

**JAPAN** Spring 2005  
**HARVEST**  
Japan Evangelical Missionary Association

**Finding Success in Apparent Failure**

*by Jim Reapsome*

**Building On Strengths** *by Andrew Leon Meeko*

**A Vision for Church Multiplication  
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This year we are very privileged to have Ted & Hester Rendall. Dr. Rendall married Norline Norbo in 1958 and in 1993 she was called to her Heavenly reward. Two sons were born into their family and three grandchildren. Among his many interests Dr. Rendall's special delights are reading and music. He has written a number of hymns and spiritual songs, including the hymn, *Prayer for the Spirit's Fruit*, and the missionary hymn, *To All the Nations*. In 1995 Dr. Rendall married Miss Hester Dougan of the Faith Mission in Canada. They are now involved in a teaching and conference ministry.



**Ministry Team:** A ministry team from Praire Tabernacle Congregation in Canada will be accompanying our speaker and they will be ministering in music for the worship program of the conference, the children's program and also the evangelistic outreach of the Gospel House.

**Children's Program:** Held during the morning sessions, the children's program will be in both English and German for children ages 4-12. We are also planning the annual Youth Conference from Monday, August 1-3, for Jr. High through college age youth. There will be lots of fun, spiritual enrichment and guidance. Activities will include games, barbeques, and various outings. In addition we will also be having a Film Night, Ladies' Buffet, Men's Prayer Breakfast, Saturday Night Sing Along. We will be sharing Holy Communion together on Sun. Aug. 7th and enjoying fellowship together at the KUC Picnic in the afternoon.

A day of Seminars by various missionaries and mission agencies is also scheduled.

### **Karuizawa Union Church Summer Schedule** (Sunday, July 24th- Sunday, August 28th)

**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.**

**Evening Service: 7:00 p.m.**

For more information please contact: Mark Magnusson, KUC Committee Chairman,  
**e-mail: markm@interlink.or.jp tel. (0561) 72-1166/73-5323 or**  
**Ron Stoller, (090) 1743-8158; e-mail: stoller@japan.email.ne.jp**  
**You can also visit our web site at <http://church.ne.jp/kuc/>**

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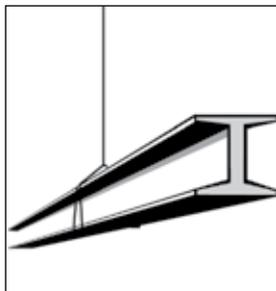
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# JAPAN HARVEST

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Japan Harvest Staff  
Editor-in-Chief: Ray Leaf (rleaf@gol.com)  
Managing Editor: Janice Kropp (dikropp@gol.com)  
Production Editor: Jim Rew (therews@yahoo.com)

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JEMA Executive Committee, 2005-2006  
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JEMA  
2-1 Kanda Surugadai,  
Chiyoda Ku, Tokyo 101-0062  
Tel: 03-3295-1949  
Fax: 03-3295-1354

E-mail: jema@jema.org  
Website: jema.org

## ***He's Alive and I'm Forgiven—***

*The Apostle Peter's encounter with the risen LORD—*

*The gates and doors were barred and all the windows fastened down. I spent the night in sleeplessness and rose at every sound—half in hopeless sorrow and half in fear of the day would find the soldiers breaking through to drag us all away.*

*Just before the sunrise I heard something at the wall. The gate began to rattle and a voice began to call. I hurried to the window and looked down into the street expecting swords and torches and sound of soldiers' feet.*

*There was no one there but Mary, and so I went down and let her in. John stood there beside me as she told us where she'd been. She said, "They moved Him in the night and none of us knows where. The stone was rolled away, and now His body isn't there."*

*We both ran toward the garden, then John ran on ahead. We found the stone at the empty tomb just the way that Mary said. But the winding sheet they wrapped Him in was just an empty shell, and how or where they had taken Him was more than I could tell.*

*But something strange had happened there, just what I didn't know. John believed a miracle, but I just turned to go. Circumstances, speculation wouldn't lift me very high because I had seen Him crucified, and then I saw Him die.*

*Back inside the house again the guilt and anguish came. Everything I'd promised Him just added to my shame. When at last it came to choices, I denied I knew His name. Even if He were alive, it wouldn't be the same.*

*But suddenly the air was filled with a strange and sweet perfume—Light that came from everywhere—drove shadows from the room. JESUS stood before me with His arms held open wide, and I fell down on my knees and just clung to Him and cried.*

*He raised me to my feet, and as I looked into His eyes—LOVE was shining out from Him like sunlight from the skies. Guilt and my confusion disappeared in sweet release; every fear I'd ever had just melted into peace.*

*HE'S ALIVE, HE'S ALIVE, HE'S ALIVE and I'm forgiven, Heaven's gates are open wide. HE'S ALIVE!*

*by Don Francisco, ©1977,1978 by New Pax Music Press*

*Hallelujah, we too are forgiven!  
Heaven's gates are open wide!  
Even so, come Lord Jesus!*

# A Fresh Call to Our Work



*Work, for the night is coming, Work through the morning hours;  
Work while the dew is sparkling, Work 'mid spring flowers;  
Work when the day grows brighter, Work in the glowing sun;  
Work for the night is coming—When man's work is done.*

*Work, for the night is coming, Under the sunset skies;  
While their bright tints are glowing, Work, for daylight flies;  
Work till the last beam fades, Fades to shine no more;  
Work while the night is darkening—When man's work is o'er.*

*Anna L. Coghill*

Jesus had just had a heart to heart conversation with the Samaritan divorcee. As unlikely a believer as she might have seemed to the twelve, Jesus saw her open heart! She was both willing and ready to receive the message! The disciples had been absent during the talk and were now hurrying back to the Master with lunchtime goodies. Jesus, in His thoughts, was not where the disciples were. They were famished; He was not. They were experiencing hunger pains from lack of food. He had pain in His heart, not for Himself, but for the starving souls of men and women all around Him. "Eat!" they begged. To which He answered, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about. My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work. Do you say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest!" (John 4).

What does our Lord feel and know about Japan, spring of 2005? We know that Jesus looks straight to the hearts of children, women and men. Lives, 126,820,000 minus believers, are starving for meaning and connection to their Savior! Starving! I think, were Jesus physically carrying out mission here today, He would most certainly announce that Japan is ripe for the harvest! According to John

Mizuki, US Center of World Mission, there are about 9,000,000 who are interested in Christianity (Christianity Yearbook 2001) with 12,000,000 interested in Jesus Christ, and 14,000,000 sympathetic and receptive to Christianity and who very well might respond if they were presented with the claims of Jesus. Jesus says, "Go for these!"

Who, you may ask, are these? It isn't news to you or me that these are the twenty and thirty-year-olds, women, mission school students, businessmen, ages 35-60, and senior citizens. John writes, "Japan is now in tremendous need of workers who would go to re-evangelize and replant churches."

What is needed now? John writes, "Now is the time to approach these receptive Japanese with the gospel. At the same time we need to pray that God may raise many people outside of Japan who would feel a real burden and would go as missionaries. Japan is now in desperate need of workers—national and foreign."

The resurrected Christ would lift our discouraged spirits and challenge us afresh to our call!

Jesus, who was whipped unmercifully, would touch our diseases and give us new energy and health!

Christ, our Savior, would listen to our confessions of sin, lack of faith, and weakness, and He would loosen the chains of regret and failure!

The Holy Spirit, the Comforter and Enabler, would fill us anew with His sweetness and power!

Take the name of Jesus with you everywhere you go! Jesus' last command told us so! ❧

*Janice A. Kropp, managing editor*

# Finding Success Apparent Failure

A long time ago there was a preacher who lived in very chaotic times. The government was corrupt. The country feared foreign invaders. The rich victimized the poor. Religion was at a low ebb. People had an almost superstitious trust in their institutions and traditions. Idolatry was rampant. Some preachers preached popular messages, but not this man. He gave it to them straight from the Lord, and he paid for it dearly. He came from a small country town and those people were the first to oppose him. They even threatened his life if he did not stop preaching. They saw him as a threat to their village as well as to the nation. Somehow he learned of their plots and he cried to God for protection and his life was spared. He learned to trust God in the face of physical danger, a valuable lesson he would need later on, because God had bigger things in mind for this preacher.

Then something dreadful happened to this preacher, and it happens to a lot of workers in the Lord's vineyard today, too. He got so discouraged and down on himself because he saw that his preaching was getting nowhere. He faithfully preached righteousness and repentance, but nobody listened. Even worse, the wicked grew prosperous out of their wickedness.

These hypocrites had the audacity to laugh at the preacher. On the way to the bank they openly predicted his downfall. They mouthed obedience to God while they ridiculed his sermons.

This was too much for the preacher and he cried to God again. God did not give him the kind of answer he expected. He wanted judgment, but God challenged him to greater faith and endurance. After all, God said in effect, you are still playing ball in the minor leagues. What do you think it will be like in the majors? Besides,

your country is still at peace and bad times are coming. In fact, even your own family will turn against you.

And so it came to pass after about two decades of peace the preacher found himself in the capital, and his sermons were heard by the king's agents and by the religious hierarchy. They considered him a traitor and demanded his execution, but again God spared him.

But the king learned that the preacher had been writing his sermons, so he summoned him and demanded to see what he had written. The king was so enraged by what he read that he took out his knife, shredded the preacher's manuscript, and burned it. Nevertheless, the preacher kept on preaching God's word.

But inwardly he was overcome by doubt and despair. His worst fear was that God had abandoned him, even though he had been faithful to the word of the Lord. But he could not stand the persecution, the reproach, the rejection, and loneliness. "Why this perpetual persecution?" he cried out to God. "Are you going to fail me?"

God told him to get his head straightened out. He had taken a wrong turn somewhere and needed to repent of his bad attitude. If he did, God would restore him and make him his mouthpiece once again. "But," God said, "don't expect your enemies to go away. Trust me, no matter what, because I am with you."

Duly recharged, the preacher returned to his preaching. Meanwhile, another vile and capricious king had taken over. He would consult the preacher and then disregard his advice. Other times he had the preacher imprisoned and beaten. As God had promised, he delivered his man and things got worse.

Finally, the country was overrun by foreign invaders and the preacher was carried off to another country by a remnant of those who escaped. There he kept on preaching repentance. God's word will be vindicated; His righteousness will prevail. Without any signs of success or revival among his people, the preacher and writer died, but we are instructed and blessed by his work today. His name is Jeremiah.

How did he succeed as a man of God in the face of persecution and failure? He knew God's call, God's commission, and he never wavered from it. In the tough times when he cried out to God, God reminded him of what he had called him to do—and it was a majestic, earthshaking work: "This day I give you authority over nations and over kingdoms, to pull down and to uproot, to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant."

At the same time, God promised him: "The kings and princes of Judah, the priests and its people, will make war on you, but shall not overcome you, for I am with you and will keep you safe...I make you a fortified city, a pillar of iron, a wall of bronze, to stand fast against the whole land."

Each of us as the Lord's servants will face a host of enemies, some of them claiming to speak for the Lord. Our lives may not be threatened, but other threats will come, forcing us to rely completely on God. We cannot risk trying to save ourselves by our own skills and credentials. We must learn to rest totally in God.

When we're new at this game, we will face the temptation of impatience. We will question our elders and supervisors in our missions. We will conceive great plans, only to have them shot down.

# ess in ailure

*By Jim Reapsome*

I came into my first Christian organization fresh out of the newspaper business. Working on daily deadlines I had learned how to get out copy fast. The press had a certain amount of power that could be used. In this mission I soon learned that just because the PR director said frog, not everybody jumped. I had to cool down and learn a new environment. God was teaching me some important lessons while I made a lot of mistakes. I called a famous British preacher Jones when his name was Lloyd-Jones. I had never met anyone with a hyphenated name before. Be patient. Cool down. God is preparing you for greater responsibilities and opportunities in the future.

Like the rock of Gibraltar, Jeremiah stood strong because—to use his words—he ate God’s word and found it as delicious as a filet mignon. He said God’s word was the joy and delight of his life. Unless that is true of us, we preach and teach in vain. Our thoughts must be permeated by Scripture. Our minds must be soaked by God’s word, not just for ideas to talk about but to keep our own hearts pure, right, and faithful before Him. This is a tough battle for us in Christian ministry. I still fight it. I still need nourishment, consolation, instruction and conviction from Scripture.

Jeremiah preserved and succeeded because he prayed fervently and honestly. He did not play games with God. When he felt rotten, he said so to the Lord. Even when he felt that God had betrayed him, he said so. Sure, he got slapped down for that, but then he got straightened out and continued his mission. After that experience you do not find him complaining again, even though things got worse in Judah and Jerusalem.

I don’t know what God has in mind for us



in our time and culture. I do know our message is not welcomed around the world. I know Christians face incredible demands on their time and interests, which cuts into the time they have to read and pray.

But never allow the prevailing culture to sway you from your mission. God will make you like fortified cities and walls of bronze. He will use you to both demolish and build kingdoms. Such is the power of his calling and of the Christian mission you represent. **H**



*Jim Reapsome is associate pastor of Western Springs (IL) Baptist Church. He was the editor of Evangelical Missions Quarterly, 1964-97, and of World Pulse, 1982-97. He is the author of Final Analysis (EMIS, 1999) and numerous Bible study guides. He and his wife Martha live in Wheaton, IL.*



# B uilding O

## The St

I am naturally a pessimist. My first trip to Hawaii was when I was 10 years old. We stayed on the northern shore of Oahu, surrounded by sheer vibrant green cliffs and the kind of tropical beauty that people dream of visiting their whole lives. But on that first morning, I wrote in my diary, “I woke up and counted my mosquito bites.” (A couple years later I threw that diary in the trash. My mother fished it out, and to my horror told a Sunday school class about my mosquito bite counting in paradise.)

We see this kind of negative tendency in Scripture as well. Despite the mind boggling miracles and good things Jesus was doing, in Mark 7 the Pharisees were fussing over the disciples eating without washing their hands! So the question is: Where are we focusing? When we face the stuck syndrome in a family or a church are we seeing only the problem or are we seeing the strength?

One statement, frequently heard in church, that makes me cringe is, “*Konnani chiisai mure desu ga...*” though we are just a tiny gathering. Why do I disdain this statement? Because the focus is on how small we are, on a weakness, not necessarily to our benefit but possibly to our detriment. I recall that another church, after completing a new building, kept reiterating the phrase, *watashitachi ni mottainai hodo no tatemono*. It’s almost a waste for a group such as us to be in this wonderful building. This seemed to

convey that a building was more valuable than the people within it. These are but a few of the many statements that emphasize a weak identity of the Japanese Church. Overall we might say that the Japanese Church has an inferiority complex; it is obsessed with its weakness and smallness. Unwittingly the Church is locked into patterns that are enforced by these dominant beliefs. The stories emphasize smallness, weakness, and barrenness.

The trend in family therapy today is overtly optimistic. Much of therapy in the past has focused on problems, instead of potentials. The therapist role was to identify a family’s problem and then determine the right way to fix it, like a doctor diagnosing an illness and prescribing the right medication. The primary attention was given to the problem itself. This emphasis in therapy has radically changed. The belief today is that by labeling a family, we make improvement harder. By seeking to uncover pathology, we entrench it. But the focus of today’s therapy has shifted from pathology to competence. The underlying optimism of this shift is that families are resourceful and have a capacity to grow, learn, and change. Every family possesses latent or unrecognized abilities, which are the key to their existence and future. Thus, therapy sessions today focus on building competence rather than correcting deficits. More than anything, a wise therapist will help a family recognize their strengths. This

takes skill because, in the words of family counseling trainer Dr. William Madsen, “Competence is quiet. The trick is to listen very carefully for it.”

Of course there is nothing wrong with knowing our weakness as long as this is not our dominant focus. According to Natural Church Development of Christian Schwarz our weakness has a critical limiting factor. In the diagram, the shortest stave determines how much water the barrel can hold. Obviously we need to work to improve our weakness, but it is important to note, the best way to do this is to utilize our strengths.

So the next question is: What is the strength of the Japanese Church? Three words that come to my mind are *holiness*, *faithfulness*, and *endurance*. I see *holiness* in the Church keeping itself from the world; Christians in Japan look very different from the rest of society, aiming to live a life of purity and reverence for God. Holiness is not one of the strengths of the African Church, which is struggling with immorality. I see *faithfulness* in that believers are loyal to their church despite discouragements and also oppositions from unbelieving husbands or families. Such faithfulness does not characterize the US Church, where the average tenure of even pastors is less than three years.

Perhaps most of all I see *endurance* as the shining strength of the Church in Japan. I am

# In Strengths

## Stuck Syndrome: Article 9

*By Andrew Leon Meeko*

struck with humility when I observe the history of Japan. Countless thousands were persecuted, enduring injustices and heinous torture. In 1637 alone over 37,000 believers were slaughtered. In Nagasaki, on February 15, 1597, twenty-six Christians were crucified. For over 250 years there was continual holocaust for Christians in Japan. I have been amazed to find that the blood of Christians was shed all over Japan, on this river bank or that mountain side, or in some remote field. Yet there is no commemoration, no monument, seemingly they are forgotten, uncelebrated even by the nearest church. The blood of those who refused to tread upon a symbol of Christ sings out to us, it is a song of enduring love for Christ.

Some time ago I asked myself, “Who do I know who has severely suffered for their faith?” To my shame I could not think of one American that I knew personally. But there is someone whose story deserves telling.

Today the Rev. Haruo Yamamoto struggles even to stand or walk because of Parkinson’s. But for many years he touched the heart of Maui, pasturing numerous *issei* (first generation) fellowships around the isle. Yamamoto was one of the most energetic and heart-warming pastors I ever met. He would dress as a clown, play hymns on a saw, and draw people to Christ all at the same time. He was also the perfect man to pastor the aging *issei*, a people who had struggled to survive work-

ing in the sugar cane fields. In Rev. Yamamoto’s study I remember hanging against the stark white wall not a beautiful Hawaiian wreath but a sobering crown of thorns—an appropriate symbol of the past.

During the war Yamamoto was a *kamikaze*. He was also a Christian. Needless to say, being a Christian in the Imperial Army was a fearful thing; persecution was guaranteed. The military gloated in putting him in situations where he had to compromise his faith. Throughout this challenge Yamamoto stood strong. But finally one day, Yamamoto’s boots disappeared. He was subsequently called in by his commanding officer and accused of negligence for losing the Emperor’s property; all military supplies belonged to the Emperor. Yamamoto was then told he must recover the boots. This order was a well-planned and impossible task as there were no boots to be had, and it was likely that his commanding officer himself had arranged to have the boots stolen.

There were only two choices for Yamamoto, steal someone else’s boots or face the wrath of the Imperial Army. Though Yamamoto struggled, he knew as a Christian he could not steal; he must stand strong. Then the day came. One morning he was called forward at an assembly, the other soldiers were informed that Yamamoto was guilty of stealing the Emperor’s property and would be made a public example. He was then forced to

stand on the stage at attention while being beaten with rods. Blow after blow hit him. He lost control of his bladder. The blows continued. Then he lost control of his bowels. But the blows kept coming. The next thing he knew he was waking up in a hospital. He had been in a coma for weeks, and it was months before he could walk again. His body has likely never been the same.

This and other stories are the glory of the Japanese Church. This is the Churches’ true identity of great strength, which cries out to be told. These are the narratives that have power to break the hold of an inferiority mentality and the stuckness it enforces.

Yes, the Church in Japan is stuck, but the Church is also strong—so strong that the world should be looking to Japan for a lesson in faithful endurance—a lesson that the Church in Japan paid tuition for with her own blood.



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



# A Vision for Church Pl

*This is the complete text that Gary Fujino preached at this past fall's CPI conference on the final day. Many have since commented on what he said so CPI felt it appropriate to make his words a part of the things like this! Gary originally gave this message in Japanese and was interpreted into English by Map*

It may seem strange to see a native English speaker talking in Japanese and a Japanese native speaker interpreting him into English. But there is a point.

We are not a missionary conference. This conference is about all of us doing something together to reach Japan. And there are many more Japanese than there are missionaries in Japan.

I have learned and been trained for most of my ministry skills by Japanese. How to preach, how to do evangelism, how to pray, how to counsel and how to follow leadership; I have learned all these things from Japanese pastors and laymen. I wish to honor my many Japanese mentors by speaking to them as my peers in Christ in their own language this morning.

*Rom. 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

Nine years ago, before I came to Japan, I had a dream. It was about serving God as a missionary in Japan. This was a vague, undefined dream. My dream was to come here as an evangelist and church planter, to "win Japan for Christ." But I never knew what that really meant, what it would look like. I kept dreaming.

God has since moved me from dreaming into obeying His call. Now He is fleshing out that call with a clear vision. This God-given vision is not only for planting individual churches but to see church planting movements started. It is this vision that has been my driving passion for the past seven years of my life and ministry.

Yet I am the least qualified to be speaking on this. In nearly nine years of church planting as a missionary, I have been involved with two major church planting efforts that have yielded either weak or non-existent churches. A third one that I am involved with presently is struggling to get started. One person even questioned whether I should do this talk because I have nothing to show for "a vision for church planting movements in Japan." In one sense he was correct. Like Paul said about himself and his sin, I can say about

myself and church planting - I am the "chief" of church planter failures. My efforts to date have shown little visible fruit. I have no "results" yet. Still, I have been following His call upon my life. I cannot escape it. I am learning that church planting and church multiplication are not about method or about creating results only but about letting the God of the harvest sovereignly plant, cultivate and harvest according to His divine plan. It is this theological interpretation of that vision for church planting movements in Japan which keeps that first dream of seeing Japan won for Christ hot and burning. It is a vision that pursues me and causes my passion for God to continue to grow.

## **For I am not ashamed of the Gospel**

Yet my passion easily turns to other emotions. Emotions like jealousy, envy, discouragement and anger. Since I have become a missionary, I have recognized again the depth of sinfulness within myself, even as a Christian worker. I see the success and recognition of others' achievements and feel deep envy at times for what they have. I want it for myself. I become discouraged when I meet with obstacles or things do not turn out the way that I expect them to. I want to give up. And I become angry when I am not listened to, when others push their agendas ahead of my own. I feel hurt or needing to justify myself. When I fail or things go badly in ministry, I get angry at myself. **HAVE YOU EVER FELT THAT WAY?**

I have within myself a deep fear of failure. Even worse, I really have a fear that my own heart desperately needs healing and much grace. I look at myself and when I do I see my inward pride, my hidden boasting and constant silent criticism of others. With this perspective, I see no hope for church planting movements through Gary Fujino.

The apostle Paul said, I am not ashamed of the gospel. The passage I have been repeating in this message is very famous. Everyone knows Romans 1:16. But, what about Romans 1:15? What does

that say? I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

Who was in Rome? Who was the apostle Paul writing to? The church in Rome. In other words, Christians. Believers! Followers of Christ, like you and like me! Paul went to preach the Gospel to other Christians, as well as to unbelievers. The first time I heard this 7 years ago from the lips of Steve Childers, I was overwhelmed spiritually. Yes, I, Gary Fujino, needed to preach the Gospel to myself! That is why I am not ashamed of the gospel.

That was such a liberating truth. The truth of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is that He allows for and understands our human failures because He knows that we all desperately need Him and the power of His Gospel. That is the majesty of grace. We as human beings do not allow for failure. We hide our weaknesses. We want people to like us. We are afraid to show who we really are. **MAYBE YOU'RE NOT LIKE THIS BUT I SURE AM.** The reality is that we are desperately sinful and desperately in need of God, even as Christians. And the best thing is that God knows this, even if we don't! God always, always gives a second chance. God doesn't look at our failures. He looks at us and loves us, just as we are.

This is what "qualifies" me to speak with you today about church planting movements in Japan today. I do not speak to you today from my successes and my strengths. I speak to you from my weakness. I am presently a failure at church planting. I have no results. My inward pride almost stopped me from admitting this to you. But knowing that God is my "Daddy" and accepts me despite my present failure helped me to say this. And as long as the Lord permits, I will not stop from continuing to try to do everything I know to see revival and church planting movements begin in this nation of Japan, even if I continue to fail for awhile. Because I know that God is able. I love Japan and the Japanese so much.

I am not ashamed of the Gospel. I desperately need to constantly preach the Gospel truths of repenting and believing to myself. It is only under this gospel of grace and brokenness that true

# Planting Movements in Japan

*Parts of this sermon were not used in the talk because of time constraints but the entire manuscript has been included here. The CPI articles for this edition of the Japan Harvest. Thanks always to the JEMA Publications committee for making room for the work of Matsudaira of Asian Access/LIFE Ministries.*

renewal and revival can happen. Please be clear on this. I am not talking about what we do but who we are. Church planting movements begins with each one of us. It is based upon action but it stems from our character, who we are in Christ and what He is making us into.

So what is the next step once we realize this? I firmly believe that because of what Christ has accomplished on the Cross and because of the power of the Holy Spirit that each one of us can be a church planter. Even me.

Recently, I saw this on the desk of a Christian leader:

Every believer a missionary  
Every home/workplace a church  
Every church a training center

Yesterday pastor Chida spoke on his vision of the possibility for tens of thousands of churches to network in Japan. One missionary here at this conference shared about his dream for karaoke churches along every major train line in Tokyo. New groups like CAN (Christian Arts Network) are networking Christian artists throughout Japan for the first time ever. CLTC (Christian Leadership Training Center) is training a new generation of leaders who will impact people for this generation. Each of these has and will impact church planting movements in Japan.

I use these examples to say that, except for pastor Chida's great vision and work, all of these other examples have either been influenced by or directly been birthed by the CPI movement. People have received vision and motivation to try something great for God because they felt that they could do it. God moved them by the Spirit and because of this there is a fresh wind of new ministries and outreaches blowing across this land. Isn't that exciting?

## Now, How About You?

This past summer I read an article in the Asian Wall Street Journal (of all places!) on the birth of new churches in America. The article's main

focus was that people everywhere are starting their own churches. Even those who are not Christians! Yes, in Jewish communities, Catholic parishes and evangelical churches throughout America there is a trend that is sweeping the religious community. The newspaper called them "Do-It-Yourself (DIY)" churches. People across America are dissatisfied with the status quo and are literally creating their own churches in their own homes. Even non-Christian groups. Can you believe that? The article said that this is surfacing deep felt needs among people for deeper spiritual truths that cannot be met through what we have always done.

What this says to me is that there is a desperate spiritual need that is out there which is not yet being met. So people are looking for spirituality but without Christ and His church. Isn't this a tragedy? Shouldn't we do something about this ourselves? If they can DIY their own churches, can't we, too? Yes, we can. And it's already happening here in Japan, too.

This is what we can do. I call this do-it-yourself church planting. It is what drives me despite my own challenges.

Paul said, I am not ashamed of the gospel. ARE YOU?

I can fail. I can admit my sin because I know that I am loved more than I can ever know and because God loves me just the way I am – a failure, a complainer, a proud, arrogant man. This can only be true when the focus is not on myself, my reputation, my accomplishments, I know that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (and forgives me!) Phil. 4:13

A vision for church planting movements in Japan has both nothing to do with and everything to do with Gary Fujino. This is not about me; this is all for the kingdom. But if "I have been crucified with Christ then I no longer live but Christ lives in me." (Gal. 2:20). And I can do anything. If the resurrected Lord lives in us we can do anything. Even DIY CHURCHES!

I think that many of us know what we must do. And even if we don't then I believe with all of my heart that God will show us if we seek. He

promises that in His word.

Will you preach the gospel to yourself and believe that God can do the impossible through you? There's nothing to be ashamed about this Gospel!

By this time next year, whether you come to the conference or not, promise me that you will have done something for church planting movements in Japan through your own life. Because this is not about you. Yet it is completely dependent on you. Do you understand? Yes?

Then, there is only one thing left to do. "JUST DO IT!" LET'S DO IT!

And for the resultant church planting movements that will eventually sweep across this land, through the obedience and faithful witnessing of Japanese and expatriate believers alike, to God, be all the glory.

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# A Vision for Church

by Jiro Chida

*Jiro Chida is the senior pastor of Keisen Christ Church in Yonezawa City in Yamagata prefecture. They are also planting three other new churches. There are 6 Pastors, 4 missionaries and 3 lay leaders. J. Mission, Sendai Baptist Seminary, and The Japan Church Growth Institute (JCGI). Pastor Chida*

I was asked to share on the theme: a vision for church planting movements. So as I share with you both my testimony and my vision, I would like to tell you how God has brought us to this point.

First of all, I would like to ask you some questions. Do you believe that church planting movements will take place in Japan? If you believe raise your hand. Wonderful! I think that a lot of it has to do with CPI having followed this theme for ten years. And I believe this also. So how do you think this will happen?

I think the most important thing is a clear understanding of the gospel. And believing the gospel just as it is, which is repentance and forgiveness. Do we all believe that we are one hundred percent forgiven? Or when somebody repents are you able to forgive him one hundred percent? I think that our divergence from this gospel is what stands in the way of church planting movements. This is something that cannot happen by human power but requires the help of the Holy Spirit. The thing that is most important is, just like with the early church, that the Holy Spirit come upon us and that we be filled with the Holy Spirit. And that has already been given to us in grace.

I also think that God has already laid down the conditions for church planting movements to take place. One of those things is networking. Another is transforming the church through the perspective of the cell church and through the development of cell group leaders.

Are you saved, raise your hand. Everybody is saved, right? But when you look at the book of Acts, more than being saved we are talking about being born as disciples. And do we understand that when we have been saved we are born into being disciples. We see disciples birthed, we nurture them, and then we send them out. So for us as leaders, we need to become like Barnabas and support them and lead them. By this I believe that church multiplication will take place with a certainty.

About thirty years ago, I heard that throughout the world in one day quite a few churches

were born. I began to think that I would like to see the same thing happen in Japan, that we would see churches being born on a daily basis. I think that was the root of my vision for church multiplication.

The church that I pastor is in Yamagata Prefecture in Yonezawa City. Our church began in December of 1959, so that would make this year our 45th year. One of the interesting characteristics of our church is that over these 45 years, every year five-ten people, sometimes about twenty people, who have been saved and nurtured in our churches and are sent out getting a job, going to college or experiencing a job transfer. Every year in March we send them out and that is a very sad thing for us. But to just be discouraged

over that becomes a thing of loss for us, so we decided to take this as a blessing.

When we decided to give thanks for that and began to see it as a normal thing we were able to realize that this was a Biblical concept. We began to realize that just as the early church had been spread out throughout the world because of persecution, here in Japan, our people had been sent out because of job changes or moving into college. We realized that this was one of the strategies for mission in Japan. Since that time we as a church have taken it as our mission to see

young people saved and raised up as disciples of the Lord, then to send them out as witnesses for Christ. We stopped having going away parties and instead give them a prayer of blessing as we send them out. We're asking that God would use them at their work or at their school.

During this time, in January of 1973, the man that we call the father of the birth of the churches for the Conservative Baptists in Yamagata Prefecture, Joseph Meeko, began his ministry of pioneer evangelism in the Ochanomizu area of Tokyo. In about March of that year our church sent out 20 people with about fifteen of those going to the Tokyo metropolitan area. One brother said, "I am going to go to Tokyo and I'm going to help Pastor Meeko with his work there." When

he said that everybody decided they would do the same thing. So within a very short amount of time the leaders of our church and myself began to go to Tokyo on a monthly basis to help in the work there. Through that we became the main church that was involved with the ministry of Pastor Meeko in the Tokyo metropolitan area.

Pastor Meeko was a man of vision. He had a vision to start a church in Okachimachi in Tokyo which would be the center and then to lay out churches in bed towns along the Musashino and Nambu Lines. He also envisioned churches for

*We began to realize that just as the early church had been spread out throughout the world because of persecution, here in Japan, our people had been sent out because of job changes or moving into college.*

# Multiplication In Japan

*This is the main church for 14 churches in Yamagata, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Chiba, Saitama and Kanagawa Prefectures. They Tiro serves nationwide as a mentor for the church multiplication network of Asian Access. He is a board member of Antioch is also a national lecturer for JCGI as well. This message is from an address at the Japan 2004 CPI Conference.*

the Science City up in Tsukuba and in Narita City, which we call the entryway to Japan. As a result of that four churches were born in the metropolitan Tokyo area.

In 1984 our church in Yonezawa began to look at Tsukuba where the church planting had not come to pass and decided to follow the Lord's leading on that. Through this we were able to send out Pastor Okita and his family to Uchiku City which is a satellite city of Tsukuba City. From a little bit before that we had sent a young pastor along with another couple from our church who had just been married to the Sekiyado area of Chiba Prefecture. In this town, they started a Sunday school and home meetings. So in 1985 then, we also were able to form a church in Sekiyado

that also became a part of the church plant. These families were all laymen but they have already started their second church in Ishioka City in Ibaraki Prefecture.

Then eleven years ago the Lord spoke to us and said that He wanted us to be a church that would start many new churches. So the next year, the Lord led us to start church planting in four different locations. One was close to Yonezawa City in Nanyo City. Another was in two locations in Aizu City in Fukuoka Prefecture and also in Chigasaki City in Kanagawa Prefecture. At that

time the Lord led us into this parent church network as we call it, which was what we used to start this network of churches.

A parent church network is a gathering of churches that are within a one-hour area of each

other and want to start churches. They gather together in a network to encourage one another, learn from one another, to get training with one another, and at the very least start one new church. This initially began under the direction of the missiologist Robert Logan who was brought in through the connection of Asian Access, at that time Life Ministries.

What Robert Logan told us was that we should not just be looking for a vision within the Yamagata area, but we should seek where networks

like this could be spread throughout Japan for the purpose of multiplication. He wanted to see five senior pastors who would commit to this vision of being Barnabas throughout the country. We said yes without even thinking about it. By 2002 the parent church network had multiplied to Okinawa Prefecture as well as Hokkaido Prefecture. In 2003, we began in Kansai, in Kanto area and also in the eastern Kanto area as well as now in Miyagi Prefecture. As we five pastors go throughout the country and work with churches what we are always looking for as we go is to place

the DNA for church planting movements within them.

What we are seeking then is that networks might begin birthing networks. I believe that the church planting network that I am involved with is going to continue to grow and will cover all of Japan. I've had the belief from a long time ago that among the 7,000 churches that exist in Japan, at the very least 3,000 of those churches will be able to take on the essential mission of church planting. If you think of it this way, and you take 3,000 churches in Japan with this kind of vision, when they get together and three years later in 2008, there will be 10,000 churches in Japan. Half of those 10,000 is 5,000 churches and if they begin to do church planting, by the time we hit 2011 there will be 15,000 churches in Japan. This is at least as many post offices as we have in Japan, so I don't think this is too hard of a thing to do.

Doing church planting through networks is something we can easily do under the power of God. In July of 2004 in the Kansai area with the sponsorship of the Antioch Church there was a seminar on world missions. It was at that time that I introduced church planting by network. After I finished speaking, the main speaker, who was a major leader of a house church in China, came up to me and said very excitedly, "What you are talking about is what most people don't know but we are doing the exact same thing in China right now." He asked me to come to share in China where he is. I just kind of blurted out that if at least three churches will get together and work on this then easily you can bring about one new church. Because I myself have experienced this church planting by network, I really believe it works

I think Church planting is not a difficult thing. Because the Lord has provided for us everything we need to do this. What we need to do is have faith and let the Lord prepare us and then move forward on that basis. So what kind of preparation do we need? As I have already said the first thing is church planting and church

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multiplication by network. It is a system for those who want to be encouraged for those who want to do church planting without fear.

Another thing is cell groups. I really believe that the idea of cell churches is something that will change the way we think about church. That is people of the church getting together and as leaders standing up and leading the church as evangelists and pastors within the community of faith.

The third thing is where pastors and mis-

sionaries take the role of Barnabas. In regard to this I think we need to take a look at what it Biblically means to be a leader so that we can come along side of those that are believers and raise them up as Biblical leaders. I don't think it is an exaggeration to say that the key to church multiplication is through this ministry of Barnabas.

Another thing I emphasize is what I call CBTE or Church Based Theological Education. Within the church, as these lay people are being raised up and are working within the church, we nurture them within the church with a theological basis. Even within the Tohoku area where our denomination Seminary

is located, they are changing the way they do their training along these lines.

These are the four things that I believe in but there are things beyond this that are perhaps even more important than what I've been talking about. The first thing of course is the Gospel. And just as I shared with you earlier it is so important for us to grab what the essence of the Gospel is and to believe in it. In Matthew chapter 16 Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter answered Him, "You are the Christ, Son of the living God." Jesus said to him, "Upon this rock I will build my church."

And Jesus commanded us in Matthew 28 that we are to go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. But for the disciples of the early church just looking at the cross and living by that was not enough. When they had been

fighting with one another over who was better, as they looked at Jesus and as they looked at the cross, they realized their own weakness within the disagreement that took place and met at the foot of the cross.

None of us can live for the Gospel with our own strength. Another Helper is important. A very important passage is Acts 1:14. They all joined together constantly in prayer along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and with His brothers. It was at this point when the

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disciples were able as weak and sinful people for the first time to come together and be filled. And we know by looking at Acts chapter 2 that this is where the power of the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples and filled them and changed them. In Acts 1:8 the Lord said that the Holy Spirit must come upon you and through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit you will be my witnesses throughout the world and to the uttermost

parts of the earth. The Jerusalem church couldn't do that. But through persecution the Lord sent the church throughout the world. Through these things all necessary conditions were fulfilled and from that point the church grew and went throughout the world.

At the world missions seminar that I mentioned to you earlier, I heard this news. It was said there are more Japanese people overseas getting saved than those who are within Japan. I couldn't believe my ears when I heard that but apparently it is true. What I heard was that those who get saved overseas come back to Japan. They can't get used to the Japanese church and they don't continue with their faith. There are many of these. But I thought that this was strange and wrong because when we are saved as Christians we have to ask how have we been prepared and led as disciples.

I think that if we understood that it is the Christian thing to do to be born, raised and sent out as disciples then these words would not be spoken. What happened with the early church when they were sent out to different parts of the earth? Did they cry and say there are no churches here and this culture is different? Wherever they went they shared the Gospel and that is where churches were born.

What I would like to be is one who prays for the church in Japan that its people would be so filled with the Word and the Spirit of God that as people are sent out to different jobs or to school they would receive training as persons sent on the mission of the church and that would be a transforming work within their lives and within the life of the churches. What I would like to see is that this would be like a wave that would sweep across the country where those that have been saved overseas would be prepared for coming back to Japan and they would be sent within Japan to create new flocks for the work of the Lord as disciples who have been born of the Lord.

What I would like us to be as leaders, as pastors or missionaries, is that we would not rule over the people of our churches but that we would encourage one another as Barnabas. We would see the multiplication of the church through serving these disciples throughout the country. I believe that there will certainly be a great revival that will take place throughout Japan and that we need to make a new commitment before the Lord for this to happen.

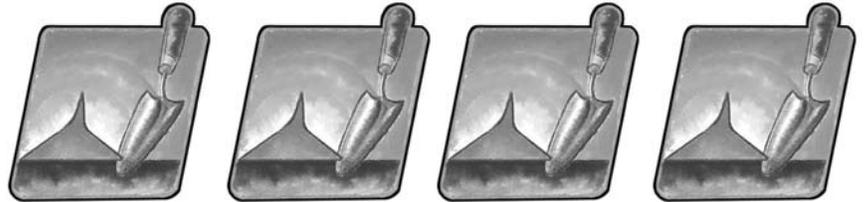
I believe that the Lord is about to bring about a new wave of church multiplication throughout Japan. What we need to do is go beyond our denominations and go beyond the walls of our churches to see that the Gospel reaches every person, that the body of Christ develops new flocks. Through that people will be developed to be sent out for the mission of the church. This is the number one mission that we should fulfill as the church.

And how do we raise up these disciples who have been born? Well, it is through celebration and it is through the cell group (a loving community). And it is through the coming down of the Holy Spirit, through a broken spirit, and through the word of Jesus Christ that these things will occur. Through the preaching of the Word, dreams, and visions, the vision will be fulfilled, and we will be able to move out as we are sent into different places.

We are not pastors; we are not laypeople. Each one of us is a witness of the Lord Jesus. Even though our roles and the way that we function are different, we can move forward together. And I believe that through this many new people will come into the family of God.

# CPI Transitions

by John Mehn



In the last two weeks I met face to face with field directors from two JEMA missions. I had told these leaders that I was interested in their feedback regarding some upcoming suggested changes in CPI. In this article I would like to sketch out for you what I outlined for them.

Several years ago the CPI Leadership Team met with some consultants who came to observe the CPI conference. They affirmed us in many areas and cautioned us in others. Since those meetings the Leadership Team has wrestled with some major issues related to the CPI ministry. We also invited some key JEMA leaders to be part of these discussions and conducted Leaders' Summits early last year in Tokyo.

## CPI VISION

***Advancing God's Kingdom by mentoring leaders to be part of a movement that is multiplying churches that are multiplying disciples through the power of the Gospel.***

As a result of all of these discussions we decided to make some major realignments in ministry to further our vision of multiple gospel-driven church planting movements in Japan.

We have seen the CPI ministry grow and widen to include over ninety denominations and agencies. Now we would like to take this wide and broad movement and deepen its impact by further equipping leaders for effectiveness. CPI would transition from primarily a conference-centered movement with some learning, to an equipping-centered movement offering year round training opportunities near the frontlines. We want to see the movement deepen from a single event in one location to ongoing equipping in many locations.

## What to expect at the National Conference

The CPI national conference itself will undergo transformation. As before, the conference will continue to emphasize the same two primary purposes of vision and spiritual renewal.

### ***Vision for Church Multiplication***

Research shows that over the last several years the church in Japan has not

been growing or at best has been growing only slightly. We have talked about why this may be. Many claim it is the culture of Japan. Of course, the soil of Japan's culture is very difficult for the gospel but not impossible.

The CPI conference has been highlighting some indigenous ministries which have been thriving and multiplying in Japan. These church planters have had to make some deliberate changes in the way they view their ministry as well as the way they carry it out. As I mentioned at the last CPI conference, we need to learn how to remove hindrances and obstacles to church reproduction. While some have, I feel many of us have not wrestled nearly enough with these issues.

We want to allow God to speak to us more about His vision for His glory in Japan and His vision for the outworking through His Church. We must all ask ourselves what it is going to take to accomplish this. The church in Japan cannot continue with the current status quo. Donald McGavran said, "More of the same is not enough." All of us need to be involved in this change. Some are farther along and will need to be patient with the rest. But we must all move towards change for the sake of Christ's gospel and His Church.

### ***Emphasis on Spiritual Vitality***

At each national conference there will continue to be the strong emphasis on spiritual vitality and renewal based on the transforming power of the gospel. God works through people and the most important part of these people is not knowledge or ability but their godly character. People of faith, who know Christ's forgiveness and righteousness daily, will be more effective in the Christian life and Christian ministry. The CPI conference has been a place where leaders in their weakness can restore their hope in Christ for themselves, their families, and their churches. We want to see this continue as God chooses to bless.

### ***Refreshing CPI Environment***

The CPI national conference has created an environment of great unity based on a kingdom mindset. CPI is where people feel safe to admit their struggles and find help together. This environment is where trust can be built for future cooperation and partnership. We all know we can do far more together than we can alone. This atmosphere cannot be manufactured

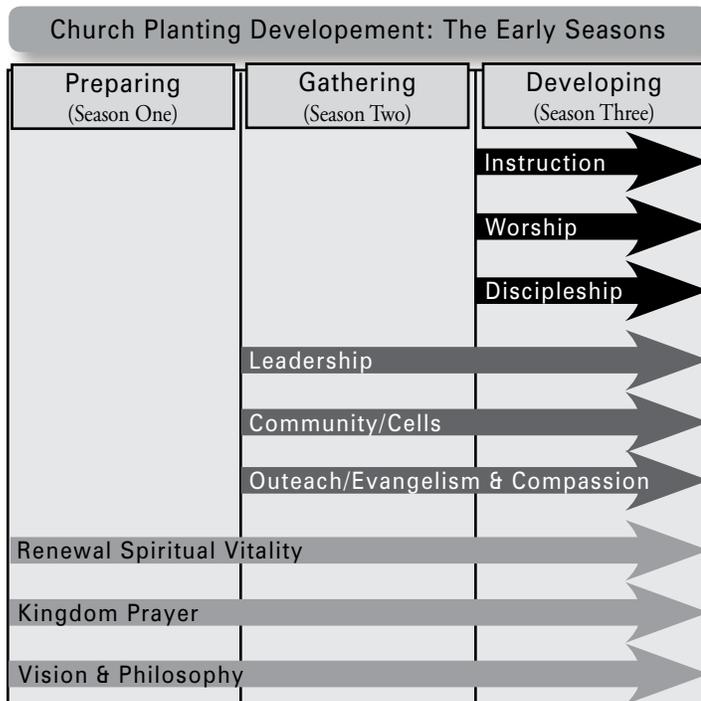
but entered into by prayer and covenanting together. This is reflected most in times of worship, fellowship, prayer, networking, learning, group sessions, and resourcing.

## The 2005 CPI National Conference

The 2005 CPI conference will be held November 8-11 at Fuji Hakone Land. However, there will be many changes. There will be few outside speakers as most teaching will be in-house. In order to best contextualize ministry approaches, we must center on people doing ministry in Japan. There will be one guest speaker, Josiah Bancroft, a church planting team leader in Ireland with World Harvest Mission. Dr. Childers will be in attendance but will have a non-public role of mentoring and coaching.

### Learning Track on Seasons of Church Planting

We want to again refocus our efforts in promoting church planting multiplication. This has led us to multiple learning tracks covering each of the church planting seasons. These will be primarily a survey in nature helping church planters discover where they need to focus their learning and application.



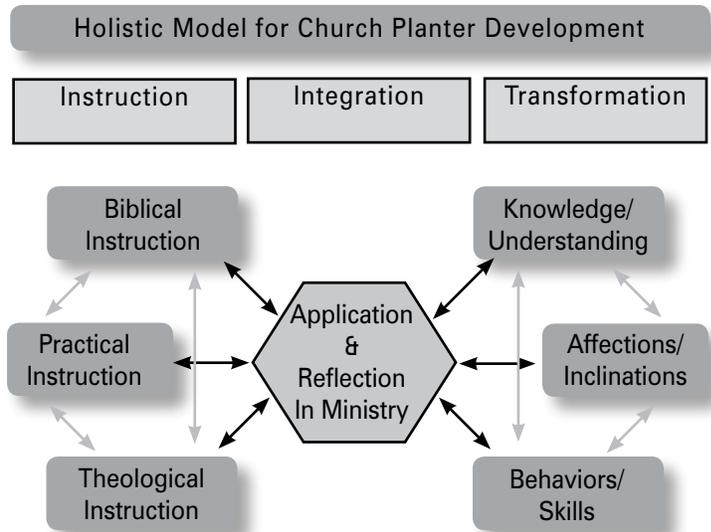
Many times we have talked at the CPI National Conference about the absurdity of starting a reproducing church through a series of steps, hops, or jumps. In church planting many things have to happen all at once, to reproduce even more so. There is some logic to development and therefore the season thinking. There are certain things you need to consider at each season. *(Many of these occur simultaneously but for the sake of equipping we look at them in this manner.)* There are also related elements that have to connect at key junctures.

This year we will offer four of the seasons along with a track on Spiritual Vitality and Renewal. We will be offering the first three seasons, which seem to cover many of the areas that church planters in Japan need, as well as a season on multiplication. The CPI manual materials will be revised for this next conference to contextualize these principles. Here is a tentative list.

1	Preparing to plant the church	Renewal Spiritual Vitality	Kingdom Prayer	Vision & Philosophy
2	Gathering a worshipping community	Leadership	Community/Cells	Evangelism & Compassion
3	Developing gospel centered ministries	Instruction	Worship	Discipleship
4	MULTIPLYING churches and movements	Multiplying churches	Multiplying Networks	Multiplying Movements
5	RENEWING vitality though the gospel	The Gospel and the leader	The Gospel & relationships	The gospel and the church

Each track will have at least a team of five people who will be involved in presenting principles, facilitating, group leadership, and working with the curriculum materials. Japanese and experienced missionaries will be sharing case studies on proven practices.

### Learning Model



The teaching and equipping at the conference will be more intensive, hands-on, and user friendly. The larger emphasis of learning will be on applying and resourcing for frontline ministry. It all begins with principles. These are principles which are Biblical, trans-generational and trans-cultural. This is vitally important as no one model or strategy works in every location. *(There is no one-size-fits-all plan for starting churches in Japan or anywhere.)* There are principles that when applied will bring God-honoring results. There will be more time for reflection in order to apply what is learned and have more interaction and networking opportunities.

Principles are combined by working models and strategies. We can learn a lot from the best practices as they reflect the missiological and practical outworking of these principles. True learning does not end until it results in transformed practices. There will be a shift from learning about ministry toward facilitating workers to develop their own individualized ministry action plans. We are more concerned about church planters making concrete plans for one new ministry idea than for collecting several good ideas that may not be appropriate or applicable in ministry. We want to send everyone

home ready to “hit the ground” with more spiritual enthusiasm and a simple individualized practical plan.

### Day of Intensive Electives

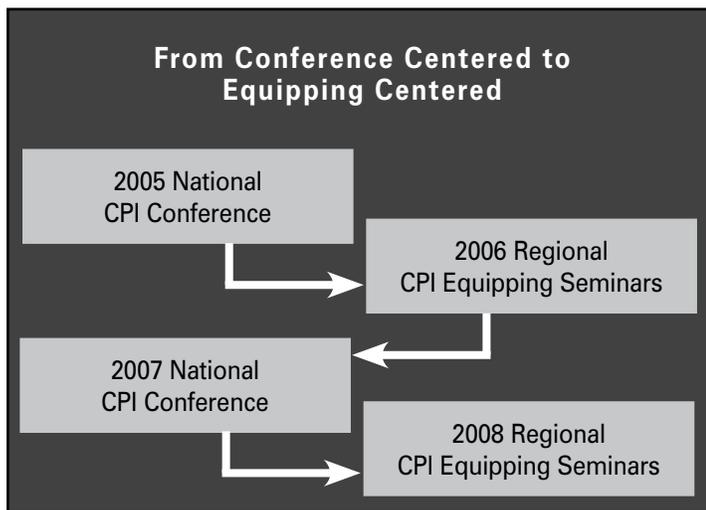
This year’s national conference will end with the final day devoted to intensive electives on the vital signs of healthy churches. Each participant will be able to choose two of the listed intensive electives. Here is a preliminary list.

1. Vision and values for ministry
2. Frontline kingdom prayer
3. Gospel worship
4. Transformational learning communities
5. Authentic caring community/cells
6. Need oriented evangelism ministries
7. Mentoring gospel centered leaders

Again the learning model is the same, hands-on working towards concrete application. Participants will not just talk about praying but will actually pray. These may even include a concert of prayer or an actual prayer walk to facilitate learning.

### What about 2006?

Another major refocus will be to move CPI from primarily a conference-based movement to one that centers on equipping frontline workers in further effectiveness. In order to offer intensive CPI equipping in regions, we will go to an every other year conference. By implication there will be no national annual conference in 2006 with the next national annual conference planned for the fall of 2007.



Beginning in 2006, we will offer several equipping seminars in various regions around Japan. These are not conferences but seminars designed to equip leaders in a particular area of ministry in an intensive manner. The basis for these equipping seminars will follow the vital signs for a healthy church. The locations and times for these seminars will be dependant on available staff for that particular intensive as well as the interest among leaders in a local region.

Our CPI dream is that there would be ongoing equipping activities in every region from a broad based evangelical movement. This would help many more churches and leaders and help facilitate the

fostering of church planting movements.

Imagine a regional seminar on evangelism in a particular area. Participants would review the key biblical and missiological principles of evangelism and also hear about how these principles are being practically applied by effective practices in their own area. So opportunities as well as regional differences could be more deeply investigated. Church planters would then be challenged and assisted in developing a plan for further evangelism ministry in their own particular ministry. When they leave they would have shared their plans with many and possibly link up with some of them for mutual benefit.

There are many groups who have been involved with CPI over the years. We hope to partner with them at various levels for these regional seminars. There is great value in the incredible synergy and cross-pollination of people learning on the frontlines and sharing that with others. This sharing can develop some incredible ministry resources that can be brought back to the annual conference and become part of the core materials that everyone is learning about and teaching from. At the conference more cross-pollination can assure that vibrant ministry approaches are planted in many areas. We expect the valuable lessons from these regional seminars to encourage even more changes in the national conferences.

### What all this means

So you can see there is going to be a great deal of refocusing in the CPI movement. We have not yet realized our dreams, but we believe the steps written in this article must be taken in order to see the vision of multiple gospel-driven church planting movements. This was the same sense I got from my session with mission leaders mentioned in this article. These leaders welcomed this thinking and affirmed CPI’s determination to have a greater focus on equipping brothers and sisters on the frontlines. One mission leader indicated that CPI is where they want to go as a mission.

Some of these transitions will demand hard work, but we believe that it will bring us closer to seeing our joint vision fulfilled. We do not know all the next steps, but we move out in faith. Thank you for your prayers and involvement in this pivotal year for CPI. As these changes occur I would encourage you to pray for CPI that God may continue to bless past and future efforts. This after all is not about CPI but about God and what He wants to do in Japan. He is moving everything to His exaltation. He gives us this promise: “Be still, and know I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psalm 46:10). 卍

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## “Sleeping Giants Come Alive at OBI” - Another Step Forward in the Internet Era

As God's people have come boldly to the throne of grace to receive mercy and grace to help in time of need through the history of His church, He has in His faithfulness to His promise answered in amazing ways to perform His wonders (Hebrews 4:16). Indeed this is true in His gracious leading for the affairs of the Ochanomizu Bible Institute through difficulties and blessings. Accordingly He is leading us into the year 2005 as we have sought Him in facing the challenges of the internet era.

### God's Guiding in Retrospect:

As we look back upon the history of our Institute, we realize that He has led us into existence to meet the needs for training lay leaders to spread the gospel and build up His body, the church. In so doing He led us through different stages of development. First, we had eight years of the Educational Department as an outreach of the Ochanomizu Christian Center, in which we provided training in seminar sessions for subjects deemed meaningful for lay people to participate in church activities. However, at the end of the eight-year period the response had become critically low.

At this critical time God gave us a new plan for starting the Institute concept. It meant we needed to look at our approach quite differently. We had to come up with a new system, organization, curriculum, activities, etc. Thus the Institute came into being in 1991. Ever since then our Institute has had a remarkable response and co-operation from pastors and churches. Yet, we have sensed a pressing burden for reaching out to a wider area with today's fast developing form of communication, i.e., the internet.

### God's Provision for the New Era:

The day of the internet is with us. It is revolutionizing our world and lives of the people. How can we use this means to train God's servants in order to reach our people more effectively? In answering this challenging question He has providentially in amazing ways provided a financial means and qualified people who have technical skills to produce the internet course, which will be available from this April. Almost one full year of preparation efforts have gone into its development.

Internet courses have been used in higher education for some time. As far as theological education in North America, out of 209 American Theological Society-approved schools, an estimated 63 schools have internet courses established as “on-line course,” “distance learning” and so forth. In our domestic scene an increasing number of homes have come to possess computers. The time has come for the internet education. And there is a readiness in the Christian community.

### Any Time; Anywhere:

A characteristic advantage of the internet course is that anybody who desires to learn can access anytime and from anywhere. It is indeed accessible without any time or geographical restrictions. In fact it has a potentiality for global outreach. This aspect is significant in the sense that we have received requests from other places

outside the greater-Tokyo area for opportunities to study such as are being offered at the Institute. Therefore, it expands wider than the traditional confines. We know not where it will lead us as its potentialities seem so wide open for expanding.

### Some Learning Specifics

- A learner can study and send in reports at his own pace, so even a busy person can participate.
- He can set up his own goals and plans. He will be able to confirm his own progress in learning.
- He can communicate not only with his instructor but also with other members who are in the same course. It will encourage and enhance his morale in the learning experience. We might say, “E-Learning engenders E-Friends.” (“E” sound means “good” in Japanese.)
- For person-to-person or face-to-face personal communication, which is a foundational base for any meaningful education, we provide a Summer Schooling experience.

### Diploma Course and Auditor Course:

The Diploma Course is designed for those who desire to study and graduate to become lay workers or ministers. Thirty (30) credits are required to qualify for graduation. Besides, attendance in the Summer School is required. The Auditor Course is for anyone who just desires to study at his own pace in his own area of interest.

#### Courses Offered for the Year 2005:

- Study in the Gospel of John
- Survey of the New Testament (From the Epistle to the Romans To the Revelation)
- Survey of the Old Testament Thought
- Study in the Revelation
- Art of Writing

As it is apparent and obvious, not only lay people but also young ministers can avail themselves of this learning opportunity in terms of the Continuing Education experience, just as they are doing in the regular class sessions at the Institute They find it so profitable, exciting and eye-opening to see lay people's eagerness, ability and dedication to study and to sit next to them in the class-room.

We trust that the Lord has in store for us things which have never entered our minds nor which our eyes have ever seen before.

So, we dedicate the new Internet Course to the Lord and humbly pray that it might be used as a means in His hands to fulfill His purposes even as it is written in the words of Habakkuk: *For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.* (Habakkuk 2:14)

(For further information contact us at:  
<http://obi-net.com/>)

# OBI

OCHANOMIZU BIBLE INSTITUTE  
2005 SPRING SCHEDULE

We are committed  
to equipping  
the Lord's laborers!

First Semester: 16 weeks  
April 11–September 22, 2005  
Summer course : July 11-13  
at Megumi Chalet

### Classes offered:

- |                            |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| • Bible Doctrines          | Dr. Masuda     |
| • O. T. Survey             | Rev. Serata    |
| • Church History in Japan  | Rev. Ito       |
| • O. T. Survey & Thought   | Rev. Nishi     |
| • The Acts of the Apostles | Rev. Fujiwara  |
| • Four Gospels             | Rev. Hatori    |
| • Reconciliation           | Rev. Kanemoto  |
| • Missiology               | Rev. Yamaguchi |
| • First Corinthians        | Rev. Kawamura  |
| • Romans                   | Rev. Fukui     |
| • Pastoral Ministry        | Rev. Noda      |
| • Biblical Counseling      | Rev. Yamaguchi |
| • Church History           | Rev. Yokoyama  |
| • Pastoral Counseling      | Rev. Hori      |
| • Theological Research     | Dr. Masuda     |

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# Deaf Ministries International

The ministry of **Deaf Ministries International** has reached out to the hearing impaired for over 30 years and has also gone around the world. First started by an interest in the deaf orphans in Korea, Neville Muir has used his training to build up churches and workshops for the deaf. Neville and Lill Muir met and married in Japan and in 1991, after some years in Korea, returned to Japan to continue to reach out to the hearing impaired in Japan. Their home church is the Osaka International Church but they have groups of people they minister to in Nara and Yokaichi in Shiga Ken as well. In the past 30 years they have also developing outreach stations in the Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Myanmar. They presently have returned to their International office in Australia but oversee nearly 90 deaf churches plus schools and work stations. With the rapidly increasing staff and needs, DMI is needing more assistance with their programs. Take a look this article and the web site to see the sponsorships and the projects that you can become involved with in the near future.

Sponsoring will bring hope for those who have a desire to improve their skills. You can sponsor a child in need as well as an adult who is seeking to finish their education. A gift of \$30 a month will give a child (child up to 15 years), a secondary student (ages 16-18) or an adult (20 years plus) education and practical skills. Due to their hearing impairment they need to get trained in job skills. Give these people the opportunity to continue their basic education and thus be qualified to get a job in society. Many of these needs are greatest in the Philippines but there are needs in countries in Africa also.

## Ministries

Sponsorships are a great investment. By investing in the projects, not only can you give

scholarships but you can help them as they help themselves. How about investing in one of two agricultural projects that the deaf are working with? For only \$80 (US) you can buy a pig!! After 4 months this mature pig can be sold for double the price and that original money can go back to raise another pig. Breeding is done on the farm. If you don't want to get into the pig market then try a tree! In Ligao, Philippines, the Calamansi (a small lime-like fruit) makes a delicious lemonade kind of drink as well as being used for cooking. A Rambutan tree produces a delicious fruit that looks like a lychee. Both of these trees are fast growing and produce well. You can plant a tree for only \$1.50 (US) and watch the students at the schools in the Philippines grow and groom these trees. These projects can be great projects for your churches, Sunday School children, camps, or your own family. Whatever you give, it will be a great help for the ministry in helping DMI become more self supporting.

There are many stories of the needs of the hearing impaired here in Japan as well as around the world. Here is one story where your investment in the lives of others would be a great help and encouragement.

## "A NEEDY BOY"



Eric is a little deaf boy who was brought to DMI's Christian School for the deaf in Oyugis Kenya by his uncle. Eric's father died of AIDS so his younger brother inherited Eric's mother giving him two wives

to care for. After bearing more children with the mother she too died of the same disease. His uncle in desperation brought Eric to the school

where he has stayed ever since. The uncle too has since died from AIDS. Eric's story is typical of many deaf children in the care of DMI.

## International

If you sponsor one of these children in Africa, the Philippines or Myanmar it will give them a hope and a new future for only \$30 (3000 yen) a month. Also, don't forget the special agricultural projects for only \$80 or as little as \$1.50.

## D=Deaf

## M=Ministries

## I=International

For more information regarding sponsoring, projects or any other questions you might have about DMI, please contact one of the addresses below\*.

PRAY and GIVE for the work of Deaf Ministries International, for their Directors, Rev. and Mrs. Neville Muir, staff and their Japan and world wide ministries. Tax deductible receipts are available for support given through the US office.

DMI  
c/o Mrs. Kathy Toth  
8746 Bluebird Drive.  
West Chester, OH 45069



DMI office in Osaka at:  
Osaka International  
Church  
2-26-47 Tamatsukuri,  
Chuo-ku  
Osaka 540-0004

\* To receive newsletters or sponsorship information, contact Alayne Madore, Chairman of DMI.

Tel. 075-871-8562

email: alaynemadore@hotmail.com

\* www.deafmin.org

\* e-mail: Muir@deafmin.org

## ANNOUNCING—ANNOUNCING—ANNOUNCING—ANNOUNCING—ANNOUNCING—ANNOUNCING

Japan Prayer Summit Schedules JEMA Datebook (page 20), Ladies invited.

**Stated Goal:** *Abiding in Him.* Come experience His holy presence with us.

Ken Reddington, Coordinator/Servant Leader for Western Japan.

Contact JEMA office for more information and to register.

**Costs:** Kanto Area: 29,000 yen, registration deadline (5/1);

Kansai Area: 30,000 yen, registration deadline (5/9); 2,000 yen discount for early registration.

# Prayer & Fasting

by Karol Whaley

Wouldn't it be great if we could just wake up one day and be all that God intended for us to be? Unfortunately, it doesn't happen that way, does it? The Christian life is a daily discipline, a day to day journey with the Lord during which He transforms us into His image. 1 Timothy 4:7b says in the NCV, "Train yourself to serve God" and in the NASB, "Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." We have to make a conscious choice to invite God into the routine of our busy lives. Fasting is an invitation to intimacy with God. In this article, we will discuss a week long fast. Remember as with any period of fasting, you should have your doctor's approval and an accountability partner to pray for you.

Fasting is one way to say to the Lord, "I want to know more of You." The wonderful benefit of fasting in regards to our spiritual walk with the Lord, is the fact that He not only teaches us about Himself, but about ourselves as well... things no one else knows... things no one else cares about... things about us that only matter to the Lord Jesus.

My first week-long fast took place during Christmas week of 1999. I do not recommend fasting over a holiday, especially a holiday as big as Christmas. However, it was His timing for me.

At that time I was desperately longing for His blessing in my life and upon my family. I started the fast with several specific prayer requests for each family member and for myself. As God and I walked together in intimacy that week, He brought back many memories which reminded me of His faithfulness to me through the years. Before I ever knew Him or loved Him, He had loved me and chosen me. The Lord also gently chastised me for my lack of trust in Him in regards to providing for all of my needs and those of my family members. By the end of the week, I had renewed my trust in the Lord and was prepared to wait upon Him for His answers to my requests. Tears still come when I recall that special time with the Lord. He was gracious to me and merciful. He answered me even before I called unto Him. After I cooked a Christmas feast fit for a King (and my family), I sat down to the table with them unable to share the meal because of the fast. However, watching their delight and pleasure was a gift from the Lord. I heard comments from them that nothing from my kitchen had ever tasted so wonderfully! Another gift from the Lord! (Don't feel too sorry for me. My fast ended on Dec. 27th and I was able to enjoy some leftovers.)

God's Word in Philippians 3:19, warns us of

the danger of allowing our appetites (not just for food, but for recognition or control, etc.) to rule over us. We can be destroyed if we allow our minds and bodies to focus on only earthly, pleasurable things. In Bill Thrasher's, *A Journey to Victorious Praying*, he says, "When you allow your appetites to become your god, you lose the ability to truly enjoy God's gracious gifts." Fasting is one way that you, and I, can regain the ability to truly enjoy God and His gracious gifts. I have discovered this to be true in my life. He will help you discover it in your life, as well.

### 3 Helpful Hints for a Week Fast

- Prepare ahead of time by buying extra fruit juices and herbal teas. Instead of eating a meal, drink water and herbal teas or fruit juices.
- Choose a week when your mealtimes are more flexible. Avoid a week with lunch or dinner commitments already scheduled. Try to reschedule those things that might interfere with your plans to fast.
- When your fast is over, eat small portions until your digestive system can handle more. Share with your physician any concerns that you have during or after your fast.

## "Global Day of Prayer, 2005" scheduled for May 15, 2005

The Global Day of Prayer will take place on Pentecost Sunday.

The plan is to start praying as the sun rises in the East (New Zealand /Japan) in different time zones until the sun sets in the West (USA).

The planning will involve leaders from all 6 continents and will include more than 240 countries around the globe under the auspices of International Prayer Council.

The website is <http://www.globaldayofprayer.com/>.

There is a powerpoint presentation at the end of the website which helps to clarify the background, scope, and objectives of this global prayer event. The goal is to mobilize over 200 million Christians, joining in from every nation, praying with one voice on May 15th, Pentecost Sunday, asking God to bless and heal the nations of the earth. Let's do our part!!



自分なりの目標を持って、働きながら学びたい人のためには、こういった授業形式が参加しやすいと思います。講義を受けて終わりではなく、それぞれの信仰の問題をぶつけ合い、励まし合い、支え合うためのメンタリング・プログラムがあり、「福音に生きる」ことを身に付けていくことができます。  
(講師：森恵一先生)

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未信者への証し	夏：9月3日	芸術の聖書的な理解
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### HERE'S WHAT CLTC STUDENTS ARE SAYING:

#### Questions :

1. What is your reason for joining CLTC? 2. What have you learned? 3. How are you going to apply your training?

#### Mr. Minoru Kikuta (welfare facilities staff)

- I always wanted to encourage people when he or she accepts God with full of confidence. (I used to ask for help from others to lead new church comers) Also, I have been wanting to get more theological training.
- I have learned that transformation occurs in our relationship with God. I need to evangelize at my pace calmly and live a Christian life for 24 hours not only during Sunday service.
- I want to give a ministry with my wife in our own house in the future.

#### Mrs. Keiko Garcia (language school teacher)

- I was not comfortable with doing ministry for the church without Biblical knowledge. It was recommended at the church studying the foundations for Christian counseling in the theological college would help my practice. CLTC had a subject for ministry of a church and class schedules suited to my situation.
- I realized what it means to be connected with Christ and found out what I had been seeking for. I understood more about faith, being loved and forgiveness than just having a knowledge of the Bible.
- I want to use training in counseling and helping people.

#### Mr. Junichirou Suematsu (recycling shop owner)

- I want to learn more deeply, in order to tell the gospel through music.
- Before entering a school, only the thing of praise and music was considered. Music is one of the means and I found out that the most important thing is our faith in Christ.  
I have an experience of growing up at the Christian home and was taught also in the church school. However, in order to introduce Christ truly, I needed to be sure that I was the one who found salvation. I used to understand only with the head but now I can understand with the heart.
- I want to tell redemption of Christ not only with music but through any means.

#### Upcoming 1-Day Seminars

\*All seminars taught in Japanese. Call for details

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- ✓ Creative Teaching Methods
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- ✓ Explaining Your Faith
- ✓ Bible Survey of the Arts

#### FALL:

- ✓ Ministry in the Community
- ✓ Technical Arts Training

#### About CLTC: What do you think about CLTC?

#### Rev. Keiichi Mori

CLTC has an excellent program for people who have jobs and clear goals of their own.

The mentoring program is not only receiving a lecture, but sharing of faith, encouraging and supporting each other. Students can learn how to live their lives according to the gospel.



P R E S I D E N T ' S P E N C I L

Spring comes with lots of pleasant images and great expectations! As a missionary living in Japan, there is the sight of beautiful cherry blossoms, the anticipation of warmer weather and lower heating bills, entering a new fiscal year beginning in April, and Golden Week vacation.

As an artist, there are images of paintings with bright colors and up-tempo music with lively orchestrations with movements that are broad and punctuated that I enjoy. As a Christian, it is the time to celebrate the resurrection of Christ, to share the love of God, and to sense the warmth and comfort of the Spirit.

Spring arrives with a sense of celebrating life. This is clearly revealed to us in creation. But it is really all about pointing people to the Creator so we all may experience true life and life eternal with God the Father. Joy! Praise! Gladness! Rejoice! These are just some descriptive words that come to mind this season.

As I think of JEMA, it is amazing to see the variety of personalities and various ministries involved. Among the over 40 mission members and over 1,000 missionaries of JEMA, there is a broad spectrum of kingdom work being done in different geographical areas of Japan. Yet we all have a unified desire to see Japanese come to faith and also build up the church of Jesus Christ.

JEMA just had its annual meetings in February. Monday, February 21, we had another Mission Leaders' Consultation (MLC). We had a talk on the Key to Church Growth by Ogawa Sensei (JEA Chairman) and Scott Parrish (Asian Access) and reports on compassion ministries (Ship 4 Japan, Teen Japan, and CRASH). The day ended with a Fellowship

Evening highlighted by a testimony from Norbert Kaschner.

The following day, February 22, was JEMA's 2005 Plenary Session. Reports from all the commissions and committees were given. Regular business, voting on the budget, and the election of new executive members made the day a busy one. And amidst all of these were fellowship, encouragement, and edification of all. Please remember to pray for JEMA. Let us know how we can be of service to you. Also, do let us know if you want to be more involved with JEMA activities.

Yes, spring is here! May you be refreshed and encouraged as you look around to see and experience the beauty of God's creation. Let us celebrate life because we have a personal relationship with the Author & Giver of life!

Ken Taylor, vice-president

Note: Ray Leaf (JEMA president) is currently on home assignment and is due back in May. **H**

2 0 0 5 J E M A D A T E B O O K

Event	Date	Place
Fresh Encounters with God (Kansai Prayer Fellowship)	April 25	Light of Christ, Central Osaka
Prayer Summits		
Kanto Co-Ed Prayer Summit	May 10-13	Okutama Bible Chalet
Kansai Co-Ed Prayer Summit	May 23-26	Hiruzen Bible Camp
CPI Spiritual Victory Seminar	June 2 & 9	OCC
Fresh Encounters with God (Kansai Prayer Fellowship)	July 4	Light of Christ, Central Osaka
Karuizawa Union Church Summer Conference	July 31-August 7	Karuizawa Union Church
Fresh Encounters with God (Kansai Prayer Fellowship)	September 5	Light of Christ, Central Osaka
Fresh Encounters with God (Kansai Prayer Fellowship)	November 7	Light of Christ, Central Osaka



Japan Evangelical Missionary Association

## February 9, 2005

Ray Leaf, Ken Taylor, Richard Kropp, Russ Epley, David Scott, and Traugott Ockert met as the Executive Committee. John Mehn (Pioneer Evangelism) and Ann Little (WIM) attended *ex officio*.

### Treasurer's Report

Russ presented the Profit & Loss Statement and Balance Sheet for 2004, noting that JEMA was in the black last year. He also reported that JEMA collected a total of ¥982,590 for the JEA Nigata Relief Fund.

Russ presented two budget proposals for 2005.

### Commission Reports

John told us that the CPI Coaching for Women seminars were coming up in Feb., and a Spiritual Vitality seminar in June. They are planning to hold an every-other-year national conference after 2005, with more emphasis on local seminars.

Ann is the new chairwoman for WIM and reported on preparations for the Women's Retreat in March. Oct. 25, 2004 was a day of prayer with about 12 attending.

The previous Liaison & Membership Commission meeting was Feb. 3, and a report was presented by Ken. This year's MLC plan was given which included MLC and the Fellowship Evening.

Dave reported that Ray purchased JEMA's new Adobe Creative Suite software. Dave received the PDF files for the JEMA CD project, and expects to have some CDs ready for sale at the Plenary. JEA still needs to find an editor for the *Japan Update*. Mr. Gushiken has agreed to do the next issue. Don Wright will finish the new *Operation Japan*.

### Committee Reports

In the office, we began using our scanner and laser printer as a copy machine. Dave introduced a written proposal for the official JEMA policy on JEMA e-mail news and paid e-mail advertisements. The ExCom decided that FAX advertising would not be a good idea for JEMA, since the receiver must pay for the paper.

### Other Business

Bob Bastable and John Somers-Harris were invited to present YWAM's Ship 4 Japan project at the MLC this month.

Ray met with John Larue (of Christianity Today International) in the USA, who has offered to help JEMA with internet publishing.

## JEMA Plenary Meeting February 22,

Delegates from 32 of the 44 JEMA member missions, plus one independent delegate, participated in this year's plenary session. After an opening time of worship, Ray Leaf shared some devotional thoughts and then gave his President's Report. As well as raising the issue of future funding for JEMA, his report highlighted possibilities to be explored in electronic publishing and increased use of the Internet. He also mentioned that the Executive Committee has begun a process of inviting a Christian consultant to evaluate JEMA's organizational structures and operating procedures. Delegates later voted in favor of continuing with this process.

The following are some highlights of this year's Commission Reports. Regarding membership, Ken Taylor reported that there are now 14 Overseas Associate Members, a new category for JEMA open to any individuals or Christian organizations overseas ministering to Japanese or interested in missions in Japan. John Somers-Harris gave the Publications report, noting that the first-ever JEMA CD is now available, an example of electronic publishing. According to Dave Scott, many have wondered about the possibility of electronic publication of the JEMA directory. He reported that this will be considered by the JEMANet committee, although there are security issues.

The Church Planters Institute report was given by Akira Mori, who announced CPI's major transition from being an annual conference-centered ministry to becoming a year-round equipping-centered movement (See CPI articles in this issue for more detail). Miriam Davis reported that the Language and Culture commission has set up a Teacher's Forum in order to help link up Japanese teachers with missionaries. All are invited to notify the commission of any Christian language teachers who would like to be on the list.

Russ Epley gave the Treasurer's Report and noted the rise in the office rent with no increase in member dues. JEMA was in the black for last year, mainly due to publications income from advertising, and a large gift from JMLI. In presenting his proposed 2005 budget, Russ suggested that publishing the new *Operation Japan* would help JEMA's financial situation, and each commission should help cover the office expenses.

The following were nominated and elected for 2-year terms on the JEMA Executive Committee: Ken Taylor (JBF) as Vice President, Max Oehninger (SAM) and Scott Parrish (Asian Access) as Members-at-Large, and David Scott (TNT) as Secretary. ❏



Translated by  
Mizuko Matsushita,  
JEMA Executive Office  
Secretary.

## Collaboration of churches in Sagami-hara City

Sagami-hara City, located 40 kilometers from Tokyo, is one of the biggest cities in Kanagawa prefecture after Yokohama and Kawasaki. There are about 40 churches in the city and more than half of them are getting a grip on evangelization of the area through collaboration. Their efforts are being watched with keen interest as a model for regional evangelization of Japan in the 21st century.

This collaboration of churches was launched after a symposium held in September 1996 entitled "Thinking about the Evangelization of Sagami-hara in the 21st Century." One hundred church leaders and 15 pastors participated. It was a laymen-centered symposium and pastors were asked not to express their opinions very much. Four projects were born from this symposium; 1) a group home, Shion Sagami-hara, for the aged, 2) Sagami-hara Bible School, 3) Youth assembly of Sagami-hara, and 4) a tract distribution project. Later Allied Singers, a children's dancing and praising team made up of from primary to high school students, was formed.

The annual symposium is for sharing ideas. Church maps and photos of pastors are printed in their tract along with messages. In their collaboration, they aim to start new churches at places where no churches exist.

## Japan Christian Academy Forum

In several years, half of the population of Japan will be more than fifty years old. How can Christianity speak to the spiritual needs of this generation? The Japan Christian Academy has been holding forums for the past four years on the theme of "The Life and Mission of Christianity in Japan in the 21st century." In fall 2004 they had a forum focusing on "The Wandering Middle and Senior age citizen: What can Christianity do for this generation?" About 100 attendees participated from various sectors of society including scholars, businesspersons, media, etc. The presentations focused on the stagnation of Christianity in Japan as well as on the question of what can be done with men in their fifties who start looking for their life purpose after retirement. The discussion groups included: 1) How to communicate the message of Christianity to the middle and senior age citizen, 2) How to lead the 14,000,000 Japanese who are favorable to Christianity to hot prospects, 3) the activation of the middle and senior citizens in the church, 4) Life, old age and standing alone: the power of sending messages from the Christian church. Lots of ideas and opinions were openly discussed.

## Prayer and Fasting

7th Annual Prayer and Fasting Meeting was held on January 13 to 15 in Tokyo on the theme "Revival and Renewal of the Japanese Church." Dr. Vonette Bright, widow of Bill Bright, was one of the guest speakers. She exhorted the attendees that prayer in unity has power and that God works by the prayer

of His people all over the world. The crisis of schools in Japan was given as a subject for urgent prayer. Areas of concern were: 1) teachers and students suffering at school, 2) a reversal of trends towards changing the fundamental education law, 3) an awakening of the Church to the actual crises and the need to play a role as the light and salt of the earth, not making the same mistakes of prewar Japan.

## Evangelization of Japanese abroad- The *Diaspora* Japanese

According to statistics from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a total of 870,000 Japanese are living abroad; 580,000 of them are long-term residents and 280,000 are permanent residents. Japanese citizens are living in about 200 countries; 350,000 in North America, 180,000 in Asia, 150,000 in Europe, 100,000 in South America, and 60,000 in Oceania. Among the long-term residents, 55% of them are business related and 30% are students and researchers.

Women form the greater proportion of those living in North America and Europe but the proportion of men is much higher in Asia. Probably this means that many of those living in North America and Europe, take their families, whereas most of Japanese working in Asia leave their families in Japan. Japanese children living abroad number about 50,000, and 13,000 of them return to Japan every year. There are many diaspora children.

It is really a grace that quite a few Japanese living abroad have opportunities to come in contact with Christians, attend church, and eventually become baptized. There are Japanese churches, Bible study groups and fellowships all over the world. For example, Japanese Christian Fellowship (JCF) has groups in many countries offering Bible studies in Japanese.

The actual reception of these returnees from abroad by Japanese churches is not always favorable. Many churches can't understand the returnees and so it is hard for the churches to receive them. The following are some suggestions for churches to help returnees: 1) Receive the returnees as they are. 2) Respect their ideas and opinions. 3) Provide a place and time for adapting to the Japanese church. 4) Encourage an international atmosphere. 5) Do not force the tradition and rules of the Japanese church.



Miriam Davis came to Japan in 1975 from the UK and taught English in schools and universities in Nara Prefecture, Nagoya and Osaka for 8 years. In 1986 she joined OMF International and moved to Sapporo to do church planting and English teaching. Since 1990 she has been Language Advisor to OMF.

## Dancho-

### the heartrending grief of a mother monkey

By Miriam Davis

Eddie Askew in 'Encounters' (The Leprosy Mission International) has a meditation on the meaning of 'compassion' in Mark 1:41-42. "Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured."

"Jesus reacts with compassion. We've devalued that word. Today, compassion suggests sympathy, pity. They're good things to feel, but they're passive, not very strong. The word is really two words joined together – com and passion. With passion; and passion meant suffering. We speak of Christ's passion, his suffering on the cross. That's powerful stuff. It's also linked to the Greek word meaning guts – the heart and stomach, which were thought to be the focus of human emotion. After all, when we're faced with a crisis, something threatening, we feel sick, our stomachs churn, we're "moved to the depth of our being". Jesus enters the man's life, feels his pain, identifies with his loneliness and rejection – a hint of the rejection and pain which Jesus himself was to face later."

So how would you explain compassion in Japanese? In Mark 1:41 the phrase used is 深く哀れみ(ふかくあわれみ) and in Matthew 9:36 where Jesus has compassion on the crowds because they are harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd, かわいそうに思われた(おもわれた) is used.

But it was a story I heard in a

Japanese sermon that really helped me understand the meaning behind the words. The story is from a book of legends, the Sesetsu Shingo, compiled in the fifth century AD in China. A man called Kanon is on a journey down the Yangtze when a soldier on his boat snatches a baby monkey from its mother and takes it on board. The mother monkey runs crying bitterly along the bank keeping pace with the ship for 400 kilometers until she drops dead as the boat docks and she leaps onto its deck. When she is cut open, her inner organs are discovered to be torn to shreds with the desperate effort she has made not to be parted from her offspring. This is the first recorded use of the word 断腸(だんちょう) to describe such harrowing grief that it literally rends the heart. Here is the story in Japanese below.

5世紀の初めに編集された中国の世説新語という故事(legends)の中に断腸ということばの由来が出ています。晋の国の桓温という人が、蜀という国に攻め入ろうとした時、船で揚子江(the Yangtze river)を渡って行きました。桓温の船が三峡(Yangtze Gorges)という所に差し掛かったとき、一人の兵士が一匹の小猿を捕まえて船に連れてきたのです。船が三峡の岸を離れると、母猿は岸伝いに悲しい声を上げて、岸を伝ってどこまでもどこまでも追いかけてくるのです。何と百里、つまり400 kmもの長い距離を

追って泣きながらその猿は走り続けたのです。400 km余りの航程の末、船が岸に再び近づいた時、母猿は急いで船に飛び移りましたが、そのまま息絶えてしまいました。その時死んだ母猿のお腹を一人の兵士が割くと、あまりにも深い悲しみのためか、あるいは小猿を400 kmもの長い距離を追って走り続けたためか、その腸はズタズタにちぎれていたのです(shred, torn to pieces)。桓温はそれを聞いて、立腹し、その兵士を免職にしました。そのためにこの世説新語の“ちつめん篇”に故事として編集されています。これより古い資料に断腸ということばは出てこないのだそうです。この断腸の思いと言う、深い悲しみや、憤りや内臓が揺さぶられ、引きちぎられるような思いと言う意味のことばが、聖書の中でギリシャ語となっており使われています。それが、マタイ9:36の群衆を見て、羊飼いのない羊のように弱り果てて倒れている彼らを可愛そうに思われた」というイエス様の感情、かわいそうに思われた」ということばであります。



## Reflections on The Millennium Matrix, author: M Rex Miller

Column #1  
by Paul Nethercott

*This is my first regular column for Japan Harvest. The goal of this column is to reflect on worship and the arts in a way that is helpful to the work of missionaries in Japan. I would like to interact with readers so I have set up a blog for posting your responses and questions. Blogs are an easy means of publishing on the Internet; go to [www.worshipandthearts.blogspot.com](http://www.worshipandthearts.blogspot.com) and follow the simple instructions.*

“We are at that very point in time when a 400-year-old age is dying and another is struggling to be born – a shifting of culture, science, society, and institutions enormously greater than the world has ever experienced.” (Dee Hock)

Have you wondered why some churches are ornate temple-like structures full of symbolic art while others look like a Wal-Mart with chairs (a box with a roof on top)? What about the different approaches to corporate worship - from ritualistic liturgical forms to highly produced performances with stage, lights, and state-of-the-art PA systems?

Rex Miller’s *The Millennium Matrix* explains why some American churches look like Wal-Marts. This is useful in understanding the church and culture of Japan. The heart of *The Millennium Matrix* is a chart called “The Complete Millennium Matrix.” For clarity, I will refer to this chart as “Miller’s chart.” Miller’s chart is “a compelling framework that enables us to view ourselves, our times, and the church in a way that makes sense of the past, the present, and the future.” The main premise of the book and chart is, “when the primary means of storing and distributing information changes, our worldviews change.” In other words, the way we communicate has a profound impact on our worldview and lifestyle including how we conceptualize and express our Christianity.

Miller’s chart identifies four major methods of communication, each of which also denotes an epoch in world history: 1) oral, 2) print, 3) broadcast, and 4) digital. As part of his chart, Miller includes lists detailing the impact on culture of each of the methods of communication. These lists are divided into a number of categories including “how we believe, how we see beauty, how we know, and how we work and trade” (see the excerpt on this page).

Now, here is the exciting part. Using Miller’s chart we can see that for oral cultures visual art is one means of remembering information. Rituals (liturgy) also help people remember, they maintain traditions. Hence, the early oral church was liturgical and its buildings were full of visual art. For the illiterate masses, stained glass windows were their “Bibles.”

When printed literature became common, a major clash took place between the new “print culture” and the old oral one. Therefore, the Reformation was not only a break with the past theologically, but also a giant conflict between the old oral culture and the new print one. For several reasons the newly literate, Protestant print culture-based believers got rid of almost all art. Besides the familiar issue of Protestants rejecting art because it was “Catholic,” the new print culture no longer needed or appreciated it. Reflecting the print-based emphasis on linear/logical/rationalistic thinking, church architecture became plain, with few embellishments. Rituals were less important and church music became more complex because people could read it in printed books. For the new print cul-

ture, revelation was far less mystical. Both general and special revelation became an object of rationalistic study. Individuals rose in importance, laying the foundation for democracy and many other new social institutions.

In the Fifties, the entrance of broadcast culture created another major clash, one that is still going on today. Churches started looking a lot like TV studios with stages and lighting. The worship service became less of a teaching time and more of a celebration featuring bands, videos, and drama. This approach works great for large groups, so the era of the megachurch was born. Generally, the older print culture generation thought it was awful; the younger generation, the current baby boomers, mostly loved it. Now, only fifty years after the beginning of the broadcast era we have an “emerging” digital generation that doesn’t appreciate broadcast style churches. We are in the middle of another drastic shift in culture.

Digital technology is driving dramatic changes worldwide. Via digital technology, we have merged text, sound, images, and data into one common “language.” “Mass media” is no longer the monolithic power it once was; “personalized media” gives individuals primary control over what they read, see, and hear. The iPod, Macintosh’s iconic device for storing digital data, is a multi-million-dollar marketing success that is at the cutting edge of personalized media.

In Japan digital technology is changing the way people work, think, behave, and believe. This is putting tremendous stress on society and on the church. Large portions of the church have not adapted to broadcast culture and now we have yet another new paradigm to deal with. We do not yet know what the new “Emerging Church” is going to be like. There are many signs, though, that evangelical churches will have candles, incense, art of all kinds and liturgy as part of their worship – many already do. A return to mysticism, awe, and beauty along with an emphasis on “authenticity” is taking place. Worship services will be more interactive, less performance-oriented, and generally smaller. There will almost certainly be a growing trend towards house churches. Robert Webber, Leonard Sweet, and many other thinkers are noting the similarities of the Emerging Church to churches of the past. Ironically, the Emerging Church is “looping back”—actively reviving ancient practices unused for several centuries by Protestants.

According to Japan Campus Crusade for Christ staff member Yoshitaka Satoh, “the current college kids are completely different from my generation; they want interaction, discussion, and don’t want long logical messages by the *Sensei*.” He

also reports that they do not like top-down command-and-control leadership. Significantly, these characteristics are ones that Miller says are common to the new digital generation around the world.

If Miller is more or less right and if Satoh's evaluation of college students is more or less accurate, we need to make huge adjustments to be effective at making disciples of younger Japanese. We will have to get rid of old stereotypes, accept new realities, and make changes in almost every area. It appears that Japanese growing up in the new era we are now entering will have great difficulty fitting into traditional church structures in Japan. Imagine the college students Satoh described attending a church where there is no interaction, long analytical messages, and decisions are made from the top down. Many churches will probably not be able to adjust. That is one reason we need new churches and new missions. One large mission has "split" with its Japanese denomination and shifted to an exclusive focus on starting house churches (the Japanese involved rejected this strategy). Is this one answer? What do you think?

Along with challenge, we have tremendous opportunities to use digital technology to build the church. Through connecting via the Internet, groups and individual are collaborating as never before. The Internet is breaking down walls between denominations and no one can stop it. Interactive media such as the CD "tract" produced by Campus Crusade for the Christmas in Peace outreach are reaching the digital generation. Potentialities with using digital technology to spread the gospel are innumerable and we have only begun to imagine what they are.

There are some weaknesses in Miller's views. For one thing, he is a little too optimistic about the new digital era. Different it will be, but people will still have all the same core problems as before. It will solve some problems and create some new ones. For another, he is probably off on his timing, it seems to me that the digital age will be established considerably sooner than 2010.... perhaps it already is.

The new digital culture will change Japan, but Japan will also change it, giving it some Japanesque characteristics that will make it unique. We need to be aware and be as ready as we can be to respond with effective strategies and methods. There will be much conflict over the changes we are facing. Many will view the new digital culture and the church that is emerging with it as a great evil. Some are already proclaiming the North American Emerging Church movement as apostate. Miller's perspective is that it is generally a healthy response to a radically new situation and that we need to adapt or we will fail in our mission.

What do you think the new digital era will mean for Japan and those of us working here as missionaries? What does this mean for the established church in Japan? How can/should we respond?

Excerpts from *The Millennium Matrix Chart* also report that they do not like top-down command-and-control leadership. Significantly, these characteristics are ones that Miller says are common to the new digital generation around the world.

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What do you think the new digital era will mean for Japan and those of us working here as missionaries? What does this mean for the established church in Japan? How can/should we respond? **H**

### Excerpt from The Millennium Matrix Chart

	Oral Liturgical BC 1500 AD	Print-Reformation 1500-1950	Broadcast Celebration 1950-2010	Digital Convergence 2010
Worship	Meeting	Event (celebration)	Gathering	
Truth	Relational	Principle	Conceptual or process	Interactive-participation
Sacred Music	Chant	Hymn	Song	Contextual Composition

**Summer Issue: *Compassion Ministries***

Please send your articles immediately to [dikropp@gol.com](mailto:dikropp@gol.com)



## The Low Down on DVD's

By now, you probably have a DVD player, either in your computer, or else a freestanding player that hooks into your TV. Both kinds of DVD players have fallen dramatically in price the last few months. They are pretty simple, and it's easy to run over to the local video store, rent a disk, pop it in the player, and sit back and enjoy a movie. However, there are a few things you need to know.

First, let's consider the freestanding players that hook into your TV. If you've bought one of these, then you probably know about "region encoding". It's a worldwide scheme, developed by the manufacturers of disks and players so that disks produced for a certain region will play only on players made for that region. I don't quite get how this is supposed to cut down on piracy, but that's the situation. For instance, if you bring back a DVD movie that you purchased in the US, and run over to the local

Nojima Denki and buy a player, the disk won't work. The US disks are region 1 and Japan is region 2. You have to either also bring back a player that you bought in the US, or buy the same movie again in Japan, on a disk that was made to be played in Japan. For those of us that live in two worlds, this can be a major hassle.

Having two players, one for each region is one possibility, but really, who has the space for another gadget? The easiest solution is to buy a "multi-region" or "all region" player that will play disks from any region. These are almost unknown by local merchants. However you can get one from Foreign Buyers Club ([www.fbcusa.com](http://www.fbcusa.com)) for a little less than ¥10,000 including shipping. Costco also sells them for about the same price. You can find them in Akihabara, but it seems to me that usually the prices are a little more. By the way, if you order disks from England, they are region 2, the same as Japan (try [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)). The PAL/NTSC issues that plague the videotape world don't seem to be a problem with DVDs. Most players that I've seen will do either.

Now if you already have a player that you bought either in your home country, or Japan, you might be able to make it into an all-region player. There are several websites that will give you codes and key sequences that you can push (usually on the remote) that will bring up, an until now, hidden menu. Usually you set the region code to "0" and this makes the player able to play any disk. This won't work with every player, but I've successfully done it with four different players. All it takes is a little research, and a bit of "messaging around" to make your player read any disk. One site to look at is [www.dvdanswers.com](http://www.dvdanswers.com) and click on "Player Hacks". You might find what you need by searching on Google for the name and model number of your player with the words "region" and "hack" added to the search.

Here are another couple of hints about freestanding players. If your player will read CDR/RW disks (most will) then try copying all your digital photos onto a CD, and popping

it into the player. I have 1500 photos, and they all fit on one disk. If I put that disk into my player, I can see them all in a slide show format. It's a great way to view the fruits of all your digital photography as a family. Also this would be the perfect display table visual on a church deputation visit.

Finally, your freestanding DVD player will play music CD's too. Probably the quality of your TV speakers is not great, but if you just want to occasionally listen to music, and you don't have a stereo around, give it a try.

Now, what about DVD drives in your computer? If you bought a computer recently, your computer probably has some kind of DVD drive. There are at least three kind of drives. First some DVD drives will only play DVDs. That's all they do, and personally I hate to watch movies on a laptop. Next, there are "combo" drives, which will play DVDs, and also write CDs (CDR CD/RW). Finally there are the newest drives that will write CDs and DVDs. If you've ever put a DVD into one of these drives, you've probably seen the message that you have a limited number of times to change the region encoding of the drive. That means you can change the drive to play disks from another region, but the change is limited, usually to 5 times. Again, if you go searching on the Internet, you can probably find programs to download that will reset the counter on the drive so it doesn't know how many times you've changed the region. There's always a small risk in changing the "firmware" that you might make the drive unusable, but if you're careful to follow the directions, you should be OK. Note that "hacking" the hardware is not illegal, you bought it, and you can do with it what you want.

Of course, the DVD drives that write disks are perfect for backing up your computer files, and/or storing video clips that you've captured, and these too have come down in price to about ¥10,000 or less.

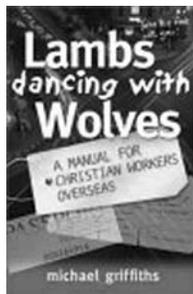
Well that's it for this issue. Recently I helped a missionary buy an electronic dictionary. The choices are wide if you are a native Japanese speaker, but the "gaijin friendly" choices are very limited. Write me and tell me which models you use, and what you like about them. The ideal one would allow for writing in a kanji with a stylus and then getting the reading and meaning in English. However with Sony getting out of the Clie business, there's even one less choice. **h**

[missionarygeek@yahoo.com](mailto:missionarygeek@yahoo.com)



**Lambs Dancing with Wolves and Comfort Zones Planning Your Future**

Reviewer: Nancy Sorley has been in Japan since 1976. She and her husband Bob, are church planters in Nara City. They are with the Baptist General Conference.



**Lambs Dancing with Wolves**

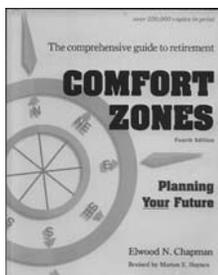
By Michael Griffiths, Monarch Books, 2001, 369 pages

Looking for one book as a text for missionary orientation? Michael Griffiths (formerly serving in Japan with OMF International), gives us a thorough coverage of the challenges missionaries face, and guidance as to how to meet those challenges. Jesus commanded us, "Go. I send you out like lambs among wolves." Griffiths combines this with the title of the novel, *Dancing with Wolves*, in which the main character, Dunbar, only survives as he learns to befriend and assimilate into the culture of the dreaded Comanche Indians.

Griffiths uses Dunbar as a model of what it means to successfully become acculturated.

The book seems to hit upon every topic new and veteran missionaries need to know: culture shock, language learning, sensitivity to culture, loneliness, singleness, marriage, contextualization, mission boards, national churches, etc. He gives lots of sound, Biblical advice and even lists of "do's and don'ts". Examples from his own experience in Japan are balanced out by his experiences in various international work. He gathers lots of illustrations from other missionaries, missionary biographies, and historical documents. By reading the book, you can tell he is well traveled, well read, and well experienced in what he writes about. The main theme of the book is building good relationships, which he lays out as the crux of missions. Besides good relationships with the nationals, there also must be good relationships within the family, with the mission board, with the national church, with fellow workers and of course with the Lord.

Since many organizations are moving towards internationalization, the chapter on relationships within international boards is very helpful. It was refreshing for me to see missions from a British point of view. I learned a lot about British mission history, Hudson Taylor, and even some new English expressions. Though often the illustrations are from old mission biographies, they serve to illustrate how many theories and practices in missions have changed over the years. Parts of the book were repetitive, but the 369 pages are an easy read. Griffiths' positive approach should remove the fear from any lambs going out to dance with the wolves.



**Comfort Zones Planning Your Future**

By Elwood N. Chapman  
Crisp Publications, 1997, 367 pages

For some people the words "missionary" and "retirement" don't belong in the same sentence. One colleague insisted it was just "transitioning." But whatever we call it, whether because of

health, finances, or mission policy, most of us will have to make the transition to "retirement." Though some people have very definite ideas of where they will live and what they will do, others don't take the time to give much thought to life after Japan.

There are many books written on retirement, but *Comfort Zones* is acclaimed to be the most successful retirement planning book in America. Its purpose is for the user to work through the

various issues involved in retirement, and plan for a successful transition to retirement life. In our generation, with people being more active and in better health, retirement could last up to 30 years or one-third of a person's life. For many, retirement is a time to realize new dreams, start a second career, or even start their own business.

Chapman presents, in manageable and easy-to-read style, the various issues, challenges and factors that influence how we will make the transition. It is suggested the user begin to plan at least five years ahead. Using charts, questionnaires, tests, worksheets, and action pages, the user begins to set up a realistic schedule and planning chart for retirement. Through evaluating expectations, goals, and values, one can better prepare and plan for what he wants. Being prepared helps make the transition easier.

The book presents issues and options that we may never have thought about. One section deals with the use of time. What amount of time do we want to use for leisure and hobbies? Do we expect to do volunteer work, have a part-time job or work full-time? How easy is it to get a job after age 50? In the appendix there is a section, "Rate Your Job-Getting Skills."

Changing relationships, strengthening old relationships and building new relationships is another matter we must be concerned with, whether we leave Japan and settle in our home town or in a new area. Then there are issues of caring for aging parents, relating to adult children in new ways, and helping to raise grandchildren.

Money is perhaps the biggest factor that will influence our retirement. The workbook uses charts, tables, and worksheets to take us step-by-step through the labyrinth of issues involved in financial planning, investing, budgeting, estate planning and buying medical insurance.

Finally, the issue of living arrangements and housing comes up. There are many practical suggestions about how to make the numerous necessary decisions. Seven living options with the advantages and disadvantages of each are presented so the user can evaluate which ones best meet his own needs.

*Comfort Zones* is a good resource and reference book. If you are married, it is most useful to go through the book with your spouse to help you evaluate what you anticipate your retirement to be like. It is never too early to start to think of how and where the Lord can use you in the next phase of life. ❧

# Even MKs Can Become Depressed



*By Dr. Esther Schubert, M.D.*

Until recent years there has been a tendency in missionary circles to assume that Christians, including missionary kids, should not be subject to depression. When suicide has occurred in this population, the missionary community has been left with some awkward issues to address. If the traditional ideas are held rigidly, the community must regard these folks as either non-Christians, very weak Christians, or Christians with unresolved sin in their lives.

In recent years, however, we have seen a more balanced perspective suggested by the fact that due to the fall of man we live in an imperfect world, and hence, are vulnerable on all fronts--the spiritual, the physical, and also the mental or emotional. It is difficult for us as committed Christians to acknowledge our vulnerability in this area, either for us or for our children. However, records show that individuals in Scripture, as well as fine Christians throughout the course of history, have been afflicted with the mental illness known as depression.

Depression is primarily a biochemical illness that seems to have some genetic component in that it frequently runs in families, or at least in the extended family. In addition, we believe that significant stress can sometimes precipitate an episode of depression in an otherwise genetically non-vulnerable individual. Of course, this illness can affect MKs, as well as missionaries.

Our tendency until recently has been to assume that depression in a Christian is due to a spiritual problem. We may assume this because individuals who have the biochemical changes of depression going on in their central nervous systems have a strong sense of alienation from God. In most cases the finding of spiritual distance resolves when the depression is treated.

Conscientious Christians throughout Scripture and church history have been victims of depression. I believe that David, Elijah, and Jeremiah were afflicted at times in their lives. Also Martin Luther, John Wesley, William Cowper, Charles Spurgeon, and J.B. Phillips have given clear indication of clinical depression. In many cases these situations were at least initially interpreted as spiritual problems. We now have clear evidence of chemical abnormalities that occur simultaneously with depression which apparently cause the depression.

I do not believe that just being a missionary kid predisposes anyone to depression. However, in a genetically vulnerable MK, the special stresses of separation, rootlessness, and frequent transitions could be a trigger for a depressive episode. Mks often deal with separation at crucial stages, and these separations include leaving parents, peers, and other important people in their lives. The adjustment of reentry to the home country

can also be a particularly stressful time. Dave Pollock says, "Unresolved grief is probably the primary issue in many MKs' lives. This grief in a genetically vulnerable child could trigger or worsen depression.

There is also no question that reentry for the lifelong MK may actually create more cultural stress than living overseas. Vandenberg has described missionary kids at the time of reentry as "invisible internationals." Indeed, many missionary kids feel like strangers caught between two worlds. Their allegiances are many and none, and they may have difficulty knowing where home is.

Spiritual warfare must be considered as an additional stress in the MK's life, and I believe it could be a factor in precipitating depression in the genetically vulnerable child.

Finally, regardless of the fact that MKs are the children of Christians, there are dysfunctions in many families, and if these are severe enough, dysfunctional family issues can create short-term or long-term stress which might precipitate depression in a child with a hereditary tendency toward depression.

## **Definition of Depression**

It is important to understand that by the term depression I am not referring to a low mood or a bad day, but to a clinical illness, biochemically based, that occurs in Christians, as well as non-Christians. At any given time in North American, five per cent of the population is clinically depressed. One out of eleven Americans will be hospitalized at some time for depression. Depression seems to cross religious lines in almost the same way as appendicitis or strep throat. For this reason I am discussing depression as an illness and not a sin. We must remember, of course, that sin in a person's life can and will produce emotional havoc. There are consequences to behavior, and we do reap what we sow. However, in my experience as a psychiatrist most of the depression I see in missionary kids stems from illness, rather than unconfessed sin. If spiritual issues are at the core, when they are dealt with, this solves the problem, and missionaries and missionary kids usually do not come to see me.

Unfortunately, I do occasionally see depressed MKs who have had a great deal of false guilt placed on them by well-meaning Christians who implied that the underlying problem is sin. Thus, my focus here is on clinical depression which, by definition, is a biochemical illness which often makes the pain of living more terrible than that of dying. In such cases depressed persons (even Christians) may look at suicide as a way out. Many Christians have told me that in the depths of their depression they have felt there was no possible physical pain that could compare with

the emotional pain they were suffering.

It is important to distinguish between a temporary crisis and a true clinical depression. Missionary kids, at whatever age, can go through grief such as culture shock or reverse culture shock or the death of a loved one. This bereavement or adjustment disorder is usually solved by the passage of time and the provision of support systems. In some cases counseling is also helpful. Bereavement is in marked contrast, however, to major depression which is biochemically based and, therefore, needs medications and sophisticated treatment, possible involving professional psychotherapy. Major depression tends to be recurrent, though the episodes can be separated by years.

There are clear-cut criteria for the diagnosis of major depression in older adolescents and adults. They include the DSM-IV criteria as follows:

- A. Five (or more) of the following symptoms have been present during the same two-week period, and at least one of the symptoms must be either a depressed mood or a loss of interest or pleasure.
  1. Depressed mood.
  2. Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all or almost all activities.
  3. Significant weight loss/gain; a decrease/increase in appetite.
  4. Insomnia or oversleeping nearly every day.
  5. Overactivity or underactivity (observed by others, not merely subjective feeling of restlessness or being slowed down).
  6. Fatigue or loss of energy.
  7. Feelings of worthlessness or inappropriate guilt.
  8. Decreased concentration or inability to think clearly.
  9. Recurrent thoughts of death, recurrent suicidal thoughts and/or plans.
- B. 1. The symptoms are not due primarily to an organic or medical illness.  
 2. Symptoms are not merely a reaction due to the death of a loved one (uncomplicated bereavement).
- C. Delusions or hallucinations accompanying severe depression must not have been present when patient was not depressed.

D. There is no other psychiatric illness.

### Adolescent Depression

Until fifteen years ago many psychiatric professionals thought that depression occurred only in adults. Now we realize that it frequently occurs in teenagers and in even younger children. During the past forty years, there has been a fivefold increase in psychiatric illness in older teenagers. We also learned as we counseled adult depressives that many of them, in retrospect, showed the first signs of depression as teenagers or even as children. Some young adult MKs with depression have told me that they remember being depressed as early as five or six years of age. Unfortunately, the earlier the onset, the more severe the disease and the more likely it is to recur. The genetically vulnerable adolescent may have depression early in life if he has suffered losses at critical childhood ages. They symptoms of depression in adolescents are similar to those in adults, although somewhat different from those of younger children. In adolescents we see the following:

1. Disturbed mood, sadness, boredom and/or pessimism.
2. Low self esteem.
3. Poor concentration or decreased school performance.
4. Sleep changes.
5. Appetite changes or weight changes.
6. Physical complaints.
7. Suicidal preoccupation.
8. Withdrawal, which may often be interpreted as resolution (improvement).
9. Acting out or running away.

It is characteristic that adolescents often do not perceive that their unusual behavior is related to their feelings. Depressed adolescents (and some adults) may also be dealing with some environmental stresses. Many come from dysfunctional families or have parents who come from this type of home and as a result have poor parenting skills.

In the US in the past twenty years there has been a severe erosion in sources of self esteem. There have been losses of religious identity, family cohesiveness, and patriotism. For MKs stress may be compounded by constant moving, resulting in a sense of rootlessness and the loss of the extended

family.

Adolescence is a chaotic time of life marked by various stages of development. At age twelve the child is still often dependent on his parents, but by thirteen or fourteen his peers are everything to him. He

craves identity within his peer group and feels that he must have a group of friends to survive. By age fifteen or sixteen he may be thinking more in terms of a single heterosexual friend, and by age seventeen we hope he is beginning to establish his own identity and to develop a mature superego or conscience.

Due to the importance of peers in the thirteen-to-fifteen age group, I believe that this period in a child's life may be the most dangerous time to make a move, either to the mission field or a return to live permanently in the homeland. This trauma may be exacerbated even more for an only child. (I do not consider furlough moves as permanent moves.)

Adolescents pass through these stages of development differently. Occasional adolescents make a smooth, gradual transition in the direction of maturity. For others, it is an irregular, uncertain process with periodic crises interspersed with times of relative calm. Other adolescents seem to spend all their teenage years in tumult. This time of life is difficult because teenagers are attempting to achieve three goals (Table I: 1 separation and individuation; 2 the establishment of lifetime identity, and 3 the development of a mature superego or conscience. During this time the teenager needs the security of a stable home, yet he also needs to break away. He may act like an adult one day and more like a two-year-old the next.

Teenagers (including MKs) deal with stress in a variety of ways (Table II). Some rebel, and to a degree this is normal and cause for no special concern, unless the child becomes excessively destructive, delinquent, or begins to withdraw. Others may resort to fantasy. This is not a serious problem unless it goes beyond normal daydreaming into drugs, alcohol, the occult, mind games (such as Dungeons and Dragons), or acid rock music. There is particular cause for concern if these activities occupy large blocks of his or her time. Finally, some adolescents react to stress by becoming depressed (Table II).

According to Dr. Ross Campbell, "the thing that makes adolescent depression so dangerous is that it may be hard to detect," it develops slowly, and it may be masked. In many, teenager depression expresses itself in masked symptoms called "depressive equivalents." They may have physical symptoms, develop an eating disorder, or appear happy when they are really sad. "Smiling depression" may be detected in the teen who appears happy when he is with his friends but looks sad when he feels no one is watching. In some cases adults know when they are depressed, whereas a teenager, more often, does not know.

Dr. Campbell lists the symptoms of light teenage depression as follows:

Table I:	Table II:
Developmental Tasks of Adolescence	Methods of Coping with Adolescence
1. Separation & Individuation	1. Rebellion
2. Establishment of a lifetime identity.	2. Fantasy
3. Development of a mature superego & conscience	3. Depression

1. Lack of concentration
2. Daydreaming
3. Shorter attention span
4. Calling oneself names.
5. Lowered grades.

Moderate depression may be evidenced by:

1. A deep-rooted boredom in which the teenager may engage in activities to distract from it. Boys often act out with antisocial behavior, seeking dangerous excitement to escape boredom, or they may get involved in drugs, alcohol, mind games, and violence. Girls more often act out with sexual promiscuity, shoplifting, and eating disorders. Recent studies have shown that low serotonin levels (one of the neurotransmitters) in boys are associated with acting out aggressively, whereas many girls direct their hostility inward. In either case, low serotonin levels may be associated with poor impulse control.
2. Disinterest in surroundings.
3. Withdrawal.
4. Physical symptoms.
5. Eating changes.
6. Lack of energy.

Dr. Campbell states that the following symptoms appear if the teenager progresses to a state of severe depression:

1. Thought processes are affected.
2. Loss of ability to think clearly, logically, and rationally.
3. Deteriorating judgment.
4. Focusing on morbid detail
5. Assuming all is bleak, nothing is worthwhile, and life is not worth living.

If severe depression goes on long enough there may be permanent biochemical damage. Although depression tends to be cyclical (that is, it comes and goes), it is dangerous to assume it will resolve itself.

By the time a teenager has thought distortion, he loses the ability to think and communicate in a clear, rational way, and counseling becomes less and less effective. He may become self-destructive or may run away. Of course, severe depression can lead to suicide. It often falls to the adults to make decisions regarding suicide intervention for a depressed teenager.

Boys succeed at suicide three times more often than girls. They also tend to use more violent, final, and lethal methods such as guns, hanging, and jumping. There is usually less chance of intervention with these methods. In recent years, however, women have become more assertive, and we see more girls, as well as adult women, resorting to violent methods.

It is important to remember that chronic stress

in biochemically vulnerable teenagers can bring on depression. Compliant children are particularly prone to depression as well as to eating disorders. Very sensitive children may be depressed just because there are problems in the world. The reverse is also true. Some depressed youth try to cope with their low moods by becoming very compliant. A child like this may be genetically vulnerable to stress and becomes compliant in an effort to avoid confrontation. Often he or she seems fine until the teen years when sent to boarding school and separated from home. At this point without the support of his family, he may be unable to cope. This can then precipitate depression and even suicide.

According to Bill Blackburn, Christian teenagers commit suicide for all the usual reasons plus a few additional ones. These include:

1. They feel that they're trapped in an intolerable situation (this can be either real or perceived). Though their perception may be inaccurate, it must be remembered that the threat is real.
2. They desire to join a loved one in heaven.
3. They have an overly romantic view of death.
4. They have a distorted Christian view, seeing heaven as an escape.
5. They feel they have committed the unpardonable sin.
6. They are victims of immaturity or impulsiveness.
7. They have some form of mental illness.

Above all, we must not assume that adolescent depression is a phase. It is, rather, an illness which requires intervention before it results in death or permanent disability.

Experiments have shown that even monkeys can be depressed. One study found that young monkeys with a high genetic tendency toward depression, if placed in a colony with extremely nurturing mothers, responded well. This seems to indicate that the genetic susceptibility can be overcome with environmental modification. I am convinced that the susceptible, vulnerable child, if discovered early enough, can be helped. In boarding school the MK who fits the category of the vulnerable child by nature or lack of nurture should, if possible, be placed with particularly nurturing dorm parents or teachers. MKs are frequently burdened with high expectations---their own and others'. At some point, missionaries as well as MKs must learn that no amount of achievement can compensate for loss of early love and unconditional acceptance.

Occupational success is not simply one goal in Western culture, it is the outstanding trait. Thus, to get ahead and succeed we feel we must hold ourselves to extremely high standards of personal

excellence. Unfortunately, we have carried this outlook with us overseas into our third culture settings. Somehow we must learn to communicate that our self-esteem, either as missionaries or as MKs, is based on our relationship with Christ and not on our performance athletically, academically, or even spiritually.

## Childhood Depression

Preadolescent (childhood) depression is much less common than adolescent depression. It can be very difficult to treat and may indicate pathology in the family structure. Chronic childhood depression occurs in about two percent of preadolescent children (ages seven to twelve) in the United States. These children are often dry-eyed (rather than tearful), and I seldom attempt to treat them in the overseas setting. In many cases the entire family needs therapy, and the mission field may not be the best place to find adequate professional counseling.

Occasionally, children may become acutely distressed and fearful, but only for a brief period of time. This situation is primarily milder exogenous depression and can be treated on the field. However, the following signs indicate a more chronic (endogenous) and serious type of childhood depression not usually treatable overseas:

1. Appears sad or unhappy.
2. Withdrawn socially or hyperactive. (In such cases it is important to first rule out the possibility of attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder.)
3. Experiences feelings of being unwanted or unloved and may, if asked, express these feelings.
4. Perceives self in a negative light.
5. Difficulty in controlling aggressive drives---fighting, biting, destructive behavior, and aggression toward people or things.
6. Excessive bullying or teasing.
7. Public defecation.
8. Enuresis (bedwetting).
9. Insomnia, although not particularly early morning awakening such as is characteristic of adult depressives.
10. Excessive auto-eroticism (the key word here is excessive; many children indulge in occasional masturbation which is not generally considered to be pathologic.)
11. Psychosomatic symptoms.
12. Presence of hereditary factors (often one of the parents is depressed).
13. Victim of physical abuse.
14. Obvious separation anxiety, even to the extent of "school phobia."
15. Development of eating disorders, especially in older children.

In chronic childhood depression the child

often has difficulty relating to others (parents, teachers, friends, etc.) and may be clinging or cynical. In such cases there is frequently a family history of endogenous depression, and the entire family may also be in need of counseling.

### **Crisis Intervention**

It is difficult to predict when an individual might cross from simply being depressed to actually being suicidal. However, there are some general guidelines on crisis intervention that are helpful. We must know how to evaluate the possibility or likelihood of suicide. When a missionary or teenage MK appears to be depressed and evidences symptoms of a major depressive episode, it is important that a qualified person talk with him/her to determine the suicidal potential. It is cause for alarm if the person is feeling hopeless and also if he/she is giving things away, talking as if there is no future, wrapping up affairs, or appearing to give up. Also, the investigator should ask directly if the individual has considered suicide.

For many years there was a myth that asking a person about suicide potential might put the idea into his/her mind. The fact is that if a person is depressed enough, thoughts of suicide have occurred to him, and it may be a great relief to be honest and to talk about the "unmentionable." If the individual has thought about suicide, it helps to know if he has a plan and how well thought out it is. If there is a plan, what has kept him/her from carrying it out? How lethal does he think the method is? Forethought and planning are ominous indicators of a serious threat of suicide.

Personnel on the field need to decide if care is available in the location, or if the individual needs to be taken under supervision to another location. If a person can make a verbal or written commitment to avoid suicide and to cooperate with outpatient therapy (assuming it is available), it may be possible to avoid hospitalization. On the other hand, a depressed MK who will not agree to measures to prevent self-destruction must be under some type of twenty-four-hour-a-day supervision while disposition is being arranged.

The treatment for endogenous depression begins with appropriate medication. Tricyclic antidepressants, Prozac, or MAO inhibitors are the more common medications in use. These are non-addictive and can be given to either adolescents or adults. Administration of antidepressants needs to be combined with counseling, and the medications must be carefully monitored by a physician trained in their use. It is usually important for the client to stay on antidepressants for at least a full year. One should also know that it usually takes three to four weeks for the medication to take effect. At times when the patient first starts to improve, he is at greater risk of suicide due to the

fact that increased energy level may enable him to act on suicidal wishes. He is no longer paralyzed by misery, although he is still sick enough to want to die. Unfortunately, tricyclic antidepressants have a significant overdose potential, and administration of these drugs must be carefully controlled and monitored.

Again, I emphasize that these medications are not generally the sole treatment for unipolar depression, but are used in conjunction with psychotherapy (counseling). The therapist should be a trained professional, and experienced in psychotherapeutic practice. Pastoral counseling is usually not adequate in these cases. (Antidepressants should not be used alone in bipolar patients.)

Age is a critical factor in childhood suicide. Between birth and five years children consider death to be reversible ("He will wake up"). This may be immaturity or the result of viewing cartoons in which characters fall off a cliff, get up, and walk away. Between the ages of five and nine children consider death to have both good and bad attributes. Between nine and twelve the child will develop a more mature concept of death. Because few suicides occur during this period, we consider this the "suicide latency age". Age twelve to fourteen is a gray area in terms of suicide frequency.

There have been tragic situations in which young adult MKs have committed suicide after returning to their home country. These situations obviously create difficulty for school administrators in overseas international schools. Students and faculty, of course, are significantly affected, and this opens the door for education by the administration of both the faculty and students regarding the reality of depression as an illness and the way of detecting it as well as treating it. It is important for people to understand that being depressed is not primarily a spiritual issue. Faculty and administration also need to be alert for copycat behavior among students who, perhaps, were depressed prior to this tragic event but now feel a certain "permission" to act on their own feelings, having observed or heard about a completed suicide.

*Dr. Esther Schubert, M.D., FACEP FAAPF, the author of What Missionaries Need to Know About Burnout and Depression, graduated from Asbury College and received her M.D. from Indiana University. She is a practicing psychiatrist in Indiana. She has had extensive experience in counseling missionaries and their children, and has spoken at several ICMK Conferences. As an MK, she grew up in China, Japan, the Philippines, and Taiwan, where she attended Morrison Academy.*

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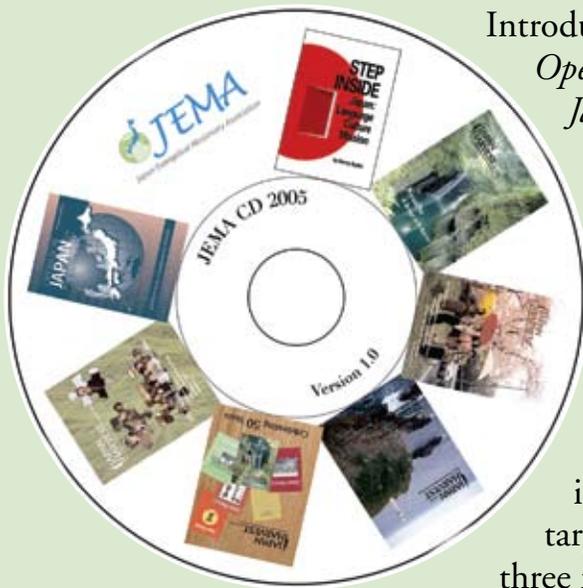
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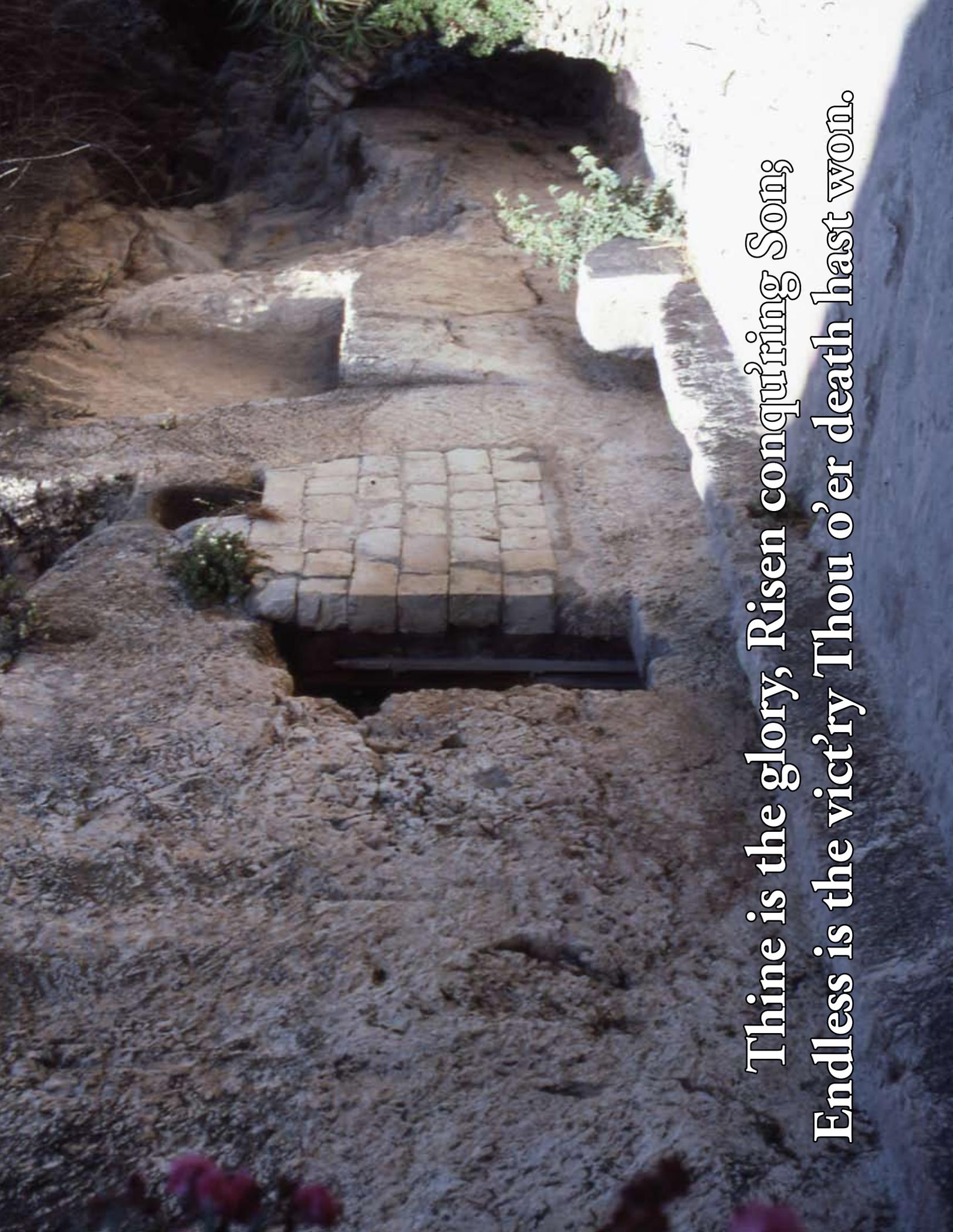
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