. Rather, church planting is better viewed as an instrument of God’s cosmic mission, in the same way the Church is instrumental in God’s unfolding plan of redemption and of consecration.

Dale Little, PhD

Vancouver Canada, November 2002

Dale was raised in Japan first as an OMF and then an EFCMJ missionary kid. He returned as an EFCMJ church planting missionary in 1984. He currently leads a church planting project in Higashi Murayama Shi, Tokyo, and is a lecturer in theology at Japan Bible Seminary in Hamura Shi, Tokyo. Dale and his wife, Ann, along with their three children live in Higashi Kurume Shi, Tokyo. He holds a Ph.D. in systematic theology.



Potpourri & Promises

By Janice A Kropp

Oh, the places we find ourselves! This time I was **out on a limb!**



Know the feeling? You are up in the tree and want to make a difference, so you pull the cord to get the power saw going! Next, where to stand while cutting becomes not only a matter of personal safety, but also one of maneuverability. Although I have never been out on a literal limb with a power saw, I have often been out on “spiritual” ones. Let me explain.

Being the music leader in our church seemed simple enough for the size of our congregation. Sad to say, our guitarist left with her husband when he went to study in the United States. That left us without a musician. Those who could play the piano were few and basically unskilled. So I guess we did have a problem. We were up a “tree,” so to speak. How could we have a worship team without an accompanist?

Before we realized it, a change was about to catch us unaware, I found myself out on **that** limb! We had a special young man in our church. He was from a Christian home! Wonderful. He was Latino. Wonderful again. Sometimes he brought his attractive girlfriend, Mizuka, to worship. Great. She was a very special young lady, too. She taught Japanese language in the local language school, and it just happened that she was Jorge’s teacher. They had started dating. (We were concerned for Jorge. She was not a believer. But it was interesting that her father, an architect, had been saved in his fifties, five years previously. His life had been dramatically changed by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the back of her mind she carried the curious questions of

what church was all about and what power it was that had remade her father.) And, oh, she just happened to be a musician!

Hearing of her ability, one of our believers, unbeknown to us, asked her to come to our worship team practice session the following Saturday. I just happened to hear about the invitation. Oh, my, how I suffered over this! It is our conviction that worship leaders should know Jesus as their Savior. As my husband and I discussed our options, it became clear that we needed to handle this carefully. First, if we cut off Mizuka, she might not enter the door of ours or any other church ever. A frightening thought! Secondly, saying something could so offend the lovely believer who had invited her that she might end up leaving the fellowship! Oh, what were we to do? We were “out on that limb with power saw in hand.” Now where to stand was no problem, but how to proceed became problematic!

After praying, we decided that I, being the music leader, would, in the power of the Spirit, do what needed to be done, out on that limb. (Was this not a battle in the heavenlies?)

The three believers, Mizuka, and myself met on that Saturday afternoon. “We need to talk first and go over what is involved in leading our believers in worship,” I announced. We all sat at a table and I began, “First, we must know Jesus Christ as our Savior. (That was intended for Mizuka.) Then, we need to make sure our lives are free from sin, confessing anything that has broken fellowship with our God. (This was intended for our believers.) We will then after much practice be ready to lead the body of Christ in worship!”

We went right into our practice of praise songs. It all went very well, and, indeed, Mizuka was a gifted pianist. After the last song, I suggested we pray. Now, Christians know what to do when it comes to prayer times. We naturally gather into a circle to pray, don’t we! Having no acquaintance with Christian ways, Mizuka did not join us. Either she felt she didn’t belong, or didn’t know what to do, I am not sure which. As soon as I realized that we were in a circle and she was not, I quietly went over to her and touched her arm, gently bringing her into the circle. As I led in prayer I heard sniffing—someone was sobbing! When I opened my eyes I looked in the direction of the weeping. It was

Mizuka. Now she was crying and managed the words, “Mrs. Kropp, I need to talk to you.” In my heart I screamed, **Yes!** As calmly as I could, I sat down with Mizuka, and began to explain God’s marvelous plan of salvation! She opened her heart and said she wanted to receive Jesus right then and there. What a joy to lead her to Christ. The following day at worship she gave her testimony with tears of joy and thanksgiving. She has been crying ever since, and it is now an event of four years ago. What a wonderful salvation! What a precious young lady!

Thinking over this whole event, there were definitely some dangerous possibilities. Having gotten out on that “spiritual” limb (it was a good thing I was up and out there), how was I going to see the Spirit work? If I had rationalized that it really didn’t matter if the pianist was not a believer because we just have to have accompaniment. If I had thought that probably eventually Mizuka would come to Christ; if I had been too afraid to touch the issue for “hurting” one of the two ladies or both; if I had ignored the ramifications figuring I had not created the situation in the first place, where would being out on a limb have taken us? Intentionally, thank the Lord, I had taken the ramifications seriously. I dared to face it all head on. Whew! Isn’t it wonderful to know that the Lord gives us the words to say? Isn’t it special that the Lord gives us the wisdom? Isn’t it great that the Lord gives the strength to tackle difficult situations? He is the **one** who gets us down off the limb to safety. Praise the Lord.

But the ramifications of that day did not end there. Now, with Mizuka a believer, our fears and concern over Jorge’s dating her were over. Almost a year and a half later it was with **joy** that my husband joined Mizuka and Jorge in holy matrimony. Now, we have a new Christian home!

Since Mizuka’s father’s salvation, both she and her mother have come to Jesus. Only her younger brother is left, and he is thinking things over. He heard the gospel at his sister’s wedding, and he has attended Christmas celebrations. Four years ago this coming Christmas, Mizuka went down into the waters of baptism. She continues to play the keyboard for worship. She and Jorge have served on church committees,

Continued on page 40

Continued from page 36

Family

What Rules the Next Generation

By Daniel Clay McGinty

As we all know, some things in this country never change. Students still wear uniforms to school and sumo wrestlers are still sporting their traditional “undies.” However, on the flip side we find those ever-pressing social “concerns” that grab the attention of this nation for a breath, and are then routinely exhaled for yet another fad to be inhaled.

Fads and fashions make up the lifestyle that appears to rule the youth culture of this country. We observe them change their aesthetic preferences like one might change socks each morning. As someone who would most likely be categorized in that “youth” department of social order, even I have trouble keeping up with the breakneck speed at which clothing enters and leaves the arena of “cool.”

I think we are all very well aware that this present generation of Japanese youth is very different from the last. It's not just their fashions and fads that are changing, but the culture from which they were spawned is changing as well. Currently, I am still in college. I am still a “youth” by many standards; however, in my course of study, which happens to be youth ministry, I have been making a few discoveries.

Last year I attended a class labeled “Issues of Contemporary Youth Culture.” As part of that class, we all had to read a somewhat lengthy book entitled *Millennials Rising*. The book was a guide to understanding the next generation, as the Gen-Xers (to which I belong) have ceased to be the forefront of pressing cultural happenings.

So what's happening? What do you, the missionary who wants to understand the changing influxes of youth culture, want to know? I would offer that to answer this question, yet another question needs to be answered first: what do THEY want to know? What is it that motivates and drives this emerging youth culture? The point of understanding a culture is to communicate the gospel effectively, but to have the desired effect, we first need to know what dominantly

and currently affects this culture the most.

Pop-culture is king. From the Back Street Boys to Beckham's stylish neo-mohawk, the youth culture of Japan assimilates the global trends and transforms them into their next fad. To many people, this obsession with fashion and the latest techno gadgets appears as materialism, but, actually, I don't think it is the “religion of stuff” that motivates these trends. Materialism may be the result of something deeper; as I studied that book (*Millennials Rising*) of this emerging youth culture, I found that relationships are king.

Now, you might think that to be a very obvious statement. Of course relationships are very important to teens, but now they are more important than ever. For this “Millennial generation,” these present youth, relationships are the only things in this life that they know are real. The last generation, Gen-Xers, encapsulated the post-modern, angst-filled cultural mindset, wherein relationships were categorized with disappointment and feelings were the only reality for one to grasp. The “Millennial generation,” like all generations before it, is rebelling against its predecessor.

Pop music is back because optimism is back, but it is all irrational happiness; it is an empty and senseless form of Romanticism. Feel good music is manufactured for a generation that just wants to feel good, even if there is no reason for it. It has morphed from a depression because there is no reason, to a happiness for no reason. This is why emotionalism is rampant, and shallow spirituality reigns.

So, where does the relationship factor add in with all this? Well, for a generation whose goal is to bag all the good feelings it

can, it's no surprise that faith in relationships has returned. As we can all identify, relationships produce the most tangible emotions we know.

Cell phones are not owned by every teenager just because it is simply cool to have a cell phone. No, it's deeper; relationships are king, and cell phones keep youth connected to what they value the most. All the various fashions that spill into the mainstream are just a means of fitting in and being accepted because, hey, the more friends the merrier.

Now, back to my original question: what does this mean to you? If such great importance is placed on relationships, if they truly rule this generation, we need to first dispel a myth that the Japanese youth have inherited from their parents. That myth might sound something like this: Christianity is a good religion, but it's not relevant to me.

By God's grace we know that Christianity is not merely a religion, but a relationship. For a generation that is so relationship-oriented already, in evangelism, the first thing we need to stress to this culture is the opportunity to have the most meaningful relationship ever: a relationship with our Creator through Jesus Christ. Only then will their meaningless tune of happiness find meaning.

Daniel grew up in Japan, graduated from CAJ, and is presently a junior at Columbia International University where he produces and edits a campus magazine. Daniel plans to come back to Japan to start creative youth ministries to empower local churches.



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Aging—Our Loved Ones' & Ours'

By Ann J. Underland, DHL

Cast me (them) not away in the time of old age, Psalm 71:9.

In writing this article, I'm a little perplexed as to whether to do so as a recently inducted full-fledged senior citizen or as wife of an only relative of our 90 year old aunt or as a professional with 26 years of experience in ministry with impaired, aged persons.

Let's start with us...

Senior citizens are constantly being criticized for every conceivable deficiency of the modern world, real or imaginary. **but**, upon reflection, we would like to point out that it was **not** senior citizens who took:

- The melody out of music
- The pride out of appearance
- The commitment out of marriage
- The responsibility out of parenthood
- The togetherness out of the family

Yes, I'm a Senior Citizen! I'm the life

of the party...even if it lasts until 8 p.m.... and I'm very good at telling stories over and over and...But remember...inside every older person is a younger person wondering what in the world happened! (compliments of Vic Springer)

As I've been saying for the past 24 years (there was a learning curve in those 26 years) aging is not for wimps, nor is their care.

What is God saying to us in the midst of this new phenomenon of radically extended life spans concerning our own aging and caring for aging loved ones? And what about ministry for and with the often neglected and forgotten impaired aged? Many have never heard the wonderful Gospel of eternal life through Christ. Others have heard but rejected His Lordship. Is not the Hound of Heaven actively pressing them, even unto the grave? Have we turned into His vision of snatching them as brands from the burning?

But let's get back to us...

Here are a few questions that I've been asked by others:

1. What options are available for the recent retiree or the frail aged loved one: Single Family House, Apartment, Senior Housing, Continuing Care Residential Community (CCRC), Adult Day Services,

Assisted Living, or Nursing Home? Is this type of care Christian?

2. Who is responsible for giving care when it is needed?

3. When does the doctor and the legal system come into play?

4. What about costs? Things are different today than they were in 1959 (especially health care).

5. When is a different living arrangement necessary?

6. Will other family members help with, not only advice, but with practical physical and financial assistance?

7. When is it appropriate for other family members to make decisions in behalf of the aged person? And perhaps the most important question of all:

8. Have you, or will you, have a family prayer conference to discuss these and other issues?

If you are intimidated by these ideas, don't think you are unique. My husband and I are addressing these issues, not only for our 90 year old Aunt, (who by the way, has health problems but still lives in her own single family home 1,500 miles from us; that's another story.), but also for ourselves as we age.

MAIN SPEAKERS

Dr. ROBERT AMESS

Chairman of the British Evangelical Alliance and Principal of Spurgeon's College. Second visit to Japan Keswick.



Dr. TED S. RENDALL

Chancellor Emeritus of Prairie Bible Institute. He has conducted conferences for CEF, TEAM, MEM, OMF, CSSM, NCEM, RBMU, UFM, ACTION INTL, INTERACT and the FAITH MISSION.



Ms. HESTER RENDALL

She joined the Faith Mission and worked in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Canada. She serves on the Board of Directors, Prairie Bible Institute.



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What is your struggle? Do you have elderly parents "back home" who are becoming more frail? Needing more care? Is the question, "Where is my duty?" or is your situation different? You have invested almost your entire life in the people to whom the Lord called you. Now you come to the possibility of a very painful parting. Should you return to your homeland which, in reality, feels less like home than Japan does? Is there a place for you here? There? Where?

As you well know, very often God doesn't give confirmation of our decisions until we step into the water. The "answer" many times can only be accessed through much prayerful soul searching, and sometimes, sorrow.

As the lame man by the pool of Bethesda knew, we can gain healing from troubled waters!

We can share that healing. You know your Lord will use this time of questioning and testing for His glory...maybe sooner than later.

Sorrow and grief can be a gateway to God's grace, because He walks with you.

As the apostle Paul put it, "as sorrowful yet always rejoicing..." in this, your journey of faith.

"For I know the thoughts I think toward you saith the Lord, Thoughts of peace and not of evil, To give you a hope and a future," Jeremiah 29:11.

The following is an excerpt from a letter sent to me from a dear woman I met at the Asia Consultation On Women held in Thailand a couple of years ago. (I have written her words as she wrote them to me.) Bangladesh is the world's poorest nation and Christians are being strongly persecuted in some areas according to Operation World. Please pray for Jacintha's heart cry...and mine:

With great warm greeting from Bangladesh,

You will be happy to know that I am involved with this Aged women.

I am helping and ministering to them.

I am a pastor's wife; there are libilty to work in different places.

I am vice president of Y.M.C.A.

Ann, do you feel for our country to have a ministry for aged?

I want to join with you. Please share your experiences and pray for our country and be a blessing with me.

Signed: Jacintha Adkikary

Ann Underland was born and raised in the state of Maryland, USA. She was educated at Johns Hopkins University and Peabody Conservatory. She served in Japan as a missionary from 1965-1973 and was called to Ministry with the Aged in 1976 and was a nursing home volunteer and recruiter. In 1977 Ann incorporated CARING,



Inc. (Christians Aware of their Responsibility to Individuals in Need of Grace). She established the first community residence for developmentally disable Aged women in New Jersey in 1980; established Caring Medical Day Services in 1982 which is a day care

for the Aged needing medical supervision and care; established New Jersey's first Alzheimer's Care Program and the CARING HOUSE 11 in 1985; in 1988 the second CARING Medical Day Services and Corporate Headquarters was established; in 1991 and 1995 the 3rd community residence for Aged men and Caringhouse IV, a first medical model, were established respectively. In 1998 Ann retired and developed Asia's Aged, Inc. in a response to God's call to serve the Church of Jesus Christ in Asia. Ann is married and has four sons.

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and Jorge takes his turn being shikaisha (leader) for worship. Marvelous.

Remember someone in the Bible who found himself up in a tree? He ran ahead of the crowd, scrambled up a sycamore-fig tree just to see the Savior. He had **no** connection to Jesus, but he was curious as he headed out on that limb. Getting himself situated up there, he had no idea how his life was about to change! Who needs change anyway, when you have it all? As chief tax collector, he was wealthy, and in the eyes of the "world" wealth is equated with value! (He must have been someone!) Granted, he was hated by his fellow citizens, as were all tax collectors. What in the world made him so intent on seeing the **man** he had heard so much about? Scripture is very clear explaining this man's intent. "He wanted to see **who** Jesus was" (Luke 19:3). Then it happened. Jesus came to the spot in the shade of his tree. Jesus looked up. Funny, but Jesus was not surprised to see a man up there, where little boys thrill to be. Instead, He powerfully and simply gave a command, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today" (Luke 19:1-10). His life was forever changed!

For us, as workers in His "garden/forest," how wonderful it is to climb back down from the "trees" we find ourselves in, bringing all kinds of **fruit** along with us! It matters not who is up in the "tree" or "out on what limb"! Jesus comes to the **aid** of **all**!

Putting walk to our talk: Believers need encouragement to trust God for the salvation of their whole families. So many

are discouraged in the process. September 8th we baptized Yasunobu Matsubara, 63, whose wife prayed all their married life for his salvation. Bless the Lord! Now three members of the Matsubara family have come to Christ, leaving Taiichi, 34, yet to join his and our family in Christ.

Promise: "Today salvation has come to this house...For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost" (Luke 19:9,10).

Give me a smile:



In June my husband and I returned for this our 7th term of missionary service. Talking to our precious grandkiddies back in the United States, our faith was stretched and strengthened when one of

the twins questioned, "Grandma, when are you coming home? Will it be in three days or in five days?" Our answer, "Honey, it will be awhile. Remember we are here to tell the Japanese about Jesus because so many have never heard."



Recipe for delicious *Maacha* (green tea)/Coffee Ice Cream:

Boil 4 pints of cream 'till decreased to half. Stir in either 2TBS of *Maacha*, or 2TBS of powdered coffee. Use a whisk to mix. Cool to room temperature. Refrigerate 'till chilled. Add 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar dissolved (use small amount of the 2 cups of milk), pinch of salt, & 2 cups of milk. Pour into ice cube trays and freeze.

Sayawaka na oyatsu.
A refreshing snack!

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I can do all things through Christ who gives me Strength. Philippians 4:13

Karuizawa Union Church Since 1906

July 21 — August 25

welcomes you to the cool, refreshing town of Karuizawa
for a summer of inspirational speakers, spiritual renewal and
fellowship for children, youth and adults.

Summer Schedule (July 21-August 25)

- Sunday Prayer Services: 9:30-10:15 & Worship at 10:30
- Sunday School for English and German speaking children during Worship Service
- Sunday Evening Worship Service: 7:00 p.m.

Youth Conference (Aug.5-7)

- Annual Business Meeting (Aug. 7, 7:00 p.m.)
- KUC Prayer Breakfast (Aug. 10, 8:00 a.m.)
- Karuizawa Gospel Festival (Aug. 10, 1-5 p.m. at Megumi Chalet) Van Burchfield playing
- Special Jazz concert (Aug. 11) by Van Burchfield during morning service and evening concert at KUC
- Gospel Concert (Aug 25, 7:00 p.m.) by Joshua Sasaki, special music during morning service
- KUC picnic (Sunday noon, Aug. 25 at Megumi Chalet)
- Karuizawa Gospel House: (coffee and concert evangelism, 1-5 p.m. at Karuizawa Language School)

Summer Speaker Schedule:

- July 21: Dr. David Ewing (Bethel Baptist Church) 10:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. services
- July 28 and Aug. 4: Dr. Daniel Lockwood (Multnomah School of the Bible and Seminary) 10:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. services
- Aug. 11: Rev. Joel Kaufman with special Jazz music, 10:30 a.m. Special Jazz concert 7:00 p.m.
- Aug. 18: Rev. Ray Leaf (President of JEMA) 10:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. services
- Aug. 25: Rev. Roald Lidal 10:30 a.m. Special Gospel Concert by Joshua Sasaki, 7:00 p.m.
- *2002 Deeper Life Convention* (July 31 -August 4)
See ad below

*For more information please contact: Rev. Mark Magnusson,
KUC committee Chairman, e-mail: markm@interlink.or.jp,
tel. (05617)2-1166/3-5323*

2002 Deeper Life Convention Walking by Faith

Wednesday night July 31st 7 pm to
Sunday night August 4th 7pm.



Convention Speaker: Dr. Dan Lockwood,

is presently the president of Multnomah School of the Bible and Seminary in Portland, Oregon. He began teaching Bible and theology at Multnomah Bible College in 1979. He served as Dean of the Seminary from 1990 to 1997. He and his wife Jani have one daughter, Elise.

Program: 7 challenging messages, kids' program, music, ladies' tea and men's breakfast, hiking and some free time in between sessions

See You in Karuizawa!

**For more information
contact the Deeper Life Chairman
Ron Stoller (052-736-0341) or Email: Stoller@Japan.email.ne.jp**



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