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JAPAN Summer 2005 HARVEST

Japan Evangelical Missionary Association

Compassion Ministries

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Why We Do Not Lose Heart *by Jim Reapsome*

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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, barbecues, 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:

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Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School for English and German
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Evening Service: 7:00 p.m.

For more information please contact: Mark Magnusson, KUC Committee Chairman,
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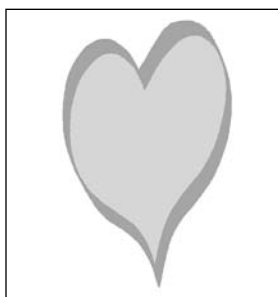
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Where Does Evil Come From?

By Richard Bewes

In spite of the evil we see, there is hope, but only if we look for the answer in the Scriptures! Here are the briefest of guidelines:

Evil Represents a Defection, Not a First Cause

Evil is an intrusion into the universe resulting from an angelic rebellion under a created angel, who aspired to be God himself (see Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:11-19). This—and humanity's bid for independence as expressed by our spiritual ancestors

Adam and Eve—are part of one and the same fall.

Fellowship with the Creator was never something that could be programmed or enforced; if you are free to love, then you are also free to rebel. So evil entered, not as something that had always existed, but as a deviation, a rebellion from the original first cause. In *The City of God*, St. Augustine wrote, "The evil angels, though created good, became evil by their voluntary defection from the good, so that the cause of evil is not the good, but defection from the good."

Evil Is Headed by a Counterfeit, Not an Absolute

Satan, who has a variety of names, is not an absolute being. He is neither all-powerful, all-knowing, nor all-present. Satan is a usurper and an imitator. In *Approaching Hoofbeats*, Billy Graham writes, "Satan's purpose was not to make Eve as ungodly as possible, but to make her as godlike as possible—without God."

As a created being, then, the devil had a beginning, and he will have an end, which is explained in Revelation 20:10.

Evil Produces Monotony, Not Creativity

Genesis 3:14-19 portrays the result of evil's entry in terms of dust, death, pain, thorns and thistles. Our whole environment—of which we are custodians—is affected, according to Romans 8:19, 20. Because evil lacks the spark of original creativity, it can ultimately produce only a desert, a "ground zero" wasteland. When education, medicine, politics and the arts ignore God, decline and confusion can be expected.

Evil Ends in Defeat, Not Triumph

The whisper of evil's downfall is already there in Genesis 3:15, with the divine announcement to the serpent of "enmity" between the woman's future offspring and his own. The woman's "offspring" is not plural, but singular—One Person! "He will crush your head (the implication of defeat), and you will bruise His heel." Even then, the serpent would only be permitted to bruise Christ, insofar as "it pleased the Lord to bruise Him" (Isaiah 53:10 KJV). The Cross would ensure evil's defeat.

Be encouraged. History and the future belong to us!

*Richard Bewes is the author of *The Top 100 Questions: Biblical Answers to Popular Questions*, 2002 published by Christian Focus Publications, Ltd., Tain, Great Britain.*

*This article was taken from *Decision* magazine, March 2005; ©2005 Billy Graham Evangelistic Association; used by permission; all rights reserved.*



Vast Segments of Our World are in Desperate Need! Who's to Care?

Our wonderful world is devastated—ravaged! There are horrible illnesses, crippling poverty, ravenous hunger, unbearable emotional, physical, spiritual pain, severe trauma, horrific accidents, sickening loneliness, varied addictions to alcohol, drugs, eating, sex, broken hearts crushed by death, trickery, bribery, lying and betrayal, and on top of that natural and man-made disasters! To all of these there seems to be no end! Not to mention the rage and disappointment of families caught in discrimination or stuck with birth defects and early death. Who's to care? In the face of all this, where are you? Where am I?

Please enter for a moment into the little understood world of parents suffering the untold agony of children born less than perfect. Andy Meeko writes:

Piled high on the mountain of struggles that special needs families face is misunderstanding. Likely, at the root of this problem is the tendency for these families to be measured and evaluated by the standards of other families. This is a potent breeding ground for frustration. One such mother struggling with the disability of her nine-year-old daughter could not resist reacting to the “nit wit” PTA official's question regarding why she was not attending meetings. She writes:

Where Are The Parents?

They are on the phone to doctors and hospitals and fighting with insurance companies, wading through the red tape in order that their child's medical needs can be properly addressed.

Where Are The Parents?

They are at home, diapering their 15-year-old son, or trying to lift their 100 lb. daughter onto

the toilet.

They are spending an hour at each meal to feed a child who cannot chew, or laboriously and carefully feeding their child through a g-tube.

They are administering medications, changing catheters and switching oxygen tanks.

Where Are The Parents?

They are sitting, bleary eyed and exhausted, in hospital emergency rooms, waiting for tests results to come back and wondering: is this the time when my child doesn't pull through?

Where Are The Parents?

They are sleeping in shifts because their child won't sleep more than 2 or 3 hours a night, and must constantly be watched, lest he do himself, or another member of the family harm.

They are sitting at home with their child because family and friends are either too intimidated or too unwilling to help with child care.

Where Are The Parents?

They are trying to spend time with their non-disabled children, as they try to make up for the extra time and effort that is critical to keeping their disabled child alive.

They are struggling to keep a marriage together, because adversity does not always bring you closer.

They are working 2 and sometimes 3 jobs in order to keep up with the extra expenses.

And sometimes they are a single parent struggling to do it all by themselves.

Where Are The Parents?

They are trying to patch their broken dreams

together so that they might have some sort of normal life for their children and their families.

They are busy, trying to survive.*

It's Q & A Time!

And so we ask some questions:

- How in tune are we to the huge needs around us?
- Do we “see” them? Do we “feel” them?
- Is “doing” church done to their exclusion?
- How high on our priority list is administering compassion?

I know I could be doing more! I know all our churches could be so prepared for disasters that we could give immediate “help” (storing up basic daily needs to share). We have found over and over again that the time to “help” is when our neighbor falls to illness, difficulty even death. These are huge opportunities to show compassion and lift the weary in heart. I think compassion begins “at home”— helping the family next door. And then compassion goes out in other waves reaching the bigger picture to involve more believers—bringing relief, cheering the poor, feeding the homeless, praying with the dying, only to mention some.

This issue of the *Japan Harvest* is intended to remind and challenge, and admittedly it is only a drop in the bucket of present need and Church response! May I challenge you to keep sending to the *Japan Harvest* what you see as meeting a need, and let us know how you are lifting burdens.

Send your articles to Gary Bauman at: gbauman@jmtb.com

**Sue Stuyvesant, Where Are the Parents? @ www.ourkids.org/archives 1996. H*



Compassion in Japan

By John Somers-Harris

It was at a CPI conference that the need for compassion ministries was highlighted for me. Natural Church Growth, Dr. Christian Schwarz's book on the eight factors evident in growing churches but absent in declining churches, mentions compassion ministries as one of those factors. When a show of hands was taken to see if these points were evident in churches represented at the CPI conference, there was a strong showing for every area except compassion. Only one or two hands were raised.

Q: What could compassion look like here in Japan?

Whenever I hear the word compassion I am always reminded of the words in the New Testament where it says Jesus looked at the crowds and He had compassion on them for they were like sheep without a shepherd. As I ride on the crowded subways and trains and observe the busy streets of Tokyo, I have in a small way felt a yearning in my heart to see the multitudes, knowing that so many of them do not yet know the love of God in their hearts and lives, exposed to Jesus through compassion ministries.

Compassion, however, like every other emotion God has given us, demands a response. What response should I give? What response should the Church in Japan give to the throngs of people riding the trains and walking the streets today? To answer this we need to go back to the New Testament and see how Jesus responded. He preached the gospel, healed the sick, cast out demons and raised the dead. He responded to the needs before Him. He scratched where they itched.

As we consider Japan and the need for compassion, the following statistical information I saw on a train is worth noting. In 1975 there were 7.7

people from age 20-64 for every one person 65 and older. In the year 2000 that was down to 3.6. It is projected that by the year 2025, just twenty years from now, it will be as low as 1.9. While this may be a major headache for the insurance industry and how to finance the cost of medical care for all those over 65, it raises several promising opportunities for the compassionate work of the Church.

Case in point: wheelchair repair

Mary Esther Penner with JBF (Japan Baptist Fellowship) receives old wheelchairs and fixes them up for reuse. Could the local churches do this or similar community service related activities that would not only be a blessing to the local community but also provide church related activities for older citizens who would not come to a Bible study or a worship service?

Case in point: exchange students in universities

Coupled with the increase in the elderly population is the effect felt by the low numbers of people in the under 65-age grouping. Universities are begging for international students to come and fill the decline in the student population. This presents a two-fold opportunity for the Church. Do we know of university students who for the sake of the gospel would consider studying here and contribute to the Christian influence in this nation? Secondly, could we reach out to other students coming here from various countries and help them as they adjust to life in Japan?

See with your mind's eye: Japanese over 65—sheep without a shepherd; see with our mind's eye: International students adjusting to life in Japan—sheep without a shepherd.

If we love enough to care for these needs and more, people may begin to ask us why we care? On the negative side, it might be because Shintoism doesn't care; because Buddhism doesn't care. Above all we should care because God so loved the world that He gave His only Son.

He looked on the crowds with compassion for they were like sheep without a shepherd.

Case in point: disaster & relief

If we work together in unity to care, not only for daily needs around us but also for the sudden, shattering needs of natural disasters in Japan, then the world ---- people---- may begin to believe that the Father sent His Son. The need for our active compassion has been highlighted for us with the earthquakes in Niigata and the tidal waves in India, Indonesia and Thailand.

What if the Church in Japan worked together and produced a united response effort with trained Church members ready to assist with relief? What if next time an earthquake hit, the prime minister would call on the Church as a recognized force to assist and lead in relief efforts? What if the local Church was a place ready with donated food, money and relief supplies? What if we were so prepared for disasters that the Japanese would know that the Church would be there to get the job done efficiently and quickly?

What if the Church in Japan worked so well together showing compassion to the people of Japan in times of national disaster that we could go beyond Japan---out to the world? What if missions and churches together owned a vehicle -- a ship -- which could transport across the seas both Christians to minister and materials to help the hurting? What if Japanese businesses wanting to help tidal wave victims would send contributions and supplies to that ship?

This might seem very unlikely to even begin to envision, but we are entering into an age where there will be famines, earthquakes, fires, floods and disasters. We, the Church, have been told ahead of time; should we not be preparing?

These are not just dreams of the night. Plans for a Christian response have already been envisioned under the name "Crash". Prayer support for a ship ministry has already begun and will be called "A Ship 4 Japan". Maybe other initiatives are already underway, too. It's time to prepare! It's time for the Church in Japan to rise up so that it may be looked to and counted upon when a compassionate response is required!

*CRASH Christian Relief Assistance Support & Hope. <http://www.crashjapan.com/>
ship4japan@gmail.com H

An Oft Ignored Power

By Andy Meeko

Huge potential lies in the most unlikely places. Entering my daughters “little chicks” class for the first time, I was totally unprepared for the mysterious power these little lives held. Only a half dozen pre-schoolers, each facing differing, monumental challenges—for this was not just some day care, but rather deaf school. Each child had little to no hearing, and many faced other trials as well, legs that couldn’t walk, brains that struggled to function normally, and faces that might bring some strangers discomfort. They were all beautiful children.

Each parent of those little lives carried a searing pain in his/her chest, and a tear that was always close to the surface. To watch a child grow up in a misdirected world is a painful thing. A world that claws at “success” is measured by price and productivity. To such a world, their child might seem a burden to be glanced at from the corner of one’s self-superior eye, or at best pitied. Such a world misses the point of what it means to be human.

But each parent has also undeniably encountered a power (a strength) in their child—a force that cannot be ignored, and has the capacity to destroy them or resurrect them, or in many ways do both. Disability can bring a person, a family, to their wits end. The grief, the anger, the stress, the frustration can take over, can conquer, the most stable home.

People with disability have power. Certainly there are the fantastic cases. Hikari Oe, is epileptic, developmentally delayed, and visually and physically impaired. He is also a musical savant. Hikari’s CDs have been bestsellers, earning him one of the top musical awards in Japan. Despite his weakness Hikari empowered his father. In the struggle of raising a son with disability Oe Kenzaburo earned the Nobel Prize. Consider Ototake Hirota who, though lacking arms or legs, still shines bright. His book, *Gotai Fuman-*



zoku, was the best seller of the 90s, and number two book of the last half century. What about blind pianist Kakehashi Takeshi—recently giving a powerful performance at Carnegie Hall in New York to over 3,000? His rendition of Beethoven’s (who by the way, wrote music while deaf) Piano Sonata No.23 “Appassionata” brought a standing ovation. What irony, a blind man playing a deaf man’s music. Doting father that I am, I can’t resist mentioning my five-year-old Ayame; though born deaf she has been tackling four languages and recently decorated the front page of the Yamagata Shinbun. Each of these inspire us because of their disability—it is a power they never asked for and paid a high price for. Such cases inspire us, but what about the hoardes that lie limp? I have found that every life has meaning and power. My friend Shotaro was mentally only about five, blind, and unable to speak, eat, or stand, in the end all he could do is listen and be—his silent suffering was more powerful than any sermon I have ever heard. One of the most inspirational families I have met has a son who though now almost twenty is mentally a few months old and still in diapers. How they do it I cannot fathom. Most families with disability disintegrate. Most suffer with abuse or end in divorce. The emotional, social, physical, and financial stress is gargantuan. These families will never change the world in some grand fashion, but they may change their own world, and perhaps change the larger world on a plane that many do not see.

So what is it this society holds dear? Everything points to money, and our preoccupation with it has been the downfall of this society. But those with mental disabilities don’t think a whole lot of money. What’s important to them is people. I heard someone say that when they were young they were impressed with people who were

intelligent, but when they grew old they were impressed with people who were kind. I used to be impressed with people who had money, now I am impressed with people who have suffered. Those with disability may be just what we need to bring equilibrium in this country. They are a gift to society—to teach us the intrinsic value of each person, the preciousness of life, and the preeminence of love. Their mere presence spreads hope and courage—precious commodities in this dark age. Their simple being can dash a multitude of vanities, melt the most frigid heart, and cause springs of gratitude to flow in a parched land. They are not angelic life forms, they are not creatures to be pitied, they are human beings, and perhaps they have a better understanding of what it means to be human than most of us. Perhaps they can heal the spiritual handicap of our misconstrued lifestyle. It is critical to note that how society deals with its weakest members is the defining statement of its health. And since those with disability have been neglected and ignored, creating a better environment for them could have astounding results.

In the Bible, the prophet Elijah goes to meet God. But first comes a terrible wind, afterward comes a mighty earthquake, and finally a raging fire. In the tumult of such horrible powers even the rocks split open. But God was not in these forces. Finally, all is calm, and in the silence the prophet hears a small voice, like a whisper—it is the voice of God. In this age there is a lot of rumbling and clattering, and I wonder, could the smallest voice be the one with the most power? Could the whimper of the suffering child, be the voice of God?

Query:

Many people with disability have a strange power to influence the able bodied and spiritually handicapped segment of society, even melting the hardest hearts. Tragically, instead of benefiting from their input, society often ignores or pities them. We also ignore the fact that most suffer greatly in homes that deal poorly with the added stress disability brings. For the sake of its own health, contemporary society must understand the needs of those with disability, as well as the fact that it needs them. ❖

Copyright held by Andrew Leon Meeko.



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.

Why We Do Not Lose Heart!

*Thoughts from
2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1.
By Jim Reapsome*

Christian fellowship is a wonderful experience, but sometimes our patience is sorely tried when someone begins to unload on us. The Bible tells us to bear one another's burdens, but sometimes the other fellow's burdens exhaust our mental capacity to endure. They just keep going on and on about their problems, especially when there is little apparent fruit to show for their efforts.

Did the people in the church at Corinth feel that way when they read Paul's second letter, filled as it was with the burdens of his ministry and his physical pain and suffering? I don't think so, because he never wallowed in self-pity. Rather he pointed to a way out of his troubles. His testimony was powerful: In spite of everything, he did not lose heart. What an amazing statement of Christ's power over adverse circumstances.

How can we explain it? In 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:5 Paul gives us some keys to rising above some of life's toughest deals and the discouragement that often arises from working in relatively unresponsive fields.

Paul did not lose heart (vs 16). The fact that he was not discouraged serves as his conclusion and introduction. He told what he had endured—affliction, perplexity, persecution—but he did not talk about his discouragement. He could have done that, but he didn't. That's a good tip for us. Rather, Paul said, "We do not lose heart."

Well, Paul, why weren't you discouraged? Why didn't you lose heart? Paul anticipates our question. He tells us why, and he gives us his reasons for his victory over discouragement—even though

he had every reason to fall into despair.

We must be realistic about our problems. Paul did not hide his. The gospel does not offer us a life free of problems. Rather, we look them squarely in the eye like Paul did. Then we learn from him reasons for victory over despair and apply them to our problems.

Paul's outer nature wasted away (vs.16). He suffered from some chronic illness—perhaps malaria, or failing eyesight. He called it his thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7,8). He also endured much physical punishment. He was stoned and beaten (2 Corinthians 6:4,5). Paul worked hard. He carried out his own injunction that his body should be a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1).

One of the hardest things to accept in life is the gradual decline of our physical prowess. Kids think they will live forever and do foolish things. As we grow older, not only are we more susceptible to the ravages of disease, but we also find it hard to adjust to a variety of normal aches and pains. This can become a major source of discouragement.

Paul's inner nature was renewed (vs. 16). He did not lose heart because he had the inner resources to rise above his problems and suffering. He did not say how his inner person was renewed, but we get some clues from some of his other letters:

He could do all things through Christ (Philippians 4:13).

In Christ he was a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

He was renewed in Christ (Colossians 3:10).

He enjoyed the fullness of the Godhead (Colossians 2:9-10).

He was blessed with every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3).

He had the resurrection power of Christ (Ephesians 1:19).

He expected inner strength because of "the power at work within us" (Ephesians 3:20).

All of these things are true for us as well. We can be renewed—we are renewed—because Jesus lives in us. The reason we fail is because we fail to draw on our resources in Christ. It's like going bankrupt because you don't use the money in your account.

Jesus told us to come and drink from His rivers of living water every day. All of us can be renewed like Paul was. Christ renews us when we ask Him to do so. When we pray and obey His commands, we are renewed. When we meditate on His Word, we are renewed.

Paul saw his present affliction as slight and momentary (vs 17). An important reason for Paul's not losing heart was that he saw everything in the light of eternity. His afflictions were merely a blip on God's radar. In the light of eternity, he saw his afflictions as "slight".

They do not seem that way to us, however. Even a headache or a sore leg can throw us for a loop. But we can grasp Paul's eternal perspective on life. In that context, whatever we suffer is momentary, like a fleeing nanosecond.

Paul's afflictions prepared him for eternal glory (vs. 17). Paul compared things that can't be compared. How could he evaluate his present distress in the light of eternity? Present afflictions he regarded as "light," whereas future glory as heavy, a "weight." That is, it has much greater value. The present is "momentary," while future glory is eternal, it lasts forever. His present experiences were an affliction, but they were to be superseded by an incomparable glory.

Let's review. Paul did not lose heart, first, because he enjoyed all the inner resources of Christ. Second, he saw his sufferings in the light of eternity. And third, he did not lose heart because he was being prepared for future glory. Do we see our sufferings as preparation for glory?

My uncle used to end every table grace, "And now, Lord, fit and prepare us for heaven." When I was a kid and heard him pray that way, I thought, "Hey, I'm not ready for heaven. There's too much fun here, and I don't want to miss any of it."

Now I see how much meaning this perspective gives to my life. Suffering is not pointless, it's incredibly rich in value. One day its value will be worth far more than anything we have ever suffered.

One of my choicest experiences in this regard

came through my friendship with Christiana Tsai, a refugee from the royal family of China. A missionary found her a home near where I used to live. Christiana suffered from incurable malaria that not only blinded her, but also made her intolerant to light. She was confined to her bed in a dark room, but when we entered, the place lit up with her smile and laughter. You couldn't feel sorry for her. She wanted to know about us and prayed for us. She was a magnet for visiting Chinese military and diplomats. Many of them came to faith in Christ in that room! Knowing God was preparing her for glory, she was liberated from self-pity and sought the spiritual welfare of others.

Paul looked at the unseen, eternal things (vs 18). How can we accept our suffering as slight and monetary? By learning what's really important. "The things that are seen" were Paul's experiences, his hardships and sufferings. He said, in effect, "Don't look at them. Don't let your mind dwell on them. That's not really important. Instead, look at the things that are unseen. Seek things above, where Christ is (Colossians 3:1). Set your minds on things that are above, not on things on earth" (Colossians 3:2).

What is reality? Not what we can see. Those things are transient, temporary, impermanent, passing away. This is the great theme of the Bible. Faith helps us grasp what we cannot see with our eyes. The real is what we cannot see.

Every day we battle between the real and the unreal, the seen and the unseen. The world appeals to the lust of the eyes. Grab it, eat it, do it, experience it, taste it, or whatever. It's hard to believe that reality is what we can't see, the realm of the spirit. Jesus said reality is life with God, our heavenly Father. You can't see your life with God like you can see a new house, or a new car, or a new man, or a new woman.

So we have to choose how to look at life. If we think life is what we can see, hear, feel, achieve, and spend, it will pass away and we will have nothing left but ashes. But if we believe that real life is in Jesus Christ and eternity with Him, then we will find everlasting rewards and blessings.

The physical side of life will end (5:1). Paul was a tentmaker by trade, so he compared his body to a tent. Tents are temporary, not permanent. He explained how the tent will be folded up some day, a reference to death. The bodies we lavish so much attention on will pass away. No amount of cosmetics, or workouts at the gym, will keep us from dying. Christians are realists about death. You can pump iron and bulk your ABS all you want, but your body will decay.

Our bodies are tents, but our spirits live forever. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, so we take good care of them. But we

cannot find the meaning of life in the condition of our bodies.

We have an eternal house in heaven (vs1). Paul makes more contrasts, this time between the tent and a building. He talks about the building made by God, not by human hands. Our temporal tents will be replaced by our eternal home. Our tents exist in this world, but God's building is in heaven. Our permanent house in heaven is our goal. That goal is superior to any earthly goal, which is another reason Paul did not lose heart.

Standing along the shore of Lake Michigan in Chicago between the Shedd Aquarium and the Fels Planetarium, you get a magnificent view of some of the world's tallest buildings. They sparkle and dazzle in the bright sun. What a testament to our cultural achievements they are! I've often said I'd like to live just one month at Lake Point Towers. But no matter how dazzling and brilliant these skyscrapers are, they are just tents destined for God's ash heap. They cannot in any way be compared with our eternal condo in heaven.

The Bible doesn't describe our heavenly condos, but we get some hints from Paul. Our heavenly condo is where our real persons will dwell, our spirits, our souls. Since our physical bodies are where our spirits live now, it stands to reason that the primary purpose of our heavenly condo will be to house our spirits. The basic purpose of our heavenly condo is to be with Christ. Jesus now lives in us, but He prayed that His own will share His glory in heaven. Our heavenly condos are primarily for us to enjoy fellowship with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What a reason not to lose heart!

Paul longed to put on his heavenly dwelling (vss. 2-4). When Paul looked at his present afflictions, he did not lose heart because he was sure of gaining a new dwelling in heaven. We can rise above our circumstances by being confident about what God is going to do for us in the future.

Paul used three words to describe his feelings as he anticipated heaven. He groaned, longed for, and sighed. He yearned to have his heavenly habitation put on over his earthly tent. He felt trapped in his earthly frame. He then changed his illustration by comparing his body to clothing, instead of a tent. He talked about being afraid of being found naked, this is, no home in heaven.

He struggled with this. He felt oppressed because he did not want to have his body stripped away. He wanted his dying body to be absorbed in life. That's what he meant when he said, "What is mortal may be swallowed up by life." He wanted the temporal to be absorbed in the eternal.

Paul did not go around looking for ways to die. He groaned for his heavenly dwelling, because of his severe persecutions and physical ill-

ness. But he knew that nothing would be gained by risking death. He faced danger many times, but he and his friends prayed for deliverance from death and Roman execution. Paul's sighing with anxiety had to do with his inner struggle between seeking release and continuing to suffer.

"I am hard pressed between the two," he wrote. "My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account," he told the Philippians (Philippians 1:23-24).

The Spirit's guarantee (5:5) was Paul's fifth reason for not losing heart. God has prepared us for heaven by giving us the Holy Spirit. The indwelling Spirit is a token of heaven. More than a token, more than a foretaste; actually, a guarantee of what we shall enjoy one day.

The Holy Spirit came to live in believers after Christ's departure (John 14:17). We receive the Holy Spirit when we receive Christ. If we are looking forward to heaven, we should get better acquainted with the Holy Spirit. Paul told us to be filled with the Spirit, and not to quench or grieve Him. Therefore, we do not lose heart, because:

1. Christ renews us to rise above our problems and suffering.

2. In the light of eternity, suffering doesn't last long.

3. We are being prepared for future glory.

4. Our physical tents will be replaced by condos in heaven.

5. God has given us His Holy Spirit as a guarantee of good things to come.

Are you at risk of losing heart? Heart failure strikes people without warning. Some recover, some don't. Don't let spiritual heart failure spoil your life with God. The warning symptoms are clear: coldness, anxiety, fear, unbelief. Treat these now by faith, as Paul did, so you may bear fruit and grow in your knowledge of God. **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.



THE “P.E.A.C.E. PLAN”—Saddleback’s Revolutionary Plan to Change the World Interview with Skip Lanfried
By Paul Neterhcott

Skip Lanfried is the North American Director of Saddleback Community Church’s new P.E.A.C.E. Plan—a bold initiative that envisions small groups around the world making a huge impact for good.

Q: Skip, what is the P.E.A.C.E. Plan?

A: The P.E.A.C.E. Plan is a mobilization of small groups into missions. The five letters of “P.E.A.C.E.” refer to Planting churches, Equipping servant leaders, Assisting the poor, Caring for the sick, and Educating the next generation. P.E.A.C.E. is an intentional effort to create methods, tools, training, and tactics for every follower of Christ in every church to get involved in local and global outreach. The P.E.A.C.E. Plan attacks the five global giants that oppress and cause billions to suffer worldwide. The five giants are: spiritual emptiness, ego-centric leadership, poverty, disease, and lack of education.

We are addressing the five giants by training people in a variety of ways. We have over 1,100 training modules on health issues alone.

These address preventable diseases, personal hygiene, care for the sick, and curtailment of the spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases. P.E.A.C.E. attacks illiteracy by educating the next generation through such things as: literacy programs, oral based training for oral cultures, teaching kids to read and write, and TESOL.

Q: What are the implications of P.E.A.C.E. for sending agencies?

A: The object of the plan is not to equip the local church to become a sending agency. Sending agencies will continue to be necessary and needed. We don’t want to be prescriptive; we are telling people from around the world to take the plan, adapt it, and use it in ways that work for them in their situations. The way we will use the Internet is intended to create an ongoing learning environment. The training modules will gradually grow and evolve as the participants feed back their learning into the system.

To use the plan, it will not be necessary for a church to change any current financial structures or commitments. After a church begins to engage in the P.E.A.C.E. Plan, it may make decisions on their own to reevaluate priorities and shift funding in new directions.

Q: What are the implications of the P.E.A.C.E. Plan for professional missionaries?

A: The P.E.A.C.E. Plan is not intended to replace the professional missionary force. The global challenge when we face the five giants is that the professional missionary force is too small to make significant progress in a reasonable amount of time. We don’t intend to replace the current mission force; we are calling the rest of us to join them.

Q: Will professional missionaries be directly involved in the P.E.A.C.E. Plan, if so, how?

A: We have had two different responses from the

professional mission force. One is an unfavorable rejection of the P.E.A.C.E. Plan (which is a rejection of the notion that every Christian should take responsibility for reaching the world for Christ). Those who have that response choose to not be involved, not to partner, and they view it as a challenge to what they are currently involved in. The other response has been extremely favorable. These missionaries get excited about having the rest of us join them. They ask themselves, "How can I help the average follower of Christ do what I do, to learn from my expertise, and to learn from my ministry?"

Q: So, you see P.E.A.C.E. Plan enthusiasts directly involved with professional missionaries?

A: As a matter of fact, all of the training under the P.E.A.C.E. Plan umbrella has come from professional missionaries, or from those closely connected to them. Professional missionaries have created virtually all of the training, and a number of mission agencies are fully "on board" providing to us their existing training materials, which we take and modify for use in small groups.

Q: Is anybody going to control it?

A: We have intentionally chosen power over control. The biggest challenge with any kind of new idea is making the decision to control it or give it power. This is because the more you control a project like the P.E.A.C.E. Plan the less powerful it will be, and the more powerful it is the less you maintain control over it. From now until the fall of 2007 we will control it. During that time we will be testing and refining all of the content and systems. In the fall of 2007, we will release control and that is when the plan will have the opportunity to become powerful.

Q: As far as mercy ministries is concerned, how do you see P.E.A.C.E. affecting our world?

A: The biggest reason that Christians don't act like Jesus in the face of poverty and disease is because they feel afraid and ill prepared. Once Christians are trained, given practical ways to care for the sick and assist the poor, fears will diminish and they will be empowered to become the hands and feet of Jesus. They will be able to interact in the face of poverty and disease like He did.

The first way the P.E.A.C.E. Plan will


impact mercy ministries is that thousands and thousands of Christians will begin to act like Jesus when facing poverty and disease. Second, because of the holistic approach that the plan embodies, mercy ministries will become a clear path to evangelism and church planting. Why will this happen? Because mercy and evangelism are "married" in the P.E.A.C.E. Plan.

Q. What are the big challenges to the P.E.A.C.E. Plan being effective?

A: The first big challenge is to help pastors and small group members overcome the fear of being used by God to plant churches, equip servant leaders, assist the poor, care for the sick, and educate the next generation. Many are frozen in fear and feel incapable of making a difference. The next big challenge is to get the word out and allow people to hear about this resource and catch the heart that is behind the vision and the creation of all this material. This is not about Saddleback Church. It is about launching a movement to establish the Kingdom of God in areas where it is not established and to strengthen and grow it in areas where it exists. It is about the global body of Christ, the local Church, becoming strong and healthy and empowered to change the world for the global glory of God.

Q: P.E.A.C.E. is bold, a "no box" plan that doesn't follow "the rules." Nevertheless, you expect it to mobilize, empower, energize, and equip a very large number of people. Do you think it is going to work?"

A: It will work only if this is God's plan for this time. Personally, I believe that this is a God ordained movement at this time in history. I believe that it is a God inspired vision that will change the lives of millions and millions of people who will change the face of our world! We work to that end, but we have absolutely no power in and of ourselves to impact or change even one person's life. We depend fully on God moving powerfully through this entire effort, and we plan to absolutely fail if God chooses not to "show up."

For more information, go to: www.saddlebackfamily.com/peace 

A PRAYER

*I asked God for strength
that I might achieve,
I was made weak,
that I might learn humbly to obey.*

*I asked for health,
that I might do greater things,
I was given infirmity
that I might do better things.*

*I asked for riches,
that I might be happy,
I was given poverty,
that I might be wise.*

*I asked for power,
that I might have the praise of men,
I was given weakness,
that I might feel the need of God.*

*I asked for all things,
that I might enjoy life,
I was given life,
that I might enjoy all things.*

*I got nothing I asked for—
But everything I had hoped for.
Almost despite myself,
my unspoken prayers were answered.*

M. Cleland, *Strong at the Broken Places*

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Sharing God's Gift to the Ends of the Earth

By Darren Polischuk

On a "budget of pocket lint" in late October, 2004, we were able to launch the vision of Greatest Gift Ministries. Our pilot project was a Gift Box program. In November and December, people in Japan were encouraged to fill up Gift Boxes with personal hygiene

items, schools supplies and small toys for boys and girls, ages 2-14. We also encouraged the inclusion of a letter and a photograph with the Gift Box telling each child that Jesus loved them. Finally, a donation of 1,000 yen per box was requested to handle shipping and cover administrative costs.

We sought affirmation from God by praying for one hundred gift boxes. By the beginning of March, 2005, almost seven hundred gift boxes had graced our living room.

In January, 2005, fourteen people from Japan went as a distribution team to help deliver 440 of these boxes to an orphanage and poor villages in Cambodia. In March, the CAJ (Christian Academy in Japan) Senior class of 50 students took 110 boxes to an orphanage in a poor village in Thailand. Boxes were also taken to Myanmar while plans continue to develop for boxes to go to a leper colony and poor villages in China.

Many of the children who received these gifts had never received anything like this before. Their eyes opened wide as they lifted the box lids to take in the sights contained within; joy overwhelmed their faces and excited squeals filled the air. Everyone knew that these gifts came from Jesus through the people of Japan.

We pray that these boxes, given as a blessing to local church partners in each country, will in turn reach into the hearts of the communities to also be a blessing.

It has been my personal experience that when people get involved with something like this and they see first hand how God's love is reaching people around the world, they get excited. That

excitement is usually life changing, so that they go back to their own churches looking for additional practical ways in which to reach their own communities with the message of God's love. This is where I get excited about Japan.

Greatest Gift Ministries is committed to networking and developing compassionate ministries in Japan through the mobilization and witness of the Japanese Church. We will go to the ends of the earth to bring joy, hope and the message of God's love to anyone who is the victim of war, disease, disaster, poverty or oppression – and we would like you to join us. May we break the hearts of congregations with the things that break God's heart. We want to see Japanese move outwards in response to Jesus' command to Love one another.

It was E. Stanley Jones, a Methodist missionary in India for sixty years, who said, "It is not our responsibility but our response to His ability," and it was Francis of Assisi who said, "Preach the gospel always and when necessary use words." We are committed to expanding the Gift Box program to include as many churches, schools and businesses that want to participate both on the sending side, Japan, and the receiving end in other countries. However, it doesn't end there. We are currently working on these projects with several more to follow:

- Used wheel chair distribution
- Christian disaster response information services
- Lay-ministry training on being a caregiver
- Senior citizens ministry development
- Short term team participation in existing compassionate ministries
- Raising the profile of Compassionate Ministries through publication

For more information or comments, please write the author at: info@greatestgiftministries.org

Greatest Gift Ministries helps the Japanese be the hands and feet of Jesus—reaching a lost and hurting world both outside and inside Japan! ❧

"How far would you go to share God's Greatest Gift to you with a lost and hurting world?" That's the question I have been asking people in Japan for the last seven months – and as I look back on my journey, I realize we've come a long way.

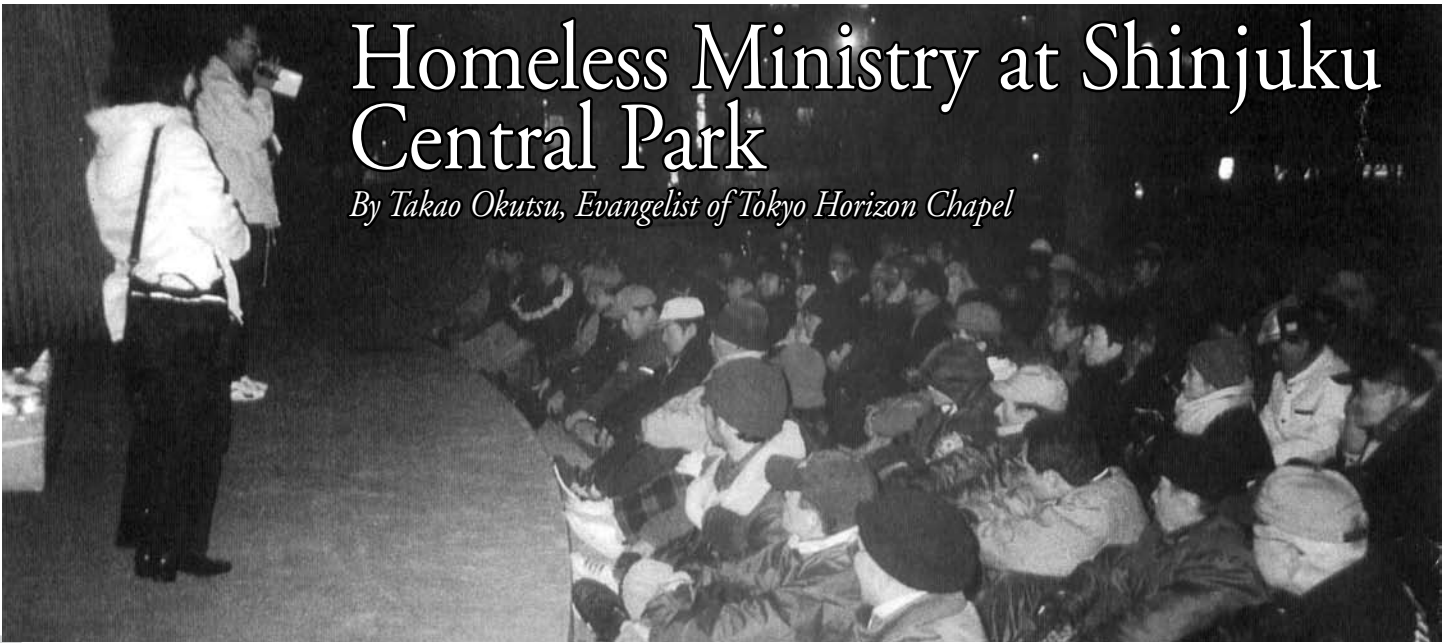
It was January, 2002, when I sat in an office in Boone, North Carolina (USA), looking at a map of the world where the ministry of Samaritan's Purse had on-going projects. As I studied the map I realized that there was no activity indicated in Japan, so I asked the question, to which I got the reply, "Japan? Why would we want to do anything in Japan? They don't need us there."

God began to share a vision with me for a way some of Samaritan's Purse projects could be effective tools to reach the Japanese with the message of God's Love. I tenaciously pursued and developed the vision of opening a Samaritan's Purse office in Japan for almost two years before getting the final "No"; they were not interested at the time.

I was devastated and wrestled with God as to why He would burden me with starting an NGO in a country where I didn't speak the language or have the financial resources to start, let alone the means to support my family in Tokyo. God made it clear to me in that moment that the only real burden I was bearing was the lack of faith! He would provide the means and open the doors for His will to be done. I needed to cross over to the other side of this crisis and depend on God alone – not man. So with a renewed passion, I put my foot on His path and committed to do everything in His power to see this vision realized – that was December, 2003.

Homeless Ministry at Shinjuku Central Park

By Takao Okutsu, Evangelist of Tokyo Horizon Chapel



Shinjuku Horizon Open-Air Chapel is a very unique church. There are no walls or ceilings. Almost all the people who come to the church are homeless. Most are men. They come to church not only for God's Word but also for food. They can receive rice balls and bread as well as God's Word every Monday afternoon. About 400 homeless people come to our church every week. They are jobless, lonely and feel useless, but they are the treasures of God. I believe God wants to use them as witnesses of Jesus Christ.

Compassion for Homeless People

I always say to myself, "If I hadn't believed in Jesus, I would be homeless, too." I have nothing to be proud of in myself. I have no good things except Jesus in my heart. Every good thing I have now has come from Jesus. The only difference between the homeless and me is that Jesus is with me. If they believe in Jesus, they will surely change. I want them to know Him!

How This Ministry Started

"I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication" (Zechariah 12:10). This was the Bible verse that Tokyo Horizon Chapel, which I belong to, put up as the verse of the year in 2001. I kept praying to God for about seven months that He would pour out His Spirit.

One day a group of young men went to Shinjuku Central Park to pray. After the prayer, a man named Toranosuke Ishibashi, whom we called Tora chan, said to me, "Okutsu san, let's start ministry at this park." I said, "Well, let me think about it. I'll pray to God."

God gave me the answer as I was reading the Bible. It was Luke 19:12 to 26. A man of noble

birth gave his ten servants one *mina* each as he left for a trip. One of the servants didn't use the money but kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. When the master came back home, he told the servant that he was a wicked one. I thought that I should not be like that servant. Instead I should use what God had given me.

Then this ministry started in July, 2001. Originally it started as an Open-Air Concert. Nobody came for the first two weeks, but I knew that Jesus was there. The third week, a woman, Setsuko Inamori, made 50 rice balls (*onigiri*). We brought these to the park and gave them to the homeless people there. From that time on many homeless people started coming to this ministry.

The Spirit of Grace

God's grace is abundant! He gives us a lot of food to hand out to homeless people every week. We use more than 40 kg of rice for more than 400 rice balls. Each rice ball is about twice as big as ordinary ones. They have a good reputation among the homeless people in terms of size and taste! We also give out bread donated by an American wholesale store. They give us lots of bread each week for free. The bread would just be garbage without our ministry, but God uses it for the poor through this ministry. He knows our needs well.

God's grace changes everything. Homeless people are looked down upon or just ignored on the street. But once they receive God's grace, everything starts changing. Those who are looked down upon become those who look up to God. And those who receive food become those who give food. And those who complain continuously become those who give thanks for everything. R. Matuso, who got baptized in December two years ago, once said, "I don't worry about food, house,

and clothes. I am satisfied with what I have." And Mr. Yamamoto, who got baptized in April last year once said, "My happiest time is to tell the gospel to other people who don't know Jesus yet." Mr. Kawashima, who got baptized in June last year, once said, "I want a gift of healing to pray for those who are sick." The homeless become children of God when they believe in Jesus.

God's grace is Jesus Himself. Many people have come to our ministry to help since it started. They come from Tokyo, Saitama, Shizuoka, Osaka, Nara, Kanagawa, Mito, and so on. Others are from other countries like America, Philippines, Korea, China, Sweden, and Burundi. The only reason that they come is Jesus. They haven't received any money for their work at all. Because Jesus gave us His own life for nothing, we serve people and Jesus for free.

Miracle of Two Fish and Five Loaves of Bread

No matter how little we think we have, two fish and five loaves of bread, these are enough for Jesus to satisfy 5,000 people. It is important for us to give all to Jesus, and then He uses them for many people. In this ministry every one of us gives Jesus our small things—making rice balls, packing bread, driving a car, handing out food, and so on. But Jesus uses them to feed 400 homeless people every week. And as we give, we receive something. It is far more than what we give!

For More Information:

Call Takao Okutsu Tel/04-2959-7567 or 070-5109-0985

Ministry/ Every Monday 4:45PM - 5:45 PM ☩

Speaking to Teens

by Tom Kisaki & Ken Reddington



Photo taken at a chapel service at Teen Challenge Western Australia which is helping us establish Teen Challenge in Japan.

Teen Challenge Japan

By Tom Kisaki

A young Assemblies of God pastor named David Wilkerson was led by the Holy Spirit to share the gospel of Jesus Christ and the love of God with gangsters in New York in 1958. Many of those youngsters were miraculously saved, but in the course of the ministry it became very clear that a 24-hour rehabilitation centre was needed to help them break free from addiction. That was the beginning of Teen Challenge. (The full story can be found in the book, *The Cross and the Switchblade*, also available in video/DVD.) God has used this ministry to save and deliver countless numbers of youth from all kinds of addictions in the past half-century, and today there are 450 Teen Challenge centres in over 80 different countries with the outstanding and astonishing cure rate of 85 percent.

The family unit in Japan is quite dysfunctional, caused mainly by the absence of the father and the over-protection of the mother. Education is extremely competitive, so young people try to find escape, release and freedom through sex, alcohol, drugs, glue-sniffing and joy-riding.

Adults keep long hours at work and have difficulties in the area of human relationships. These are resulting in depression and nervous breakdowns, leading to suicide, which now numbers 30,000 per year, or one person ending his/her own life every fifteen minutes! Again salary-men and housewives alike are trying to find ways to relieve their tension and do so through alcohol (so-called the kitchen drinker) and gambling (pachinko & slot-machines). Moreover, Japanese society is a shame culture where families try to hide their problems rather than face and solve them. All of this makes rehabilitation and re-entry to society even more difficult.

Teen Challenge Japan has just been established (June 2005) in order to help people who are suffering from drug and alcoholic addictions and all forms of dependency and life-controlling problems. The Japanese government, schools and hospitals do not have the answer to the drug problem. Because this is a sin problem, it requires a spiritual solution.

We are aiming to have a residential rehabilitation centre where those who are suffering from addictions can be separated and protected from drugs and/or any other negative influence/envi-

ronment. Residents will be taught how to pray and how to have devotions. They will attend chapel service every morning and study the Scripture. They will also have sports and music, as well as communal duties, like cooking and cleaning. The purpose of our program is for these troubled youth to know and experience the love of God, forgive and be forgiven, and to be healed in the heart and delivered from their addictions—to learn to live drug-free lives as born-again, Spirit-filled Christians.

For more information, please check:
info@teenchallengejapan.com
<http://www.teenchallengejapan.com>

Thank you for your prayers for this new compassion ministry!

Overcoming the “Wall”

by Yasunari Tashiro, Cooperating pastor, Yokosuka Central Church, Domei Church Association. Instructor, Bible, Yokohama Girls' High School.

Taken from "For Reading the Times 116" in the monthly magazine Inochi no Kotoba, July 2004, Word of Life Press. Translated by Ken Reddington

Being a chaplain at a "mission school" (a school started by overseas missionaries based on biblical principles) has taught me that when it comes to how the students see life and common sense, they build a "wall" in regard to the Christian faith. They think that religion doesn't have much of a connection to life. Religion is something that people "enter" who are especially troubled by something. And since they are not troubled by anything big, teens think it doesn't relate to them. In this situation, no matter how hard one tries to explain things, nothing is communicated.

Even among those students interested in "religion", there is a real tendency to think of religion as something that causes war. We must always ask ourselves how we are to respond to the kind of "common sense" that says that it is better not to have any religion at all. Thus, when we ask the question, "Does religion really causes war?" we must consider seriously what is being said. Also, when people ask us if what is written in the Bible is true, we have to explain the historical proof and talk about historical credibility.

What actually causes this "wall" we are speaking of in the first place is traditional Japanese culture, the thinking that has pervaded our modern society, as well as the individual's way of seeing things through their own experience. We must try to get a good understanding of Japanese culture and the controlling premises behind modern thinking. From there, we need to once again really think carefully about what we should say and in what order we should say it. Our concern should be how to destroy this "wall".

There is a necessity to analyze why people who live life under the philosophical premise that this modern culture is to be received blindly cannot understand the Christian faith and to see to what end that type of thinking leads to. Also, when I speak to my students about the Bible, I talk to them about the problems that are created by the Japanese culture. With the twelfth graders (those in the final year of high school), they can really understand when I explain the problems carefully, and they ask me, "Teacher, what should we do then?"

We need at this time to stop and look at what type of society we live in and how miserable is the position that that society has placed us in. We must see whether the world we live in is really good and we need to tell the students that the Christian faith does give answers to the problems that everyone has. They need to see that the message of the Christian faith relates to them in a personal way. That is one of the "narrow paths" by which teenagers can overcome the "wall".

My Personal Comment:

Normally, the word "Kirisuto Kyo" (キリスト教) is translated as "Christianity", but in this translation, I have translated the word as "the Christian faith". I have done so because the word "Christianity" in English can also mean those people who are Christians, not just the religion. Also, I think that seeing Christianity as an active faith and more than just a religion is something that we need to stress as we deal with Japanese every day. Because of that, when I talk with people, I use the word "Kirisuto Shinko" (キリスト信仰) so that I am stressing faith more than the do's and don'ts of a religion.

While it is true that we as missionaries might not know all the Japanese traditional culture that goes into the thinking of people, we DO know what modern philosophy teaches. And as we think more and more carefully about where people are coming from, we can more easily help them "over the wall".
Ken Reddington

Changing your Style of Speaking

by Yasunari Tashiro, Cooperating pastor, Yokosuka Central Church, Domei Church Association. Instructor, Bible, Yokohama Girls' High School.

Taken from "For Reading the Times 117" in the monthly magazine Inochi no Kotoba, August 2004, Word of Life Press. Translated by Ken Reddington

"Just believe and you'll be saved". That is one phrase that is understood fairly well by the teens that I teach at school. But they understand it in this way: "If one believes that there is a God, that person will be able to overcome the dangers in life." What they hear has nothing to do with putting one's trust in Jesus as one's Savior, who died on the Cross in our stead, to forgive our sins. To them the words "be saved" are not understood to mean that fallen man is separated from the life of God and needs to be delivered from the horrible condition of being eternally condemned.

In other words, what the Christian understands as the meaning of "salvation" has been transformed by the Japanese people's "peculiar way of understanding" and has been misinterpreted, resulting in the destruction of the very concept of faith in Christianity. Thus it turns out to be, "There's no benefit even if I choose to believe. Christianity sure sounds fishy to me." How complete this "destruction of faith" goes seems to depend on how old they are; the older they are, the worse it gets.

And what is more surprising, in response to the phrase "Just believe and you'll be saved", teens

often say, "So, those who don't just believe can't be saved, huh? I feel sorry for them. Isn't that unfair?" Because they think it isn't their responsibility, it's unreasonable that they shouldn't be allowed to be saved. Since they feel that anything you decide to believe is good enough (the Japanese is: "iwashi no atama mo shinjin kara", literally "the head of a sardine can be an object of faith if you believe in it"), the idea of "believing" is taken very lightly.

For us as Christians, these two verbs that we use so often, "believe" and "be saved", change their meanings completely when they are transferred "as is" into the Japanese spiritual climate. No matter how simply, plainly, boldly or sacrificially one speaks, you will just cause people to stumble if you do not use a "speaking style" that takes into account this change of meanings.

When speaking to modern young people in Japan, we need to seriously concern ourselves with changing our style of speaking. This is not just a problem for "mission schools" (schools started by missions), but one that presents itself to anyone anywhere in this country who is involved with evangelism. For those of us "speaking" Christians, we need to think deeply about the real meanings of the words "believe" and "be saved". We need to think about how we can speak in such a way that there is no "change of meaning" between what we say and what the hearers hear.

My Personal Comment:

I think that we as Christians, no matter in what country we are, need to be more careful with the words we use. The "Christianese" that is understood by most Christians in church can be an almost unintelligible language to those outside the church. For instance, in Japan the word "sambi" (賛美) is often used in the church to mean "sing", though it actually means "praise". While the word "sambi" does not mean much to the average Japanese, especially to teens, it would be almost impossible for them to understand the worship leader in a church who said "Sambi shimasho" (meaning "Let's sing"). I agree with Mr. Tashiro that we need to do some real serious thinking about the words we use and how people understand them, as opposed to what we think we are saying.

A friend of mine (also a missionary in Japan) says that he doesn't use the word "believe" much when he talks with Japanese. He uses the word "trust" ("shinrai suru" 信頼する). Though people might believe in almost anything, they are very careful in who and what they trust. I think that is a good way to put it. Trusting in Jesus, entrusting to Him all we are and have, is really the message we want to share with people. Ken Reddington

continued on the bottom of page 27



EARTHQUAKE

I was at home playing with my children when the first tremor struck. My kids instinctively bolted under the table, and I switched on the television to the NHK channel to find out where the epicenter was. In the course of the next few minutes, two more shocks sent my children scurrying under the table. I remained glued to the television screen. The quakes, that were large enough to disrupt normal routine in Tokyo, were located in Niigata, where they brought death and destruction and forced thousands of residents out of their homes.

As a missionary, sent to Japan to share the gospel and love of Jesus Christ, my first thought was, "What can we do to help?" However, my good intentions soon met with significant resistance. Before I even mentioned my desire to anyone, I had doubts as to whether my help would even be necessary. "After all, Japan is a highly advanced technological society with every modern capability. Surely, everything that needs to be done is already underway..." I reasoned. But over the next few days, it became apparent that the disaster was overwhelming the efforts of the first responders. Large numbers of people were sleeping in their cars and more and more were showing up at evacuation centers. The elderly and children were suffering under poor conditions with insufficient food, water, and adequate sanitation. What made matters more precarious were the frequent aftershocks and the forecast of bad weather. A situation that was already difficult could possibly become much worse. We needed to move quickly!

As we were scheduled to work with Japan's Second Harvest (a food bank) to pick up food that week, we decided instead, after a few quick calls, to

rent a truck and take emergency supplies to Ojiya town, in one of the hardest hit areas. At this point the next hurdle loomed before us. We suddenly found ourselves with a hundred questions. Were the roads open? Would they allow our rental truck through to the people who needed the supplies? How long would all this take? What if more aftershocks hit while we were there? Did we need to get permission from anyone? Would we get in trouble? Who should we go through? Were the supplies that we were taking truly needed? As it turned out, we ended up getting help from a local official in our own town who called the volunteer office in Ojiya to explain what we were trying to do. We soon had a letter from Ojiya inviting us to come with relief supplies along with a rough idea of which roads were open and what route to take. As the situation was constantly changing, we decided to plunge forward with the information we had, put some hand-made signs on the rental truck, load it up, and head for Niigata.

My experience with the Niigata earthquake has opened my eyes to a huge realization that, as a missionary community and as the Church, we are failing to address serious needs related to disasters. Last year alone over a half million Japanese were forced out of their homes by earthquakes, floods, volcanoes and typhoons. In their time of loss, pain and confusion, where were we? We were paralyzed, not by a lack of concern or compassion, but by doubts and uncertainty. From this the vision for Christian Relief, Assistance, Support and Hope (CRASH) was birthed.

CRASH

Simply put, CRASH is a vision to see widespread Christian response to disasters in Japan. Our goal is not that CRASH would become the Christian response agency, but that each mission and each church in Japan would have the information and preparation needed to help in the way that the Lord would have us respond. CRASH aims to be a catalyst for change, reducing resistance and making it easier for ministries to share the compassion of Christ effectively. CRASH serves as a catalyst in three ways:

- CRASH TEAM: A rapid disaster response team
- CRASH CENTER: A website and toll-free phone number with accurate, up-to-date relief information
- CRASH COURSE: Vital training to equip ministries for compassion

What I envision is:

When a disaster strikes the CRASH TEAM is mobilized quickly, arriving at locations with one thousand emergency kits of food and water. Sanitation needs will be assessed and responded to. In the meantime, the team sets up a tent to serve as a care ministry where victims can come, where relief workers can give a cup of cold water or hot tea, and where victims can share burdens with someone who listens and cares. A third function of the CRASH TEAM is to assess and report ongoing needs back to the body of Christ through the CRASH CENTER.

The CRASH CENTER is a location where any church or mission in Japan can find out the answers to their myriad of questions: What is the situation on the ground? Are any other Christian ministries there? Is there someone to partner with? Where is the greatest need?

Many groups may be reluctant to get involved because they feel they are not qualified---possibly doing more harm than good. This is where the CRASH COURSE comes in.

Between disasters the CRASH COURSE is designed to provide churches with disaster preparedness for their own congregations, training for pastors with specialized counseling courses for dealing with trauma victims, and emergency response training for those who want to be volunteers in disaster response.

At present CRASH is still just a vision. We are working hard to make this vision a reality, and we realize that the Lord wants to involve many more in the effort. For more information, please go to the CRASH CENTER web-site: crashjapan.com

We are looking for Christians with hearts full of compassion who would partner with us in action, in prayer and with financial support.

To be part of this effort, please write to Jonathan Wilson at: jonathanwilson@calvarychapel.com H



Compassion Ministry to the Sick & Dying

By Bob Gellerstedt

“I lift up my eyes to the hills—from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth?” Psalms 121:1

At the foot of Mount Hiei, in Kyoto, the Japan Baptist Hospital serves people by ministering to their physical and spiritual needs. God, who created the beauty of the earth, made each patient in His image to know, worship, and serve Him. As a “co-operating” chaplain in the Baptist hospital it has been my privilege to be a witness for our Lord. Briefly I would like to share three things that God has taught me in my work with the patients and staff.

First, in visiting a patient, one needs to hear his/her story. The point is for the patient to do most of the talking. In listening, it is critical to truly understand what the patient is saying. The next purpose is to hear what the Holy Spirit is leading one to share from the Bible. From God’s Word one can show the patient that God loves and cares for him/her. Our prayer is to guide the person to a living relationship to Jesus.

Next, a living narrative of faith is an example of how God, through Jesus, is working in the chaplain’s life. How has Jesus helped you in trials, in sickness, in death of a loved one? By telling and living our narratives, we witness to the true and living God and show what He can do through Jesus Christ to transform the patient’s story. Indeed, it is critical to state what God can do for one who knows Him through Jesus. For example, God helped me so much when my

father died, and as I share how He worked in me during that time a tremendous “cultural barrier” comes down as I talk with Japanese. Grief is universal, and patients are willing to listen to a faith narrative.

Finally, to state the obvious, prayer is so important in ministering to the ill, elderly, and to their family members. Pastor Matsuoka Hirozaki, the former Buddhist priest who became a Christian, writes, “Are not Japanese very tolerant when you ask, ‘May I pray for you?’ [If you want to pray with them], I do not believe they will refuse you” [from イエスに出会った僧侶, p.128].

When praying with a non-Christian in the hospital, I briefly tell them the content of my prayer, and then ask the person’s permission if I may pray for her/him. I am careful to pray for God to give the person strength, care, and reveal Himself through Jesus. Pastor Matusoka is right;

Japanese will rarely refuse the offer of prayer.

Listening, living, praying—it is a privilege to share Jesus in Japan!

Bob Gellerstedt’s e-mail: gbjapan@pastors.com



J. Robert (Bob) Gellerstedt was born in Atlanta, Georgia. He holds degrees from West Georgia College (B.A.), The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (M.Div.), and Emory University (Th.M). Bob came to Japan as a student summer missionary in '77 and

was a Journeyman Missionary here from '78-80. He also served in the pastorate in the USA, then came to Japan as a career missionary with IMB/SBC and has been co-operating chaplain, Japan Baptist Hospital, since '93.

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Prayer Focus

One Way God Used a Lengthy Fast

By Karol Whaley

The waves crashed on the shore a few yards from where my husband and I were sitting on the California beach. It was the spring of 2000, and we found ourselves in deep thought about God's plans for our future ministry. We had been missionaries working in Japan since 1984 and were seriously considering not returning. God had been faithful to help us plant one church in Sapporo. We were pondering whether or not we had what it would take to stay the course to see another church planted? God's call to Hokkaido was so clear years ago, but now seemed distant as we pondered the possibilities.

Very unexpectedly, one of us brought up the idea of fasting before the Lord for His direction and answers to our future. Neither one of us had fasted for more than a few days in a row. But, we were obviously talking about a month-long fast. With our busy schedules of speaking in churches and traveling, was it even possible? We made the commitment that day on the beach to begin a month-long fast. Looking at our calendars, we chose a beginning date and marked when it would end.

Due to our busy schedules, we decided upon a liquid fast consisting of juices, hot drinks, and clear soups. If we had to speak at a church we told them ahead of time that we would not need a meal, but would be glad to fellowship with them over a cup of tea.

One church insisted on making the lunch served after the worship service, a soup bar. Everyone in the church had soup, too! If the Lord calls you, He will also do it!

It didn't take long to feel hungry and unsatisfied. I remember the time dragging by. Do you

realize how we clock off our days by the three meals we eat? When there is nothing to eat, mealtime is not a delight, and three times of no delight gets extremely tiring. But then God steps in, and begins to teach us exactly how to depend upon Him, and how to spend our hours and days in delight of Him.

I John 2:16 says, "These are the ways of the world: wanting to please our sinful selves, wanting the sinful things we see, and being too proud of what we have. None of these come from the Father, but all of them come from the world." During the month-long fast the Lord dealt with me in each of these areas. I saw my depravity in a new light, but I also experienced His grace to a new depth. For several days in a row, God spoke to me about my desire to receive praise from others. I repented and thought that this issue was dead. The next day the Lord tested me. Someone called praising me for something I had done. My response in my heart did not pass the Lord's test. I had been "moved" by the praise in an unhealthy way. The Lord had to review what He had taught me until I passed the next "heart check". Galatians 5:16 says, "So I tell you: Live by following the Spirit. Then you will not do what your sinful selves want."

Not only did God reveal the ways that I had not lived according to His Word; but, He also revealed His awesome grace. I became more thankful for every good gift that came from His hands. One day I was eating soup at a restaurant with several other people.

I looked at the choices of soup and saw one that seemed to be more broth than anything.

As I lifted the ladle I was careful to bring up

only the broth (without the other ingredients). I thought I had been successful until I got closer to the bottom of my soup and realized there was a small (quarter inch) potato sitting in my cup! I was so overwhelmed that tears filled my eyes. (I am an emotional person!) One cubed potato piece that I hadn't expected. I was so grateful and so surprised by His goodness!

After 30 days passed, we talked about trying to make it to 40 days but stopped fasting on the 37th day. Truthfully, this is the only time we have ever done a fast of this length. The first day of food, we began with simple foods. But soon, the body was crying out for more, so we began eating normal portions. I didn't know about the dangers of eating too soon. It needs to be a very gradual thing or our bodies can't handle it. I was ill for several weeks before gaining my health and strength. It is so important to check with your physician before you do a fast of this length. Also, be knowledgeable about how to recover physically after a long fast.

What did we gain from this extended fast? We discovered that the Lord was calling us back to Japan to serve Him. He didn't let us know the specific details of His plans for us.

Within a year of our return, my husband was asked to be on the leadership team for our mission. Serving in leadership has been a stretch for us, but, we know we are in the right place at the right time. We are grateful for what He is teaching us about our dependence upon Him for everything. And, it all began on a beach in California on a beautiful, quiet spring morning. ✠

Annual Women in Ministry Day of Prayer

Monday, October 24, 2005, 10:00am-2:00pm
Ochanomizu Christian Center Room, Room 901

*Coffee and tea will be provided.
Bring your lunch or purchase an obento from a nearby shop.
Come join us as we seek the Lord in prayer!*

-For current information on WIM activities, check out the WIM website at jema.org-

Sleeping Giants come alive at OBI!

By Dr. John Masuda, President

A sports car lover was telling me one day of his exciting experience following closely behind a big truck. "How dangerous!" was my immediate reaction. He went on to explain that what he was doing was getting into the truck's "draft." As I reflected upon what he told me, I was reminded of getting into the "draft" of God as He moves ahead of us and leads us on.

One of the aims of OBI is to provide opportunities, physically and spiritually, to get into God's "draft" by planning tours. So, in March an eleven-day-tour was planned for places where St. Paul ministered in Greece and Turkey. Twenty people participated with our teacher, Rev. Iijima, as the leader. The purpose was clearly spelled out as "Verifying the Truthfulness of the Word of God, the Bible." Following in the footsteps of St. Paul, the trip to some extent retraced his missionary journeys.

Accordingly, the tour began in Athens. "We climbed up and stood on the hill of Areopagus. As we looked around we recognized the splendor and dignity of the Temple of Hephaestus, the Ancient Agora, and the famous Parthenon on the hill of Acropolis. Suddenly we were caught up in the strange sensation that we were standing where St. Paul once stood and preached. Thus, this inspiring experience impacted us on the first day.

The second day we went to Philippi, the first European town in Paul's missionary journey. It was quite impressive. Our thoughts focused on the imprisonment of Paul and Silas and the conversion of the jailer. As we stood by the jail, we felt the impact of his imprisonment.

Then the tour took us to Berea. In a rather quiet section of the town was a monument to Paul in a life-size mosaic. It looked as if he were extending his welcome to us with a big smile. Our thoughts went back to the Berean people and their willingness to accept Paul's preaching. Then the tour moved on to the Lydia Memorial Chapel, followed by a short chapel time when the Acts 16:13-15 passage was read, describing the baptism of Lydia and her household.

Finally, the tour took us to Turkey, where we visited the Seven Churches of the Book of Revelation. We saw the remains of Troas. One participant was so overwhelmed with the inspiring reminder of what Paul went through that his whole body felt a kind of shock and tears ran down his cheeks. Paul had gone from Asia Minor to Troas, and it was here he heard a voice calling, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." This participant realized that if the apostle had not

obeyed the call the result would have been the gospel not reaching Japan today.

Visiting historic remains in Turkey brought back vivid images of Paul's missionary journey and all of us relived with deeper reflection what the apostle and his associates had to go through. The outstanding old city of Ephesus exhibited the highly developed culture and lifestyle of the ancient world. One cannot help but feel the intensity of Paul's fervor as he confronted the worship of the great goddess Diana with the claims of the gospel. A visit to the hiding place of Mary, the mother of Jesus, where she was so thoughtfully cared for by St. John in the days of persecution, led us to serious contemplation and feelings of tenderness.

Leaving Ephesus, the tour took us to Miletus, where a Sunday service was held by the Tour Chaplain, Rev. Fujiwara. We were reminded of a moving statement by Paul at this very place, "However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace" (Acts 20:24). Standing on the exact place where the apostle gave such a challenging testimony, we were all powerfully impacted. "May we also so confess and be led to lead such a life of utter dedication."

The tour went on to Perga, where John Mark left Paul's party to go back to Jerusalem, to the seeming dissatisfaction of the Apostle. Then we took a flight to the historic city of Istanbul, where the East meets the West. The city, built by the Emperor Constantine back in 330 A.D., was a powerful Christian city. Christian mosaic art is still preserved from ancient times. In the course of history, Turkey became Islamic with only a very small minority of Christians remaining today.

Looking over the remains of the first century churches and places, we were impressed with the reality of historical judgment on the one hand and God's mercy at work on the other. Also, it's wonderful to realize that today Christian Japanese are prosperous enough that a tour of this nature is possible and that it can be used to strengthen them in faith. Further, today's Christians need to be well informed and equipped with up-to-date verification of the truthfulness of the word of God. Thus, God is writing a new chapter in our history and He continues to do so. It is ours to get into His "draft" in order that we might keep following Him and moving with Him to fulfill His purpose for each one of us.

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Reaching Japan with Compassion Via a Reality Check Part 1

The Last Dinosaurs—a comment on Church & Mission in today's Japan

By Eyvind Haraldseid

I came to Japan in 1994 as a missionary together with my wife. I had just finished seminary. After language study we were sent to a Japanese church in the fall of '96 and were to work and receive training from an experienced Japanese pastor. It worked really well; no complaints! During this time we learned a lot and had ample freedom to serve and were also able to make some meaningful contributions to the overall program of the church. We had high hopes that the church could be made into something more “modern,” as we realized that it was not particularly “up to date.” We believed in change—reformation if you like.

The pastor retired and we had a new younger pastor. Our role had in the meantime changed to “co-worker.” The new pastor was another blessing to us. Together we found that although it was year 2001, the church was still pretty much a 1968 model! Change was urgent and needed. A year was spent on revising the Sunday service program but only minor changes were accomplished. Apparently, change does not come that easily.

Around this time our mission also started a new project—a café house named E-Street Club. While still going to and co-working with our church, we gradually became involved in this new ministry. My missionary co-worker who started this project concluded that the distance between the café house and the church was too great and we should develop the café house into a café house church. I deeply disagreed and we had intense fights over this issue. I had faith in the Japanese church and their ability to change and fill the gap. In 2002 we took over the leadership for this project as the couple who started it had to leave the field.

E-Street Club is still not a church in 2005, but this ministry has changed me a lot and also changed the way I look at the Japanese church. Although I for years tried to “fit in,” behave and adjust to “the Japanese way,” I never felt quite at home. I mean, I felt foreign to the style of fellowship as it was a rather closed environment, little openness and a lot of “do’s and don’ts”. The music is still for the most part beyond “old style” and the words used I would most probably have to translate for most Japanese young people.

If I, as a long-time, older Christian, and on top of that, a missionary, do not find the church too comfortable, this might explain why I have seen several youths growing up in our church and then leaving as soon as they get their independence. That new people hardly ever come to the church is quite understandable from this point of view, isn't it?

What is the church really meant to be like? I

mean in the Biblical sense. I find this to be the key question. Church should be relevant and authentic and too bad, this is not always the case in Japan or in other countries as well. As a missionary, I have tried the way of reformation, but it seems too difficult. Pouring new wine in old wineskins might not work here either. (Slow learner?)

Eddie Gibbs points out that if present trends continue the church in Europe will be gone by the year 2030. I fear the church in Japan will be gone even before that. America can be quite more optimistic as, according to statistics, only 60% of all existing congregations will disappear by the year 2050 (Eddie Gibbs, *Church Next*).

The main problem for the Japanese church the way I see it is that it has lost touch with the world around them. It represents a language and culture foreign to most Japanese. The way leadership works, the way we evangelize, the way we get together, the way we teach is not working too well anymore. Many people, and pastors especially, around Japan are wondering if it is worth the cost continuing. This I have discovered after having the chance to talk to national leaders of churches in this country as well as other younger people, church leaders, pastors and also missionaries. The feeling of stress, loneliness and frustration is alarmingly high, but for safety reasons kept below the surface not to disrupt the harmony, and possibly anger the older leadership. The problem of a great number of pastors retiring in the near future might only be one of the major problems faced by the Japanese church if the next generations of pastors don't even last to retirement.

Another problem I see is that there are not many leadership development programs, not many seminaries in Japan that foster the new type of leaders/pastors needed for creating a new “kind of church.” The Q & A approach to theology is out-dated. New ways are needed. A lot can be learned by reading *Church Next* by Eddie Gibbs.

And finally then there are the missionaries, us, raised for the most part in traditional churches—not too different from the Japanese churches. Can we make a difference in Japan?

I have come to the conclusion that the Japanese church needs to be reinvented. How?

This article will be concluded in the Fall issue of this magazine. We invite your thoughts, ideas, and reaction. **Please write to Gary Bauman at: gbauman@jmtb.com** 卍

Eyvind Haraldseid serves with the Evangelical Orient Mission (EOM) of Norway.



New & Old

Interview by Jim Rew

Japan Harvest has a long history, so that's not what's new. The editorship changes now and then, it's here we have the two.

It has been a pleasure. It has been one of my great joys! The time has come for me to say goodbye. As your managing editor, it is my great privilege to announce my successor, Gary Bauman. Jim Rew interviewed us the other day:

Q: Janice, how long have you been involved with the Publication Commission of JEMA?

A: For about fifteen years! I started out by writing a very special column. Don Wright, managing editor, asked if I would do a woman's page. I was delighted. Instead of one page I asked for two and gave them the title of Potpourri & Promises. You see, I wanted to write about many things, desiring to tie them all in with Scripture.

Q: How many years have you served as managing editor?

A: For six years, now. And, I was probably more surprised than anyone. You see, the president of JEMA served as the magazine's editor, a huge job for such a busy position. When this seemed no longer a possibility, I was asked to serve. I agreed, but only with the help of an expert computer person. That person was you, Jim. I couldn't have done the magazine without your wonderful help.

Q: Gary, what changes have you seen in the magazine since Janice became managing editor?

A: I think the magazine has taken a significant step up in content and layout!

Q: Janice, can you give us the goal you had for the magazine?

A: Sure. Every magazine needs a purpose statement. Mine was to see missionaries going

the "long haul" in victory, power, affirmation, while keeping up with information and testimonials.

Q: Janice, what has been the most rewarding aspect of your editorship? The most frustrating?

A: Each time an issue came out, it was exciting. I have also loved receiving responses about articles! You might remember I had several articles translated into Japanese and made these available to readers. What joy when e-mails came in requesting those articles. Another time, in my Potpourri & Promises, I included what I called A Grace Test. When several readers said they had both taken the test and wanted it in Japanese, I was thrilled!

As to frustrating aspects, probably having to rework articles.

Q: Gary, what are your goals as managing editor?

A: I want to build on Janice's foundation, while continuing with in-depth surveys of our readers to find out even more clearly what people want and need. Also, I want our readership to include not just English-speaking missionaries, but English speakers in a wide variety of occupations who are trying to reach their Japanese friends with the gospel. Maybe my dreams are pretty big, but I'm hoping this will be a magazine for people working with Japanese wherever they may be—whether that be Japan, New Zealand, Australia, North America, Europe, or anywhere else in the world!

Q: Gary, what has led you to your new position?

A: I have enjoyed reading all my life! In fact, in the fifth grade I was such a bookworm that I would read a new book every day. Since I loved both the printed word and music so much, after being in Japan for many years I began thinking I would like to write a column on music and worship. So in 1999 I went to

Gerald May, editor at that time, and asked if I could give it a try. I continued the column until last year, when Janice asked me to join the Publication Commission. I was very interested, especially since I had already done some publishing on my own. Also, my desire to get more involved in various types of writing had led me to take a writing course while on home assignment three years ago. And in God's perfect timing, just this past April I had the privilege as a representative of the Publication Commission to attend a week-long seminar in Korea on magazine publishing. But even as I got more involved with JEMA publications, becoming the managing editor of Japan Harvest was one thought that never even crossed my mind. It seems clear that God has led me to this place. So here I am!

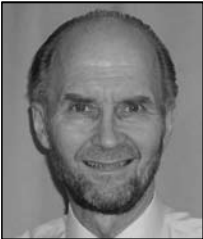
Q: Janice, any words of wisdom for Gary?

A: Keep a balance. Use your editorial staff to full potential.

Q: Gary, you have been appointed our new managing editor by the JEMA Executive Committee. How does your mission feel about your appointment?

A: I think you already know the answer! Peter Thompson, our Director of Japan Missionary Personnel, just called to give you greetings and to affirm the full support of Asian Access in my appointment to this position. Also, several people in our mission family have expressed to me personally that they feel this a great fit. I'm excited about how God has surprised me with putting this all together! **H**

My thanks to everyone for your prayers, writings, support and encouragement. What a blessed experience to be a part of the OLD and the NEW! Janice A. Kropp



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

The Church in Japan, except for a few exceptions, is not growing. The number of believers is decreasing or maintaining status quo and although new churches are being started, older churches are also closing. It goes without saying that the Church grows when Christians have a vibrant and bold witness for Christ. Therefore it is not surprising that in Japan personal witnessing has slowed or even died in many churches. Why? Fear of rejection and ostracism hinders witness. Lack of confidence in knowing how or what to say hinders witness. Lack of conviction that all men must believe in Christ alone for salvation hinders witness. The mistaken idea that testifying for Christ is primarily the responsibility of professional Christian workers, rather than the privilege of all believers, hinders witness.

At the Mission Leaders' Consultation in February, Scott Parrish, a new Member at Large for JEMA, gave an analysis that confirms the fact that the Church is not growing and that the lack of personal witnessing is a root cause. At our present rate of growth, it will take approximately 1,000 years before 7% of the Japanese population is Christian. Scott urged us not to be discouraged by the current situation but to take leadership for training and encouraging lay Christians to witness. He showed that if every Japanese Christian witnessed to only three people a year on the average then this goal could be reached by the year 2030, and that the entire population of Japan would be reached by the year 2055! His presentation was aptly followed by Dr. Ogawa's testimony of his own ministry in personal evangelism. It was Dr. Ogawa's observation that the village mentality that develops within the local church body often becomes the biggest stumbling block to personal evangelism.

During the Mission Leaders' Consultation we were also encouraged by the vision of YWAM missionaries John Somers-Harris and Bob Bastable, who are planning and praying to start a ship ministry to other parts of Asia, but have it based in Japan. Another encouraging development is that Teen Challenge, the effective and worldwide ministry to those caught in the web of drug addiction, is also planning to open a branch in Japan. Both ministries ask for prayer from the JEMA community.

Another Japan missionary, Jonathan Wilson, shared his vision for a co-operative, rapid response team to work quickly

bringing emergency supplies and assessing needs when a disaster strikes. His intriguing idea has good potential as one way the JEMA community could be of assistance during these times.

At the Missions Leaders' Consultation we were made aware that the face of foreign missions in Japan is changing with the advent of ethnic missionaries coming to minister to their own ethnic communities. As the Japanese government continues to import foreign labor to work in Japanese companies, there is a need for Christian workers from their own cultural and language groups. The question JEMA needs to face is how we can support and encourage these Christian workers. Often they do not speak either English or Japanese and they have unique difficulties living in Japan. An ad hoc committee will be formed to study this need.

The last major discussion topic at the Mission Leaders' Consultation was the process of calling an outside consultant to examine the organizational structure and financial policies of JEMA. The purpose is to make recommendations for more effective ways to carry on the work of JEMA. On Tuesday the Plenary Session voted unanimously to endorse this process and in the coming days we will keep you posted as it develops.

The Mission Leaders' Consultation day ended with a good time of fellowship around the dinner table. We were especially blessed by Norbert Kaschner's (Japan Fellowship Deaconry Mission) testimony of God's grace and healing during his recent battle with cancer. **h**

—Ray Leaf

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

Event	Date	Place
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
Annual Women in Ministry Day of Prayer	October 24	OCC (Room 901)
Fresh Encounters with God (Kansai Prayer Fellowship)	November 7	Light of Christ, Central Osaka
JEMA CPI Conference	November 8-11	Fuji Hakone Land Hotel
Fresh Encounters with God (Kansai Prayer Fellowship)	January 16, 2006	Light of Christ, Central Osaka



Japan Evangelical Missionary Association

JEMA Executive Committee Report for May 25, 2005

Janice Kropp, Sharon Smith and Ray Leaf returned from the USA, and for the first time in several meetings the entire JEMA Executive Committee and *ex officio* members met. Ray gave a devotional on the need to reaffirm the doctrine that salvation is by faith alone in the absolute sufficiency of Jesus Christ and His work on the Cross.

Treasurer's report: Russ reported that at this time of year the finances are on target, but we may have to reevaluate our budget assumptions before the year ends. A long discussion ensued regarding how JEMA is being financed and the possible need to raise membership fees sometime in the near future. With this in mind, it is obvious that the Lord has guided us to begin a consulting process to help us evaluate JEMA's operation.

Pioneer Evangelism: John Mehn reported on CPI's recent leadership team's approval of their financial operating principles. This document appears to be a good working model for all the commissions to study.

Women in Ministry: Ann Little reported on the good retreat they had in March and their preparations for the Woman's Day of Prayer in October.

Prayer Commission: Akira Mori submitted a written report on the Tokyo Prayer Summit. Although attendance has decreased from previous years, it was a good time of meeting with the Lord. When Bill Paris, the commission chairperson, returns in June, they will evaluate JEMA's future involvement with the summit.

Publications: Janice Kropp reported that they are planning an early retirement from September 1. She has served as managing editor for the Japan Harvest for six years and has done a marvelous job. The summer issue will be her last and she will be greatly missed. At the same time the Lord has provided a new managing editor with the skills and vision needed for

the position. He was appointed to the position pending his mission's approval.

Language and Culture: The JMLI church language textbook *Seisho Monogatari* was scanned and is now available for sale as a pdf document.

JEMAnet: A second run of the JEMA CD is planned to meet new orders that are coming in.

Jonathan Wilson met with the Executive Committee to follow up on his Mission Leadership Consultation presentation of a program whereby the mission community could rapidly respond to disaster situations such as happened in Niigata last year. The program, Christian Relief Assistance Support and Hope (CRASH), is still in the process of formation. It is not designed to become another organization nor is it planned as another aid agency. It is planned to be a quick temporary response. Jonathan would like JEMA's endorsement of the project since its successful implementation needs broad participation throughout Japan. Jonathan was encouraged to submit a written proposal for JEMA's endorsement when the project is ready to begin.

Consulting Project: Scott Parrish presented a decision-making timetable for inviting the consultants to come to Japan for three days of interviews and evaluation. He will present the Executive Committee's suggestions to the consultants and another meeting was planned for July 25 for a subcommittee to discuss the next steps in the process. 卍

Pray for the Children

We pray for the children who sneak popsicles before supper or stuff clothes under their bed. And we pray for those who can't bound down the street in a new pair of sneakers or those who can never go to the circus.

We pray for the children who bring us sticky kisses and fistful of dandelions, who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money or don't like to be kissed in front of the car pool. And we pray for those who have no safe blanket to drag behind them, who can't find any bread to eat, who don't have rooms to clean up or whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser.

We pray for the children who spend all their allowance before Tuesday, who like ghost stories, who never rinse out the tub and they never get visits from the tooth fairy. And we pray for those whose nightmares come in the daytime, who will eat anything, who have never seen a dentist, who aren't spoiled by anybody and who constantly cry themselves to sleep.

—adapted from Ina Hughes



Translated by
Mizuko Matsushita,
JEMA Executive Office
Secretary.

Compassion Ministries on the Move

Display the World of the Bible

The Biblical Archeological Document Museum opened on the 4th Floor of the Ochanomizu Christian Center in December 2003. They aim at reproducing visually the life and world of the people of Bible times as realistically as possible in order to help visitors have a proper understanding of the Bible. Over a hundred archeological materials are displayed, from lepta coins to documents relating to the Bible; some of them original and others replicas. The museum is open on Mondays and Saturdays from 1 to 6 PM. Please contact by fax at 03-3304-7730 for more detailed information.

Counseling by e-mail

Pastor Atsushi Yokota in Nagano uses e-mail for counseling. He says it is a practical means of outreach to the present generation. He accepted Jesus as his personal savior at the age of 18 after a high school friend committed suicide. He then sought for a way of salvation because of the big spiritual shock. The number of contacts by e-mail is not always the same; sometimes it is only once a week or suddenly many contacts come all at once. The cases of *hikikomori* (becoming a social recluse) are more common. As the senders feel free to write anything because of anonymity, they write about their problems straightforwardly. Pastor Yokota feels that counseling by e-mail is a very important ministry that meets the need of the present society, and so he hopes that more Christians can become committed to it. It would be especially effective if churches become involved, because they can take what they hear to the Lord in prayer.

An interchange program for the mentally handicapped

A NPO called International exchange program for the mentally handicapped (*Chiteki Shogaisha Kokusai Koryu Kiko*) started in April. Their purposes are to organize exchange programs for the mentally handicapped, their families, and institutional staff between Japan and other countries and to provide high-level care in an attempt to establish mutual understanding. The angel house run by hawaiian christians will be established in the Island of Hawaii in July. From September to December, they plan to have practical training for the mentally handicapped at workshops, exchange programs of parents and teaching staff, with classroom visits in Hawaii.

Mr. Kazuhiko Kanno, a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hooya and one of the founders of the organization, became a christian because of his handicapped daughter. He was encouraged a lot by contacts with parents who have the same problem. He has been visiting programs for mentally handicapped children in the USA for the last 9 years. Through his contacts with American parents having the same problem, in February, 2004, he decided to start this ministry. His contact phone number is 0424-61-8933.

Mrs. Yoneko Tahara With the Lord.

Author of *Ikirutte Subarashii* (How Wonderful It is to Live), active evangelist, and wife of Pastor Akitoshi Tahara, Mrs. Yoneko

Tahara passed away on April 18 at the age of 67. Though seriously handicapped, her Christian witness touched and encouraged many people regardless of their generation. In addition to her service in churches, she was very active speaking in public schools and gave hope to children and young people. She lost her mother when she was 18. Because of her great grief, she tried to kill herself by leaping from a train platform in front of a train but was saved. She lost her left hand, left leg and right foot. After her suicide attempt, she was visited in the hospital by a missionary and a young man who later became her husband. She was transformed to be an active Christian and served the Lord with her husband for more than 40 years. She tried to do everything with her right hand and remaining three fingers. She was a good adviser to the weak and the young people. She is survived by her husband and two daughters.

Bible School for Evangelism to the Hearing & Speaking Impaired

The Japan Assemblies of God opened a Bible School to train evangelists and pastors among the hearing/speaking impaired. The school was inaugurated in Sakai City of Osaka in April with three students enrolled. After three years of study, students have to take a final examination and receive approval from the mission as an evangelist among people with these handicaps. There are 33 Assemblies of God churches in Japan that carry out this ministry, and about 700 auditory and verbally handicapped people are members.

Bread and Cookies Workshop "Manna"

"Bethlehem", a group home for the mentally handicapped, opened May 2004 in Inzai City in Chiba. With the help of assistants and volunteers, mentally handicapped people share life together and live like a Christian family. It is a part of the *Megumi no Ie* (Home of Grace) NPO. The workshop Manna was started this April by two members of Bethlehem and another two who come daily from outside. One more member will join it in May. These have been trained in making cookies and cakes since September 2004. They officially started their business with public subsidies from the prefecture and city. Good quality of products and sales network are their most important emphases. They are looking for shops to accept their cookies and cakes for sale. Contact number is 0476-97-3268 (telephone/fax).



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.

Strategies for Understanding the News

By Miriam Davis (la@omf.or.jp)

'How can I understand the Japanese news?' is a question I am regularly asked. So here are a few suggestions for strategies to help you.

1. **Make a decision NOT to watch bilingual or satellite TV** for e.g. one day a week. There are too many temptations in Japan with easy access to satellite and cable.
2. **Record a news program** on video or DVD so that you can review as many times as you wish with a language helper or by yourself.
3. Before watching the news in Japanese **watch in your own language** or read the newspaper in English or on computer so that you have an idea about what topics are going to come up. If you do this you are beginning to develop the **important strategy of predicting** what kind of language you are going to meet and so are better prepared for coping with it.
4. **Choose news content that you are interested in.** If Japanese politics doesn't interest you then choose a world news program (e.g. NHK G Kaigai Network 海外ネットワーク Saturdays 6:00 to 6:45pm) or sports news or whatever.
5. **NHK Educational Sign language news**
This is broadcast on weekdays from 8:45-9:00pm; on Saturdays at 11:45am and 7:55pm; and on Sundays from 7:55-8:00pm. These news programs are excellent for language learners since the news is presented slowly and clearly. Speakers also make distinct pauses between phrases which help the listener process the material before the next input. The spoken word appears in written form on the screen as well as with sign language, so this can be a good way to practice reading as well as aural skills.
6. **週刊子どもニュース Shukan Kodomo news** NHK General Saturday 6:10-6:42 pm. This weekly children's news show was reviewed in the English Daily Yomiuri in

February 2005. Wm. Penn wrote:

"What is an NHK viewer to do to get some clearly presented news and entertainment? Tune into Shukan Kodomo News, of course. This show has long been one of my favorite recommendations for those looking for a way to improve their Japanese language skills, too. Each week, simple yet informative coverage of major news events is presented by Ikegami and his assistant to a panel of three children with the aid of easy-to-understand props and charts, and the hiragana readings for tough kanji are kindly provided. The program also has a rather user-friendly Web site where summaries of previous shows can be accessed."
(<http://www.nhk.or.jp/kdns/>)

I recently discovered **NHK週刊子どもニュース 04** (NHK 出版 ISBN4-14-081004-1 ¥900), a book based on the content of the programs for 2004. This is a great way for the advanced student to read the news for a variety of reasons.

- There is lots of furigana
 - Attractive layout and color illustrations
 - Meanings of words given in easy Japanese for children to understand at the bottom of pages, e.g. p.8 explains 'pension'. 「年金」とは、年をとってから国から受けとるお金のこと.
 - There is explanation not just of words but of situations, systems and policies in a way that is easy to understand.
 - Reasonably up-to-date news. Published end November 2004 with news reports from January through end October. Many items are still topical.
 - Inexpensive at ¥900
 - Quiz questions throughout the book
 - Index at back of important news each month in Japan, the world and sports.
7. If you enjoy the internet, find a suitable Japanese news website especially if there is one where you can listen as well as read. Here are a few sites for reading the news in Japanese on line.

<http://headlines.yahoo.co.jp>
<http://dailynews.yahoo.co.jp/fc/world/index.html>
<http://news.www.infoseek.co.jp/>



Column #2
by Paul Nethercott

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 and follow the simple instructions.

Reflections on Christ Centered Corporate Worship

The most disturbing worship service I've attended took place at an evangelical church in the USA. It was America's Independence Day (July 4th) and this church was ready. The opening video clip showed the Statue of Liberty, fireworks along with images of the Bible and the cross. The worship team appeared on-stage in, you guessed it, red, white and blue outfits. The "worship music" praised the USA, which prompted our six-year-old daughter to ask, "Mommy, why are they singing about America instead of Jesus?" The worship leader took the role of a cheerleader, as he worked the crowd into excitement over Independence Day. It was amazing. He even said, "We are here today to celebrate the USA and...Jesus too." I was shocked. You may be asking "what's wrong with Patriotism?" Nothing really. It is a normal and moral thing to have patriotic feelings for one's country. In fact, morals of all kinds are extremely important to the proper functioning of society, but Moralism is different from morals.

Moralism is the explicit or implicit teaching that one must Be Like..., Be Good, Be Disciplined (Bryan Chapell). Chapell also says, "The primary problem with Moralism is not what is said but what is not said...the difference between presenting principles and a person." Since Moralism is the default setting of humans, every Christian struggles with the problem of reducing Christianity to a set of moral principles. This is what the Pharisees, archetypical Moralists of Biblical proportions, did. They were proud people who were sure that they were "right" and better than others. In contrast, those who really "get" the gospel are deeply aware of their broken state. "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner," is their heart's cry. The Apostle Paul looked down on no one because he viewed himself as the "chief of sinners." He would say the same today, even in relation to members of the most despised group on the planet, the group some think it is OK to dehumanize, hate and torture—Al Qaeda.

Moralism in worship is not a problem peculiar to Americans. I have attended worship services at evangelical churches in Japan where I left thinking, "a Confucianist could have preached that message." In most cases, the people responsible would be horrified. In other words, even if we firmly believe the gospel, even if we think we have Christ-centered worship services, it is very easy to miss the mark. I asked myself, "Of the hundreds of messages I have given over the years, how many were moralistic "be" lectures that failed to focus on the great meta-narrative, the story of God's redemption?" Lord, have mercy.

The American Pastor John MacArthur identifies the issues: "The mandate for the Christian (is) the ministry of reconcili-

ation to God through Christ, which brings about righteousness, transformation, and a new creation. There is, however, today in Christianity, in its evangelical element, an emphasis on another kind of effort. It is an effort to produce morality..."

Clarity about the purpose of corporate worship helps us to stay focused. Corporate worship is a time for God's people (the Church) to receive God's revelation and respond appropriately to Him. It is an opportunity for the people of God to retell and relive the great stories of faith (past, present and future). The elements of corporate worship we find in the Bible (offering, silence, Scripture reading, message, testimonies, communion, baptism, fellowship, music, visuals, dance and drama) are all means of encountering and/or responding appropriately to God. Clearly, the means themselves are not worship. They are "ways" for us to hear from God, "connect" with Him, and express the adoration (worship) we have in our hearts.

For those of us concerned about immorality, injustice, poverty, and other issues, the most important thing we can do is lead people into worship of Jesus Christ. Why? Because, like Isaiah, when we meet the Lord Almighty we are changed. We will be renewed, deeply aware of both our brokenness and a Holy God who has declared us clean and forgiven. The Gospel, not Moralism, is what will change us and our world. Lord, have mercy.

For an expanded version of this article go to <<www.worshipandthearts.blogspot.com>> where you can post comments.

Bulletin Bloopers:

- The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been cancelled due to a conflict.
- Bertha Belch, a missionary from Africa, will be speaking tonight at Calvary Methodist. Come and hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.



Digital Tips

Do you have kids that live on the other side of the ocean? If so, they probably already know all about Skype. It's a free software download that lets you talk to another person, through the Internet, using your computer speakers and mike. It's not as convenient as picking up the phone, but it's free if the person on the other end is using Skype too! It works best if you both have broadband connections. Go to www.skype.com and look over the information, and then download the software. They have versions for almost any computer. If you have trouble, ask any college student!

If you resist paying for software, but want all the features of Microsoft Office, you can use the free alternative, Open Office. This program has evolved through the years, and now includes all the components of Office Pro. The latest addition is a database, which joins the existing word processor, spreadsheet and presentation program (think PowerPoint). The English version handles Japanese very well. You can download it from www.openoffice.org. Personally, I think the 3 user "Student & Teacher" version of Office from Microsoft is well worth the \$130 it costs.

If you ever have to type a list of addresses in Japanese, like your church directory, then you know it takes hours to look up all the right kanji. Here's a shortcut that is almost too good to be true. In the language tool bar (Input Method Editor control) there's an icon that is usually set to "一般" (or "normal"). If you change that to the other choice "人名/地名" ("names and places") and then type in any Japan postal code, and hit the space bar, the address in Kanji will pop up. You just have to put in the last numbers. This works in Windows applications such as Word and Outlook/Outlook Express.


It's time to claim back some of your desk space. The days of big monitors crowding you off your desk are over. The price of 17" LED's have fallen under thirty thousand yen. You'll be amazed at how clear, and how compact these things are. There's no turning back once you try one.

Christian Computing Magazine has discontinued their print edition, and has gone entirely digital. You can receive it free along with their new Christian Audio/Visual magazine by signing up on their web site. www.ccmag.com

Sometimes, when you have a computer problem, you just don't know who to turn to. You've probably already used up

all the favors you have with the computer geeks you know. A website that could be a real help to you is www.missionary-techsupport.com. It's just like the name says, a web site that offers all kinds of technical support for missionaries. It's not a real busy site, and the guys that run it seem very friendly, and willing to help.

Recently I had problems with the e-mail programs on two different computers. As I tried to track down the problems, I read quite a bit on various web sites, warning that too many e-mails in one folder can cause problems. I think that was the problem on both of these computers that I was working on. One of them had over nine thousand e-mails in the in-box. I like to keep old e-mail on my computer, and have some going back almost ten years. The trick is to divide it up into several folders. In Outlook Express, you do this by clicking on "Local Folders", "File", "New", and then "Folder". You can create as many folders as you like. I move my e-mail into a new folder at the end of each year. So I have "2002 IN" and "2002 SENT" etc. etc. Most sites that I looked at said to keep any one folder down to 2000 messages or fewer. Also, you should regularly "compact" your folders (maybe once a month). Again, in Outlook Express, go to "Tools", "Options", and "Maintenance" and then click on the "Clean Up Now" button. Choose "Compact" and let it crunch for a few minutes. Somehow this seems to keep the e-mail files in good shape. Don't feel like you have to delete old e-mails to "save space" on your computer. Thousands of e-mails take up very little space.

I appreciate comments, advice and questions. 

missionarygeek@yahoo.com

Filling Is the Answer

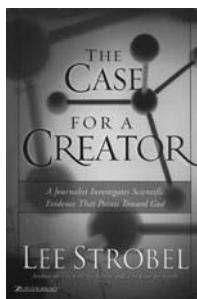
Paul tells us to live victoriously and to avoid excesses of the flesh. Moody once illustrated this truth as follows: "Tell me," he said to his audience, "How can I get the air out of this glass." One man said, "Suck it out with a pump." Moody replied, "That would create a vacuum and shatter the glass." After many impossible suggestions, Moody smiled, picked up a pitcher of water, and filled the glass. "There," he said, "all the air is now removed." He then went on to show the victory in the Christian life is not by "sucking out a sin here and there," but rather by being filled with the Spirit.

—Mrs. Rudy Miller



The Case for a Creator

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.



The Case for a Creator

Lee Strobel, Zondervan, 2004, 340 pages

Lee Strobel, the author of *The Case for Christ* (available in Japanese) and *The Case for Faith*, again draws on his unique background as a Yale law school student and Chicago Tribune journalist to discover, through modern science, evidence for a Creator of the universe. His methodical searching and inquisitive mind combine with his clear narrative writing style to draw the reader into his search for truth. Strobel can take a pretty difficult academic subject and explain it in terms even a layperson can grasp.

His quest is to answer three main questions: Are science and faith doomed to always be at war? Does the latest scientific evidence tend to point toward or away from the existence of God? And, is evolution still valid in light of the most recent discoveries in science?

Strobel recounts how science, evolution and Darwinism started him on his journey to atheism. However, when his own wife became a Christian, he set out on another journey to investigate the truth of Christianity. In his search he returned to examine the evidence that had led him to atheism. As he jets around the country interviewing top scientists like Michael Behe, author of *Darwin's Black Box*, and astronomers Jay Wesley Richards and Guillermo Gonzalez, he asks hard questions and searches for the truth. He discovers that much of what he had been taught in school was based on disproved theories, manipulated evidence, and even fraudulent scientific experiments. New and fascinating scientific discoveries in fields of astronomy, biology, cosmology and even DNA research have turned the tables on evolution. The amazing developments in the various fields of science, even in the last decade, are intriguing in themselves. But for someone in search of God, they give strong arguments for His existence.

This book, written from his own experience, is an excellent challenge for any scientific skeptic. But for me, I saw the wonders of the world through scientists' eyes, from the organization of galaxies to the complex machinery of cells. I gained a greater awareness of God's power, design and greatness. What an awesome God we serve!

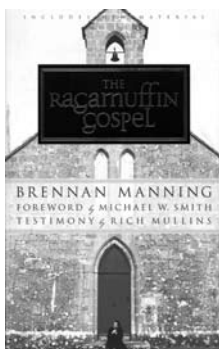
who has experienced God's grace in full measure. Manning, a former Franciscan priest who had his battles with alcohol, writes that his book is not for the "super-spiritual." "It is not for academicians who would imprison Jesus in the ivory tower of exegesis. Rather, it is written for earthen vessels, who shuffle along on feet of clay. It is for inconsistent, unsteady disciples whose cheese is falling off their crackers." The author speaks forcefully about self-acceptance when he states, "justification by grace through faith means that I know myself accepted by God as I am. When my head is enlightened and my heart is pierced by the truth, I can accept myself as I am. Genuine self-acceptance is not derived from the power of positive thinking, mind games, or pop psychology. It is an act of faith in the God of grace," (page 49).

I recommend this book to my fellow ragamuffins. It is good to be reminded that we are not only saved by grace, but we live by grace, and we serve by grace.



The Ragamuffin Gospel

Reviewer: Dick Kropp, serving with the Christian and Missionary Alliance since 1969, is presently in church planting in Chiba ken.



The Ragamuffin Gospel

Brennan Manning, Multnomah Publishers, Inc., 2000, 235 pages

About a month ago I discovered an author that I had been totally unfamiliar with. His name is Brennan Manning. Dallas Willard, noted philosopher and Christian apologist says, Manning's writings "throw firebrands into your soul."

The Ragamuffin Gospel is about the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not a theological treatise on the subject, but is written by one



The Heavenly Man

Brother Yun with Paul Hattaway, Monarch Books, 2002, 352 pages

Liu Zhenying, known as Brother Yun to his friends, was born in 1958 in the southern part of China's Henan Province in a village of 600 farmers. Growing up, Brother Yun saw believers crucified on the walls of their churches

for their unwavering faith in Christ. Others he saw dragged to their deaths chained to vehicles or horses. His mother was the only one in his family at the time who was a Christian; but, her heart had grown cold and she had forgotten most of what she had learned from the western missionaries who led her to Christ.

At the age of 16, Brother Yun's life changed forever. Because of his Dad's severe illness, Brother Yun's mother's faith was rekindled. She gathered her children together and they prayed "in Jesus' name" for a miracle of healing. Indeed, the father was miraculously healed. The children, other relatives, and friends became believers in Christ.

Brother Yun's mother told him that Jesus recorded all of His teachings in a book called the Bible, but that His words were gone. It was the Cultural Revolution and there were



The Heavenly Man

Reviewer: Karol Whaley, with her husband Tom, has served since 1984 with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. Karol serves as area prayer advocate for Japan and Australia in the Pacific Rim Region. They live in Tokyo.

no Bibles. Brother Yun asked around and no one knew what a Bible looked like. An elderly Chinese pastor told Brother Yun, "The Bible is a heavenly book. If you want one, you'll need to pray to the God of heaven. Only He can provide you a heavenly book. God is faithful. He always answers those who seek Him with all of their heart" (p.27).

This began a time of earnestly seeking God in prayer for the gift of a Bible. Brother Yun waited, prayed, fasted, wept, and waited longer. Months went by and he had not found a Bible. Then the Lord answered his prayer. Two strangers knocked on the door of his house and handed him a precious package. Inside the package was a real Bible, the "heavenly book!" God had appeared to an elderly evangelist who had buried his own Bible inside a can deep in the ground waiting for a better day. After disobeying God for months, the evangelist finally sent it on to Yun's house, which had appeared to him in a vision.

From that moment on, Brother Yun's faith soared. He devoured the Bible like a hungry child, even sleeping with it on his chest each night. Later on in his life, Brother Yun was

quoted as saying, "You can never really know the Scriptures until you're willing to be changed by them" (p.297). Brother Yun's life was changed by the Bible, and by his deep abiding trust in Jesus Christ. Brother Yun, through the years, memorized entire books of the Bible. He likes to tell people that he was trained in the Holy Spirit Personal Devotion Bible School, otherwise known as "prison."

Brother Yun saw many miracles of the Lord during his many years of ministry starting house churches all over China, and training Chinese lay persons to go out as missionaries throughout all of the regions of China, and to other nations. The first lesson taught in each training sessions was, "How to suffer and die for the Lord." Brother Yun said, "Every house church pastor in China is ready to lay down his life for the gospel. When we live this way, we'll see God do great things by His grace" (p. 300).

In the book, Brother Yun shares his story, including the ups and downs of his faith. During one prison experience with extreme torture, his legs had been crushed. In his depressed and hopeless condition, the Lord brought Hebrews

10:35 to him as an encouragement and a promise. "So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded." Miraculously, God helped him to escape from that heavily guarded prison by walking right out the front gate unhindered. Zhenying's name in Chinese means, "Hero of the Garrison". Brother Yun, indeed, was a hero to many in the house church movement and to those he led to the Lord and cared for while in prison. But Brother Yun would say, "Jesus is everything. We are nothing."

Brother Yun is called "the heavenly man" because of an incident that occurred when he was questioned by the guards in prison. He would only reply, "I am a heavenly man! My home is in heaven!" In Chinese culture the memory of people who did great things is cherished for many generations to come. Brother Yun has left a legacy of God's greatness and faithfulness for future generations of Chinese. *The Heavenly Man* will bless your life as you learn about the house church movement in China and at the same time catch a vision for church planting movements in Japan.

Continued from page 13

Thinking of Context

by Yasunari Tashiro, Cooperating pastor, Yokosuka Central Church, Domei Church Association. Instructor, Bible, Yokohama Girls' High School.

Taken from "For Reading the Times 118" in the monthly magazine *Inochi no Kotoba*, September 2004, Word of Life Press. Translated by Ken Reddington

The phrase "Just believe and you'll be saved" has the gospel meaning of salvation only when those who hear it become aware of the grave danger that their soul is perishing. The teenagers to whom I teach the Bible have totally no understanding of this destiny of the soul. On the other hand, they think that all religions are irrational and superstitious. The Christian faith is one of those, so they think that because it isn't the truth it is natural for it not to grow and expand (in Japan). To students like this, no matter how enthusiastically we speak, they shrug it off (the direct translation is "let it flow" [like water off a duck's back]) as having nothing to do with them.

So before I speak about salvation to those with that kind of mindset, I talk about the peculiar context (or situation) of the Japanese culture that makes it hard for the Christian faith to grow in this country (such as the polytheistic climate, the exaltation of ambiguity, etc.). When I do this, the students begin to realize that, seen internation-

ally, it is actually the Japanese that stand out, and they see that what they had thought about the Christian faith to be natural was just an arbitrary presupposition on their parts. Then they start to realign their way of thinking.

In this way, the principle comes alive that "to the Jews, I become a Jew and to the Greeks, I become a Greek". In the same way that Paul started his sermon to the Jews in a completely different way than he did with the Gentiles in Athens, the way we speak is very important. Taking notice of context in communication theory, the culture anthropologist Malinowski and linguists J.R. Firth, M. A. K. Halliday, etc. have studied "situational context" and "cultural context" in the "speaking" environment. What they have to say can give us clues for evangelism.

Up till now, the "content" of what we say has been researched at length, but research in the area of how what we say is received is bound to become one of the most important areas of future missiological studies. And as more light is shed on this area, why there is so little fruit in Japan will become clear, and we will be able to grasp in what direction the church must go in the area of twenty-first century outreach.

I think that this area is being researched by missiologists, but from now on, that research needs to be made more available to the church at large. In so doing, my prayer is that it will lead to more enlightened evangelism among teenagers.

My Personal Comment:

This article shows us the problem, the solution and what needs to be done in the future. There is no real communication until what I want to say is actually communicated (and received) by the listener. So I must find out how the listener takes what I say, whether they are teenagers, children or even adults. As this article recommends, if more research were done in the area of how various age groups perceive what is trying to be shared, then more effective (and efficient) evangelism could be done. And, as is the desire of all of us working here in Japan, more people could come to know our Lord Jesus as their personal Savior and walk in obedience to Him. May His Voice be heard in the land of Japan clearly! Ken Reddington **H**



Ken & Toshiko Reddington are in the process of starting a new church in Ino, just west of Kochi City.



Suggestions for a Fruitful Missionary Ministry

By Harry M. Taylor

The late Rev. David Ellison, a great man and a great missionary who gave his life for Cambodia, was often heard to say when praying, "Lord, after we have done our best we are yet but unworthy servants." There is nothing commendable in the missionary except as Christ is revealed in him and through him. A saint of the past century wrote, "We can see farther through our tears than through our accomplishments." It is with these thoughts in mind that I attempt some comments on the given topic.

Fruitfulness, like any of the richest and most valuable entities of life, can be counterfeited and grossly misunderstood. Not seldom are we caught with the immature idea that fruitfulness is a matter of statistics, of people and numbers. While people and statistics are obviously a part of a fruitful ministry, statistics can, on the other hand, easily become a stumbling stone or a millstone around our necks. The scriptures will not permit us to judge the whole matter of fruitfulness by the scale of statistics, be they few or many. It is most important that we see fruitfulness as a spiritual condition, a way of life, a living abiding tree where fruit is the inevitable outcome, as certainly as the harvest follows the plow and the seed.

The continual upgrading of requirements for foreign missionary service is sending to our fields the best academically prepared personnel of our history. The late Rev. Robert Zeimer was heard to make a comment on this development which reflects my personal feelings as well. He said in so many words that if the present requirements for foreign service had been *en regle* when he went to the field, he questioned whether he could have made the grade! The emphasis on education is vitally important these days and something to be thankful for—if we don't let it get in the way of being used of God. We must not fall into the trap of imagining that education plus missions equals fruitfulness. The genius of success on the mission field is not our using God, but God filling the instrument given into His hands and using that instrument for His glory—be it a vessel unto honor and notoriety or a plain unsung hero of the faith. It matters not which, if we glorify Christ!

In this writing it is my intention to dwell on the spiritual and practical side of the missionary ministry, and attempt to touch on some of the negative and positive attitudes that will either make or negate our faithfulness in the service of Christ.

I doubt that any life of ministry is more fraught with frustrations, pressures, pitfalls and impossibilities than that of foreign missionaries. The apostle Paul himself admits to this in 2 Corinthians 1:8 when he states, "We would not have you ignorant brethren of our trouble (a modern version renders it, serious trouble) we were pressed out of measure, above strength even to the point of despair." We dare not discount the fact that severe trials have an important part in forging a useful and fruitful missionary ministry. That is, if we grasp the all-important fact that the same revealed, victorious Christ Paul knew through the Holy Spirit, is our glorious possession, then we can say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me!" Praise His Name!

As I sit in this guest room thinking about "The Strategy of a Fruitful Ministry," I note some sheets of paper taped to the wall, penned in large letters in bright red ink. The first one reads, "THINK BIG! THINK POSITIVELY! I need \$40,000 in business sales in April. I will DO IT!"

Then at the bottom is written, "I am the best salesman in my company. I will be # 1!" To the side of this small advertisement is written, "If you are making less than \$10,000 a month, you are probably selling the wrong product." Incentive, attitude, vision, drive are all vital basic necessities for accomplishing anything anywhere in the world. BUT it sure makes a world of difference what motivation is behind the incentive. In the West "bootstrap-drive" with self-interest and self aggrandizement may go a long way, but on the mission field it will leave one thoroughly deflated and debunked...and we hope will lead to the important secret of a Christ-centered, Spirit-filled life. He is the only One who can give a unique and inspired incentive and drive far beyond the human and the carnal.

I know of no other concept that can more thoroughly and speedily lead a missionary to defeat, unless it is the attitude that says or even thinks, "Because I am a missionary with all the right answers, with irrefutable arguments and I proclaim the truth of Christ, the heathen must respond...success and fruitfulness guaranteed." Here reality can be a stunning and brutal blow that will test our dedication through and through. Indifference and rejection on the part of the heathen can be one of the most deflating and defeating factors in all foreign work. We are unlikely to know much about or appreciate success and fruitfulness if we haven't at one time or another felt this wet blanket of defeat and frustration. Missionary work, we will soon find, is not just a battle of wits or a super salesman's task. It is the proclamation of the Gospel revealed in WORD, portrayed in life, in flesh and blood and manifested through the Holy Spirit. I dare say there is no place in the world where "total man" must enter more fully into the ministry of the Gospel than on the foreign field. We will not sell the Gospel to the heathen until we have first sold ourselves unconditionally to Christ and are instruments wielded in His Divine Hand—led and filled with His Spirit.

I know of no missionary in a truly heathen field who has come to any measure of success without enduring the fires of frustration, sacrifice, and suffering. Peter says in his second epistle (4:1), "For as much as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind." Suffering leads us into what Peter calls, 'the will of God.' Then Paul in Philippians 1 writes, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." It is vital to know the full Gospel of Christ and to be able to give verbally a clear and concise declaration of it. It is also just as important that this glorious Gospel be worked into the depths of our inner nature and life. There is a strategy that leads to fruitfulness and there is a price connected with it. It is necessary to let time and experience condition us—permitting the Word of God to do its work, the fires of the Holy Spirit to refine, the genius of the cross to condition the life, and make the man whole.

Often times we are shocked to discover that our most glaring defeats and short-comings lie closest to home. If our first step is wrong, our last one won't be right. We cannot over emphasize the necessity of right attitudes, right attitudes toward our sending agency, our mission. It is frightening how easily the devil can get us off the track at this crucial beginning point. If the enemy of our souls can wound and blind us at this point, he can keep us, like Samson, grinding in the gristmill of defeat throughout our ministry—an inestimable tragedy!

The mission, the establishment, is not me and they. It is US, the arm of Christ, the body of Christ reaching out to perishing men and women. We are one in Christ or we are nothing. We will be one in the Spirit of Christ or useless and powerless nonentities. Fragmentation and division in our midst can blight the most fruitful harvest. From the very beginning of the Church the irrefutable law of Christ was unity in love and oneness in mind and heart. The Holy Spirit will not honor anything else. We should fear the ugly head of the devil in division, envy, jealousy and selfishness more than the plague. On the mission field the spirit of division and selfishness is one of the most painful swords the missionary can thrust into the heart of Christ. I tell you with tears that there have been times of fruitlessness and barrenness on mission fields, not because of the indifference of the heathen, but because of division and wrong attitudes among the missionaries. We are not data machines; we are part of the body of Christ and the Holy Spirit will not honor division. Dissension destroys fruitfulness.

Probably every missionary has, at one time or another, tied his/her mission to the whipping post and vented his/her frustrations only to find that inevitably his/her own spirit was the loser. It is so important to learn early the great lesson—"giving things time to work out"!! It is necessary to keep all relations on a loving, spiritual basis and in so doing we cannot lose! Sometimes it is easier to love your enemies than your fellow-missionaries. The unailing secret for dealing with all these problems is "As Christ hath forgiven us our sins..." If we are discriminated against, God has promised to champion our cause. He loves to honor faith, move mountains, and make a way where there is no way. Give Christ the place of preeminence! Victory and blessing shall not be wanting, but on the other hand, the spirit of resentment and discord will shut tight every door of heavenly blessing and leave us barren and empty!

We are seeing Western society torn apart these days over many issues—insubordination to leadership, the cry for equality and on and on we could go. The spirit of the age can verily bite the missionary with fatal poison, too, if we don't honor and exalt our calling and ministry in Christ above all other interests! It is hardly new to emphasize the necessity of holding the leaders of the Church and Mission in high esteem, love and prayer support. Delegated authority is deeply scriptural, but how subtle are those spirits and temptations at work in the world. It is easy, sometimes, and almost pleasant to let people think we are neglected or even abused—carnal attitudes like to hear these insidious suggestions. God help us to nip these tendencies in the bud. If we let them pass it will be to our own loss and

tragedy. Paul commands us to honor those who are over us in the Lord! We honor Christ and we honor ourselves by honoring our leaders. Honor and love are our spiritual duties bearing rewards and fruitfulness.

We also hear ourselves calling for equality. There are times this sounds so right, but it has the sting of the serpent in it. The devil would be delighted to get our attention turned aside from our glorious sacrificial mission. If the enemy can get our attention and interest centered on ourselves and on our monetary interests, he will rob our hearts, send the heathen to eternal hell, and we will not be guiltless. Selfish attitudes can make us barren, fruitless trees that the Master of the Harvest might interrogate with the words, "Why cumbereth it the ground?" Lord, inspire us with godly gratitude for the means that enable us to get to the task and then we leave the rest in His Blessed Hands!

Today there is an ongoing increasing army of dedicated youth, inexperienced missionaries, who are enduring the severest neglect and want just for the privilege of serving the Lord Jesus in foreign lands. I don't advocate that system, but I do advocate the spirit of dedication and love for Christ that counts no cost, no sacrifice too great to fulfill this holy calling. In the great commission we hear of the supreme love of Christ—dedication to the task to which He calls. We hear of eternal rewards that our Lord prepares for the faithful. There is not one word about equality, but many words about being approved of Christ. "What is that to thee? Follow thou Me.!" A pledge to poverty would rightly have few advocates among us, but a heart unshackled by money matters is a vital necessity if we would have the Lord's inspiration and fruitfulness.

Now for the positive suggestions for fruitfulness, I would place as No.1 the heartfelt plea, "Lord, fill my life with the insatiable love for yourself, your word, and for the lost for whom you died. Blessed Holy Spirit, make this miracle a reality in my life." God is love! Love is the unmistakable evidence of His fullness. This love of Jesus Christ and for Christ will break through to the heart and consciences of men where nothing else will or can break through to the heart. Love never faileth! Love must be godly, victorious, selfless, dynamic and an indispensable element for fruitfulness.

When my wife, Miriam, and I were transferred from Cambodia to the Near East, we were literally and thoroughly floored by the impossible task. We were not only new, but also wholly inexperienced in that part of the world. Absolutely nothing appeared to have any hope and we were too dumbfounded to run. After the first year we were afraid to leave and at the end of five years

we were still afraid to leave—but for a different reason. Praise the Lord! In all our frustration there became, by the Grace of God, a fullness of the Love of Jesus that replaced the fear, despair and sense of futility...a love for Christ, a love for the place and a love for the people to whom He had sent us...a sense of optimism and assurance in the face of impossible circumstances. This glorious work of the Holy Spirit, who shed abroad the Love of God in our hearts, lays the foundation for everything else. He gave the blessed expectancy that our Lord was going to do the impossible—that He had people whom He was going to save—that He would lead us to needy hearts with whom He was working. With the coming of this new experience the circumstance didn't change for a considerable period of time, but the Lord put optimism in our hearts. We dared to believe for an Evangelistic Center and for a building that would belong to the church. We had neither money nor people—two very vital ingredients for such a project. We had less than a dozen faithful believers and an impossible building situation to work from. Convinced, after beating the sidewalks of Beirut for literally months, that there was absolutely nothing in our range available, we made known that we were believing for an ideal building to house the future Evangelistic Center and we went on record for trusting God for 100 new couples plus a sizeable missionary pledge. Within six months the Lord gave us the building that far surpassed our highest hopes and within a year it was filled to capacity. Then we had some greater problems in the area of expansion and outreach. Where would the money come from? How will it all be done? The Lord helped us to use our problems as stepping-stones and not millstones about our necks.

Fruitfulness is not just a goal toward which one should strive, but also a state of life and experience in which we need, by the Grace of God, to continually live. Oh, that we might bear the fruit of His love! Oh, that we might conform to His Divine Will and Purpose for us—that we might be fruit bearing: "Purge us Lord, that we may bring forth more fruit...much fruit is the promise for the life that abides in Christ."



Harry Taylor is the ninety one-year-old father of Janice Kropp. He has served all his life with the Christian & Missionary Alliance, first in Cambodia then in Lebanon. Recently he lost his loving wife, Miriam, and now resides in Columbus, North Carolina (USA).

POTPOURRI & PROMISES

by Janice A. Kropp

When the call came we hurriedly packed two bags, straightened the house the best we could, and were out the door. Not really expecting to get a call that my precious Mother was critically ill, there it was on that early Thursday morning, February 10. Mother had suffered long with different lung ailments, but now it was complete pulmonary failure, and she was in ICU. You know, I was so glad I had called my Mother the previous Monday morning, her Sunday night. We had a good talk and then we gave our usual, "Love ya, love ya, love ya!" That was our final conversation! She had turned ninety on December 23 and we were going to celebrate the event in March during our scheduled vacation! Interesting, isn't it? We had planned a three-week vacation to see all our sons and meet up with Mother and Dad!

On the flight across the Pacific I knew I had to talk to the Lord about what we might be facing. I asked the Lord to keep Mother until we got to Florida. "Keep her, Lord, at least until Valentine's Day!" But I knew in my heart that when God calls His children they GO, so I added, "Lord, I know You have Your timetable. I submit to whatever that may be." Mother slipped quietly into the Lord's presence on the 10th at 10:10 A.M. We arrived that very evening at 6:45! Unbeknown to us, Mother's nurse, a believer, prayed that somehow we would sense, before landing in Orlando, that death had occurred. And, you know, we did.

I tried to call my parent's house from Atlanta while Richard stood in line for a seat assignment. The home phone was busy. Being 4:00 in the afternoon, the family should have been at the hospital. Someone was home. I then put a quick call through to ICU only to be told that they could not give me any information. "Call your sister," they instructed. I knew then that most likely Mother had died. Then I asked the nurse what time my sister had left the hospital. The reply of, "10:30 this morning," confirmed my deepest fear! She was gone! No more seeing the sparkle in her eyes. No more hugs, words of love, or laughter! But you know it has been well with our souls. I had settled it all on the flight.

Well, you can be sure the next days were a flurry of activity. Mother's memorial service, on Valentine's Day, was a celebration! With hearts, all sizes and colors, we decorated the floor in the foyer, down the aisles and across the front of the sanctuary. Four posters, with the seasons of her life, sat on easels facing the congregation. Flowers and plants were interspersed throughout. Our hearts were lifted by the special message, the familiar old hymns, reminiscing, and singing as a congregation, The Lord's Prayer. (Do we do this only in Japan? Everyone was so blessed!)

All this took place over four months ago. My ninety-one-year-old father, now distanced from his precious mate of almost seventy years, is gain-

ing strength daily.

May I just tell you a little about my precious mother? She was such an unusual person. As an MK she was raised in the Middle East. In those days very little was communicated about the needs of missionary families. Mother faced and figured issues out all on her own. After marrying my father, Harry Taylor, she served with him for almost seventy years. We all know what that means! It was a ministry of two intertwined lives! You didn't have one without the other. Together they served 28 years in Cambodia, but during their first term our little family was interned in the Philippines for three years and three months. Mother often commented what a great chance she had to learn Japanese, but under those circumstances, no way! Those were trying and difficult days! Food was scarce. Clothes were few. Communication with the outside world was non-existent. But those were precious days of learning hard lessons. After the war we returned to Cambodia and that was where Mother began her battle with breathing. Rice pollen and dust ruined her lungs—something she never really got over. When the folks were forced out of Cambodia in the 60s they were reassigned to Beirut, Lebanon, where they spent 17 years, war and all. Those were marvelous years which today are yet yielding a harvest.

Mother and Dad have friends literally around

the world. Here in Yachiyo City, Chiba Ken, Richard and I were at a BBQ for Nova teachers. Dea, now our youngest son's wife, was then a teacher and we had been invited to attend. S. Newton was there from Australia. Before he gave us the details, his talk and manner told us of his backslidden condition. As we chatted we found that he was a member of one of our Australian churches and had indeed heard my parents speak when they were there for a special mission's convention! Small world! Today S comes to our church and has come back to Christ!

Mother had opportunity to speak at a ladies meeting in Japan on one of her several visits. She told of her war experiences, gently. At the end of the meeting, unbeknown to me, the pastor's wife presented mother with the most gorgeous bouquet of flowers we had ever seen. And you know our minds went back sixty some years to the day a Japanese truck driver placed a bouquet of wild flowers on Mother's lap. After her nearly dying in the Baguio hospital, she and I (one month old) were put in a vegetable truck to be taken to the facility where about 500 POWs (Americans, my older brother and father included) were being held. On the way, the driver pulled off the road, got out and disappeared! Mother's heart sank! Shortly, he returned—with wild flowers, picked

in the fields, and placed them on her lap. Neither he nor she knew all the days of hardship which lay ahead at the hands of Japanese soldiers. Isn't life a picture? Was I destined for Japan?

Now, Mother is in Glory, rejoicing with the saints and enjoying the beauty of her wonderful Savior! And, I miss her! She was my model in life and ministry. She taught me to give, to serve, to love. She always went beyond the call of duty—with dignity and grace.

So you might ask why I am going into all this detail. There is a reason. For you see, the events of these last months have brought both my husband and me to a crossroads. The care of my precious father, now ninety-one and walking with a cane, has fallen to us. This means we will be leaving our beloved Japan a few months earlier than we had anticipated. We are due for retirement in the spring of 2006, but we must leave in September of this year, not so long from now.

We first came to Japan September 1, 1969, and have lived in Iruma (Saitama Ken), Hiroshima, Kyoto, Kotesashi (Saitama Ken), Tokorozawa City, and finally six wonderful years in Yachiyo City (Chiba Ken). It would take a book to contain it all, so I will end right here and now. Our days of service in Japan, and particularly to you, are quickly coming to a close. It has been such a

joy! I love this magazine and I have counted it a privilege to have visited your homes regularly over the past fifteen years—first, as the author of two home-grown pages, Potpourri & Promises, and then as managing editor. I bid you farewell, with tears and gratitude! I shall miss you, and I will not forget...

My Prayer for You:

To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! AMEN Jude 24,25.



Give Me One Last Smile:

My grandson Kaleb loved my Mother and called her, "MimMim." Holding hands we walked the street just outside the house in

Florida. I gave him some instruction to which he answered, "Since my MimMim is gone, I'll obey you, Grandma." What a boy! H

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自分なりの目標を持って、働きの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)

- '3H' (Head, Hand, Heart) バランスの取れたプログラム!
- キリスト者の生き方を導き、教会とその地域に影響を与えるプログラム
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"The Gospel paradigm has transformed me."

These are only a few of the comments from students who gave personal testimonies on their first year at the Christian Leadership Training Center in Nakano, Tokyo, during a winter retreat held in January 2005. One student even expressed trepidation at leaving the nurturing environment of CLTC when he graduates this fall 2005.

Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 2:8: "We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us." "Dear to us." This is the result of a focus on deep fellowship in Lord. Where not only is there love but life is shared in the power of the Gospel. "Heart" is the mentoring core of the CLTC curriculum. Our emphasis with this is not on content (knowledge) or skills (application) but on the continual transformation of every believer through the simple Gospel message for their own lives, even AFTER salvation. This principle is a key component of all that CLTC does. For Paul himself not only preached the Good News to the unsaved (Rom. 1:16) but to the BELIEVERS in the church at Rome as well (Rom. 1:15). This is the transforming power of the Gospel.

The basis of this paradigm at CLTC is centered on two specific areas. First, the message of the Gospel permeates the entire teaching curriculum with the reminder to "repent and believe" (Mark 1:15) in classes as diverse as Contextualization, Psalms, Personal Ministry Assessment, and Integrative Theology. Second, this paradigm is expanded in the "Gospel Transformation" bible study by World Harvest Ministries which has been translated in Japanese specifically for CLTC. It is used bi-weekly in the regular mentoring group times. This guidebook combined with the peer mentoring atmosphere of the fifty minute group meetings sinks the message of grace and truth into the heart AND LIFESTYLE of every student at CLTC.

A wonderful thing that has happened since the mentoring groups began in March 2004 is that this mentoring process has birthed 6 student leaders from the charter class of 2004, 4 of whom will continue to lead these entirely student led group settings for both their classmates and for the new batch of matriculated students in 2005. From the beginning CLTC's vision has been to quickly mentor and multiply student leaders -- apart from faculty and staff -- who can competently raise up successive generations of student leaders. So far, the Lord has magnificently honored this vision.

So, if you are looking on behalf of a Japanese disciple for them to be trained for ministry in an environment that not only equips them with knowledge and skills but is used of God to actually transform lives, even as the student is in the learning process, then CLTC is the place for you!

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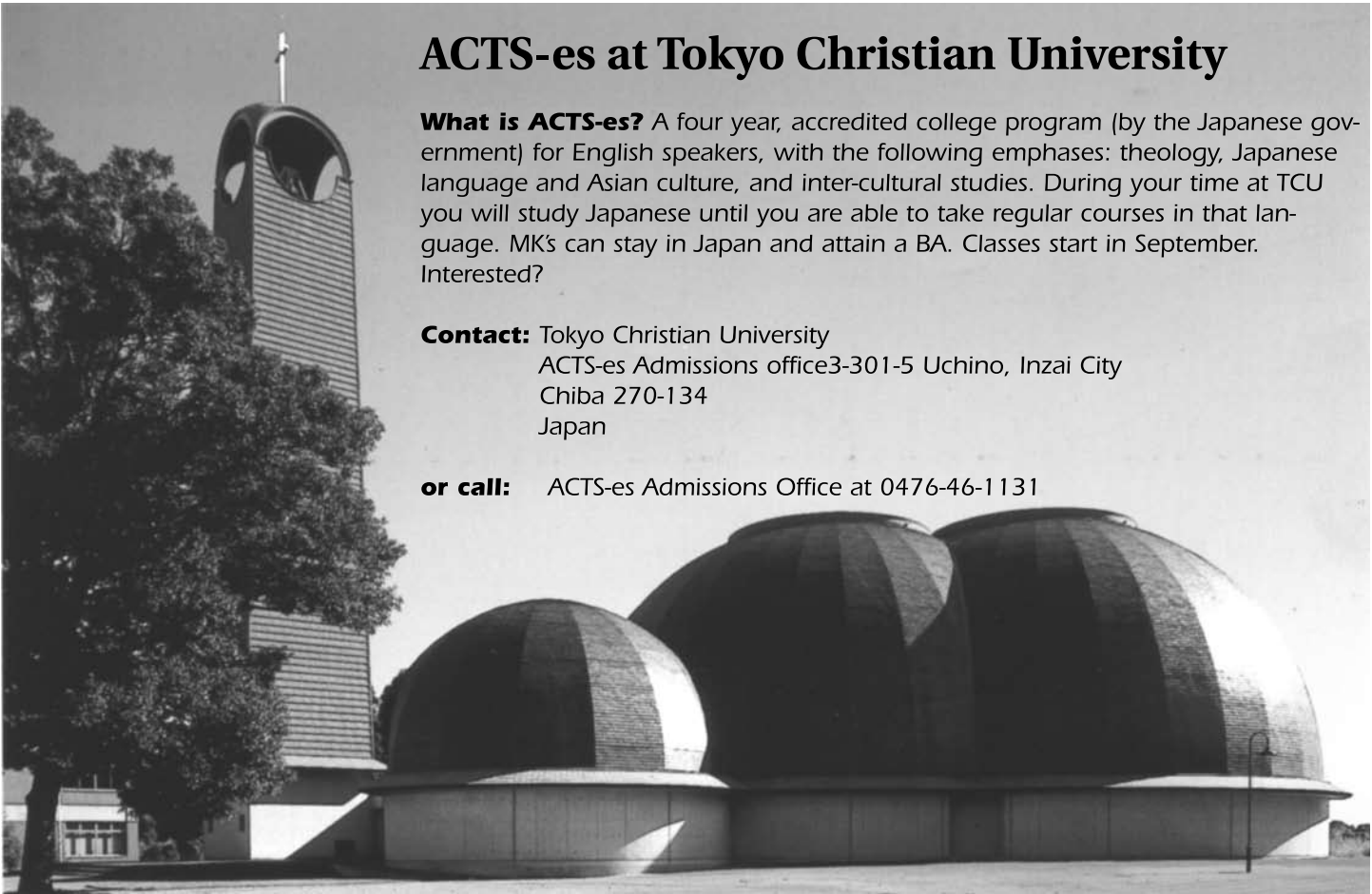
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