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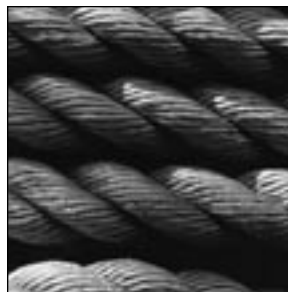
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**JAPAN
HARVEST**

Volume 55 No. 1
/ Summer 2003

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(Norwegian Shinsei Senkyodan)

Cover Photo: PBA

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The Japan Harvest is the official publication of the Japan Evangelical Missionary Association. It is published quarterly to promote primarily the cause of the evangelical church in Japan, and secondarily the ministry and activities of the association. Individual articles or advertisements express the viewpoints of the contributor and not necessarily those of JEMA. The editor welcomes unsolicited articles.

Price overseas is \$ 25.00 per year.
Price in Japan is ¥ 2,800 per year,
Single copy is ¥ 750.

Postal Transfer: Japan Harvest, Tokyo 00130-4-180466

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God knows that if He gave us a complete map,
we'd launch off without Him.

Looking into the Haze

by John A. Harvey

Walking by faith or sight: Perhaps nowhere is the tension between the two greater than in long-range planning for religious institutions. Business and sound management principles are merged with biblical concepts and divine guidance. The result is often a hodgepodge of contradictory approaches, which confuses everyone and marginalizes genuine faith. This is especially true with the scriptural model of vision.

A biblical vision is the expectation of what God will do, not a dream that people hope will happen. It is a matter of faith that one has received God's plan for His people and that God will bring it about. In management circles, vision is the reasoned opinion of earthly minds. Having analyzed past performance, people make judgment calls on future productivity and what might be realized.

Even when churches possess a genuine vision from heaven, spiritual objectives are usually subjected to the world's perspective when people chart a program into the long term. While the concept of preparing for the future is valid in itself and has been

built into Creation, as demonstrated by the ants (Proverbs 6:6), most of our master-planning conclusions are not the plans of the Master at all.

What is clear from Scripture is that God doesn't generally supply long-range plans. He told Moses where he was ultimately going and directed him in laying a foundation, but told him how to get there on a step-by-step basis.

God knows that if He gave us a complete map, we'd launch off without Him. He purposely makes us depend upon Him daily in order to make the journey successful. God is not just looking for lip service when it comes to trusting Him for guidance; He wants us to actually do it. We are to take action only when we see the cloud or pillar of fire move.

If we are going to use the world's methods, let's do it without trying to sanctify the wisdom of man. On the other hand, if we're making the journey with God, let's do it His way instead of trying to turn black and white into gray.

The contemporary planning/vision way of thinking reminds me of the view from

Mt. Nebo, where one can look into the country of Israel. It is a picture of haze—scenery blurred by pollution.

Likewise, continually mixing carnal and spiritual approaches to advance planning takes the clarity out of both processes and makes the church ineffective, taking it from the cutting edge of change.

One would think that an organization whose Head knows the future would be best prepared to respond to the challenges of tomorrow. The fact that we are continually a generation behind ought to tell us something about our planning methods, but even more about our failure to receive guidance from the Lord of the Church.

Rev. John A. Harvey is senior pastor of First Alliance Church, Toccoa, Ga. (USA). He has served as a missionary and as regional director for Europe and the Middle East for International Ministries of the U.S. C&MA.

Used by permission of Alliance Life Magazine, May 2003.

How many more will be sacrificed?

by Debbie Penner

Once Upon a Time...

There was once a man who wished to honor his deceased grandfather. His grandfather had hated and feared one specific group of people more than any other. He had had them tortured and killed, and their leaders deported, so the grandson decided to do the same. When the last of the ill-fated group rose up in rebellion against this heavy oppression, it was under the leadership of a 16-year-old boy. The man sent his army to lay siege to their stronghold and quelled the rebellion by massacring them all – men women and children.

40,000 Christians died that day. They were essentially the last Christians in Japan. But Tokugawa Iemitsu wished to honor his grandfather even further. After all, it was his grandfather who had succeeded in uniting the islands of Japan into one great nation. He decided to make sure there would never again be any Christians in Japan. He forbade all communication with foreign countries and required every citizen in his land to register with a local Buddhist temple. No commerce or business was allowed without a certificate of registration from a temple.

He did all that, but he still wasn't satisfied. Man's best wasn't good enough for his grandfather, so he invited the spirit world to assist him. Tokugawa Ieyasu was declared to have been a personification of a god, the highest god – the spiritual ruler of Japan, Amaterasu Omikami. A shrine was built to worship her, and lesser shrines were erected all over Japan, so people could worship her without having to travel far.

In this way, Amaterasu no Omikami, the 'goddess who illumines the heavens' was invited to rule Japan at the very outset of its unified government. Amaterasu, the demonic princess of Japan, ruled over the princes of each island, who in turn controlled the authorities of each district. In the cities, there were appointed head

demons. Each city section, and then each household was covered individually.

And so the web of control continues to this day, a web that was set up deliberately to shut out Christianity, and for which a 16-year-old boy, Amakusa Shiro and his 40,000 followers were sacrificed.

And what about all the people who have lived in the 360 years since that event? Most of them have been sacrificed to the demonic system, too. One by one they have slipped into an eternity of hopelessness and despair.

A Modern Tale of God's Grace

A few fortunate individuals have escaped. Perhaps Kiyokazu will be one of them. He was 16, too, when the devil tried to sacrifice him as well. His mother had just become a Christian. Kiyokazu was troubled. He had refused to go to school for most of junior high. He had passed the test into high school, but quit attending after just two weeks. Perhaps the demonic authorities in charge of his family sensed that he might see his need for redemption, and accept Christ as well, because late that summer his bicycle was hit by a truck, and he slipped into a coma with severe brain damage.

The church began to pray, and a month later he was released from intensive care. Two months later he came home from the hospital, but he was far from OK. The brain damage had taken away his emotional reserve, and he flew into violent rages that were dangerous to everyone around him.

Satan hadn't succeeded in taking his life, but he was determined to take him, nonetheless. Kiyokazu got involved with a gang of boys who had dropped out of school. For the next three years he sniffed glue, got involved with girls, embezzled money, joined the underworld, and committed every other crime imaginable. He had just started in on heroin when his friends

turned on him and left him half-dead on his doorstep.

About that time his mother, who had been praying for him all along, changed her prayer focus. Up until now it had been specific. "Help him to quit the drugs. Quiet his violent heart." and so on. She had come to the end of herself. Now she started to pray differently. She said, "God, there is nothing that we can do to help him. He is beyond our reach. I give him to You. You take over. Get a hold of his soul, and don't let go. Lord, he is Yours to protect and rescue now, not mine. If he starts sniffing glue, or gets into trouble again, that is Your responsibility." After praying, she didn't shake anymore when he started to kick the walls in. She just continued to pray, and God gave her a great peace about the situation.

Kiyokazu was fed up with his unfaithful friends. He broke away from them. He stopped the drugs altogether, and asked the underworld if he could leave. The violent spells grew shorter and shorter until instead of an hour of raging, they consisted of just one or two holes kicked in the wall. And then this spring, he gave his mother the biggest surprise of all. "I can't believe all those people in your church would pray for someone who they have never met. I want to go and see what kind of people they are."

So Kiyokazu started coming to church. "I have no desire to become a Christian." He told my daughter at a church picnic last week. "Every week I decide to never come back. But every Saturday, I find myself wondering what I will wear to church the next day. Yesterday, I even found myself asking my boss if I could have Sunday off to go to church." Recently, he has stopped telling his mother, "I will never become a Christian!", and started saying "It's not like I don't believe". I talked to his mother today. She said over and over, "I would never have believed he

would be like this today. I hardly recognize him from the violent demented mess he was a year ago.” I asked her if she felt it was God’s doing as a result of prayer, and she gave me a resounding ‘Yes!’

Lots of people pray for their children, and for others. What’s the difference? I feel there are two main factors. Others are praying also. Kiyokazu’s aunt in particular prays, not only for him, but for his mother, that she will be able to pray for him. Our supporting churches in the States are praying as well. Cumulative prayer is powerful! 360 years of oppression can’t withstand it! But sheer numbers and hours spent in prayer is not enough. The real change started taking place only after his mother surrendered the situation to God’s grace, power and wisdom. Simple trust and humility, and an awareness of our own helplessness in the situation are necessary before God will move mightily on our behalf.

In a sense, that’s easy. 100 years of mission work in Japan have shown that there is nothing we can do to initiate a great awakening. First, the web of satanic power must be broken, and only God can do that. That’s why several of us have initiated the Free Japan movement. We want to invite as many churches as we can, both in Japan and all over the world to pray for God to bind Satan and pour out His Holy Spirit, so that a great multitude of Japanese people will come to Christ. We want to meet from all over at the Toshogu Shrine to ask God to break the great web that has Japan bound, and free her people to turn to Christ. We’ve chosen March 2004 as an initial target date. I know you are praying for Japan as well, but I can’t help but wonder what great things God would do if we all joined together to beseech Him in one great chorus for this nation. Will you join us? Check out Free Japan’s web page at www.freejapan.org. Or you can e-mail me at: obachan@myrealbox.com.

In any case, will you pray with us for Kiyokazu? His best friend just got out of prison in June, and his mother is concerned that the glue and drugs will start all over again. Pray that the devil will not have access to him until he has definitely accepted Christ as his Savior, and that God will use him to bring his friends in to the Kingdom as well.



Storming the Gates

How a group of short-term missionaries took on the forces of darkness!
By Jenna Lusby

It’s August, 2002. We hop on the Bullet Train, speed along at 160 mph, arrive in Nikko, Japan after dark. We haul our luggage uphill through narrow streets to a shabby little inn. None of us is superstitious, but we’re disturbed to find a small Shino shrine outside our door. In fact, that’s why we’re here—to claim an ancient shrine for God.

Spiritual Warfare

Gathered in one room, we resolve to come clean of any emotional or spiritual clutter. Over the months, each has prepared in his own way: praying, studying, and fasting. Hundreds of prayer warriors state-side are supporting us.

We’ve heard that when spiritual darkness oppresses an area, Christians should live in the opposite spirit. In Japan depression is high, so we will be joyful. The Creator is denied here, so we will acknowledge Him.

Deborah and Karis have conducted prayer walks in pagan temples in Asia. Andrea worries that we’ll run out of things to pray for. Arian, Daniel, and Jesse have been to shrines earlier in the summer and felt the dark oppression. Arian is afraid. This shrine is dedicated to Tokugawa Ieyasu, the shogun (samurai general) responsible for initiating the slaughter

of untold thousands of Christians in the 1600’s and closing the country to missionaries for more than two centuries.

Nikko is home to the famous carvings of three monkeys—hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil. One theory claims that this “evil” is Christianity. These mountains were devoted to gods centuries ago, and we suspect that Japan’s age-old spiritual resistance could be rooted here. We’ve targeted a people group Satan has marked for ownership. We expect our minds and hearts to be attacked.

Beside a mountain stream the next morning, we draw courage from 2 Chronicles 20. King Jehoshaphat placed singers ahead of the army to praise God before the battle. The Lord set ambushes against the enemy and they were defeated. “Do not be afraid or discouraged because of the vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God’s (verse 15).

We are singing soldiers, fighting not against people, but against principalities in high places. We head for the mountain shrine, softly singing the names of the Lord: “You are Alpha, Omega, Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, and Friend.”

The First Gate— The Gate of the Lord

The entrance to every shrine is a gateway, torii. Here we begin. Not drawing attention to ourselves, we pray verses from Psalms. “This is the gate of the Lord

through which the righteous may enter” (118:20). “Life up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of Glory may come in” (24:7).

The 30-foot torii is impressive, but we’re more awed by the natural beauty of ancient pines and clear sky. “Notice how we keep looking up while everyone else is looking down,” Karis observes. “I think the gates are really the peoples’ minds.” The Scripture takes on new significance. We pray that passersby will open the gates of their minds and lift their hearts to the King of Glory.

We spread out. Clint begins humming a song just as Jennifer starts singing it while Leah is thinking it: Lord, I lift your name on high. We seem to be on the same wavelength.

The Second Gate— The Glory of God

In the open courtyard we pass the whimsical carvings of the three monkeys, which now look macabre. Do they really symbolize, “See, hear, speak nothing of Christ?” Here the prophet Isaiah reminds us, “Hear, you deaf, look, you blind, and see!” (Isaiah 42:18). “I am the Lord: that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols” (42:8). We share Scriptures while Daniel puts on his headphones and praises through music.

The Third Gate— The Lord Will Answer

People are purifying themselves at a sheltered water basin. A young man drinks from a ladle. A mother washes her child’s hands. Groups of uniformed children scamper across the courtyard. Tears spring to Clint’s eyes. Jan and Annie turn somber. They are feeling the same thing. These innocent children and millions like them will learn empty customs, but not the love of Jesus.

It seems time to move on, but Andrea and Jesse’s eyes are fixed on the people at the water. Andrea thumbs through her Bible and happens upon Isaiah 41:17: “The poor and needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the Lord will answer them.”

Two demon dog statues stand guard. One’s mouth is open, forming the first sound of the Japanese syllabary (hiragana) ----a; the other’s mouth is closed to say the last sound----n. Does this sound like the

first and the last, Alpha and Omega?

One building houses three golden mikoshi (portable shrines) for the gods, designed much like the Ark of the Covenant. The center mikoshi is Ieyasu’s. Leah, the youngest in the group, stands before it and resolutely says, “You thought you would kill all Christians, but twelve of us are standing here and you’re dead.”

The Fourth Gate— Do Not Lift up Your Horns

Travel ads say, “See Nikko and die!” The rich architectural beauty of the complex, constructed to illustrate Ieyasu’s unequalled authority, is supposed to overwhelm the viewer. The fourth gate and temple doorway are fantastically ornate, with hundreds of carved dragons and fanged beasts in writhing, serpentine bodies, as if designed for the worship of a mass murderer. I call Deborah over to look at them. She has found Psalm 75:4-6 and begins reading:

“To the arrogant I say, ‘Boast no more,’ and to the wicked...’ Do not lift your horns against heaven; do not speak with outstretched neck. No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt a man. But it is God who judges.”

Claiming Victory

We read the Scripture over and over. Three thousand-year-old verses suddenly come alive with power.

Inside the courtyard we form small groups to pray. We end up in the four corners, interceding for the Japanese whom we love, and for missionaries striving to make Christ known. Deborah is joyfully overcome with the sense that God has answered, that victory has been claimed within the gates of Heaven, and that in a matter of time the people of Japan will stream into the Kingdom of God.

The school children enter the main worship building, and kneel to receive a lesson. Arian sits alone on the floor in a dark corner, her Bible in her lap. A robed official comes and says, “You must be on your knees.” She politely leaves.

We return to the first gate. We’ve decided to circle it seven times, like Joshua did at Jericho, to claim the territory once more. We take our time, sit, read, pray, and circle. Throughout the day Karis has been unable to dismiss a phrase of Scripture from her mind: “Build up, build up.” That’s all she remembers, but it’s persis-

tent, and seems important to her. I search for the passage in my electronic Bible. It’s Isaiah 62:10-12. We claim the promise together.

Pass through, pass through the gates!
Prepare the way for the people. Build up,
build up the highway!

Remove the stones. Raise a banner for
the nations. The Lord has made proclama-
tion to the ends of the earth;

Say to the Daughter of Zion, ‘See, your
Savior comes! See, His reward is with Him,
and His recompense accompanies

Him.’ They will be called the Holy
People, the Redeemed of the Lord; And
you will be called Sought After, the City
No Longer Deserted.

We obey, and pass through the gates.

We expected no supernatural event, no bolts of lightning or crumbling walls. But on that day it surely seemed a protective presence hovered above us. Perhaps that’s why we kept looking up. The way the Word fell into our hands and hearts surprised us all. The sword of the Lord cut right to the truth of that place. We expected darkness and felt light; expected oppression and felt unity. “It was the day I feared most all summer,” Arian said afterward, “and it was the one day I wasn’t afraid.”

Jenna Lusby is a freelance writer in Cincinnati, Ohio (USA). Jenna writes: “I organized a team of college students to do English Bible camps, but we also joined TEAM EXPANSION group for the prayer journey. It was one of the most powerful spiritual experiences of my life. My sister, Lynn Pratt, who operates SAY YES TO JAPAN, a networking ministry, suggested I send you a copy of my article with the possibility that you might like to reprint it.” Thanks, to you, Jenna and your team!—jk

*Our duty
is not to
see through
one another,
but to see
one another
through.*

Revival Questionnaire

Recently in a very stirring sermon I heard it stated that the average praying time for ministers in USA today is THREE MINUTES! I was appalled! I wept, literally. How can this possibly be when prayer is the most powerful force on earth? Prayer is the key to revival. According to E.M. Bound's discovery every man and woman of God in history was primarily a person of prayer with many spending up to 3-4 hours a day on his/her knees.

Our enemy has nothing to fear if prayer is secondary in our ministry—even if we are busy in evangelism. Paul exhorted that "...first of all, prayers, intercessions...be made for all men." Dr. Edwin Orr, who studied the history of revivals his entire life, concluded that prayer alone is the key to revival. My heart has been—and is—examined as I prayerfully go through the following questionnaire:

- Did I pray for revival today...this week?
- If not, could it be that specifically praying for revival is not a priority prayer burden of mine?
- When did I last earnestly pray for revival?
- When I do pray for revival do I pray fervently, even with tears and a heavy burden?
- Have I been so constrained to even fast at times because of the anguish of my soul in its longings to see God move in revival power and glory?
- Do I believe that importunate, believing prayer, without doubt, can bring revival? See Joel 2:13-18.
- If revival depended on my praying, would it ever come?
- Am I assured of the absolute fact that revival NOW is really God's Will?
- Am I assured in my heart that revival is definitely God's plan for Japan?
- Why is it that we have not been experiencing revival in Japan like has been happening in other countries of the world?
- Could it be that the real reason we are not experiencing revival in Japan is because we have not obeyed God's directions?
- Do I believe that revival can come through the prayers of but one person? Ezekiel 22:30
- Do I love this nation of perishing millions enough to commit myself to praying daily for that promised outpouring----and continue faithfully until it comes?
- Standing on Jesus' promise of Matthew 18:18 will I endeavor to find a prayer partner with whom I can meet regularly for agreement in prayer?
- Will I commit myself to both promoting and participating in revival prayer meetings which is an absolute condition for revival to come according to Joel 2:15,16?

My prayer is that you will be inspired to much more prayer!

Donnel McLean

Prayer Focus

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

On April 7, the JEMA Day of Prayer, ten gathered to pray at the Tokyo Diet Building. These included Bill Paris, Jackie Brock (Assemblies of God), Rich Conrad (Baptist International Mission), Steve Clark (Campus Crusade for Christ), Barbara Dunbar (Southern Baptist), David Scott (Tentmakers Network), Neal Hicks (United Methodist), and Rhonda and David Somers-Harris (Youth With A Mission). Jonathan Hansen (World Ministries International), a visiting guest of Russ Epley (Team), also joined with us.

Bill Paris had asked Mr. Nomura, a believer who has worked as a secretary in the Diet, about getting a tour through the Diet Building. Mr. Nomura graciously gave us the day and time we asked for. Miss Kaori Kimi, former worker in the Diet, led our tour.

Bill explained the purpose of our visit by stating we want to serve Japan's leaders by means of prayer. We would be "guests in (their) work place, (and could) bless their place of work with God's presence..."

Come with us now as we enter the House of Representatives. Pray with us that the work of prayer started on April 7 will continue through your prayers.

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

As we entered the side entrance of the Diet Building we saw the board listing the names of all representatives showing whether or not they were present that day.

Thank you, Lord, for these men and women. Give them wisdom that Your will might be done in the decisions they make for the nation.

...For kings and all those in authority....

Miss Kimi led us to Prime Minister Koizumi's office door where we stopped to pray.

Give him wisdom and discernment, Lord,

in decision-making that affects the prosperity of the nation and the freedoms of the people.

...That we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness....

Close by were various party leaders' offices. Among them was the Soka Gakkai Party. We prayed simultaneously for this party whose beliefs are so set against the Gospel.

Lord, may the government in no way deter anyone from seeking or following You but be used of You to administer a Japan where all may believe freely.

...Who wants all men to be saved....

In the Central Hall on the first floor we prayed for the Emperor and foreign heads of state who would enter the Diet here.

Lord, we pray for the salvation of the Emperor and the heads of state, who will walk here. We pray that You will reveal Yourself to them now.

...And to come to a knowledge of the truth.

We ended our tour in the Chamber of the House of Representatives where we again prayed simultaneously. Many of us prayed for decisions to be made regarding education as well as praying again regarding the influence of Soka Gakkai in the government.

May the children of Japan not be influenced toward Shintoism. May they know more fully Christian history, and gain an understanding of creationism over evolution. May the decisions of this House serve Your will and purposes.

Our prayers joined those of the ten or so Christian representatives, some of whom organize their own prayer meeting, and the twenty or so Christians working in the Diet. Many representatives find it difficult to attend church. Some workers said they would value serious intercession since politics can be nasty at times.

Father, protect Your children serving You in the government. Give them the grace needed to shine for You in difficult

situations. May there be more opportunities for prayer and fellowship.

Later Bill wrote that he "personally sensed God's pleasure in us being able to walk into the very workplace of the leaders of this nation to lift them before the throne of God. I pray more believers would be that person God is looking for to stand in the gap that He might bless this nation with a great harvest."

Check the following address for further listings of representatives, etc:

http://www.shugiin.go.jp/index_e_member.htm

By Rhonda Somers-Harris

A new organ, so the story goes, had been installed in a New York City church. A rare and costly instrument it was. The first Sunday it was used, the electric current that operated it went off at a point early in the service. A hurried call for help brought a mechanic. Soon a note was set up and handed to the organist. It read, "After the prayer the power will be on."

The mechanic did not realize what depths and heights of truth there were in the suggestiveness of those simple words. A prayerless church is a powerless church. A church that prays weakly will grow weakly. A church that prays mightily will achieve mightily for God.

Gospel Herald

Success or Failure: A Tale of Three Men and Three Books

by David Seamands

I guess it's a characteristic of old age to begin to evaluate one's life a little bit, and think about the meaning of success or failure. I've been doing some of that lately, and so I want to share with you some of the thoughts I've had in the last several months. The Bible has a lot to say about success and failure. Hebrews 11, you know, is the great Faith Hall of Fame chapter and it lists these wonderful people, who in their own way were very successful. Eighteen Old Testament heroes of faith, men and women, are listed by name, and then the thousands of nameless saints are honored for their faith in the midst of very gory and ghastly sufferings. We know this passage so well. An interesting aside in the description of these thousands of nameless suffering saints says, and I love it, "the world was not worthy of them." Jesus talked a lot about this subject, too. In Luke 10:17, when the 70 you remember, returned jumping up and down because of their remarkable results, Jesus as much as said to them, "O.K. boys, settle down, don't rejoice in your successful results; rejoice rather in your relationship—your relationship with God." In John 12:24 He tells them they need to die like a kernel of wheat to bear fruit. Paul uses this theme a great deal too in his life. When you are considering success or failure you have got to take the long view, Paul says. You cannot take a short view, or make too quick a decision. You have to see things from God's viewpoint and God's timing or you will miss it. And we are reminded that God does not run on Eastern Standard or Daylight Savings time or on any other kind of chronos or chronological time as

we humans do. There is only one word ever used in Scripture for God's timing and that's kairos, the fullness of time, the right time, the ripe time. So I want us to think on this subject of success and failure, maybe in a little different way by relating it to three men and three books. And of course, when I gave this subject to Brother Ted he said, "Oh, which books of the Bible are you going to use?" I said, "I'm not going to use any of them." Well, that was kind of dangerous, but he has allowed me to preach anyhow and I appreciate this invitation so much.

Let me start with the closest at hand, about a man and a book, and that's myself back in 1950. It was our first term in India. I hurriedly caught an early morning train. On that day I was to go up to another mission station, about a half a day away, for a very important planning time. I was to catch that same train as it came from the big city late afternoon and come back home. Well, we were getting along fine until all of a sudden the train stopped with a jerk. There had been a derailment up ahead, damage to the tracks. So they backed us up and put us over on a siding next to a very small railway station. They said we were going to be there a while, maybe a day or up to a day and a half. Well, I was going to miss my meeting! I hadn't brought anything to read, not even my always-present companion, the little

"Don't rejoice in your successful results; rejoice rather in your relationship with God."

Philips New Testament. I had thought, "Well, I'll read all the mission papers on my way." The only other thing I had brought, as all missionaries know, was that unbreakable one-gallon Stanley thermos jug of boiled drinking water, which you always carry in India. I got out and looked around the station. Food would be no problem. The equivalent of Big Macs is everywhere, even in India. Ah, a bookstore. Wonderful! But I looked at the English stuff and it looked pretty trashy, not good at all. The bookkeeper saw that I wasn't interested in all that. He noticed I was a missionary by my halo. Ah, he sensed my need, so he climbed up

to a certain shelf and brought down an English book, a well-worn paper back, *Atlas Shrugged*, by Ayn Rand. Well, at the time I had neither heard of the book nor the author. My only hope was this book and I must admit that it had a unique style. What a powerful writer, this woman! She had an incredible anti-Christian philosophy—a philosophy of pure selfishness. But mostly its eleven hundred pages kept me occupied for the rest of that day and into the night and for most of the next day. When I got home, I was grimy, dirty and grumpy and so I sort of gripped around for a while and made life a little more difficult for Helen, at least that's what she told me. And as far as I was concerned, the day was a total failure. I had just wasted a day.

"When you are a believer God becomes the Engineer of your circumstances."

Ten years later I was in my first year as pastor of the host Church of Asbury College and Seminary. A student from the college called me and said he was having some serious intellectual problems with his Christian faith. He would like to come and talk. Well, as soon as he came and sat down

in the office I could read his thoughts. I knew what he was thinking; I sensed his discomfort. He was a very brilliant pre-med student, sharp as a tack. He looked down his sophomore nose (he had told me he was a sophomore) with a combined expression of disdain and pity. I could read his thoughts. (Well, I know I have come to the wrong person to get help with this kind of a problem. Seems like a nice guy. Maybe he was ok as a missionary out in the villages of India, but this poor man certainly wouldn't understand the kind of stuff I need to talk about.) Well, he kept the conversation on a surface level and his attitude began to get to me, I had to confess. I was new. It was a different kind of a job and I began to slump down in my chair, lower and lower. And then I said, "What about what you wanted to talk to me about—those intellectual problems, and all?" He put me off and then finally said with kind of a hopeless sigh, "Well, I don't suppose you ever heard of a book called, *Atlas Shrugged* by Ayn Rand, have you?" Well, let me tell you, I rose up in my chair and with all my vast erudition, I said, "Of course I've heard of it. I read it years ago, all eleven hundred pages. She's

quite a writer isn't she?" Well, this bright pre-med student's jaw dropped and so did his defenses and we had a wonderful conversation. Best of all, it was the beginning of a deep friendship, a kind of mentoring relationship, and I had the privilege of leading this young man to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ and helped him get deeply rooted in Christian faith, evident for many years as a practicing physician. And it all began with what I had considered bad luck and a wasted day, a total failure. Oh, it took God ten years, you see, to show me how wrong I had been and how He had been in that situation all along.

Oswald Chambers is right when he says, "When you are a believer God becomes the engineer of your circumstances." That does not mean that God is the author of everything that happens in your life, but it does mean that He is the Master of every situation.

Now, let's go to another book, another man, a wonderful man, E. Stanley Jones. A dear friend on the mission field, a collaborator in many evangelistic efforts, Stanley Jones was a graduate of Asbury College along with his roommate, J. Waskom Picket. (In 1906 Mr. Picket became a great bishop in India.) In 1925, Stanley, just a young missionary in India, wrote a book. It was called, *The Christ of the Indian Road*. Think of it, back in those days this religious book sold a million copies. That was unheard of. It was a hard back too. It catapulted him into fame. He was on the cover of *Time Magazine* in 1938, which said he was one of the greatest missionaries in the world. Stanley Jones wrote 28 books and they sold by the millions. They were all highly successful. Well, all but one, that is. It didn't sell and the publishers didn't reprint it right away. It was a failure. It was a book on the life of Mahatma Gandhi. He wrote it in 1948, oh, all of us evangelicals got excited and began to criticize and accused Jones of making Gandhi a Christian, which he had tried very carefully not to do in the book. He praised Gandhi and especially talked about Gandhi's method of non-violence, but the Cold War was on and Americans were interested in armaments and the book

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just didn't sell. Nobody read it, but there was a young black American who got interested in that book. I think you know his name, Martin Luther King Jr. Up to that time, you see, there were a group of Black Americans who were determined to create a revolution to bring them freedom and equality. You remember some of their names, Mohammad Elijah, Malcolm X, and the Black Panthers. And in King they saw possibilities and were going to bring him in with this violent revolution. What if they would have? They would have all been wiped out, and blood would have flowed in the streets of our coun-

try. What a historical disgrace the whole thing would have been. But, you see, King got a hold of that book and was deeply impressed by Stanley Jones's presentation of non-violence. And this is what King said when he read the book, "Ah, this is the way we will achieve our freedom. We will turn our whole movement from violence to non-violence. We will match our capacity to suffer against the other's capacity to inflict suffering. We will wear our opponents down with goodwill." They took that way, roughed up, beaten, jailed; they refused to go to the back of the bus. They didn't strike back when fierce dogs were turned on them, when their churches were bombed and burned, or when men and women and sometimes little children were killed. They sang spirituals; they made speeches. In 1944 E. Stanley Jones wrote, *The Christ of the American Road*, and it was interesting to discover on page 60 the written words, "What is America? America is a dream unfulfilled, a dream of a place where a man is a man, a place where race and birth and color are transcended, etc. That is the American dream." Does that sound a bit familiar? "I have a dream!" Don't misunderstand what I am saying. I am not detracting from Martin Luther King's genius; nor am I adding to his defects. I just want us to realize a fact of history. The one book that Jones wrote was a total fail-

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ure; was it a failure? Or was it, historically speaking for the United States of America, one of the most successful books in our history? Of course it was! You know it was. The last time I visited the King Center in Atlanta, Georgia USA, Helen and I happened to be with two friends, Stanley Jones's daughter, Eunice, and her husband, Bishop James Matthews. Somehow I saw the display first. I said, "Come Eunice, come and look at this!" There behind glass was the display of three things, King's preaching robe, the Bible and there was Stanley Jones' book on Mahatma Gandhi, with all of King's notes. When Eunice Jones saw it she said, "I have got to tell you about that. It was Koretta King who first told me that my father's book is what revolutionized and turned Martin Luther King Jr. from violence to non-violence. I wrote my dad, who happened to be in Norway preaching in a whole series of revivals, about it. So when he got back, I asked daddy about my letter and did he get that news?" He threw back his head and started laughing and laughing and laughing. He said, "That is really funny. Of all my books, that is the only book my publisher ever told me was a total failure!"

We could mention many things about Dr. Jones. He won millions to Christ through his spirit-filled preaching. Asbury has had many revivals. There was a revival way back in the 1900's also at the seminary and it was during that time Sammy Jones had a great deeper life experience and was filled with the Holy Spirit. It was Wesley who said that whenever there is revival, the people preach and are filled with the Spirit. There is revival

or riot. Well, this is when the riot was changed. Failure, No! Now we see it. The book was a success.

Now last of all, I hold in my hands a book. A book of daily devotional readings, which continues to be to this day, the world's best selling devotional book, including even Mrs. Cowman's book, *Streams in the Desert*. This book, to this very day, *Christianity Today* a year or so ago, published the facts and statistics and said, this is the widest selling devotional book in the world; published in 75 lan-



WLPM, Japan's Largest Christian Publisher Goes Independent

By Don Regier

After 53 years of ministry under the legal responsibility of The

Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM), Word of Life Press Ministries (WLPM) has entered a new era under new legal status.

Begun by the literature evangelism committee of TEAM missionaries back in 1950, today WLPM is Japan's largest Christian publisher, wholesaler and retailer. TEAM missionary, Ken McVety, directed the ministry virtually from its beginning until his retirement in 1994 when Mr. Motoyoshi Togo became its president. It has always been a part of TEAM's religious juridical person and under its board.

On May 12, 2003, World of Life Press Ministries (Inochi no Kotoba Sha Dendo Group) officially became part of the religious juridical person of the Sweden Alliance Christ Mission (SACM), the legal entity established for the Swedish Alliance Mission in Japan (SAMJ) which came to Japan in 1950. The official Japanese name is Sueden Domei Kirisuto Kyodan. WLPM chose the English work "mission" for the Japanese word "kyodan" because they see themselves as an evangelistic ministry (senkyou dantai) serving the entire Body of Christ, and not a competitor with established denominations. Swedish evangelist and revivalist, Fredrik Franson, founded both TEAM and the Swedish Alliance Mission (SAM), the parent body of SAMJ. SAMJ has no more missionaries in Japan and any future missionaries will be assigned to work with TEAM. Most of the churches founded by SAMJ missionaries have joined the Nihon Domei Kiristo Kyodan, which shares the same religious juridical person with TEAM. WLPM will continue to minister the Gospel of Christ under the same doctrinal statement it had under TEAM. The spiritual and historical connections run far and deep between the various groups represented.

The 53rd annual general assembly of

SAMJ opened in the Aichi Ken Chusho Kigyou Center building in Nagoya at 1:00 p.m. with Rev. Masayoshi Orito leading in worship. TEAM Japan Field Chairman, Tom Sloan, gave greetings and emphasized that TEAM has always had the goal of WLPM becoming independent in a way that would maintain its non-denominational character of ministering to the entire Body of Christ in Japan. Now God has provided a way. SAMJ representative, Stig Andersson, came from Sweden to give the message. He noted that more than 100 years ago one of the groups that eventually merged to form SAM began



as a tract publishing and distribution ministry in Sweden. Therefore, that too is a part of the SAMJ heritage that again is now expressed in its relation to WLPM and the ministry of Every Home for Christ (EHC).

The worship was followed at 1:30 by the business meeting chaired by Rev. Kaneyuki Kamio. Lars Gunnar Forslund, the last responsible SAMJ missionary, briefly outlined the steps SAMJ made to begin cooperation with WLPM upon the suggestion of a pastor. He talked of the shared vision for reaching the masses for Christ and mentioned the Christian newspaper-publishing ministry SAM now has in Sweden. WLPM Group President, Motoyoshi Tago, gave a more

detailed report on the steps toward cooperation beginning in 1998, when he learned of the possibility. He said that TEAM had always given WLPM financial independence. TEAM never took any profits from WLPM, but insisted all income go back into the ministry. WLPM has always had its own leadership team, headed first by McVety and now Tago. Now, finally comes the legal independence. Tago urged all to rededicate themselves to the spirit of Fredrik Franson, which included a pioneering ministry and emphasis on conscious communion with the living Christ.

The assembled members, with the proxies of those absent, chose the board of SACM, approved financial reports and passed a budget. The 14-member board overseeing the ministry includes two auditors, a 5-member executive board chaired by Rev. Akira Yoshimochi, president of Tokyo Christian College. Board members include missionaries, pastors, businessmen, plus retired and present WLPM executives.

TEAM has pledged continued involvement in the ministry of WLPM. Two missionaries are members of the board and two missionaries, Roberts Peabody and Don Regier, will continue to be assigned fulltime to the staff.





The Culture of the “Salaryman”

by Joni Spears

One of the most common complaints in churches across Japan is the lack of male presence and leadership, and most often this is attributed to the life, or culture, of Japan’s salarymen. The typical salaryman’s lifestyle squeezes him into the mold of performance and living only for the company, and leaves time for little else. Many of us only hear bits and pieces of what life is like for Japan’s “salarymen.” But few of us know what life is really like inside these companies. My husband has been working as a “tentmaker” missionary for over 10 years at a life science company here in Japan. He is one of a handful of foreigners working at a research campus with more than one thousand Japanese workers. I would like to present some of the factors that, taken together, form the intense pressure that weighs down on salarymen today and keeps them from hearing the gospel. I would like to give a few signs of hope. In sharing some of what my husband has experienced, I hope God will inspire new ideas for reaching these men, and help us to pray more knowledgeably and effectively for these men to come to Christ.

Spiritual warfare.

This is probably the greatest barrier to Japanese businessmen responding to the gospel. Most large companies have a Shinto shrine right on the property, and ceremonies take place on a regular basis. As for my husband, he is becoming increasingly more aware of the spiritual warfare occurring at work. For example, twice a year a Buddhist priest comes to the company to perform memorial services for the spirits of animals sacrificed in the medical experiments. One afternoon, he was feeling particularly uneasy—he felt discouraged and even oppressed. As he began to pray, an announcement was made that the memorial service was about to start. He realized then the source of the oppressive atmosphere and changed his praying to concentrate on the ceremonies. After that, the darkness lifted. Of course, Shinto ceremonies are also performed when construction is begun or a new building finished on the property. Employees are invited to attend all these ceremonies. And there is a Shinto shrine on the property where a Shinto priest comes once a month to perform ceremonies for the success of the business.

Hardened hearts

As is the case everywhere, ignorance and misperceptions about Christianity abound. In his conversations with co-workers, my husband has encountered many hearts hardened to spiritual matters. One friend said, “I could never become a Christian because of the wars that Christianity has started.” This friend also insisted that Buddhism had never started or been involved in any wars. Others have confessed that they just don’t have an interest in Christianity. My husband even tried to put together a marriage enrichment meeting for some of his co-workers, and not one was interested. Perhaps it was because a preacher would be speaking, or some cultural difference regarding what they expect out of their marriages. There is a tremendous amount of illogical thinking, misinformation and indifference among the workers at this company, as there is among Japanese at large.

Superstitions

Most of the men at my husband's company are scientists and claim to think and reason "scientifically", yet they will discuss blood types (which supposedly reveal one's personality) and buy good-luck charms at the shrines. Once, one of his co-workers bought the least expensive charm for safety while driving. On the way home, he had a car accident. The next day he went back to the shrine and bought the most expensive charm! The company also allows the employees to purchase charms for prosperity in business from the local Ebisu shrine, and helps distribute them by sending out employees to buy the charms for anyone who wants one.

Time off

The prevailing attitude toward taking time off is another area of pressure for the employees. It is my understanding that most Western companies separate sick days from vacation days. But the workers at my husband's company get only 20 days off a year for both sick days and vacation days. One year we planned to go home to America at Christmas, right when one of my husband's projects was due to be finished. He finished right on time and we went home for the holidays. He was later told by his boss that he was irresponsible to plan to leave because if the project hadn't finished, he should have planned to stay. He was also denied a higher bonus one evaluation period because he had to take extra time off when our 4-year-old daughter had open-heart surgery. Most men, then, will take as few days off as possible, as they have to save up days in the event of a serious illness or injury.

Late hours

The stories about the late hours are true. Combine staying at work until 8, 9, or 10 p.m. with a one to two-hour commute, and most workers don't get home until long after the children are in bed. My husband is the first one to leave most nights because as a Christian, he of course is seeking balance between his work life and family life. Yet we suspect that many of his co-workers don't attribute this in a positive way to his Christian beliefs; rather, they probably think he is just not loyal enough to the company. In most Western countries, we say that a Christian worker can be a positive witness by how he or she works.

But here in Japan, a Christian worker might have to work less than everyone else, and therefore risk disrespect. Of course, a worker can witness by working hard when he/she is there, but in Japan, where form can sometimes be more important than substance, staying late may be the more important virtue.

After-hours entertaining

This hits hardest on salesmen who must entertain prospective clients. Fortunately, my husband doesn't have to do much after-hours entertaining as his job doesn't entail that, but he has been very disappointed in the depth of conversation at the welcome parties and end-of-year parties. He thought once he could speak enough Japanese that he would enjoy these events more, and perhaps have a conversation that could lead to spiritual matters. Yet now that he can communicate, he has discovered that the conversational topics are the same every time, (blood types, gossip) and that there is too much smoking and drinking for any real conversation to take place.

Privacy

Another factor is the privacy issue. It is typical that my husband's co-workers don't even share their good news, such as a new baby to be born or an engagement, until right before the event, or sometimes even after. Perhaps they want to avoid the pressure of the teasing that occurs, or maybe in such a competitive environment they want to keep something to themselves. It certainly makes it difficult for Christians like my husband to see opportunities for ministry or encouragement.

Unspoken pressure

The unspoken pressure to perform can be subtle but pervasive. Formerly at this company, the overtime sheets were passed around to each employee to confirm that the hours worked were correct. The problem was that every employee's hours were printed and one could see what everyone else was working too. The comparison was unavoidable. Additionally, now with the recession in Japan going on for more than a decade, men are concerned for the future of their jobs and with proving themselves irreplaceable.

Spoken pressure

Several times a year the employees are

gathered for "pep" talks or "state of the company" addresses. Most of these speeches' main message seems to be "Double your maximum effort"! The pressure to produce more, work harder and prove one's value to the company is enormous. When you look at the cumulative effects of the late hours, the entertaining, the pressure to work, these men are tired, and it is no wonder they don't have time to think about spiritual things or even feel a spiritual need.

Signs of Hope

Other Christians. Many large companies will have at least a handful of Christians, so the opportunity for encouragement and witness is there. But often these Christians feel so bound by societal pressures and what is "allowed" at work that they give no verbal witness at all. For instance, a few years ago, my husband discovered four other Christians at his work and invited them to be part of a prayer group/devotional time which would meet twice a month. Often, though, it turned into a discouraging time for my husband. He repeatedly encouraged these Christians to be "salt and light" in the company, but several were rather resistant, especially when it came to being a verbal witness. But, while there was even some resistance to my husband's suggestion to pick one co-worker and pray for that one by name, a few did respond to the challenge.

Changing Attitudes

Attitudes are slowly changing with each generation. Once my husband went to another floor to get some item, and four of the men were absent due to illness. Actually two of them were home helping wives who were sick. When my husband returned to his room, he told his co-workers about that, and his boss, (a man in his mid-50's) said, "Really? Men do that these days? Really?"

Interests

My husband was single when he first joined the company, and so were most of his co-workers. Now that he and most of his friends are married and having children, he is finding more opportunities to share, especially regarding family and kids. Additionally, we have found that national holidays are great opportunities for meeting with the families of my husband's

co-workers. They have the day off and are looking for something to do together as a family.

In conclusion, we haven't discovered the "key" to reaching salarymen with the gospel, but we definitely feel that more Christian salarymen and women are needed to reach these non-believing workers. We can all pray that God would send more tentmaking missionaries to enter these companies and befriend these workers. But more importantly, Japanese Christians themselves should be encouraged and trained in how to do workplace evangelism so that it is not such a frightening prospect to them, and they need to be taught how to intercede in prayer, such as praying for co-workers by name. They need to be taught about spiritual warfare and how to pray against the enemy. Missionaries could work with women at their churches to find out the husband's interests, (such as fishing, or riding motorcycles), and then try to find another Christian with the same hobby to introduce them to. And certainly we must ask questions of the Japanese Christian businessmen that we do know, and then we must listen, listen, listen. What do THEY think would be of interest to their friends? Of the precious free time that they do have, what do they consider an attractive use of their time? One can certainly go out on any weekend and see hordes of young families shopping together, eating out, and going to zoos, farms and museums. Surely the church of Jesus Christ can offer something as compelling and attractive to families, where the men can be reached through friendship, interests, and family.

A Prayer for August

by Katy Brown

Loving Father, please help me to be as quiet as August; as patient as crops preparing for harvest. Please help me to grow in this time of waiting.

While the warm August sun presses down on the earth, I am drawn by the warmth of your love. I am inwardly alive in the wonder and beauty of quiet times like August.

International VIP Club

by Bob Holmes

This year the International VIP Club, born in 1993, will celebrate its' 10th anniversary. Some years before that a group of Japanese businessmen, headed by Andrew Ichimura, started praying about how business and professional men could find Christ and His liberating power. It was their belief that the wheels of commerce could be used to transport the life giving Gospel of Jesus Christ to the uttermost parts of Japan. About this time, on the other side of the earth, my late wife Charlotte and I, heard the Lord speaking to us about full time service for the Lord.

I had been working for United Airlines for thirty-six years, had three children either on the mission field or preparing to go, and was ready to do whatever He asked. So on March 1st 1993, I retired from United and started looking for the "agency" that He would send us to. Twenty-three days later, I returned from a breakfast Bible study to learn that I had received a call from a United Airlines Senior VP. When I returned his call I found that he wanted me to return to the company and go to Japan. This was our answer. We would go to Japan and United Airlines would be the "sending agency"

The next Sunday, Jerry White, President of The Navigators was speaking at our church. After that service we were invited to dinner with Jerry. This again turned out to be part of God's plan since Jerry knew of a man (Andrew Ichimura) in Japan who was interested in reaching businessmen for Christ. Shortly after arriving in Tokyo, a meeting was held with Andrew in the coffee shop of the Imperial Hotel. At that meeting the International VIP Club was born.

The plan was simple; monthly meetings would be held at which there would be a businessman as the speaker. In addition to

telling about his business, he would also give his testimony. There would be a time of fellowship during which there would be an opportunity for "one on one" witnessing. The goal was to have one third of the group to be non-Christians. Also all attendees would know that this was a Christian meeting.

The first meeting was held in our apartment at Ark Towers in September of 1993. About ten people attended. This number grew to an average of thirty-five, with the top being fifty-three, a rather large group for an apartment. Later we held our first large meeting at 10:00 am on a Saturday morning, at the Westin Hotel in Ebisu. There were four speakers, music and simultaneous translation. Nearly five hundred attended, and important life decisions made. As time went on a weekly breakfast Bible study at the Imperial Hotel was added to the pattern of monthly meetings.

In September of 1997, Charlotte and I had to return to America as cancer that she had battled in 1979 had returned. The VIP Club was left no alternative but to find a new place to meet – and in a hurry, since the apartment was no longer available. The meeting was moved to the Mori Building and continued to grow. Seeing now that it was possible to have the ministry in places other than a private home, the decision was made to add another meeting. That decision was to be repeated many times over the following years, until at present there are over one hundred meetings taking place each month all over the country. Before her home going in April of 2001, Charlotte was pleased to know that even something as terrible as cancer, could be used by the Lord, for His purposes. We concluded that if it hadn't been for the need to go back to America, VIP Club would probably have continued the meetings in the apartment, with a

group of about thirty-five. As it stands now there are thousands of men and women attending these meetings. This was a great demonstration of Romans 8:28.

As the club grew there were members who left the country, some to accept foreign assignments for their Japanese company, others, expats, returning home. These frequently took the VIP Club burden with them and started clubs in other countries. As a result of this activity there are now clubs in 10 foreign countries.

Two other benefits came from VIP Club that were not planned nor expected.

First, many “closet”

Christians, men and women who knew the Lord but were not sharing their testimony, came out of the closet. This happened when they saw others, sometimes in their own office or company, publicly making known their faith. The second benefit was that the meetings provided a place for young businessmen and women to meet. Several have suggested that they met their spouse at VIP Club.

Business being as diversified as it is, men and women frequently like to gather with those in the same kind of business or profession as they. For this reason VIP Club has seen a diversification of club themes. For example there are clubs for people in finance, medicine, creative arts, education, etc. In addition there are clubs for various age groups i.e. young adults, mature adults, and retired. These usually can be distinguished by their differences in music. Some of the younger groups prefer Christian contemporary, while the “mature” groups might prefer a flute and piano duet.

Once in a while someone asks me why the International VIP Club has grown as it has. I could speculate about many possibilities, but at the end of the day, I would have to say it's because it's God's program. He intended for businessmen and women to take the gospel with them as they went about their business in the world, and as long as they will do that VIP Club will continue to grow and be a blessing to the business and professional community.

Not too long ago it became apparent that there was a need for a VIP website.

That site was developed and is being kept current to serve the thousands of people who “hit” it, looking for information. For those who still enjoy the printed page, a newspaper featuring VIP Club news is being planned. This paper will also include articles that may be considered of an evangelistic nature.

From the beginning the International VIP Club was designed to be an outreach program, not an evangelistic program, to be used as a vehicle for reaching lost businessmen and women. To reinforce that idea, the mission statement on this page was recently written, reflecting what had

been the intent of the founders from the beginning.

This statement provides a platform for the expansion of the VIP Club movement, without encumbering it with unnecessary rules and organization. Our prayer is that our Lord will continue to lead and direct the club, and that it might be used in changing the oft quoted statistic of “less than 1%,” are Christians. Jesus already paid for Japan. We pray that we may see it delivered to Him.

Visit our website at:



Desire to

website address: <http://v-station.tv>

“Please, tell me again. What exactly do I need to do to accept Jesus?”

Yoko's question was surprising because it followed a study on the blessing of being persecuted for Jesus (Matthew 5:10-12) and teaching on our call to suffer and follow in Jesus' footsteps (1 Peter 2:19-25). A week later, Takako said, “I can understand believing in Jesus in my mind, but what does it mean for my everyday life?” Before I could answer, however, Kimiyo, who had herself just recently decided to trust Jesus and is still dealing with the consequences, began to share what she had discovered about trusting her daily life and problems to Jesus and what it meant to her to follow Him.

This kind of open sharing and excitement about the Word of God has become the norm for an evangelistic Bible study meeting every week in the Tsukishima area of Chuo Ward, Tokyo. Its members often bring new people, share openly with each other, read the Bible in and out of class, learn to sing hymns and praise choruses, and even have asked if they could give offerings. (My answer was no, but to wait until we studied what the Bible says about giving. Now after the study they give.)

The story of this Bible study didn't begin with my plans, or by my initiatives, or by efforts of missionaries, but it all began with a growing desire of a person who wanted to know the Bible. It was in the fall of 1998, when Miwako, a young housewife who was also a member of our English class in Sayama, Saitama Prefecture, moved with her husband to Chuo Ward, to an apartment on the 42nd floor of a new 50 floor condominium complex. Shortly after her move she shared her own surprise of how much she missed the Bible times in our Sayama English class. “Could you come and teach me here?” she asked. There was a little regret, but not much hesitation in saying no. The

Know Brings Bible Class to

trip would be two hours one way and available time seemed scarce. Several weeks of unsuccessful searching for someone nearer to teach was followed by an unexpected phone call. "I have six friends here in the apartment building who will study the Bible with me. Now, will you come?" This time I could not say no.

The group of friends met every other week in one of their apartments. Meetings usually consisted of about 30 minutes of chatting, in English and Japanese, getting to know each other and finding out what everyone had been doing lately, followed by about an hour and a half of Bible study. We usually read in English and Japanese, took time to answer word questions and let everyone speak. We went through the Gospel of Mark, very slowly, bringing in passages from all over the Bible, as needed, to explain what was happening and to answer their questions.

As time progressed it became apparent that the input of a Christian lady, as well as more regular meetings, were needed. The need was met by Kayoko Namba, a godly woman in our church. She agreed to go teach on alternate weeks. Using many of her own experiences, she talked directly about personal issues of faith and brought in much that she had learned from various sources, such as Focus on the Family, etc. In the class we noticed a change almost right away as discussion depth increased. The experience was also a great stretching time for Mrs. Namba, as she learned to minister in this new way, using Bible college course materials. Her knowledge of theology and hermeneutics began to grow, too.

Before we knew it, it was time for us to return to Canada for home assignment, and, due to family needs, the one-year term stretched into two. We were thankful that Mrs. Namba was there to fill in the gap, and while we were gone two of the ladies, Miwako, the one who first asked

for the study, and Noriko, were baptized and joined churches. Unfortunately, they had to go rather far to get to church thus a desire was born in their hearts to see a church begun right where they lived. We were filled with praise to see that their individual searches had led them to God!

We returned to Japan, again assigned to Sayama, and shortly went to visit our friends in Chuo. While several ladies were no longer able to attend, the two believers had asked around among mothers of kindergarten and school classmates of their children and found three new Bible study members. Our first study together began with self-introductions of new members. Ready to move on I was interrupted by Miwako, whose words hit like a bomb, "You ladies need to hear our introductions too, because there is much about us that you do not know." Miwako and Noriko gave their baptismal testimonies, sharing how they came to know Jesus and what it had meant since. The impact of their words was almost electric and set a tone for the Bible study that I could never have accomplished. Almost right away, new people began to open up asking questions and expressing their desire for faith. The impact has continued!

After several months the study was too large to meet in a small apartment so it moved to a meeting room in the

condominium complex. Even new members began to ask for prayer and began to see what prayer does. February 2003, Miwako's husband, Hiroyuki, with severe complications of cancer one night reached the point of death. The prayers of many were obvious and the doctors admitted Hiroyuki's recovery was "close to a miracle." Hiroyuki was moved to commit his life to the Lord and asked for baptism. (He had begun to study the Bible at the time of his illness.)

Recently, after four years of meeting, Mrs. Namba moved away. The two ladies, who were now believers, through her encouragement are teaching what they learned from her and two new groups have been formed. These studies are effective for Bible content and for sharing their faith on a personal level. Already one more lady has decided to commit her life to Jesus and several others have deep interest.

In numbers, the group is really not large, but the work that God has done in hearts is. It is wonderful to see how He has opened up hearts, how He has answered prayers, and how He has given these ladies peace and comfort to freely share their faith with their friends. I have been blessed seeing how He has poured out a vision to see ladies in their neighborhood find the true joy in knowing Jesus Christ. May many, many more Japanese let desire grow

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Japan's Teen Girls: Looking for Love in all the Wrong Places

by *Bethany Hall*

A 40-year-old man checks a website looking for a date. In a nearby neighborhood a girl uses her cell phone to look up a dating website to see if anyone has responded to her posted biography. He did. She emails his cell phone and they arrange a time, a place, and a price. It's disturbing how often this scenario takes place in Japan, but what is more disturbing is that the girl is probably much younger than you imagine.

Enjo kosai, or "compensated dating" is a growing trend in Japan, especially among teenage girls. "The scale of prostitution in Japan is the largest among developed nations," says Masako Kihara, an assistant professor at Hiroshima University School of Medicine, as reported in *The Japan Times*. "Some 14 percent of Japanese men aged between 18 and 28 had an encounter with a prostitute during the previous year, while the figures in the U.S. and Europe were only between 1 percent and 2 percent," continues Kihara. About 5 percent of high school girls have participated in compensated dating according to a 1999 survey given to Tokyo high school students.

But it's not the typical story of a starving child on the street that is lured into prostitution so she can buy food, as is the sad case in many Asian countries. These Japanese girls, sometimes as young as 12 years old, seek out middle-aged men and

solicit these "dates." Generally, the young girls are looking for a way to make enough money to buy popular designer clothes. Arrangements are easily made through Internet-capable cell phones or email. Many dating service websites exist where girls can post their information and men can email the girls to coordinate a meeting, usually at a local hotel.

The Government's response

Currently in Japan the legal age for consensual sex is 13. But, it is illegal to pay for sex with anyone under the age of 18, whether in the country of Japan or traveling overseas. Child pornography was finally banned in 1999. The Japanese government has attempted to stunt the growth of this sick trend, often through limiting the Internet or cell phone usage that makes dates so easy to arrange.

The most recent attempt was on June 6 when the Japanese Diet enacted a law banning people from soliciting sex from minors through Internet dating sites. The new law also makes it illegal for the children to solicit sex from the men through the websites, which has caused some controversy. Previously, the teenage girls were willing to cooperate with police because they could not be charged and were considered victims under the Child

Prostitution Prevention Law. Now, officials fear that girls will be less likely to talk and incriminate themselves, making *enjo kosai* safer for the men.

The increasing number of teen abortions in Japan has also alarmed the government. The number of abortions has fallen in every age group except among girls younger than 20, according to the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry. 46,500 teenage girls had an abortion in the year 2001. In response to these alarming statistics, not to mention the fear of spreading Sexually Transmitted Infections, the government is talking about increasing sex education in schools and encouraging condom use.

The Moral Issue

The government seems to be taking a very physical approach to a very spiritual problem. However, the spiritual issue is not what concerns the girls selling their bodies in *enjo kosai*. According to *The Japan Times*, Atsuko Yoshida, an adviser at the Japan Family Planning Association, has said that she no longer tries to teach young girls right and wrong from a moral viewpoint. "Arguments that they are too young to have sex or should not sell themselves are ignored," says Yoshida. "So instead, I raise the issue from the scientific side."

But how is prostitution considered a decent option for making extra pocket money? The 1999 Tokyo survey revealed that many girls don't believe *enjo kosai* is prostitution, justifying the practice. Most Japanese girls have not been taught the sanctity of sex, they have not been taught morals, and they have not been taught that they are valuable, lovable children. Many Japanese share the belief that sex is something that only men enjoy and women can use to get what they want from men.

Michiko Hayashi, a teacher of health education at a Tokyo high school, partly blames low self-esteem and inability to build healthy relationships for these moral crises among Japanese teens. "From an early age, the only thing parents want from their children is to get good grades," Hayashi told *The Japan Times*. "If a lonely girl meets a nice man who gives her attention, she does not refuse. Parents should think more about the relationship they have with their children."

The Church's Response

The government's legal limitations on *enjo kosai* do not seem to work. Instead of quitting the practice, girls find new ways

to hook up with their men. Arguing with them from a moral standpoint will not work if the girls don't have solid morals against which to contrast their immoral practice. So what can the church do to help these lost teens?

Kenny Joseph, a missionary involved in the *True Love Waits* campaign in Japan, has put together a team that has distributed 300,000 copies of a comic book illustrating the consequences of *enjo kosai*. Joseph and *True Love Waits* have moved passed the embarrassing nature of the topic of prostitution and sex and see the importance of openly addressing it with Japanese teenage girls.

Marre Ishii, pastor of Tokyo's Committed Japan Church, suggests the first step is to address Japan's lack of solid morals. A lack of belief in a Creator God means a lack of absolute right and wrong, as well as a lack of value for each human life. "If there is no Creator, there is no concept of sin," Ishii told *World Magazine*. "We're no different from animals." Also, if there is no Creator, there is no concept that each person is deserving of love and unconditionally loved by the One who made her.

For Pia, a young Filipino girl previously involved in prostitution, love is the answer. This teenager, who was forced into prostitution in the Philippines from age eight to age 12, traveled to Japan in 1999 to speak out against the sexual exploitation of children, according to *The Japan Times*. While speaking at a Tokyo high school, Pia told students that if their friends become involved in *enjo kosai*, the way to help them stop is to make the girls feel that somebody loves them. Amen, Pia. Isn't that exactly what Jesus did?

Sources

The Japan Times online was a great resource for this article. Much of the facts and sources were researched through *The Japan Times* website.

World Magazine, April 26, 2003.

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Three-Stranded Ministry: Evangelism, Mercy, Training/Education

By Rhonda Somers-Harris

What do an American missionary family doing church planting in *inaka* (the country) Japan, a visiting Cook Islands dance group doing outreach in Shibuya, and Japanese staff training Japanese and foreign missionaries in Okinawa have in common? These are all part of Youth With A Mission Japan. This combination of cultures, church backgrounds, and various callings are part of what makes YWAM Japan what it is in the Body of Christ.

The Japanese name for YWAM, *Sekai Seinen Senkyoukai*, captures the essence of another very important if not the most important focus of YWAM. That is, to motivate and facilitate youth as worldwide missionaries. Those of you who know some of us in YWAM Japan know that we are not as young as we used to be (!) Yes, since its start in 1960, primarily as a youth movement, YWAM has grown to include those of any age who simply want to serve God in missions. But, our core calling will always be to prioritize enabling youth in missions

YWAM International is now 43 years old. Ministry in Japan began in 1978 making this our twenty-fifth year! We are still young compared to other missions here, so we are thankful for what God has done. We are especially thankful that this year, at our National Staff Conference, we made a significant change in our leadership by appointing our first Japanese National Director. His name is Naoto Ahagon. It has been a special time of transition. Each of our operating locations had opportunity to thank John LaDue for his leadership

and service and then Naoto was welcomed as our new leader. JEMA President, Ray Leaf, and others joined us in this celebration and time of prayer. We would appreciate the prayers of all God's people as Naoto leads the mission on.

There are 100 YWAM staff members serving here in Japan in 11 locations. We come from Asia, both Americas, Europe, Africa, and Australia. Ministries range from an adoption agency to surfers' ministry; from church planting to feeding the homeless. Perhaps a brief overview of YWAM International will put our variety of ministries into perspective.

YWAM International now has about 12,000 volunteer staff based in over 800 locations in over 135 countries. There are what we call the three strands of ministry weaving throughout all we do—evangelism, mercy ministries, and training/education.

Evangelism is an integral part in training and in mercy ministries, but it also has an emphasis of its own. Drama, music, performing arts, and sports camps are among the creative tools staffers use to share their faith. All 11 YWAM Japan operating locations are involved in evangelism in some way and include street preaching, English coffee house, Bible studies and—surfing!

YWAM International also engages in church planting in coordination with churches and denominations, or on its own among people groups without churches. We have 5 church planting locations in Japan. These are in Kagoshima, Toyama, Nagano, Ome, and Narita.

Mercy Ministry meets some of the practical and physical needs of over 400,000 people worldwide annually. Caring for street children in South America, aiding in the recovery of drug addicts in North America and Western Europe, feeding and housing refugees and women in need in Africa and Asia, operating ocean-traversing ships demonstrating and declaring the Good News practically and verbally, are just some of the ways in which helping hands are extended. *Ai no Kesshin* in Shizuoka Ken works with a national network of Christians to help mothers and children in crisis by providing adoptive homes for children and needed support for unwed mothers. Our National Office, located in Tokyo's homeless district of Sanya, has regular outreach to the homeless living in nearby streets and parks.

Training/Education aims to better equip Christians to serve others in everything from agriculture and health care, to drug rehabilitation and biblical counseling. Through the mission's degree-granting University of the Nations, staff can study in specialized areas such as science and technology, communications, the humanities, and Christian ministry. The basic entry course into YWAM is three months long and is coupled with three months of outreach that takes the students overseas. The discipleship course, along with 24/7 living together, give ample opportunity to apply practical aspects of faith to relationships. Currently, schooling is available in three locations in Japan, Tokyo, Osaka and Okinawa. Tokyo (Ome) serves as the

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From World Cup to Sports Net to the F-u-t-u-r-e

By Charles Smoker

As I listened to a presentation of the 2002 World Cup Soccer outreach plans at a JEMA meeting in February 2001, several things were very clear to me: soccer fever was already heating up; several Christian soccer teams and many volunteers were coming to Japan for outreach; this was to be a great opportunity to go out into the community to share the Gospel. Efforts were targeting youth because a crucial need brought up by the Japanese pastors is the continuing substantial decrease in numbers of young people coming to church; conversely, many young people with church connections are leaving.

Several things were very unclear to me: Were the missionaries and Japanese Christians ready for World Cup outreach? Was God leading me in this direction? Would the results be worth the time, money, and effort? What could I do? I had only a scant interest in soccer; I didn't play; I didn't have any soccer connections; I was clueless as to how to locate or rent a soccer field; I had no idea where to start!

With desperate reliance on God, I accepted the Ambassadors In Sports soccer team for ten days. At times I thought, "Lord, what have I gotten myself into?" To make a long story short, the Lord directed me to two important Japanese contacts in Fuchu. Interestingly, both these men had some Christian background. Let me explain.

First, my son's elementary school principal had told me in previous discussion that he had been baptized as a teen, but was not a believer now. Yet, he was very supportive of the "teaching and morality" of Christianity. He was willing to distribute the Ambassador's information to all 22 Fuchu elementary school principals, called his brother (who set up soccer clinics and a match at a university soccer field), planned a welcome ceremony at his school, and called the *Asahi Shinbun* (newspaper) and a local cable TV station for coverage! When

the Ambassadors did their clinic at his school, he mentioned privately to my wife that God must be speaking to him!

In addition, the principal introduced me to the Fuchu Youth Soccer

director. The director later told me that his mother was a Catholic. It was neat to see God directing these two men for His glory. They bent over backwards to help. The director arranged for lodging, clinics & matches, some free busing, free use of the Fuchu soccer fields (real grass!) for clinics and a church tournament along with several meals. He also arranged for Fuchu City to officially welcome the Ambassadors by having a formal welcome party at the City Hall. The Mayor, Chief Education Officer, and other City Hall officials attended; the Mayor gave a welcome speech; the meaning of a Christian ambassador was explained; we closed the program with the presentation of an Ambassador's soccer ball and banner, and distributed gift bags (which included a Christian soccer video and a soccer tract). What an opportunity!

God continued to use soccer to pave the way for a face-to-face contact and build bridges with thousands of kids, hundreds of parents and other soccer fans through the soccer clinics, matches, and school events. During these events, God gave us opportunities to distribute Christian tracts, videos, and CDs, explain the Ambassadors' ministry and invite people to church. The Ambassadors were formally asked to return to Fuchu.

The relationships and networks established with the churches and other Japanese are continuing and moving forward in the faith that God will direct the steps of those He has called. The Ambassadors will be here again this summer. I've been having a weekly English lesson with the director; his wife also joins at times. We also study Bible verses or passages in English and Japanese. I see our son's principal from time to time. He's already scheduled a welcome party and a soccer clinic for the Ambassadors again on a school day.

In addition, my wife and I have been involved in meetings with other missionaries and Japanese pastors to form a ministry network called "Sports Net." Our vision is to see the church built up and by utilizing sports (any sport, not just soccer) move out into the world. When Goal 2002 was being organized, Japanese pastors held firmly to one pre-requisite: that 2002 would NOT be a once-and-done outreach, but that the cooperative efforts and momentum would be used to spring into a future ministry to build the church with a focus on young people. Sports Net goals are: 1) to assist in providing and developing sports ministry opportunities for churches to participate in, and 2) to assist in the growth and discipleship of young leaders by networking them with opportunities in sports.

What can it mean on a local church level? In our case, we reserve soccer sites (mostly indoor). Then, we send out these dates to contacts (mostly Christians). For Christians, these matches provide encouragement as they fellowship and bond with other Christians. It is a non-threatening setting to invite non-Christian friends to. It is a chance to share faith through testimonies or casual conversations. It's a reason to pray and work together with people from the same and other churches. We've had families, homeschoolers, and teachers in secular universities (along with their students) come out to join us. For non-Christians, they can see firsthand that Christians are "real" people and they can hear personal testimonies from participants playing soccer with them.

Please be in prayer for Sports Net and for director, Pastor Hiro Yonai (Kokubunji Baptist Church). We are still in the embryonic stage, totally dependent on God and still not very organized. But, it's exciting. We wonder, too, where God is going to take us from here?



Charles Smoker and his wife, Anne Marie, have served with SEND International since 1999.



Getting Acquainted (*Kirisutosha Gakusei Kai*)

By Philip Miles

through which various issues were explored, such as local church involvement, relationships with fellow students in campus groups or in the wider KGK movements, as well as relationships with Christians in the rest of Asia.

With the help and advice of staff, the students did most of the planning and preparation. They led the singing, led small groups (into which everyone was placed), and chaired the meetings! Main session

speakers, however, were outside guests. Speaker, Uchida Kazuhiko Sensei, head of Seisho Senkyokai Bible College and a KGK graduate, had the main Biblical input. He took everyone carefully through Paul's teaching on the body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 12. Other talks given on the same topic, were by Gideon Yung,

National Conference, March 2003

The student ministry of KGK (*Kirisutosha Gakusei Kai*) may not be familiar to many *Japan Harvest* readers. One reason is that KGK is an indigenous movement. It was begun after the war by Japanese students and has been led by Japanese ever since, as an evangelical, non-denominational student ministry. It thus tends to not appear on the radar screens of missionaries coming here from overseas. It is true, though, that over the years a number of missionaries have been involved in the movement in a support capacity; you can read about one missionary's involvement in the early days of KGK in *SENSEI: The Life Story of Irene Webster-Smith* by Russell T. Hitt.

Another reason why the work of KGK is not so well known in the missionary community is that it tends to focus on low-key, grass roots ministry. KGK puts its emphasis on helping students live and witness for Christ on their campus and in the midst of everyday relationships. Furthermore, as to the actual running of campus groups, area prayer meetings and so on, these are also in the hands of the students themselves. The staff works in a training and support capacity. This emphasis on student initiative is seen as important in preparing students to live for Christ in the world beyond graduation.

Many, many young people have been helped by KGK in this way over the decades, and many Japanese pastors and other leaders in the Japanese church today are graduates of the movement. However, if you're not actually a graduate of KGK yourself, this whole network may remain virtually invisible. You may have noticed the national office if you have visited the Ochanomizu Christian Center, but that would give you no idea of the fact that KGK carries on student ministry on hundreds of campuses across this country, reaching Christian students, and through them, their non-Christian friends!

As we held one of our more visible events recently, this seemed like a good chance to better introduce the work of KGK to *Japan Harvest* readers. From March 3-7, 450 students from around the country gathered at a campsite in Hyogo Prefecture for the KGK National Conference, which occurs once every three years. The theme this time was *Kirisuto no Karada* (The Body of Christ),



East Asia Regional Secretary of IFES (International Fellowship of Evangelical Students). KGK is a member of IFES. Other movement members include UCCF in Britain and IVCF in the U.S. This involvement has brought Japanese students into close contact with members of the body of Christ in the rest of Asia, which has done much over the years to raise their vision for the worldwide implications of the gospel. Gideon Yung looked at the life and ministry of Paul, and also spoke of the missionary work being done by IFES East Asia at the moment. Pioneering student work is at present occurring in Mongolia, Macao and Cambodia. In the case of Cambodia, the work is being headed up by KGK graduates.

KGK's involvement with other East Asian movements has

with KGK

College Campus Ministries

brought it into close contact with issues arising from the Second World War, issues that much of modern Japan has not yet adequately dealt with. For that reason, the third speaker who addressed the students at this year's National Conference was Watanabe Nobuo Sensei, a minister with the Nihon Kirisuto Kyokai. He spoke of his own experiences as a young Christian in the war and of the virtual spiritual collapse of the Japanese church through those years. He also looked at the implications of these past events for young Japanese Christians today. Many students were fairly stunned to find out what had been going on in their own history.

Besides the main sessions, every student was involved in a small group, which gave them a chance to talk about what they



the world of work, overseas mission, running prayer meetings on campus, and bioethics. These seminars gave the students a chance to think about how to apply their faith to some particular area of concern. One of KGK's distinctive emphases over the years has been the need to apply the gospel to all areas of life, and to all days of the week (not just Sunday).

One of the difficulties of running a conference like this is that it is hard for the students when it finishes and they have to return to fairly difficult situations. They might be the only Christian on their campus. Their campus group, if it exists, may be the only one in their region. They may yet be very immature as Christians themselves. After the "high" of singing God's praises with hundreds of fellow Christian students, it can be hard to go back to the reality of daily struggle as a Christian—even for those who initially found the conference extremely daunting.

For that reason, the students were encouraged on the last day to focus on the encouragement that comes from God's Word, which they will always have with them, no matter how discouraging their circumstances.

Nonetheless, it would be great if Christian students throughout the country could meet up with others on their campuses or in their areas. If you know of Christian students who have no other Christian fellowship on their campus, please introduce them to KGK. It may be that there is already a group on their campus, or perhaps one other Christian who would love to meet up with them.

Although KGK has work right across the country, the simplest thing to do would be to get in touch with the national office at tel: 03-3294-6916. They can then direct you to the appropriate staff-worker. The KGK home page is: <http://www.246.ne.jp/~kgkjapan/>

Phil and his wife, Lyn, have been working with KGK since 1994.



were hearing and also get to know students from other parts of the country. The small groups also gave the students a chance to orient themselves in the midst of the large numbers of people at the conference. With both staff and students there were about 500 attendees in all, and that can be quite difficult for many students to cope with. Young people in Japan today are not used to trying to relate to such a large number of people at once. Nor are they very good at starting friendships with strangers. Some, who may have been bullied at school, may even find just being with so many unfamiliar faces a rather frightening experience. The small groups thus gave them a bit of a safe haven.

There was also an opportunity during the week to go to an elective seminar. A few of the 30 or so seminar topics included

Dangerous

Practices

Church

of

Jesus

Christ,

Beware!

By William Wood

Some Frightening Examples

Twenty-three years of ministry among cults had taught me never to be surprised by seemingly unbelievable tales of abuse, sacrifice, or heartache coming from the mouths of former members of a dangerous religious group. Even so, I was not prepared for the information being presented to me by six individuals who had just come out of a growing evangelical church in Shizuoka Prefecture. The following are comments from several:

“My pastor regularly beat up on me using a frying pan.”

“As a member of the church staff, I was told that I must fulfill my responsibilities no matter what the cost. I was pregnant with my fourth child but not feeling well, and the doctor told me that I was in danger of losing the child if I did not take an extended rest from my work at the church. I told this to the pastor, but he would not give me permission to take time off. He said that I needed to give up my baby even as Abraham offered up Isaac on the altar. I did as I was told and ended up having a miscarriage.”

“We regularly have our meals together at the church, and one day our pastor scolded my son for eating too slowly. He then took my son outside to a pen that we have for keeping chickens, and tied him up with some rope so he couldn’t get out. My son, scared to death of the chickens, cried out for help, but the pastor wouldn’t let him go until an hour or so had passed.”

Sound too bizarre to be true? I wish that were correct, but subsequent investigation proved that these stories were not fabricated but based on actual fact. Perhaps these were just isolated incidents not worthy of serious attention? Unfortunately, that does not seem to be the case. For the past two years I have received reports of spiritual abuse in dozens of congregations across Japan. Certainly not all are as dramatic as the ones quoted above. However, the emotional and physical pain is essentially the same. As shocking as this may sound, the church of Jesus Christ, commissioned by God to be an oasis of healing and salvation for the lost, has for some become a totalitarian kingdom that sacrifices its citizens on the altar of a deluded leader’s ego.

In this article I would like to dig down to the root of the problem and offer suggestions for what needs to be done.

Though aware of the delicate nature of this issue, I am firmly convinced that Japan will not experience revival until this is dealt with.

Leadership in the Cults

When discussing the problem of cults or cultic churches, two key concepts must be addressed at the outset: authority and control. Cult leaders are infamous for laying claim to unlimited spiritual authority. They endow themselves with titles such as: God’s Mouthpiece, God’s Anointed Servant, The Divine Prophet, or God’s Messenger. In any religious group, authority needs to be established to ensure that people will trust and follow the leader. Reasons have to be given as to why someone is worthy of unconditional allegiance. Cult leaders unashamedly assert a monopoly on divine authority making such claims as—having had a unique spiritual experience, or having a special relationship with God that guarantees them an unlimited supply of divine wisdom, or they speak for God, and any who do not give total obedience are branded rebels, followers of Satan, trouble makers, or opposers of God.

The influence of a leader over his following is further enhanced by the use of a number of control techniques. Threats of divine judgment are often used to squelch any criticism of leadership policy and prevent individuals from leaving the group. Control of information also plays an important role in maintaining the image of “God’s Anointed Messenger.” Believers are forbidden to meet with members of other religious groups, participate in meetings not sponsored by the group, or read any material critical of the leadership. All decisions—even those of a very private nature—must get the approval of the cult leader.

The misuse of spiritual authority inevitably fosters unhealthy dependence. Cult members are made to feel that they are children who are incapable of finding their way through life’s mazes without firm directives from their “spiritual father.” They gradually lose the ability to think and to make judgments for themselves. This form of childlike dependency is commonly referred to as “mind control.” It results in conformity. In other words, each member begins to think, speak, and act in a similar way—whatever way will best suit the

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Thinking Theologically about Church Planting: Nurturing Communities of Faith



by Dale Little

“Sensei (teacher), please bring a short biblical message at the beginning of our business meeting next week.” “Sensei, I feel as if God has abandoned me.” “Sensei, we’d like you to perform our engagement ceremony.” “Sensei, my mother was hospitalized yesterday. Please pray for her.” “Sensei, can you teach that twelve week class on our doctrinal statement again?”

These kinds of requests or comments do not sound like what you’d hear on the forefront of evangelism. Nevertheless, these issues typify discussions with people in my church plant. These often deal more with establishing the church plant than with evangelizing the lost. From a practical point of view, it seems that a major, yes, necessary role of the church-planting missionary is to provide care and nurture for the community of faith, which the church planter is trying to coax into existence.

Perhaps the necessity of nurturing runs counter to the common caricature of the ideal missionary church planter. It places emphasis upon the necessity of a church planter having a cluster of gifts centering on evangelism. When describing a cross-cultural church planter, the idea of a “church-planting evangelist” often seems to carry more credence than a “church-planting teacher.” Evangelism is seen to be at the forefront of church planting. Evangelism is where the only real action is said to be located. By contrast, the person gifted as a teacher is portrayed as filling a secondary role in missional church planting. The ministry of teaching and encouraging is viewed as important only because it conveniently fills in the gaps of care left in the wake of the ambitious evangelistic church planter’s ministry.

However, there seems to be significant biblical evidence that Paul himself was as much a teacher and nurturer as he was an evangelist and initiator. For example, if Paul had not prioritized the nurturing aspect of his church-founding ministry

our New Testament would be deprived of most of its letters. And again, Paul did not hesitate to use maternal and nourishing terminology to describe his brief, but demographically significant, church-founding ministry at Thessalonica: “As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children” (1 Thessalonians 2:6,7 NIV).

Interestingly, J.I. Packer, professor of theology at Regent College, subsumes Paul’s self-understanding of evangelism under the rubric of teaching: “His primary task in evangelism was to teach the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ.”¹ Apparently Packer does not see a disjunction between Paul’s teaching and his evangelism.

Furthermore, Andreas Kostenberger, professor of NT at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Peter O’Brien, professor of NT and Missions at Moore Theological College, in their outstanding recent monograph on biblical theology of mission, point out that *euangelizomai* (“to preach the gospel” or “to evangelize”) as it appears in Pauline literature cannot be narrowly defined. “Although this verb is often taken to include only initial or primary evangelism, Paul employs the *euangelion* work-group to cover the whole range of evangelistic and teaching ministry—from the initial proclamation of the gospel to the building up of believers and grounding them firmly in the faith.”²

For Paul, the ministry of founding a new local church included an intentional ministry of care and nurture. Paul, the church-founding theologian, might not fit the popular caricature of a church planter described above. This may be because Paul was both an evangelist and a teacher. He was both an initiator and a nurturer.

Perhaps we missional church planters should consider following Paul’s example by choosing to intentionally engage in both evangelism and teaching, in both caring and nurturing. Thinking theologically

about church planting can provide motivation for trying to keep the balance between these two equally important aspects of church-planting ministry. Does the church planting and educational training you have chosen provide evidence that you are trying to keep both in balance?

¹ J.I. Packer. *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1961), 46.

² Andreas J. Kostenberger and Peter T. O’Brien, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: ICP, 2001), 183.



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. He holds a Ph.D. in systematic theology.

JEMA-CPI 2003 Japan Church Planter’s Institute Conference Tuesday, November 18th–Friday, November 21st, 2003
Bring your family and co-workers.

This year we will have 5-6 training tracks. Also, Dave and Nancy Walker will take part in teaching the Gospel in Life and Ministry track. Dr. Dwight Smith of Saturation Church Planting International, will also be teaching a track. Finally, this year’s other training tracks will involve more “local talent” from Japan.

A full children’s ministry is planned for all main sessions so that the whole family can attend.

The early discount registration deadline goes until the beginning of September 2003 (Call the JEMA office for more details).

See you there in November!

Consider volunteering to serve during the conference in some manner.

From the President's Pencil

Jema's vision statement reads: "JEMA exists to network and equip its members to make disciples for Christ," (adopted at Plenary Session 2003).

Have you found the key yet?

"Have you found the key?" Through the years people have asked me this question. Of course, they mean the key to evangelism and explosive church growth. It seems to the general Christian public outside Japan that Japan is a spiritual enigma. Everything needed for explosive growth seems to be at hand! There is an Evangelical church, Japanese evangelists, a wonderful abundance of evangelical literature, a large missionary community and even many prayer movements for Japan. But recent statistics tell us that the church is doing well to simply hold its own.

Recently I attended the funeral of a lady who was in a church plant that we worked in 24 years ago. She was a nice lady, a widow with two children, friendly and cooperative, but though she professed to be a Christian, she did not take much interest either in the Bible or in the church. In our short two and a half years there, she did not contribute much at all. After being away from that church for 20 years, along with the current pastor, we

visited this nice lady in the hospital. Now in her eighties, it was obvious that she did not have too much longer to live. She was now a much different lady! At her funeral some time later, the pastor related how she had experienced the Lord's presence, great peace and joy! It was a powerful testimony of God's grace.

At the same funeral, working very busily behind the scenes with all the setup and food preparations, were two other people from the church plant 24 years ago. One, a single lady, after waiting for more than 20 years, had been recently baptized. The other, who 24 years ago sold pornography in his store, was today a changed man. He is a faithful believer and a solid church member. Twenty-four years ago I wondered about the faith of these three! From everything I could humanly see then, I could not have imagined what I witnessed at the funeral.

Is there a key to speeding up this process of spiritual growth in Japan? I suspect the answer lies in our understanding of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility! Like you, I desire to see more happen quicker in reaching people for Christ! Psalm 37:1-11 is a passage of Scripture I have found very encouraging in church planting here. More than once the Lord has encouraged me through verse 3 (NAS), "Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land and cultivate

faithfulness."

In this summer issue of the *Japan Harvest* I trust you will be both encouraged and challenged by the articles and reports. And let us know if you have family and friends who would benefit by becoming subscribers!

Ray Leaf,
JEMA President



**Fall Issue deadline:
September 1, 2005**

*Let us hear your experience &/or your opinion on the topic: Missionary Evangelistic Methods—Tools, Fads, OR Stumbling Blocks?
We need articles on "Reaching the Un-churched at Christmas."*

*Please send your articles/testimonies to your editor at: dikropp@gol.com or FAX: 047-486-6210
Please send your photos to your production editor, Jim Rew, at: Rewster4@aol.com*

JEMA Datebook 2005

Event	Date	Place
Karuizawa Summer Conference	August 3-10, 2003	Karuizawa Union Church, Karuizawa
JEA SEND ME Global Youth Conference	August 12-15, 2003	Aoyama University Campus Tokyo
Kansai JEMA Day of Prayer	September 8, 2003	Light of Christ Church, Juso, Osaka
Kanto JEMA Day of Prayer	October 6, 2003	To Be Announced
Sapporo JEMA Day of Prayer	October 23, 2003	Sapporo International Church
WIM Day of Prayer	October 27, 2003	OCC
Church Planting Institute	November 18-21, 2003	Fuji Hakone Land

Executive Committee Report

March 19, 2003 OCC Tokyo

Being the first Executive Committee meeting following the spring Plenary Session, the mood was positive and we rejoiced in the good reports. Financially, JEMA is staying within its budget.

A motion to provide funds for a display board was passed. The board will be used to display JEMA materials at various functions, such as the SEND ME Conference coming up in August.

One hundred-five ladies attended the Women in Ministry Spring Retreat in Karuizawa. It was an excellent time of fellowship along with very good messages.

CPI is gearing up for another record attending conference, November 18-21. Volunteer help is needed in the areas of registration and clerical work.

Bill Paris will lead another prayer walk on April 10 and this year Prayer Summits will be held in three locations.

Missions Leadership Conference surveys were reviewed and showed overwhelming approval for its one-day session held at OCC, Tokyo. A new JEMA vision statement was a significant contribution of Plenary delegates. The vision statement reads, "JEMA exists to network and equip its members to make disciples for Christ."

Pastor Irikawa's introductory lesson at Plenary on Heart to Heart Evangelism will see twenty taking the course. Lessons will be given on the second Monday of the months, March, April, May and June.

The Executive gladly gave endorsement to the Christian Artist Network (CAN) Conference to be held in September under the leadership of Ken Taylor and Paul Nethercott.

May 7, 2003 OCC Tokyo

Newly elected Vice-President, Ken Taylor, brought the devotional from the Book of Galatians.

Peter Blank, treasurer, reported that

JEMA's financial condition is good. It was noted that three-fifths of office expenses are met through the *Japan Harvest* magazine's income. At the same time, publication's income would be in the "red" if it were not for the good advertisers who faithfully purchase ads. It was also reported that *Japan Harvest* subscriptions have been on the decrease. Seeing how important the *Japan Harvest* is to JEMA, we need to continue to encourage new subscribers.

Mr. Hanazono, director for Church Information Service, joined us for discussion on the ministry of CIS. Begun ten years ago, in June 1993, CIS is an outgrowth of a JEMA committee, which investigated areas for new church plants. Recently the CIS Board began a restructuring process, which dissolved its board and appointed Mr. Hanazono as director. At this critical juncture of CIS's history, the Executive Committee spent time discussing with Mr. Hanazono the future of CIS. We commended Mr. Hanazono for his dedication, and expressed our wish for him to continue. Time was spent discussing possible ways JEMA can help. Don Wright expressed the need for CIS data in preparing the prayer guide, *Operation Japan*. CIS has had limited advertising in the Town Pages which has seen an increase of referrals by non-Christians. However, with Internet resources available, missionary referrals are decreasing. It was agreed that JEMA could help CIS by providing some free publicity. This suggestion will be passed on to the Publications Commission. We closed our time with Mr. Hanazono in prayer.

The Publications Commission submitted a request for JEMA cooperation in a unified Christmas outreach. A Christmas CD will be needed. More specific information is needed before moving ahead.

The Executive Committee approved Janice Kropp's request for the formation of a *Japan Harvest* editorial staff. Membership on the editorial staff will be for two years.

Women in Ministry's new chairperson, Jan Potter, reported that WIM's Prayer Day will be October 27. Men's Prayer Summits are to be held on May 1-6 at Okutama Bible Chalet, May 26-29 at Hiruzen Bible Camp, and June 2-5 in Nagoya.

Ray Leaf reported that the two major issues facing our sister organization (JEA) are: (1) the process of creating a new translation of the Bible, and (2) how to proceed with reported cultist practices in some churches.

The JEMA Language and Culture Standing Committee had its first meeting on April 10. Discussion centered on how to continue providing resources to the missionary community for language study, especially with the July closing of JMLI (Japan Missionary Language Institute).

JEMANET web page now has links to many of the home page sites of member missions. Email addresses cannot be posted because of the danger of SPAM.

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for July 9.

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9. 2 Week Course - 26 pages ¥200
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12. Guide to Christ, the Church and the Christian Life - 160pp. ¥1500
13. Christian Doctrine Workbook ¥750
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16. Chinese Art Calendars - from each October. Cheaper in quantity ¥150

WRITE OR CALL

FAX OR PHONE ANYTIME
0994-42-4444

JEA Global Missions Youth Conference

What: The Japanese “Urbana”

Theme: SEND ME

When: August 12–15, 2003

Where: Aoyama Gakuin University, Tokyo

Calling all Christian Youth and young adults around the world to join the Japanese Christian young people (targeting 2,000) in praying for this conference. It is our desire to see young people encouraged and challenged to share the Gospel with Japanese youth and the nations of the world.

Speakers are: Dr. Ajith Fernando, the National Director of Youth for Christ in Sri Lanka, Bible expositor



Dr. Gregory Waybright, president of Trinity International University in Deerfield, Illinois USA.



For more information call: JEMA office 03-3295-1949; international calls (81)3-3295-1949, or fax 03-3295-1354 or international fax (81)3-3295-1354.

JEA statement of opposition to Emergency Legislation Bill #3

This statement of opposition is in regard to government opinion regarding limitation of citizens’ rights in the event of a forceful attack. And we quote:

We, the Japan Evangelical Association, have already expressed on May 24th two reasons why we strongly oppose the Emergency Security Legislation Bill #3, and have strongly requested that the bill be discarded. In spite of the difficulties in

enacting such a bill, the ruling coalition party intends to continue deliberation in the next Diet session, which we see as very regrettable.

Additionally, at the close of the current Diet session at the end of July, on Wednesday, July 24th, the final inquiry of the House of Representatives Emergency Legislation Special Committee will make a statement which would, in the event of a forceful attack, limit the rights of citizens, according to the frank opinion of the Minister of Home Affairs. There is the problem of the “emergency legislation for an expected war,” and with it we feel anxiety at the point that it will result in the infringement of basic human rights as an important necessity. The committee is decisively expressing the very opposite, although the real threat to our human rights has been shown.

In our previous statement we touched on the above because of what the Japan Evangelical Association and its member denominations experienced during the Second World War under the “National Mobilization Law” or the revised “Peace Maintenance Law.” It is unreasonable suppression. There are religious groups who suffered excessive hardships through the deprivation of their basic human rights. Because of that experience, pacifism and the upholding of basic human rights are strong tenets of the Japanese Constitution, so we strongly voice our opposition to Bill #3, which would completely supersede individual conscience.

A forceful attack would mean war, and the current Constitution of Japan does not have any laws foreseeing such a situation. Therefore, the current Constitution of Japan does not allow such a law. Prime Minister Koizumi speaks of “no fear in the preparation,” but it is not the preparation for war (emergency), but because of peace that we should give high regard to the Japanese Constitution. If the present Japan invests all of its energy in preserving peace, where is the country or power, which would seek war with Japan? The Japanese Constitution is committed to pacifism, and must not neglect the preparation for peace, which is for the “greatest and best security” of Japan.

The Japanese Constitution declares support for basic human rights, completely rejects war, and through earnestly pursuing peace, says it is the safe and respected

means of security. Under the Emergency Legislation, it follows naturally that citizens’ freedom of thought, conscience, beliefs and speech are limited, although government opinion has not foreseen that consequence. In the past, the Japanese government robbed the citizens’ freedom of thought through the “Peace Maintenance Law,” which was imposed on the people as the “National Mobilization Law” which forced the populous to cooperate with the operation of the war. An act of government must not repeat the same mistake in the 21st century. Chief Cabinet Secretary, Fukuda, recognizes that “we must maintain the view of the freedom of the heart, which is absolutely guaranteed.” However, while saying “it is possible to accommodate a church, a shrine, or a Buddhist temple,” and “it is possible for there to be an agreement for the public welfare” what he says is contrary to religious belief, freedom of thought and other freedoms which are secured by articles 19 and 20 of the Constitution.

Because this actually recalls the double structure, which the Japanese government used in the past, we strongly protest. Therefore, the plans for Emergency Legislation Bill #3 must be discarded.

Within the government, the ruling coalition parties in cooperation with the opposition parties are working together on this issue; we are expressing the opposite statement to the end that “in an international dispute, regardless of military might, our government should attempt to solve the problem by peace diplomacy aimed at reconciliation, trust and cooperation.”



Memorial

Mrs. Ruth Frivold passed into the presence of the Lord on March 1. Her funeral was held one

week later on the 8th. Ruth and her husband, Bob, were AGMF (Assemblies of God Missionary Fellowship) missionaries here from 1953 until 1983. Having started a church in Nagoya with Uchimura Sensei, they later worked in Kobe and Nagano Ken helping with ministries in Ueda, Tobu Machi, and Maruko Machi. Ruth is survived by Bob, who lives in Seattle, WA, USA. The missionary community extends heartfelt sympathy to Bob and the family.



A word to Encourage Miss Penny!

Neil Verwey, of Japan Mission, writes: "It is always such a pleasure to go see Miss Penny and speak at her church. Although she is now 94, she speaks many times a week. She amuses me! In spite of many physical problems and weaknesses, she just continues to function as best she can every day for the Lord.

When Peggy (my wife) and I arrived at her church last Sunday, she had just finished her Sunday School class. 'It's difficult for me nowadays to play the organ and lead the singing for the children all at the same time,' she said.

She's quite weak now and does not go out much anymore. 'But everyday I spend much time in prayer and Bible study,' she says. We were surprised when we saw the list of hundreds of people she is praying for daily. 'For you and the other Verweys, I

pray about seven times a day,' she adds.

Mr. Sasagawa led the meeting on the Sunday I spoke. 'Thirty years ago, Miss Penny found me in a tuberculosis hospital, and led me to the Lord. When I left the hospital Miss Penny arranged a wedding for me with a nurse, whom she had won to the Lord some time back,' he said. 'For our wedding anniversary I always buy my wife a nice bunch of flowers. Then together we always thank the Lord for Miss Penny and for what she has meant to our lives,' he added.

May the Lord encourage Miss Penny today! She has lived and served in Japan since 1932! Talk about faithfulness!

Foreign affairs

~The Iraq Connection~

Kenny Joseph Jr. writes: Thank you so much for praying! We were able to safely enter, cross the long border and enter Baghdad as the first relief organization to do so. We were able to bring in 20 tons of water (11,000 bottles), medicine and food to help the precious Assyrian Christians. In addition, the Thuraya Satellite Telephone Company donated 10 Satellite telephones so we could meet the greatest need, letting family members know they were o.k. To date over 14,000 people have lined up for 4 to 6 hours at a time to make calls. Furthermore, we brought nearly 500 letters from family members to Baghdad.

And there is much, much more. For updates and information check www.assyrianchristians.com

Health alert! S-A-R-S

Ann Underland, of CARING (Christians Aware of their Responsibility to Individuals in Need of Grace established in 1977), writes: "We just had a meeting about SARS. Our

head microbiologist, Dr. Yung, highlighted for us the following, which I would like to share with you:

The virus is a corona virus (shaped like a crown) and has two groups: 1) the human group, and 2) the mouse/cow group. The normal human group does not cause such severe illness. WHO and some American scientists are analyzing the DNA code to see if the SARS virus is more related to the mouse/cow group.

The virus is about 1 micron large. Normal surgical masks can screen out particles. The surgical mask is best since it covers a larger area of the face. In high-risk areas we recommend eye shields, as well as the surgical mask.

The life span of the virus depends on both the temperature and the humidity. The lower the temperature and humidity, the longer it survives. The warmer and wetter it is, the quicker it dies. The life span is from 2 to 24 hours. The membrane covering this virus is lipid (fat), therefore, contact with 70% alcohol will kill it within a few seconds. Since alcohol is flammable, it is not recommended for household use. Bleach will do.

Other than transmission by droplets, a likely route is oral-fecal. In Amoy Gardens, the virus was isolated to the feet of cockroaches and feces of trapped rats. Therefore, care in toilet hygiene is very important. Flush the toilet with the lid down, and clean the toilet with bleach after flushing, not before. Bleach mixed with chlorine will be deactivated once in contact with organic matter."

Faith & Values

I Caught Your Faith

I saw you stand bravely for years,
but saw no trace of senseless fears.

I saw you stand calmly
through stress,
but caught no glimpse of bitterness.

I saw you stand prayerful in grief,
but saw no trace of unbelief.

Though you spoke well
of Jesus Christ,
I caught your faith
watching your life.

クリスチャン新聞

Gleanings from
The Christian Shinbun

Confession of Wrongdoing

Back in the 1930's the Mino Mission school children were under "furious" persecution by the city officials and residents of Ogaki City for not participating in idol worship. Unfortunately, during WWII churches and Christians in Japan denied that worship at Shinto shrines was idolatry. Idol worship was seen as a part of national courtesy. Churches were forced to unify in line with national policy, which in essence, promoted the non-religious corporation of the shrine. The policy maintained that the shrine was not connected with religion and that all Japanese, regardless of religious affiliation, had to pay visits to the shrine for worship. To safeguard national policy, posters were circulated agitating the Japanese to denounce the Mino Mission, which stood strongly in opposition. Missionaries, too, were objects of violence.

Recently, the Ogaki Church of the Japan Christian Church Mission issued an apology of wrongdoing in the following confession: "We committed a big crime before Jesus Christ by defending ourselves and by pretending to be loyal to Christ and the Emperor. In fact, we expressed denial of our friends of the same faith."

Small Revival Comes to a Mountain Town

"I was baptized with my mother last fall. I do not like to study, but I think that I have to because it will be necessary to serve God when I grow up."

"Oh, God, please have many people cross the bridge to our village. Please open the path of faith so that all my family can cross the bridge of God together." These are just some of the compositions written by primary school children coming to *Kodomo no Ie* (Children's House) in a small village in Mie Prefecture. The Children's House was started by Mrs. Itsuko Taniguchi, a member of the Kikyogaoka Lutheran Church in Ueno City. The purpose of the school is to help children caught in the pain of divorce or discrimination. (Some are Burakumin.) Others refuse to go to school, or they are having problems passing entrance examinations.

Mrs. Taniguchi's advertisement flyers explained that her school was rooted in the Christian faith and that the method of teaching would be Montessori. School events would coincide with the Christian calendar, and any student wanting to attend Sunday School was welcome. Students came to study and as they listened to prayers, conversations about God, and studied the Bible, their hearts began to open. One family who had planned to purchase a Buddhist altar changed their minds when their two children were

baptized.

The small mountain town is without hospital, police, post office or church. There is a temple, a shrine, and believers of Tenrikyo and Sokagakkai. Many inhabitants are elderly and living alone. "They (the people of the village) know there will be no change in their lives even if they give money to the temple and shrine. I wish that instead of the siren the ringing of the bell at the church in Ueno will remind everyone it's time to gather and learn," says Mrs. Taniguchi.

Group Clad in White, Who are They?

The Group Clad in White are a part of the Panawave Research Institute and they have caused a lot of trouble in western Japan over the past 10 years. Ms Yuko Chino, now 68 years old, was a follower of Shinji Takahashi, who claimed to be the reincarnation of Buddha. Later he announced that he was the true Messiah, "El Randy." Baptized as Christian when in university, Ms Chino, at age 35, changed after meeting Mr. Takahashi. At the time of his death she knew she would be unable to succeed him, so started her own group. She uses the names of Moses, Michael, Gabriel, and Messiah, but she has nothing to do with Christianity.

Her group (GLA) has their own businesses, selling computers and medical tools. Off-shoots of GLA are called by such names as, *Kokoro no Tsudoi* (meeting of the heart), Hikari no Onakama, (friends of the light), *Kai wa Kai*, *Kokusai Shobo* (international right way), *Ishiki Kyoiku Kenkyujo* (institute of education of conscience), *Ai no Family* (family of love), Asylum Tokyo, and *Kofuku no Kagaku* (science of happiness). Publications are widely used as a means to spread their ideology.

Osaka Company, Chuchuan, Holds Bible Fellowship

On Friday evenings businessmen gather in a room of the Chuchuan Company in Tennoji, Osaka City. This company is well known for its sale of socks and underwear.

Pastor Kuroda, of the International Bible Church, teaches "The Strategy of the Bible-Businessmen's Know-How." Of the 56 attending 60 to 70% are non-believers! Following each message they divide into small groups for discussion and fellowship.

"I can learn something about life without any barrier between Christian and non-Christian. If I did not work in this company I

would not have such a chance. At first I didn't enjoy the time, but now I do. I have started understanding Christianity, and I see that it's not religion that's important, but the studying of the Bible," explained one of the attendees.

Some of the employees have become Christians through this fellowship!

Ministry to Returnees Held in Oyumino Rainbow Chapel

Pastor and Mrs. Yasuyuki Kumada are returnees, and they are presently holding English and Bible classes for neighborhood children who are also returnees from the USA.

When the Kumada's were living in the States they met missionary Klaus, who had returned there after 30 years of ministry

in Japan, and accepted Christ. They were so thankful that as new believers, because of Klaus and his ministry, they were able to read the Bible, sing hymns and pray in their own language.

Returning to Japan, Mrs. Kumada says she felt some gaps in the church. She missed the "warmth" of Christian fellowship here. The Kumada's are excited about ministering together. Mrs. Kumada says that it's important to find a partner who has the same vision from God!

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



She's gone home! Junko Nakagawa has gone HOME to be with Jesus!



We met over the phone about five years ago. It was time for the annual Ladies' Retreat and my name just happened to be one of the contact names for reservations. Junko was so friendly and spoke in excellent English. I loved her right away! There was just something about her intensity, her spiritual energy! As we talked she realized that I was the writer of "Potpourri & Promises," and it seemed she felt she knew me. What a surprise. At any-rate, we met for the first time at the retreat and you would have thought we were long lost friends. Her hug was so huge!

We had a five-year journey through many times of trials, doubts, and failings. Wanting Junko to sense how valuable she was, I asked her to do translation from the *Gospel for the Millions* magazine. She took my challenge seriously. I also asked Junko if she might want to translate the book my parents had written, *Edge of Conflict*, since we had been POW's in the Philippines for three years in that horrible war. Junko read the book aloud, put it into Japanese and her dear mother, Aiko, wrote down each and every word. (We hope to publish the book this year.)

She is HOME now! Free, at rest, rejoicing with Jesus. Junko entered into His presence the afternoon of Tuesday, May 27th, with her funeral on Friday at the Sophia University chapel.

She leaves behind her 76-year old believing mother, Aiko, her husband, Ryoichi, not yet a believer, two sons and their wives. The sons accepted Jesus while in Jakarta where Ryoichi and Junko lived and worked for many years. I, for one, miss Junko greatly! I know you will miss her touch in this magazine, too. jk

Excerpts from Signs of the TIMES, Encyclopedia of 7700
Illustrations By Paul Lee Tan

1051 Message to Baylor Students

Dr. Samuel Palmer Brooks was president of Baylor University in Texas (USA) from 1902 until his death in 1931. On his deathbed he wrote a message to the senior class of 1931, which has become immortal to the students of Baylor.

"I stand on the border of mortal life but I face eternal life. I look backward to the years of the past to see all pettiness, all triviality, shrink into nothing and disappear. Adverse criticism has no meaning now, only the worthwhile things, the constructive things that have built for the good of mankind and the glory of God count now. There is beauty, there is joy, and there is laughter in life—as there ought to be, but remember, my students, not to regard lightly nor to ridicule the sacred things, those worthwhile things. Hold them dear, cherish them, for they alone will sustain you in the end, and remember, too, that only through work and oft-times through hardships may they be attained. But the compensation of blessing and sweetness at the last will glorify every hour of work and every heartache from hardship."

1053 Dying Words of Believers

Matthew Henry: "Sin is bitter. I bless God I have inward supports." Martin Luther: "Our God is the God from whom cometh salvation: God is the Lord by whom we escape death." John Knox: "Live in Christ, live in Christ, and the flesh need not fear death." John Calvin: "Thou, Lord, bruise me; but I am abundantly satisfied, since it is from Thy hand." John Wesley: "The best of all is, God is with us. Farewell! Farewell!" Charles Wesley: "I shall be satisfied with Thy likeness—satisfied, satisfied!" Baxter: "I have pain: but I have peace. I have peace." Preston: "Blessed be God! Though I change my place, I shall not change my company." Goodwin: "Ah! Is this dying? How have I dreaded as an enemy this smiling friend." Everett: "Glory, glory, glory." (This expression was repeated for 25 minutes and only ceased with life itself.)

Continued on page 37

The Death of His Saints

Ladies' Spring Retreats

Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu

The Hokkaido Christian Women's Fellowship gathered on Saturday, March 8, 2003 at the Sapporo International Church with 42 ladies starting out our day in praise and worship. Speaker Lee McDowell, gave three good messages entitled, "Called to a Savior," "Called to Suffer—God's Grace in Disguise," and "Called for Such a Time as This." A picnic-style lunch of soup, pita sandwiches, chips and lemon mousse were served from colorfully decorated tables. All the ladies enjoyed browsing at the "Grab Table."

Debbie Griffin, reporting

March 5-7, 2003, at Megumi Chalet, Karuizawa, the 10th annual JEMA Women in Ministry Spring Retreat brought a record attendance of 105 women from as near as Nagano to as far away as Okinawa.

Speaker Lee McDowell, a former pastor's wife and presently a Christian counselor in Littleton, Colorado, brought four excellent messages under the theme of "For What Were You Called?"

- 1) **Called to a Savior:** Women are searching for identity. Life's transitions affect the way we see ourselves. Self-identity can mistakenly be attached to what we see as our call or vocation. In fact, God calls us to Himself; we receive our identity from Him. Peter's story gives clarity to the message points.
- 2) **Called to Serve:** God sometimes brings changes in our lives to get our attention. His grace can be severe. Moses speaks to us of submissive service.
- 3) **Called to Suffer:** Lee called this "unexpected interruptions" and from Jesus' own mother, Mary, we see that we do live in the paradoxes of God. "We know where we stand with God, but we don't know what He will do." There are mysteries in suffering.
- 4) **Called for Such a Time as This:** Esther reminds us that God sees the big picture



when we very well might not." God is hopelessly wrapped up in our stories. He is the great, unseen Watcher in our lives. So many times we write God out of our stories, but He isn't interested in the stories we write. Unless there are risks in our exploits for God, there will be no stepping out in faith."

Lee walked us through the processes of grieving and forgiveness. There were small group prayer times, singing, and lots of great fellowship. Several ladies shared their talents in "Musical Moments at the Woodshed."

Jane Landaw, reporting

The Sasebo Ladies' Retreat meets each March in the retreat-like home of Phares and Lucile Huggins. There is always a balance of missionaries, their daughters and military ladies attending. Fifty-five gathered for the three-day English retreat followed by a lesser number at the two-day Japanese retreat. This year speaker Janice, spoke from the Book of Titus on the topic "What It Takes to Make It." The messages were, "It takes a Savior," "It takes a Standard," and "It takes a Steward."

Ladies from the near-by base catered all our meals, which included a Thanksgiving feast with all the trimmings. If you have never been to one of our retreats and you live in southern Honshu or in Kyushu, I

hope you put next year's retreat on your calendar. You'll be glad you did!

Carol Wilkinson, reporting

Tokai (Nagoya) Region's 1st Men's Prayer Summit, June 2-5, 2003.

Thank you for remembering this first Prayer Summit in our area in prayer! We had a really good time in God's presence. It was a very small group, just 6 of us, but what a blessed time. The weather in the Gifu mountains was great, too. While praising God inside we heard the birds offering praise outside.

On the evening we celebrated the Lord's Supper together, we shared our testimonies and were again impressed how differently God guides each one. At first, four days seemed like too much time, but we found it all went too quickly.

Next year's Prayer Summit will be from May 18-24. We invite you to come for a wonderful time in God's presence and for good fellowship together. It will definitely be worth it!

Reinhard Berns, reporting

Church Music

Worship & Music:

Finding a Balance between the Fresh and the Familiar—Part 2

(Part 1 was in Fall 2002)

Acknowledging our emotions

It's fine to talk about the logic, even spiritual benefits, of a balanced worship environment, but our emotions have a way of sidetracking us from our noble aspirations. Without even realizing it, often we end up falling into the "I know what I like and I like what I know" philosophy. Whenever we get into unfamiliar territory, we're automatically resistant, even when we have objectively decided to venture outside our comfort zones into fresh worship expressions.

I tend to think of myself as being open-minded, but a few years ago when we rearranged our office, my desk unexpectedly ended up in a different location. "Now, wait just a minute!" was my automatic emotional response. I hadn't even thought about the logic behind the move.

More recently, I sang a few bars of a "new" Christian song (well, it was new when I was a teenager...) and my fifteen-year-old daughter turned up her nose, expressing something to the effect of "never heard of that ancient song!" If it's outside of our normal experience, chances are we'll dismiss it before it gets a fair hearing.

Submitting in reverence for Christ

In a previous column I mentioned the familiar passage found in the fifth chapter of Ephesians concerning the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Because that Scripture portion generally is divided into several sentences in our English and Japanese translations, we seldom realize that verses 18 through 21 are all one sentence in the original Greek.

Pastor Mark Roberts has given us a literal rendering of Ephesians 5:18-21:

"¹⁸Do not get drunk with wine, for that

is reckless, but keep on being filled with the Spirit; ¹⁹speaking among yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs; singing songs and psalms to the Lord in your hearts; ²⁰giving thanks always and for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to our God and Father; ²¹submitting to one another in reverence for Christ."

As the Lord speaks through the apostle Paul (in the broad context of a full variety of musical expressions), we are told to submit to the thankful expressions of others (which may not be in styles we fully appreciate), and likewise, submit our thankful expressions to the forbearance of others. This mutual submission in worship expression may not be comfortable, but God speaks to hearts sincere and full of thankfulness, no matter what the expression.

Facilitating flexibility

There will always be people in our churches who don't want to accept the validity of other worship expressions (I once had a church member assure me, "If we haven't sung a hymn in church, we haven't sung at all!"), but you can help people develop flexibility by:

- Looking at the broad range of worship expressions in Scripture
- Humorously getting congregation members to admit their biases
- Preparing people for the introduction of new worship resources and experiences ahead of time
- Exposing people to experiences outside their weekly routine

We can expose people to new experiences in 2003 through the Christian Arts Network Worship Seminar (see www.japancan.com) from September 21-23, and the Japan Church Planters Institute Annual Conference, (see www.jcpi.net) from November 18-21. Both events will provide some excellent modeling and training activities relating to worship that will help increase emotional flexibility within members of our congregations.

In the final analysis, all we can control in our commitment to praise is our mature decision to both wholeheartedly worship God in spirit and truth (John 4) in our own way, and allow those around us to wholeheartedly worship God in spirit and

truth in their own way—whether we "like" it or not!

To God be the Glory!

Gary Bauman has been in Japan since 1988.



He serves as a worship development consultant with LIFE Ministries. He welcomes questions and comments addressed to gbauman@lifejapan.org.

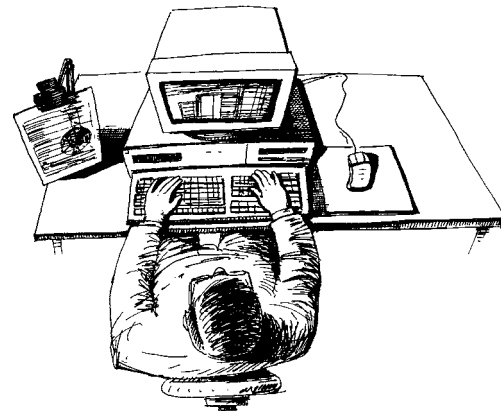
CIS (CHURCH INFORMATION SERVICE)

CIS, having been reorganized, is under the leadership of Yukio Hanazono.

Sensing the need for being more relevant to the on-going work of the Kingdom, the following four steps have been taken to serve the Church of Jesus Christ more effectively:

1. New emphasis will be placed on the gathering of reliable records showing evangelism progress. Annual records will be documented. It is interesting to note that over a period of 21 years (1982-2003) the number of churches has increased from 5,900 to the present 7,729! Membership, worship attendees, baptisms and Sunday School attendees are also on record.
2. Introducing non-believers to churches has and will continue to be a main function of CIS. From January to October 2002, 143 requests for church referrals were received. Thirty-seven of these were requests from non-believers, 4 from returnees and the rest from believers. With present-day Yellow Pages and Internet use, CIS is hopeful that churches will use its Church Address Database for referrals.
3. CIS wants to serve laypersons, pastors and missionaries.
4. CIS wants to continue to address the following questions: **a.)** How will evangelism move forward in Japan? **b.)** What is the mind and plan of the Lord for Japan's evangelization? **c.)** What are present trends in Japan and around the world?

email: cis@church-info.org
URL: www.church-info.org/



Computer shopping?

OK, it's time to buy a new computer, and although you're a JMLI graduate, you want an English model.

Now what? Well, you live in one of the largest cities in the world with hundreds of thousands of English speaking people working and living here. It should be easy to get an English computer, right? Well, yes and no.

The good news is that you can get the hardware pretty easily, but English software is hard to come by.

English on a Japanese Desktop Computer

If it's a desktop we're talking about, then the hardware is the same for an English system or a Japanese system. The only difference is the keyboard and the software. Just find an English keyboard for a couple thousand yen, throw away the Japanese one, and away you go! You have to provide your own English software since the supplied Japanese Windows will have to go (if you want to have an all English system).

English on a Japanese Notebook

The problem with running English on a Japanese notebook is the keyboard. Sure the A-Z keys are the same, but many of the other keys are in different places. You can get used to some keys fairly quickly, but without some special software setup, what's printed on the keytop is not what is really being typed. THIS CAN MAKE YOU CRAZY. Switching the software over to English is tedious and not for the faint of heart. On top of that, you've got to buy new software. You're going to replace the Japanese Windows XP, that comes with it, so you're going to have to shell out another ¥15,000-¥25,000 just to get the thing booted up.

English notebooks available in Japan

TOSHIBA

Toshiba Direct is a special division of Toshiba that sells English models in Japan. Go to www3.toshiba.co.jp/tdirect/eng/ and you will see the models and prices. The cheapest notebook listed today (early June) is ¥148,000.

IBM

Like Toshiba, IBM has a division that sells English models here in Japan. Go to www-6.ibm.com/jp/pc/engmodel/ for a list of models and prices. The cheapest notebook listed today is ¥129,000.

DELL

Dell sells English notebooks here, but it's hard to find which of their models are available in English. You can go to www.dell.co.jp to select the model you want, go through the specifications, and at the end you will get a choice of operating systems (Windows XP English, etc.). You can always call them up, and they'll help you on the phone, but finding the info on the web is a bit of a challenge. The cheapest English notebook listed today is ¥123,800.

One thing to keep in mind is that the selection of the English models is limited. Many of the Japanese models you see in the local computer store are not available as English models in Japan. The beauty of ordering an English system here, such as this Dell, is that you call them up, give them a credit card number, and you'll have a new computer delivered to your door in a few days! No muss; no fuss.

There are a few stores that cater to English speaking customers.

USER'S Side 2 is located close to Ebisu station (www.users-side.co.jp/2/). They have English models from several makers, and the best selection of English software in Tokyo, but it's not the kind of selection you'd expect in a city the size of Tokyo.

TNT-PC in Kobe (www.tnt-pc.com) has several English notebooks, desktops and English software listed on their website.

Mercantile Co. Ltd in Osaka (www.mcljapan.com) has a good selection listed on their website, too.

In Tokyo, you find a limited amount of English software at some of the larger computer stores, but usually they only have Windows, or maybe Office. You can order the same from Amazon Japan (www.amazon.co.jp).

If you can't find what you want here, you can always have it shipped from the US. A few mail order places will ship overseas (try www.outpost.com), but many will ship only certain products. Or if nothing else, the old tried and true method will work: order on line, and have your software shipped to a friend who will then ship it to you. If they only send you the disks, shipping is cheap (come on now, you don't really read those manuals anyway).

OK, bottom line is if you need a new computer, and you want an English model, call Dell, Toshiba, or IBM, and it'll be dropped off at your house in a couple of days. Call your Aunt Bertha, and have her buy the software you want in the US. I'm sure she would be happy to mail it to you!

Cooler New Gadget

Have you checked out those keychain hard disks? Go look at the new Buffalo "Clip Drive." If you get one, maybe you'll finally start to back up your data! (At least that's a good enough excuse).

That's all this time, happy computing, and no BSODs (look it up on Google).

By the way, I'm taking a break next issue. Pinch-hitting will be Dan Rudd, local Mac expert, representing the "dark side" of computing.

missionarygeek@yahoo.com
By Missionary Geek

An optimist
fell out of a ten-story building.
As he passed the second floor
he was heard to say,
"Safe so far!"

The Reader



The Message of Heaven & Hell

Bruce Milne, Inter-Varsity Press, 2002, 351 pages

In Matthew 7, Jesus teaches that there are two ways leading to two final destinations. We come to Japan because we want to see people on the road that leads to life, not the road that leads to destruction. But how often do we preach or teach about heaven or hell?

Bruce Milne, formerly professor at Spurgeon's College, London and recently pastor for 17 years in Vancouver, Canada, has given us a rich resource for proclaiming the terrors of hell and the glories of heaven. Based on 20 key texts, these expositions help explain what the Bible teaches about eternal realities.

Part One, "The Dawning of Destiny," looks at heaven and hell in the Old Testament by exploring 5 key passages. "Despite its sparsity of direct afterlife teaching (the Old Testament) lays the basis for the later, fuller New Testament exposition of human destiny." Milne begins with the opening chapters of Genesis, which give the foundational building blocks. "We learn who God is and what He purposes, and who we are and what is expected of us."

Part Two, "Destiny Determined," looks at heaven and hell in the Gospels. Jesus teaches that everything is worth sacrificing in order to avoid hell. Milne looks at the vexing question of the duration of hell and notes that the vast majority of the church has believed, "though seldom without considerable inward struggle, that the Bible teaches the endless duration of hell." In a moving exposition on Matthew 27:45-50, Milne says "only once in all history has there truly been 'hell on earth'—when

Jesus Christ took our place on the cross and bore the wrath due to us for our sins." The final chapter in this section looks at "heaven on earth," when the disciples encountered heaven in the risen Jesus.

Part Three, "Destiny Declared," looks at heaven and hell in the rest of the New Testament. Paul's preaching at Athens in Acts 17 reminds us that Paul proclaimed God's future judgment to his sophisticated hearers. God's judgment will be "the one utterly fair and just judgment in all history." The only proper response is repentance and faith. In an excellent chapter on 2 Corinthians 4, Milne shows how looking forward to heaven enables us to minister in hope and puts our trials in context. Milne ends with the closing chapters of Revelation looking at final judgment in chapter 20 and heaven in chapters 21, 22.

This is not dry theology, but messages from the heart of a pastor who wants every reader to understand what is at stake, to be ready for the final reckoning, and to be in God's presence for all eternity.

Milne has read widely, writes well, and reminds us of the importance of thinking hard about heaven and hell. Reading this book, working through the Biblical passages, and praying that God will help us to live with eternity in view, will make us faithful messengers of the Gospel.

Further Reading:

Ajith Fernando, *Crucial Questions about Hell* (Crossway, 1991).

Paul Spilsbury, *The Throne, The Lamb & The Dragon: A Reader's Guide to the Book of Revelation* (InterVarsity Press, 2002).



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.

2nd Cymbala book on Japanese market

One thing moves God: faith. Not doctrinal savvy. Not willpower. Trust in God alone stirs Him to move miraculously on our behalf. Time and again, Jim Cymbala has

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Pre-emptive love

How a Hiroshima Man's Story Might Save Hong Kong

By George L. Olson (former missionary to Japan)

To pre-empt crackdowns on Hong Kong's freedom, four people risk tele-casting the story of a Japanese pastor's sacrificial love toward dying POWs at Shamshuipo Prison.

Check Internet site: www.1stbooks.com

Congratulations to Missionaries Barbara Bauman & Elaine Mehn who have published books.

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Sleeping GIANTS come alive!

“Lay people are sleeping giants!” We have heard this lament for so many years.

With increasing attention given to train and incorporate the laity Ochanomizu Bible School came into existence 1991.

Impossibility Turned to Possibility

Prior to the opening of the Institute there were eight years of classes held for the laity. The attendance, however, was going down, so much so that serious thought was given to closing the Institute down. Then, a missionary suggested keeping it going under the new name, Ochanomizu Bible Institute (OBI). The concept of “Institute” called for new concepts, structure and management.

Dr. Clyde Cook, President of BIOLA University, Biola, CA (USA), gave the dedication lectures, April 1991. The response was tremendous. What had looked impossible was becoming possible right before our eyes! We repented of our lack of faith and prayed, “Lord, take over. This Institute is Yours.” We realized that what we needed was a divinely-led fresh paradigm. The first year of this new start found 150 students enrolled. We have been averaging around 100 since then.

New Discoveries

An overwhelming response came from retired people (including company presidents & executives), and housewives whose children had grown up. Significant were those facing retirement in the near future. Their desire was to study and prepare to become either pastors or pastors’ helpers at the time of retirement. One student’s wife registered in our music course hoping to become an organist and one day serve the Lord along with her husband, who was studying to become a pastor. What a moving testimony!

Students come from all over!
They come from Mishima, Ito, Mito,

Utsunomiya, etc. Not only does it take time to travel, but it also takes money for the fares to do so. With all the sacrifice, the morale of the students seems higher than the norm.

There has been an unexpected response from pastors’ wives! Husbands have attended seminary, but their wives have not. So, after the children grow up and leave home many wives, wanting to be better qualified to work along with their husbands, come to study. One such wife spent over 4 hours traveling round-trip and graduated with honors.

A Sense of Fulfillment Found

Quite often students say, “OBI is giving me a sense of fulfillment!” To which I would hear a teacher answer, “It gives me a great sense of satisfaction and fulfillment to teach!” The classroom is so highly motivated that both teachers and students are excited and inspired over and beyond description!

In the last 12 years 132 students have graduated! The amazing thing is that a significant number of these keep on doing research in graduate classes. They say, “We want to study as long as we live.”

These are some of the exciting and inspiring realities we have witnessed in the education and training of lay people. All is almost too beautiful and magnificent to be true—actually taking place in Japan! But it is reality! We praise the Lord for all that He has accomplished and is accomplishing in and through us, and we pray it will continue in the days to come. So, we say, “OBI is the Lord’s!”

Dr. John Y. Masuda, President
Ochanomizu Bible Institute

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Potpourri & Promises

By Janice A. Kropp

H-E-L-D Hostage

NEVER do I ever want to forget those “life-threatening” struggles? Actually, there have been eight; I will mention four.

The first came at age 16. Having been raised in a missionary family, my heart’s cry was, “Lord, let me serve in Your ARMY!” I could not bear the thought of NOT being able to serve Him on the mission field. But in full surrender, as a teen, I found myself at the altar of the large C&MA church in Orlando, FL (USA), where I prayed the most difficult prayer of my young life, “Lord, if this is not Your will, I will remain in this country and serve You here.” For the first time I had peace about becoming a missionary. HIS love held me hostage!

The second came at age 26. We were completing requirements for missionary service, with one last hurdle, the final interview! By this time my husband had three years of seminary under his belt, and for me it was the close of three years “putting hubby through.” We had worked in several churches, as youth pastor in one place, and as assistant pastor in another. I, now with three years experience as a teacher in the elementary grades, found that I loved teaching. Could I ever give this up? For the first time in my life I had a good, rewarding job, and a nice little house

just off the school/church property of St. Mark’s Day School. This was living! Then came the final mission interview that swept us out and on to language school before I realized what was happening. HIS grace held me hostage!

The third came at age 31. We were about to complete our first term here in Japan, and had been in Kyoto for two years of ministry. Those two years were so hard. We lived in a small duplex with no flush toilet or facility for washing. I figured out how to “rinse” diapers, and our washer sat outside the back door—fully exposed to weather and the eyes of all who passed by. There was no yard for our precious two sons, so I stood on the street day after day trying to keep them both happy and safe. I wanted so badly to be a “good” missionary. We had very little contact with English speakers, and that was good, really. But the work was so slow and so were we. Would we ever become fluent in Japanese? Would anyone come to faith? Miracle of miracles one precious young adult did come to Christ, (a story in and of its self), but only one! Things just didn’t seem to add up! We expected to be “effective” workers in the Kingdom and look, not much was accomplished! So discouraged, we were ready to “throw in the towel,”—call it quits. Some of those “first term” feelings I’ve written in the following poem:

Molly Missionary

*Excitement was tingling right from her head
to her toe
But little did our young, little missionary,
Molly, know
That the stages of ministry would toss to and
fro
Causing her heart and mind to hurt her so.*

*It’s leaving, it’s arriving, it’s language and
food
All these in short order would change her
good mood
From a song to a cry, from praise to a sigh,
Our darling would be tempted a ticket home
to buy.*

*First it was hubby and all his progress
While she felt left behind, not to mention the
mess
Then her heart tugged in this way and her
head in that
She felt like givin’ up in no time flat.*

*What, be faithful in reading and prayer, oh,
my,
All she could think of was work and she’d cry
The children, the neighbors, the church and
the pets,
“Oh, Lord,” she would ball, “I’m going to be
full of regrets.”*

“My child,” He then whispered, “Why all

*the fuss?
Remember the promise you made on the bus?"
"Lord," you said, and I answered, "Yes."
"Lord, I'll go where you lead to the East or
the West."*

*"My Molly, my dear, I do notice the tear
That comes when you're irritated and full of
fear.
I want you to know, that I'm not so demand-
ing.
It's in the area of the Spirit you need to be
standing."*

*"The FRUIT of the SPIRIT I want to see in
you
LOVE, JOY, PEACE, GENTLENESS are
only a few.
Life on the "field" is where these should
bloom
All nine fruit of the Spirit can replace your
gloom."*

*"But I can't," Molly cries, and now out of
control,
"I can't, can't, can't, can't ----I'm bearing
my soul."
"Since when did 'I can't' mean you cannot
try?
I don't want to, would be more truthful a
reply."*

*"Well, I guess YOU are right, LORD, you
know me well
I guess I don't love you much, my attitudes
tell
I've fallen again, right flat on my nose
Oh, JESUS, JESUS, what would you pro-
pose?"*

*"My Molly, my missionary, my daughter,
my dear
First on my list is the command, 'DO NOT
FEAR!'
There's forgiveness, there's cleansing, there's
a complete change, too,
So open your heart to what my Spirit tells
you."*

The tension between the call and reality was very real to the two of us "first-termers."

But God! What would we do without HIS working behind the scenes? We had asked a national pastor to come hold special meetings. He came. We talked. We shared. We confessed our frustrations, mostly with ourselves. I will never forget

what Pastor Fujika did and said. He looked hard at us! He pointed his index finger at the two of us with the words, "You came to Japan to tell Jesus. Now, you can do that. Do that!" (Often in our self-pity we wish for soft and loving words of understanding, when in reality what we need is correction, yes, even rebuke.) Well, here we are some thirty years later. His plan has held us hostage!

The fourth came at age 46. Having been in our home country for four years we came to a crossroads. (Why four years there? That is another story in and of its self, but in a nutshell I shall explain.) Having been raised in dormitories since grade 1, I was not with my parents a whole lot. Then when we came to Japan we had only snippets of time with them. Now that they were aging, who knew how long they would live? It was then we opted to remain in the States for an extra year to be with them, for I did not know how I would ever cope with my sorrow should one or both of them be called to glory. We just hadn't had enough time together! My precious husband, Richard, suggested we remain for a year to be together, as we co-owned a house in North Carolina. Almost right away we got into church planting and were thrilled as the ministry grew, in the end causing our time to lengthen to three years. Then the day came to decide just where we should be. Do we stay and continue this exciting ministry or do we return to Japan, the land of our calling? We felt we should return and when our whole family agreed we knew the Lord was leading. Our return, however, would mean leaving our oldest son there, another whole area of pain and sorrow. (God knows all about the pain of separating, doesn't He? Should we expect to do less than He, the King of Glory?) Yes, there was the deep pain of separation from our own flesh and blood, but there was also the privilege! It was the privilege of sharing Christ with the Japanese, whom we had come to dearly respect and love, that held us hostage!

Oh, you say, why use the word "hostage"? Doesn't that mean, being held against your will?

Let's face it, Christ died for us while we were yet sinners. He was the furthest from our thoughts, until He caught our attention. Once we were FAR from HIS love. Even now, we so often run from His calling and that love. We protect our wills from

His loving influences. That is, until He, in His wonderful love, holds us hostage! It sure feels good knowing I'm held by His love when mine has been lacking. It sure feels great to be held by His grace, assuring me that He knows far more than me. It sure feels wonderful to be held by His plan, for mine is so often off the mark. It sure feels super to be held by His power to help us complete the race. Had I run, I would have forgone all the wonderful blessings, fruit and growth I now see clearly. "Thank you, Lord, for holding me hostage!" And, how about you? May I say, it's far better being held hostage by our Lord than all the confusion of self-made plans and efforts. Oswald Chambers encourages us not to resist God's "drawings." He puts it pretty clearly when he says that God holds us responsible for what we do not see. God constantly faces us with "gods" in our lives, be they attitudes, pride, whatever, and He seeks our relinquishment. If, however, I "close" my heart to His nudges, He does not force it open. "He opens other doors, but He reminds us that there are doors which we have shut, doors which need never have been shut, imaginations which need never have been sullied," (My Utmost for His Highest, April 2 reading). Held hostage today am I—with glorious freedom to "live"!

Promise:

"Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep His commands. He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord," Deuteronomy 8:2 & 3.

Give me a smile:

Relating his observation (a cat crossing the playground), two and a half year old grandson, Kaleb, gave his babysitter a smile when he said, "Oh—the cat is barefoot." (And, no doubt, he followed suit!)

1054 More Last Words

William Carey: "When I am gone, speak less of Dr. Carey and more of Dr. Carey's Savior." Susanna Wesley: "Children, when I am gone, sing a song of praise to God." Lady Glenorchy: "If this is dying, it is the pleasantest thing imaginable." Edward Perronet: "Glory to God in the height of His divinity! Glory to God in the depths of His humanity! Glory to God in His all-sufficiency! Into His hands I commend my spirit." John Pawson: "I know I am dying, but my death-bed is a bed of roses. I have no thorns planted upon my dying pillow. Heaven is already begun!" Adoniram Judson: "I am not tired of my work, neither am I tired of the world; yet when Christ calls me home, I shall go with the gladness of a boy bounding away from school."

1064 Epigram

"No one cries when children, long absent from their parents, go home. School is out. It is time to go home. Vacation morning is a happy occasion."

1017 To Prefer Hell

Altamont the infidel, cried out his last words: "My principles have poisoned my friend; my extravagance has beggared my boy; my unkindness has murdered my wife. And is there another hell? Oh, thou blasphemed, yet most indulgent Lord God! Hell is a refuge if it hides me from thy frown."

1018 "You Need Not Tell Me"

Sir Francis Newport, the head of an English infidel club, said to those gathered around his dying bed, "You need not tell me there is no God for I know there is one, and that I am in His angry presence! You need not tell me there is no hell, for I already feel my soul slipping into its fires! Wretches, cease your idle talk about there being hope for me! I know I am lost forever." Sunday School Times

1024 Go to Hell!

Voltaire, on his deathbed, addressed his doctor: "I am abandoned by God and man. I will give you half of what I am worth, if you will give me six months' life." The doctor replied, "Sir, you cannot live six weeks." Voltaire replied, "Then I shall go to hell, and you will go with me." Soon after he expired.

designs of the leader. Spiritual, mental and emotional growth stops, and members are oftentimes reduced to a robot-like state.

A cult leader might be compared to a ruler who is trying to establish his own kingdom. Infatuated with ideas of his own importance, he has grand visions for the future, but he needs a faithful following of believers to carry them out. Needless to say, his plans are called "the will of God," designed for "the glory of God and the salvation of mankind," but in reality they are selfish schemes to satisfy his own lust for wealth and power.

Leadership in Cult-like Churches

During my years of cult research, time and again I have seen the above pattern in numerous religious groups. Little did I realize at the outset that I would eventually begin to see the exact same pattern emerge among some evangelical churches in Japan. One would like to think that pastors using mind control techniques do so without knowledge of their cultic roots. Perhaps some think that they have stumbled upon an effective discipleship method that produces faithful church members. Certainly most pastors have a sincere desire to see revival in Japan. However, as already stated, mind control does not contribute to true spiritual growth. Indeed, it severely hinders it. In addition, pastors who claim absolute authority and demand total obedience (much like a dictator would) are in direct violation of the principles of spiritual leadership as taught by Jesus Christ Himself.

Jesus' Teaching

"Jesus called them (His disciples) together and said, 'You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many'" (Mark 10:42-45).

False Leadership

In the passage above Jesus presents two types of leadership: the authoritarian leader and the servant leader. Authoritarian leadership is often personified in govern-

ment officials. Leaders in high positions are adept to "throw their weight around;" in other words, they are experts at controlling others, exercising power over people, and manipulating the weak to insure the success of their self-centered designs. All opposition is squelched; criticism is prohibited. In the words of Jesus, they "lord it over" all who are under their authority.

Our Lord never said that pastors were to be rulers. Rulers use power, which means the insistence on getting what they demand. Power is used to force people to follow despite personal wishes. Power is assumed. It is insensitive, dehumanizing, and in the end destructive.

True Leadership

Jesus, on the other hand, tells us that the mark of a true leader is servant-like humility. True shepherds are not spiritual tyrants. They do not threaten or try to manipulate people for their own advantage. They do not demand obedience, but lead by example, service, kindness, gentleness, and patience. A genuine shepherd will never give priority to his personal needs or goals. His one concern will be the needs of the flock. He will, if necessary, "lay down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11).

Pastors are given spiritual authority under Christ to lead the flock of God, serve their needs, and provide an example. Jesus is the ultimate role model of the proper exercise of this authority. His life and ministry were never characterized by coercion, violence, or manipulation. Not once did He force His way on any individual. He was, first and foremost, a meek servant.

Peter's Teaching

The Apostle Peter also, in the same Christlike spirit of humility, gives the following directive to elders: "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers--not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:2-3).

Certainly the Scriptures place importance upon obedience to those in positions of authority, whether secular or spiritual (Rom 13:1-5, Heb 13:17). Christians

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The Testimony of Tokuhiko Meiri, Dendoushi (evangelist) of Chiharadai Christ Church

"Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him." (Psalm 34:8)

In the grace of my God, I married a very wonderful Christian woman on July 21, 2001.

I remember what a great blessing that was!

And it was not just a blessing for me, but many of my friends were also blessed by our wedding.

But joy was not the only thing I experienced through being married.

Part of it was also a newlywed life with a lot of arguing.

You see, just because we're Christians and married, it doesn't mean that we fight over "God's leading" or on differences in "philosophies of education"...

No, we fought on an even lower dimension.

For example, we fought about which dishes to use for supper, and about whether they were washed properly, or about getting lost while driving...terribly petty things.

On our wedding day, we were overflowing with joy. We thought that we could endure any hardship...

The reality now is that I get irritated at her over trivial thoughts and ideas...

Mine is truly a shameful story.

I discovered that I had the same attitude toward work in the church.

When I was baptized I was filled with tremendous joy, and was blessed with many friends at church.

But, for me now 10 years later, I get discouraged over small things. I have discovered the part of me that gets irritated over things not worth bothering over.

I have also uncovered the "me" which competes against other workers in the church.

I even came near to embracing jealousy toward a worker my own age. He is mature in character and good at putting together programs, building relationships, and doing follow-up.

When it came time to share together, I would only talk about that person's weak

points or look at his mistakes...

Mine is a shameful story as a worker in the church.

I give thanks to God that His grace has been poured out on someone as wretched as me.

This is because the God I believe in wants the situation to be resolved and will lead me, no matter how wretched I am.

One night after I had talked bitterly about my co-worker, God revealed to me the error of my heart.

The Lord led me to pick up the phone to confess and apologize to my brother in the faith, whom I had envied, and ask for his forgiveness.

There are many times after my wife and I fight that she very kindly goes to the trouble of leading me into repentance.

She very kindly and directly says, "If I have done anything wrong to you..." which makes me say in repentance, "I was actually at fault. I'm sorry for getting angry at such a small thing..."

Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. Psalm 34:8

This is a word I want to keep stored in my heart at all times.

I want to value the joy of living as a child of God.

I thank God who has helped someone as wretched as me. I can walk through life full of confidence because of God's wondrous joy and because of Christ's humiliation for me.

JEMA Ladies Day of Prayer

It was a small thing, very small, and rather, well...silly. After four years of searching through boxes, wondering if I had given it away, and trying to remember what possibly could have happened to it, I finally asked my husband if he had come across it when he was unpacking. It was a very remote possibility because as we know there are two kinds of people in the world - those who find things and those who need things found. My husband is definitely in the latter category. Well, I was very surprised and pleased when he said yes - he knew exactly where it was. It had been under the computer table for years, but since no one was using it he decided to wrap it up and put it in the closet. He went straight to the closet and pulled out - the electric pencil sharpener!!! I was delighted! After years of using dull pencils I gathered up all the pencils in the house and had a happy time of sharpening them! It made my day!

You may not need your pencils sharpened, but you might enjoy a day away to ask the One who knows all the answers. We would love to have you join us for the

JEMA Ladies Day of Prayer

October 27, 2003 from 10 am - 3 pm at OCC (Ochanomizu Christian Center) with Penny Baily—leading in worship and praise and the Chiba ladies team leading the prayer sessions.

Coffee and tea will be provided
Please bring or buy your own lunch

Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you. Mt. 7:7

Maybe we can help make your day!

"This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us." I John 5:14

guages. There is an author's name on it, but he didn't write it. The fact of the matter is that you can almost say that Oswald Chambers,' My Utmost for His Highest,

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wasn't written by him. He never wrote a book in the sense of writing, printing, publishing. There are 30 books that bear his name, but he didn't write any of them. Well, how did it happen? There are some ways you can almost say that his life was a failure in a certain sense. He was born in Scotland in 1874, the son of a Baptist minister, converted at the age of 16 and had great gifts as an artist, musician, and poet. His early intension was to be a great Christian artist and as it turned out he won the highest of scholarships and went to great art schools at University of Edenboro and Scotland. Then God called him to preach. It was an interesting call. "I want you to be a preacher. I want you to serve Me. Now, I can get along without you, but I want you to serve Me." That was kind of a strange call, wasn't it? And so he answered that call to preach. He switched to a well-known Bible college for his training. He was so outstanding he ended up as one of the college's teachers. It was during this period of his life, under the influence of the great Keswick holiness preachers of that day, Andrew Murray and F.B. Myer, where Chambers experienced the wonderful infilling of the Holy Spirit and became a preacher of great power and a man of great prayer. He teamed up with Junji Nakada, the famous Japanese evangelist, who along with the Kilburns and Cowmans, founded the Oriental Missionary Society. Chambers and Nakada preached in many countries including the United States of America. Then he became the principle of a Bible College in London for 4 years when WWI came along and he felt the burden to minister to the soldiers. He volunteered and went out as a YMCA

"I want you
to be a preacher.
I want you
to serve Me.
Now, I can get along
without you,
but I want you
to serve Me."

The twin deceivers of
the Christian life
are success and failure.
God has not called us
to either. He has
only called us to
faithfulness.

chaplain to Egypt. The soldiers soon found this was no ordinary man or chaplain.

They had to move the meeting place for services as hundreds, even thousands of soldiers gathered to hear his message. Oh, he won so many of them to Christ. Then all of a sudden, nobody expected it, after what was called a successful surgery for a ruptured appendix, he suddenly died in 1917 at the age of 43. He wasn't well known, only in a small circle. Where did all his books come from? God called his wife to write her husband's books. Can you imagine it? She had taken his sermons down in shorthand and so it was BC, Betty Chambers, who edited, wrote and published his books. And though every

book bears his name as author, look a little further and you will find in each forward a modest introduction, and below will be two initials, BC. These books sold millions all over the world. These have been translated into scores of languages. However, during the great London blitz in 1940 a bomb set fire to the bookstore next to Saint Paul's Cathedral in London and all 46,000 copies of his books were destroyed. All the printing plates were also gone! The story his books' reprinting, is nothing short of a miracle.

One man wrote 28 books—all successful—except for one, but maybe that was his greatest success. This man though he didn't write any books—here they are. God has a different viewpoint on things doesn't He? I shall have to trust Him to apply this to your life wherever you need it and I haven't the faintest idea where that might be. Success—failure,

how is it in your life—in your story?

Let me close with one of Chambers greatest statements. Listen carefully: The twin deceivers of the Christian life are success and failure. God has not called us to either. He has only called us to faithfulness. Amen.

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University of the Nations Japan and offers the training in Japanese, English and Spanish. An International Training School is also run in Switzerland aimed at Japanese with a fair understanding of the English language. YWAM Japan schools send Japanese and foreign students overseas in outreach teams and we are blessed in return by receiving outreach teams from overseas. Teams come and go throughout the year, working with churches, on the streets, and on university campuses doing drama, puppet ministry, sports outreach, coffee shops, campus ministries, music, surfing, and any number of other ways to share the Good News.

In a nutshell, this is who and what we are as YWAM! We know that as we face the challenges of the 21st century, networking is of utmost importance. If we as a missionary community are going to effectively impact Japan, we must network. So what does YWAM have to offer?

Do you have a key church worker who would benefit from the Discipleship Training School? Send him/her along!

Do you have a group of key members to whom we could bring a mobile version of training to your location? Let us know!

Are you working with crisis pregnancy situations or with someone considering an abortion? *Ai no Kesshin* can help!

Would any of the many short-term teams visiting Japan be able to assist you on location? Give us a call. For more information take a look at our homepage at: www.ywamjapan.org Or why not contact Bryan Smith at bsmith@ywamjapan.org for short-term teams to partner with you or your church?

Thank you for this opportunity to tell a little bit about ourselves. We are excited about the level of unity in the church and among mission agencies throughout Japan. Christians are partnering and praying together as never before! Let us go on together to see the Gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed and the church of Jesus Christ strengthened in this land!

**Congratulations
to YWAM
for 25 years in Japan!**

should respond positively to pastoral exhortations to obey the clear dictates of God's word. However, there is no Biblical basis for demanding unquestioning obedience. Moreover, a pastor has no right to interfere in personal issues that are not clearly addressed in Scripture, and he certainly has no license to exact obedience to commands that go against the teachings of God's Word.

Conclusion

Finally, spiritual authority should not be used to avoid the process of communicating with the congregation and persuading them (or waiting for the Holy Spirit to convince them) that a certain course of action is God's will for the church.

Mind control, no matter what form it takes, will never produce the kind of spiritual growth that God desires. Christians are not to be dependent upon any leader, but rather each should develop his/her personal relationship with God in such a way that each will find the wisdom and grace to discern the will of God, and then do it, in

His power.

It is time for us to prayerfully reflect upon our discipleship methods in the church. Are we using fleshly techniques to influence, educate, motivate, and train our people, or are we relying totally upon the work of the Holy Spirit? Are we using spiritual authority to demand obedience, or are we striving to be an example that people will joyfully follow?

There also needs to be an honest examination of our hearts. Is there any desire within us to gain fame by achieving some measure of success in ministry, or have we laid all pride at the foot of the cross? Are we trying to heal our poor self-images by assuming the role of an invincible spiritual giant, or do we stand secure in the knowledge of our full acceptance by the Father in Christ? Do we have such little confidence in our church members' ability to discern right from wrong that we must have a say in every decision they make, or have we grown to such a place of trust that we commit each believer into His hands?

These are difficult questions indeed.

However, only as we face these issues openly and prayerfully can we hope to see a true moving of God's Spirit in this land.

William Wood graduated from Christ for the Nations (Dallas, TX) in



1976, and began missionary work in Japan. Wood, began outreach to cults in 1980 and published his first book on Jehovah's Witnesses in 1983. He Founded Word of Truth Ministries in 1988 and that ministry spread into Russia,

Romania, the Ukraine, Mongolia and India. In 1998 and 2001 Wood respectively received his Master of Divinity degree and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Luther Rice Seminary (Atlanta, GA). In 2001 he also purchased land in Tokorozawa City and built the Cult Research and Rehabilitation Center, the first facility in Japan for victims of cult abuse. His hobby is gardening (especially growing raspberries, blackberries, blueberries) and cooking.

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Karuizawa Union Church

(since 1906)

Karuizawa Union Church welcomes you to a cool, refreshing summer of spiritual renewal and fellowship for the entire family.

Karuizawa Summer Conference

(Sunday August 3 to Sunday August 10)



Speaker, Dr. Ronald Youngblood, professor of Old Testament at Bethel Seminary, San Diego (USA), was a translator and editor for the NIV Bible, editor of the "Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society," and author/editor of numerous books and commentaries.

As teacher, preacher, lecturer, interim-pastor and editor for 40 years, he is widely known as a teacher with a pastoral heart and continues to speak world-wide.



Karuizawa Summer Conference Schedule: (Sunday, August 3 to Sunday, August 10)

- A series of ten challenging messages on "Themes of the Old Testament" by Dr. Ronald Youngblood both morning and evening sessions
- A special program for English and German speaking children, ages 4-12 every morning of the conference (except Wed. and Sat.)
- Church potluck picnic at Megumi Chalet, Sunday, Aug. 3rd. 1:00 p.m.
- Youth Conference (ages 12-20) begins noon, Monday, Aug. 4th, all day Tuesday through Wed. noon. includes hiking, barbecue, tubing, games, and Bible devotions.
- Film Night for the whole family, Monday Aug. 4th, 7:00 p.m.
- Ladies' Buffet, Thurs. Aug. 7th, 4:30 p.m. (Stella Cox speaking)
- Seminars and Booths by various mission agencies, Friday, Aug. 8th. 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
- Men's Prayer Breakfast, Sat. Aug. 9th. 8:00 a.m.
- Gospel Concert by Kosaka Chu and Joshua Sasaki, Sat. Aug. 9th. 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
- Holy Communion, Sun, Aug. 10th, Sunday Morning Worship Service

Karuizawa Union Church Summer Schedule (Sunday, July 20 -Sunday, August 31)

- Sunday Services:-Prayer Service 9:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
- Sunday School for English and German Speaking children, ages 4-12 during the morning service
- Sunday Evening Service, 7:00 p.m.
- KUC Annual Business meeting: Wed. Aug. 6th. 7:00 p.m.

Weekly:

- Family Film Night, Aug. 11, 12, 13; 7:00 p.m. (three part BBC series of "The Chronicles of Narnia" by C.S. Lewis)
- KUC Picnic, Sun. Aug. 17th, 1:00 p.m.
- KUC Prayer Breakfast, Sat. Aug. 23rd. 8:00 a.m.
- Gospel and tract ministry at KUC Gospel House (bring a friend and enjoy the coffee)

For more information please contact: Mark Magnusson, KUC Committee Chairman, e-mail: markm@interlink.or.jp, tel. (0561) 72-1166/73-5323 or Summer Conference Director, Ron Stoller, (052) 736-0341; e-mail: stoller@japan.email.ne.jp You can also visit our web site at <http://church.ne.jp/kuc/>



An interview with Dr. Stephen Franklin

President, Tokyo Christian University

Q. What a beautiful campus you have here. **A.** “Yes, I think it’s one of the nicest in the country. TCU moved here in 1989; I’ve been at the college for 12 years, and just finished my fourth year as President.”

Q. What would you like to see at TCU during your tenure? **A.** “Due to increasing enrollment a lovely new dorm is in the planning stages for 36 students. We are also seriously considering having the first Japanese government recognized M. Div from an Evangelical University, which would include building up the library another 20,000 volumes. And there are many other on-going projects.”

Q. There was a pipe organ concert recently in the Chapel. How important is music to the University? **A.** “Quite important. **A.** The choir is strong, and voice, piano, and organ lessons are available for all. Quite apart from the curriculum it’s a musical community, often combined with outreach. A very important part of the education is the Christian service required of every student, plus cross-cultural internships, and clubs which focus on evangelism. Though all the students obtain a Christian education, with either a major in Theological Studies or International Christian Studies, about 23% of the student body go directly into the pastorate, with others serving as salt and light for Christ in the work place.”

**For more information on obtaining a Christian University education contact: tcu@tci.ac.jp
Tokyo Christian University 3-301-5 Uchino; Inzai Shi, Chiba Ken 270-1347
Phone: 0476-46-1131 Fax: 0476-46-1405**

