



Hikikomori *Japan's Hidden Epidemic*

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from Japan's Legendary Master Swordsman*

Theology in Japan

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of Reactionary Cross-Cultural Theology?*

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In This Issue



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Lake Toya, Hokkaido, early morning (mirror image)

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MOVING? Contact the JEMA office so we can update our files!

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**Japan Evangelical
Missionary Association**
*exists to network and equip
its members to make
disciples for Christ*

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WIM

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Day of Prayer <i>Wednesday, January 30</i> <i>10:00 - 2:00</i> <i>TEAM Center, Mitaka</i> <i>Check for details at</i> <i>www.jema.org, go to WIM</i>	An Afternoon with Jane <i>Sunday, March 9, 2:00-4:00</i> <i>Musashino Christian Ctr B1</i> <i>No Registration. Directions at</i> <i>http://englishchurchtokyo.org</i>	Annual Retreat <i>Megumi Chalet, Karuizawa</i> <i>Wed.-Fri. March 12-14</i> <i>Registration on-line in January</i> <i>at www.jema.org, go to WIM</i>	Hokkaido Christian Women's Fellowship <i>OMF Hokkaido Ctr, Contact:</i> <i>Rowena McGinty at 011-971-8055</i> <i>Registration at hcvfconference@yahoo.com</i>
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SPRING EVENTS : JANE RUBIETTA

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A Call to Life, Love and Breakfast on the Beach.
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Jane Rubietta is a Pastor's wife, mother of 3, author, speaker, and co-director of Abounding Ministries. Join us for a special time of having our hearts awakened through Jane's spiritual depth as she applies Scripture with candor and humor. Jane's published works include *Resting Place*, *Grace Points*, and *How to Keep the Pastor You Love*.

Learn more about Jane at www.janerubietta.com



Your WIM Commission:

Front Row: Nancy Nethercott, Lynn Fujino, Elaine Mehn, Laura Harris.
Back Row: Ann Little, Dorothea Langhans, Lora Kleinjan



Jane Rubietta

For information on any events, go to www.jema.org and click on WIM

February 18, 2008 - JEMA Fellowship Evening & New Media Bazaar OCC Building, Ochanomizu, Tokyo

5:30 - 6:30 Bring your own bento & fellowship with fellow missionaries

6:30 - 7:00 New JEMA website launch - Demonstration and Q & A

7:00 - 8:00 Your choice of 2 out of 3 electives (25 min. presentations on Facebook, mixi, and YouTube)

8:00 - 8:15 Closing

President's Pen



Ray Leaf has served as JEMA President since February of 2002. Ray and Ruth are church planters in Higashi Yamato-shi. The Leafs have worked in Japan since 1972 with SEND International.

Unity, Liberty and Love

"...I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

John 17:20-21 (NIV)

On January 3 and 4, I again had the privilege of representing JEMA at the Korean Missionary Association (KMA) New Year's Conference in Hamamatsu, Shizuoka. Once more it was a time of blessing and reflection.

As my wife and I retire from Japan this coming spring, my heart echoes our Lord's high priestly prayer—that the Body of Christ in Japan with all its different gifts and ministries will indeed be a living reality of our oneness in Christ. Although close geographically and culturally to the Japanese, KMA missionaries struggle with many of the same issues missionaries from other nations do.

Indeed, the Church in Japan is involved in a great spiritual struggle for the soul of the nation. Augustine's maxim applies well to the Christian community in Japan, *"In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, love."* JEMA is a vital part of the ongoing work of the Kingdom of God here.

As JEMA president, I have been greatly blessed and encouraged by the dedication

of fellow missionaries from so many different mission societies. I have been challenged and sharpened through my interaction with our sister organization, the Japan Evangelical Alliance (JEA). I am also delighted in the new team of JEMA leaders that God is raising up to continue this work. I am confident that you will be as well. There are too many JEMA people to mention in this short column, but I must commend our "girl Friday," Mizuko Matsushita, for her untiring labor of love for the JEMA community in the daily routine of the office.

Jesus, the Son of the Living God, is our Lord and Savior. Preach in his Name and authority. The Scriptures are the inerrant and authoritative Word of the Living God. They all testify of Jesus. Confidently use the Word of God to exalt him, and may the Lord bless and enrich your ministries for the salvation of people and the transformation of this nation.

JEMA Datebook

Event	Date	Time	Place
WIM Day of Prayer	January 30	10 a.m.-2 p.m.	TEAM Center
JEMA MLC	February 18	10 a.m.-5 p.m.	OCC
JEMA Plenary Session	February 19	10 a.m.-3 p.m.	OCC
Fresh Encounter with God Prayer Meeting	March 10	9 a.m.-12p.m.	Agape Chapel New Osaka Hotel
WIM Retreat	March 12-14		Megumi Chalet Karuizawa
Fresh Encounter with God Prayer Meeting	May 12	9 a.m.-12p.m.	Agape Chapel New Osaka Hotel
Eastern Japan Prayer Summit	May 12-15		Okutama Bible Chalet
Western Japan Prayer Summit	May 26-29		VIP Alpine Rose Village



Gary Bauman has served as managing editor of Japan Harvest since September 2005. Gary and his wife Barbara have worked in Japan since 1988 with Asian Access.

What's Changed Since We Started?

It was over three years ago. I was attending a seminar for Christian magazine publishers in Seoul, Korea. People were amazed to hear of the existence of the magazine I was showing them that was directed toward such a specific readership.

Even more noteworthy—that magazine had served for over half a century as a key communication channel for the evangelical missionary community in Japan. (In fact, as I sit here at my laptop I'm looking at the flagship issue, the typewritten Vol. 1, No. 1, *E.M.A.J. News* of April 1951!) By March 1952 the publication had taken on the unassuming name *Fellowship News* and included an update on the ongoing discussion with the Japanese government regarding missionary income and Japanese income tax requirements. (Some things never change!) Our current name, *Japan Harvest*, appeared with the printing of the February 1954 issue.

But in 2008 we find ourselves at a point of transition. What resources are better printed in a magazine? What information is better distributed by e-mail? What materials are better posted on a website? The answers to these questions are important to both our JEMA member missionaries and Christians everywhere who are interested in ministry to the Japanese. So the JEMA Publications Commission has already initiated some changes in our communications to respond to today's realities.

What's Changed in Publications/Communications during this Past Year?

You've undoubtedly "felt" some of the changes in *Japan Harvest*, even if you haven't been able to put your finger on them. We've heard from more native Japanese writers, highlighted current news a bit differently, tried to deal more intentionally with significant cultural issues as they relate to evangelism, and included fewer committee reports. On the visual side, we've changed our magazine logo, increased the standard text font size and line spacing for easier readability, experimented with using an accent color in the body of the maga-

zine, and changed our dimensions from our historic 8 ½ x 11 inches to the more universally standard A4 size.

Less apparent, but perhaps more significant, we've worked hard on the development of a new website. Although this can be a slow process in a volunteer organization like JEMA, during the course of the past year we have been active in setting up a forward-looking content management system, moving to a different web-hosting service, preparing to transfer our print materials into digital archives, and continuing the process of defining a new visual JEMA identity that can effectively bridge both print and digital media. But all of those activities have been behind the scenes, while our current website has remained relatively static as it waits for the launch of the new site. Finally the changes are in the air!

What Changes are Coming?

First, our next *Japan Harvest*. We have been researching advances in printing technology and the options available. As a result, with our Spring 2008 issue we will be printing *Japan Harvest* in full color (without increasing our printing costs!). This will involve additional layout challenges, but we're excited about the increased flexibility this will give us.

The launch of our new "beta" JEMA website will be in February, and we will be soliciting viewer input for gradual improvements over the course of this next year as we continue to learn how to best design this resource to serve you. JEMA members will need to register for member access to additional resources, so check out www.jema.org in early March and browse the new site. (And while you're at it, take a look at our flagship issue of April 1951 entitled *E.M.A.J. News!*)

Thanks for the opportunity to serve you,

News Briefs

Veteran Japan Missionary's Counseling Ministry Expands to the Internet *Assist News*

Lila (Finsaas) Joseph traveled to Japan in 1954 as a single missionary in order to spread the gospel to a largely unreached people group. She met her husband Kenny in Karuizawa, where they were married in 1955. They raised four sons on the mission field, and at the age of 78 she still lives in Tokyo with her husband. Her continuing work includes Bible teaching, counseling women in distress and being a grandmother to 13 grandchildren.

Her new "Ask Lila" column at www.assistnews.net will feature questions from women around the world who are looking for Biblically-based guidance from a woman who has learned some lessons along the missionary road. It will address such issues as the missionary wife wondering whether or not to put a

child in boarding school, the pastor's wife wondering how to balance work, family and ministry, the new mother needing practical advice on child-rearing, and the young woman wondering if you can serve God on the mission field and still be single. Readers may address questions to "Ask Lila" at lilajoseph@gmail.com.

House Church Movement at CPI—Growth through Multiplication

Revival Shimbun

The house church movement advocated by Dr. Mitsuo Fukuda of RAC network was examined with keen interest at the CPI Conference. Speaking to attendees, Dr. Fukuda pressed home the importance of multiplying churches by contrasting the "elephant church" with the "rabbit church." The elephant takes 18 years to reach child-bearing age, and the length of pregnancy is 22 months. Furthermore, an elephant

usually bears only one baby. However, the rabbit reaches child-bearing age only four months from birth and can deliver seven babies after one month of pregnancy. A pair of rabbits can produce 476,000,000 rabbits in three years.

Dr. Fukuda compared these two styles of child-bearing to church planting. He pointed out that it is more effective to plant small house churches that give birth to disciples, one after the other, than to focus on big churches with big buildings that draw lots of attendees through a pastor who gives attractive messages.

Dr. Fukuda started discipleship training for some young people in 2002 and has continued to train leaders of house churches in Hyogo Prefecture. His house church network started with one church, but it has now developed into one hundred house churches.

He explains the discipleship strategy followed by Jesus Christ:

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SCHEDULES FOR OTHER CONVENTION

Office

Okinawa	Feb. 1 - 3	098-832-2415
Kyushu	Feb. 6 - 8	092-873-6230
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Kyoto	Feb. 17	06-6762-3020
Kobe	Feb. 17	06-6762-3020
Nara	Feb. 17	06-6762-3021
Tokyo	Feb. 23 -24	03-3291-1910
Tohoku	Feb.10 - 12	022-248-1760
Hokkaido	Feb.26 - 28	011-261-6898

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News Briefs - continued

1) The 12 apostles were sent out two by two (Mark 6:7). If each of these groups had made 12 disciples, there could be 72 disciples in all.

2) These 72 disciples were sent out two by two, so there were 36 groups in all (Luke 10:1). If each group then made 12 disciples, the total number of new disciples would be 432.

3) By adding 72 and 432 the result is 504. This number corresponds to 1 Corinthians 15:6, "He appeared to more than five hundred ..."

4) The 504 disciples could be divided into 252 groups and if each group made 12 disciples, the total number would become 3024. This number corresponds to Acts 2:41, "...about three thousand were added to their number that day."

From the above, Dr. Fukuda concluded that the number of Jesus' disciples increased not by addition but by multiplication. He stressed the importance of bringing forth disciples who can bring forth other disciples. — *translated by Mizuko Matsushita with the Japan Harvest staff*

More University Contacts Sought for Upcoming Lecture Tour with Prof. Werner Gitt *Juergen Boeck*

From the end of May to the end of June 2008, Dr. Werner Gitt will be giving lectures throughout Japan. He has spoken on every major continent on the topic of "Faith and Science," and lecture content can be either scientific or scientific-Biblical in nature.

Some of the specific topics he lectures on include the following: 1) "In the Beginning was Information," 2) "Brain and Mind," 3) "Did God Use Evolution?" 4) "Events Beyond Space and Time," 5) "How Well Designed was Noah's Ark?" 6) "Five Minutes after Death", and 7) "As a Scientist, Why Do I Believe in the Bible?" —

The aim in each case is to cause people to both think in wider dimensions, and about their Creator—ultimately to lead them to

Jesus. The main target group will be university students and academic-related people. Lectures will mainly be held in universities or locations close to them but there will be some lectures in churches as well.

Evangelistic tracts will be available, as well as Dr Gitt's book, *In the Beginning Was Information*. Currently there are several lectures planned from Okayama to Sapporo, but there are still possibilities to add more universities or other places of interest.

If you have contacts with professors (e.g., in your church), with people in universities, or if you work with university students, JEMA member Juergen Boeck, who is coordinating the lecture tour, would be very happy to get in touch with you. He may be contacted in English, Japanese, or German for more information (juergenboeck@gmx.net).

Karuizawa Language School to Close March 2008

TEAM Japan KLS Board

The Karuizawa Language School (KLS) began many years ago, serving the mission community in an effort to see missionaries trained well in Japanese. In light of changes in missionary needs and a number of issues facing the school at this time, it has been decided to close KLS and form a new language training center which will better accommodate a wider range of people in the missionary community. Although many details such as a new name for the center have not yet been determined, the current plan is to:

- Move away from a language school structure to a center for facilitating language learning
- Implement contemporary language learning principles through the advice of professional language consultants
- Provide a comprehensive on-site two-year language course for career missionaries, made up of core teaching modules that can also be

studied in parts

- Introduce IT/video learning options to provide opportunities for distance learning for missionaries already in ministry or preparing to come to Japan
- Provide support to all missionaries in the pursuit of life-long learning
- Move from the Karuizawa Union Church property into the Karuizawa TEAM Center property

KLS will continue operation through March 2008, until the completion of the winter term. The KLS Board plans to hold a celebration on Friday, March 14 to recognize what God has done through this school to see the work of the gospel progress in Japan. More details will be made available closer to the event.

The KLS Board hopes to gradually introduce different aspects of the new language training center starting in the latter part of 2008. Questions about this move may be addressed to any of the following board members using their contact information in the JEMA Directory: Katie Cole, Flossie Epley, Jon Junker and Steven Parsons.

Alpha Asia Pacific Reaches Out

Alpha Asia Pacific chairman, Chris Sadler, shared at a lunch in Tokyo for international church staff members on November 30, 2007 regarding the growth in Asia of the Alpha Course. Different Alpha "versions" for specific target groups are either in use or in various stages of development. Some specifically mentioned were CEO Alpha (Singapore), Workplace Alpha (Hong Kong), Youth Alpha, and Prison Alpha (60 countries). The "pre-Alpha" Marriage Course is opening doors into the lives of couples that may not be ready yet for a regular Alpha Course. For more information about Alpha Japan activities, contact Andy Game at andy.game@alphajapan.jp or visit the Alpha Japan website at <http://alphajapan.jp/>.



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Karol Whaley lives in Tokyo and serves as the Area Prayer Advocate for the PacRimJO (Japan & Oceania) with the International Mission Board, SBC.

What Will 2008 Bring?

As we think about the new year God has given us, what kind of year do we hope it will be for God's Kingdom in Japan? Our JEMA purpose statement reads that the "Japan Evangelical Missionary Association exists to network and equip its members to make disciples for Christ." With this stated JEMA purpose in mind, where do we as an association want to be at the end of 2008 or even at the end of five years? How can prayer help us with our focus? One thing that I think all of God's children can agree upon is that prayer needs to be the foundation of all that we do.

In 2001, I volunteered to serve on the prayer team for the Billy Graham Crusade held at Bulldog Stadium in Fresno, California. The dates for the meetings were October 11-14, exactly one month after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C. Billy Graham said, "We are in troubled times. We're going to have to rethink our lives." He continued, "But in the midst of all that, there is one hope, that Jesus Christ said he is coming again. Without hope our nation will not go on."

What stuck in my mind were not the quotes above, or the fact that the horrors of 9/11 had just occurred. The memories that linger are the hours spent with the prayer team and the presence of the Lord that was upon that group of believers who helped sponsor the event. Over 500 churches from fifty-four denominations with a total of 20,000 volunteers helped with this special outreach in California's agricultural heartland.

There were about 20 people gathered in the room to pray during each service. Several TV monitors, with the sound muted, were strategically placed around the room so that we could see the people filing into the auditorium as well as those already seated in the stadium as we prayed. We also saw the stage and who was singing or speaking at the time. We prayed for several hours without ceasing, asking the Lord to touch peoples' hearts and transform lives. We were a small, but unique, group of praying people from different backgrounds and different worship styles. There

was a unity among us that was evident from the beginning. How could this happen so quickly, having never met before? It was simply because we were there for the same purpose.

Total attendance for the four-day crusade was 200,000 and nearly 15,000 (14,731 to be exact) accepted the invitation to receive Jesus Christ as Savior. Follow-up teams were already in place to introduce the new believers to local churches where they could grow in the Lord. Praise the Lord! There is fruit that has remained. What a gift to have been even a small part of what God did in the city of Fresno those days.

We have one purpose in JEMA.... to network and equip each other to make disciples for Christ in Japan.

God has brought together a small, but unique, group of missionaries from different backgrounds and different worship styles. Are we not here for the same purpose? Are we not ambassadors for Jesus Christ for the salvation of the Japanese and to see His Kingdom advance through involvement of mature Japanese disciples reaching their own people?

What would happen if we in JEMA gathered together in 2008 in old-fashioned prayer meetings to pray for unity (love & respect) for those under the JEMA umbrella? Would we see unusual answers to our prayers for the Japanese? To paraphrase what Billy Graham said...

We live in troubled times and must rethink our lives. Without hope, we will not be able to go forward. Jesus Christ is our hope! He has promised that he is coming back. May our hope overflow among the Japanese in 2008!

"I pray that God will help you overflow with hope in him through the Holy Spirit's power within you." (Romans 15:13b)

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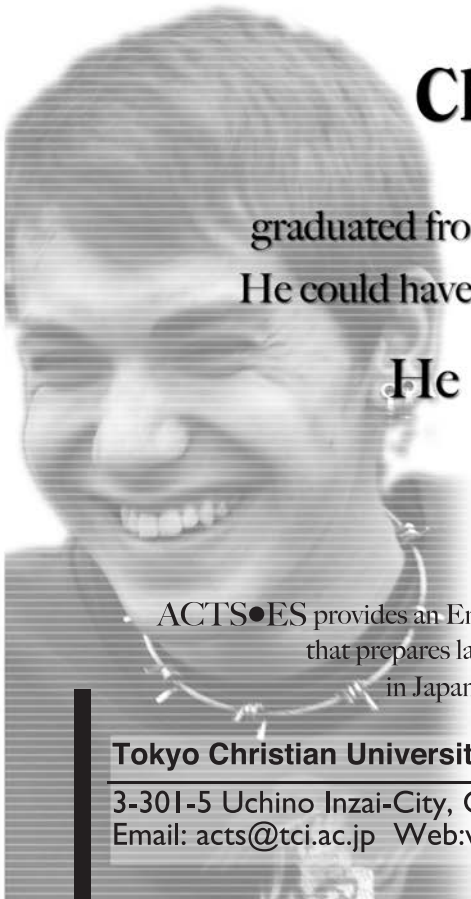
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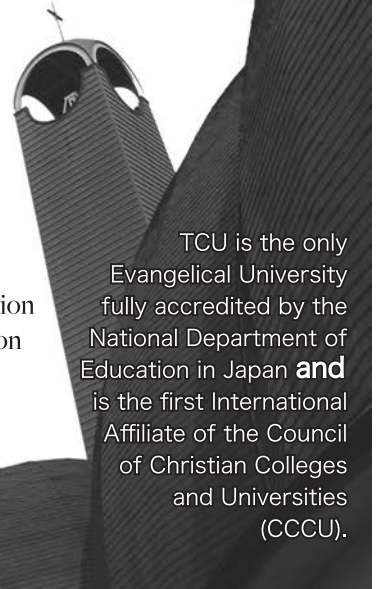


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A Resting Place:

Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus

by Jane Rubietta

“Run the race with perseverance.” What an axiom for professionals, summed up by years in seminary and official ministry. Run, and keep running. Sure, run the right race. But run.

The perseverance part makes sense with such a life motto: never give up. Winston Churchill would be proud of all of us in ministry.

Maybe. But even runners can't run incessantly. They need rest stops, food stations, and medics to care for shin splints and blisters.

As runners say, it didn't take long in the pastorate for us to bonk. To hit the ministry wall, the wall of impossibilities, and crash into our inabilities and disabilities. I wasn't who I thought I was, ministry wasn't what I envisioned, and God certainly wasn't who I expected. What a mercy that turned out to be as I examined my soul fatigue.

Symptoms of Soul Fatigue

My idol was myself: I'll do it, I can take care of it, let me help. But I

couldn't. I moved into such depression and incapacity that all I could do was crawl away, alone, and ask God who He really was. You need a resting place if these symptoms crop up in your life and ministry:

- Burnout
- Trigger temper
- Irrational thinking
- Lack of joy or laughter
- Loss of focus
- Chronic headaches or other pain

- Hyper-controlling of others
- Fatigue
- Depression
- Resentment
- Unforgiveness
- Giving in to temptation
- Lack of feelings
- Loss of passion
- Inability to love your family
- Judgmentalism

We need to extend that life motto from “Run the race with perseverance” to, “Fixing our eyes on Jesus.” Watch how He lived: a lifestyle of fixing His eyes on the Father. He ran the race, straight to the cross, but He ran it “for the joy set before him” (Hebrews 12:2).

Joy. Not necessarily a ministry characteristic. We need intense times of gazing at Jesus to give us perseverance to run. And to provide the joy.

An Intense Gaze

This intense gaze looks like a personal retreat. More than a quiet time, separate from sermon prep. A day apart, every month or two, to turn off the cell phone, leave the piles of undones and half-dones, and head to the place where we are loved apart from anything we ever accomplish.

There we can rest in God’s arms and fill up the tank that goes desperately empty, that place within designed only for a Savior’s love. Yesterday, I avoided the office and moved into extended solitude, reading, journaling, praying, watching the world outside. The bright yellow-green finch spoke as profoundly as the Scriptures: such a brilliant feathered brightness, perfectly blending with the nubbly new life on the trees, had to be carefully mixed by an attentive Artist.

This Artist wants us to know how much He loves us. The Author of our faith wants us to be powered up with His love and compassion and presence rather than the job description unwritten in our ministries.

When I can get to that place, I can breathe again. This is my resting place in the endless race. This personal retreat restores passion, rearranges perspective, and reroutes priorities. There we can really see who we are (and aren’t) and more importantly, who Jesus is.

That Resting Place, I am convinced, averts crises because when we are loved, we can look at the sin in our life and confess it and get back to God’s heart. When loved, we can look at loved ones and actually love them again. When loved, we can look at God’s calling and run with perseverance the right race.

The Wrong Race

The track isn’t well marked. It’s easy to follow the wrong signs: the board’s approval, the congregation’s attention, the colleague’s affirmation, the admiration of someone important somewhere. To count: how many in church, how many converts, how much in the coffers, how complete the compensation package, how large the ministry. King David got into a lot of trouble by counting, because he put his hope in numbers. Not in God.

What counts is what God is doing in our heart, and then what He is free to do through us. This calling has always been about His abilities and power and love, not our own. Not about whether I look good or people like me or respond when I speak or I get my way at the next meeting. It’s about whether God can change us more and more, so that when we meet our neighbor’s eyes, he sees Christ’s love shining in our eyes.

That happens when we fix our eyes on Jesus. When we allow His piercing gaze to reach our heart, to search us and love us still. We have to be still to sense that kind of love. We need a resting place.

Unfortunately, when we run the wrong race, others get run over.

They Have Forgotten

Jeremiah 50:6 says, “My people have become lost sheep; Their shepherds have led them astray.

They have made them turn aside on the mountains;

...And have forgotten their resting place” (NAS).

I don’t want to lead the sheep astray, by forgetting my resting place. And I don’t want to forfeit God’s calling because I have chosen to run the wrong race, run the race without more than a glance at Jesus’ face. Too many abandon the ministry, or fall into sin, because they have forgotten to focus on the One who said, “Come to me...”

Don’t bonk. Gauge your fatigue factor. What symptoms are showing? Then, grab your calendar, mark an X across a day, and book into a retreat center. Stop, breathe, and meet your Savior’s eyes. Let Him give you rest. The One who upholds the universe, who designed the finch’s neon feathers, waits to love you.

He is the One, after all, on whom the entire race depends. It is His race.

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Award-winning author and international speaker Jane Rubietta brings Scripture to life with animated and dynamic teaching. Books include Resting Place: A Personal Guide to Spiritual Retreat, Grace Points: Growth and Guidance in Times of Change and Quiet Places. Her book, How to Keep the Pastor You Love, launched a ministry to people in ministry, as well as to churches, elders, and concerned lay people, offering an inside look and practical helps on ministering to your minister. Jane is a pastor’s wife, mother of three, and works frequently with clergy, ministry wives, and elder boards. She has worked with Focus on the Family with their pastor-care resources, interviewed on hundreds of radio and TV stations, and written numerous articles related to ministry. Jane and her husband, Rich, co-lead the non-profit organization, Abounding Ministries (www.abounding.org). For more information on Jane, visit www.JaneRubietta.com. Her latest book, and the subject of our upcoming retreat together, is Come Closer: A Call to Life, Love, and Breakfast on the Beach.



CPI 2007: Fellow Workers for the Kingdom of God

By John Mehn

“God showed me that I am not alone in ministry. Living in a prefecture where little is happening, you tend to lose sight of the big picture. I had been feeling isolated & lonely, but God has reminded me I am not alone, and I am encouraged to seek networking...”

“I was able to see many ways and many places in which God is working in new bigger ways than I’ve seen in Japan before. Has given me bigger expectations, and fuel for prayer for how God might work in our area...”

“My vision for my region is growing and starting to take shape as I interact with others and learn more about networking...”

The theme for the 2007 Japan Church Planting Institute National Conference was “CPI Onward: Fellow Workers for the Kingdom of God.” During two years leading up to this 14th national conference, seven seminars were

held in five regions, covering nine ministry topics with a combined attendance of 237 people. This culminated in the 2007 conference being one of the largest conferences ever on church planting, with 400 registered.

Involving its broadest constituency to date, over 60 mission agencies, denominations and local churches were involved in the conference.

Several US churches participated by

sending volunteer teams, which helped with the logistics of the conference, including the children’s ministry program. North-shore Baptist Church of Bothell, Washington, which hosts the Reaching Japanese for Christ (RJC) conference, sent a team which also explored other ministry opportunities to partner with Japanese churches.

Church planters, pastors and lay workers were the predominant attendees, enjoying

a choice of 16 Core Training tracks and 21 electives on ministry in Japan. Overseas attendees included Rev. Jude Hama, director of the recently launched West African CPI in Accra, Ghana, who came to learn

from CPI ministry in Japan. Attendees also came from Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Philippines.

An important component of this conference for Japan attendees was CPI’s encouragement and support of workers in forming their own regional church planting networks throughout the nation. During the conference, nine regions met to plan for future networking. And in the two years leading up to the 2009 National Conference, once again regional seminars and networks will be offered in a number of areas around Japan.

Evaluations of the 2007 conference included the most compliments and appreciation ever. God is gathering his fellow workers to build his Kingdom in Japan, one of the world’s largest and most needy unreached people groups. More information on the conference is at the CPI website at www.JCPI.Net.

Faithfully Waiting for God’s Glorious Intervention in History

By Gary Fujino

We share this condensed version of Gary’s heart-felt address at the 2007 Church Planting Institute Conference to encourage you in your ministry no matter how slow it may seem. With Gary, we believe God has a plan to intervene in the history of Japan. The responsibility is ours to actively wait in faith.

Ten Steps in Starting a Church Planting Network

By Steve Childers

1. **Pray** for Network Partners
2. **Identify** them
3. Build a **Relationship** with them
4. Share the **Vision** with them
5. Hold a **Planning Meeting**
6. Ask for a **Commitment** (within one month)
7. Find a **Network Coach** (if a minimum of three commit)
8. Begin **Network Meetings**
9. Be **Flexible** (it will *always* be “messy”)
10. **Pray**

CPI can assist any group with vision materials (#4), content for planning meetings (#5), securing a network coach (#7), and ongoing support of network meetings (#8).

We live in an age of paradigmatic change. Thirty years ago, who would have believed terrorists would use airplanes as bombs—or that the definition of something as foundational as marriage would be questioned?

The prophet Habakkuk also lived in an age of change. As he looked at all that was wrong in Israel, his cry was not simply, “Lord, why isn’t the religious system I was brought up in doing a better job at changing society?” No, he accused God of being unjust!

This Old Testament prophetic book is written like a dialogue between God’s messenger and God himself. Habakkuk complains to God and then God responds to Habakkuk’s complaints.

His first complaint, about the injustice and corruption in his land, is found in 1:2-3. Let me paraphrase God’s answer in 1:5-7, “Listen to me, Habakkuk. I’m going to do something unbelievable. I’m going to raise up the Babylonians as a major world power and through the Babylonians I will punish the nation of Israel for its sin.”

Habakkuk’s second complaint is found in 1:13. He retorts, “Lord, no! That’s not right! How can you punish an evil nation with a nation more evil than itself?” God had already anticipated the prophet’s cross-examination in 1:5, promising Habakkuk an “utterly amazing” experience.

I would like to focus on how God responded to Habakkuk and apply my observations to the present day as we consider God’s glorious vision for his Kingdom.

Expect The Unexpected—and in the Unexpected, Expect Christ

Change, whether negative or positive, is hard to take sometimes. But I believe God is already making positive changes we “would not believe even if we were told” (1:5) because, as in Habakkuk’s day, the changing realities of our world can

be hard to deal with.

Let me illustrate with a personal example. Our mission’s Tokyo-based missionaries reported that during the three-month period between May and July 2007:

- Seventy-one short-term mission workers (mostly college & high school students) attempted to share the gospel an estimated 1065 times with Japanese non-Christians.

- Ten weekly Bible studies led by those workers and Japanese Christians were birthed from these contacts. About half continue to this day.

- Fifteen persons made professions of Christ and five were baptized. Six months later, all but two of the new believers have remained in their newfound faith and continue to be followed up by missionaries.

- When engaging in “cold contact” evangelism, about half of the time the first contact was initiated not by the short-termer but by the Japanese persons themselves.

- Two new groups of believers have started meeting together for worship in what we call “house churches.”

- Most workers spoke no Japanese; most of their Japanese contacts spoke very little English. Yet, when a missionary became involved later on, it was clear that the gospel had been effectively shared, the person had sincerely believed, and that they understood what they were “into” now.

I do not share these results with you to promote my own mission because, honestly, I was initially opposed to a lot of what we did! I am sharing this with you because I want you to know this was my own Habakkuk-like experience. Though, like the prophet, I argued with God about its viability, the Lord simply said to me, “you would not believe even if you were told.” The fruit of this past summer violated many things I thought I knew, but it has changed the way I do ministry in

Japan. It has also given me much confidence that God is positively and sovereignly at work in this country, far outside of my human thinking and experience!

It is my conviction that the Lord is bringing about massive change, not only in Japan, but throughout his global Church and the world. We must be ready to listen and to act, “to run with it,” as the Lord said to Habakkuk even if it doesn’t completely make sense. That’s faith, isn’t it? But now, based on what’s been going on, I hope such “utterly amazing experiences” will happen to all of us in similar ways.

Exercising Corporate Faith in God’s Vision for the Future of Japan

In Habakkuk 2:4, God says: “*The righteous will live by his faith.*” This important verse hearkens back to Genesis 15:6, “*And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.*” Abram was the man of faith to whom Habakkuk was referring, the father of the nation of Israel.

By extension, therefore, when Habakkuk says, “the righteous will live by his faith,” he suggests the corporate implications of that truth for both the Israel of the prophet’s day and beyond—even to our own day in the present. This is as true for us now as it was for him then. That is, our faithful lives, as “righteous ones,” should not be simply about “Jesus and me” but also about Jesus working in *us*, the Body of Christ, corporately.

In the New Testament, too, we see “the righteous” as a *group of people* who live by faith.

Our Lord began his ministry with the words in Mark 1:15, “*The kingdom of God is at hand; repent and have faith in the gospel.*” In this passage and others, we tend to think of the gospel as being focused on an individual’s relationship to God. Yet the kingdom dimension of Jesus’ words shows that repentance and

faith *also* takes place in the context of a community. The Apostle Paul, too, highlights throughout his epistles the fact that “the righteous” are both individuals and yet part of a community (The Church) *at the same time*.

Many centuries later, this identical phrase became one of the most important watchwords of the Protestant Reformation because of Paul’s use of Habakkuk in Romans 1:16-17, “The righteous shall live by his faith.” Luther’s revolutionizing theological movement sprang directly from the corporate dimensions of these verses.

So, it really is not about me; the gospel is all about *HIM* and how *HE* works through us. How are we, as members of the Body of Christ in Japan, *communally* living by the righteousness that is in Christ alone on a day-to-day basis?

God said to Habakkuk, “If it (the vision) seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay” (2:3). We can gain much encouragement for the future of Japan and for God’s glorious vision for his Kingdom in this nation by these words of hope because they speak not merely to one person but to the larger kingdom community as a whole.

Biblical Waiting Versus Waiting as the World Waits

The title of this message comes from Dr. Walter C. Kaiser. In his commentary on Habakkuk, Kaiser highlighted the fact that God’s timing in answering Habakkuk’s prayer would come at a time in history appointed by God himself. I believe this is also an appropriate theme for us in Japan, because as we serve him here we are expectantly and faithfully waiting for God’s intervention in the spiritual history of this precious nation.

And as we wait, we must discern the difference between the waiting God asks of us and the waiting that comes from this world. They are not

the same.

The Thessalonian church fell into the error of worldly waiting. They excitedly heard about Jesus’ Second Coming and dreamed of being caught up in the air at his return. But somehow the church got their waiting on God wrong; Christians became lazy busybodies. This worldly type of waiting had nothing to do with God’s vision for his glory or his Kingdom. However, Habakkuk had seen God’s glory. This made him want to wait, God’s way.

It should be noted that in the Bible, “waiting” is almost never passive, but something directly connected to “faith,” especially to faithful living; it is always active. Perhaps the most famous verse concerning this idea of “expectant waiting” is found in Hebrews 11:1. But faith is linked with hope in a number of other places throughout the Scriptures, showing that the one who is faithful is one who has hope, and that the one who hopes is full of faith.

That is what we see in the second half of Habakkuk. There are five woes against the Babylonians listed in chapters two and three of Habakkuk. But interspersed throughout are declarations about God’s glory and the breadth of his kingdom:

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (2:14)

But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him (2:20). (See also 3:2-3 and 3:13.)

Why could Habakkuk wait? It was because he knew who God really is—his character—his works, what God really can do:

- God really can destroy evil.
- God really can save.
- God really can be fearsome.
- God really can do whatever he wants, including filling the earth with his glory.
- God really can be merciful and save us all from ourselves.

Don’t you think that’s something worth waiting for?

Yet Habakkuk had to wait 66 years. That’s how long it took for the Babylonian dynasty to be dismantled and crushed under the hands of the Medo-Persian Empire in world history. We don’t know how long he lived, but one thing is certain. The prophet still lived righteously in God by his faith and he lived with an expectant hope that never failed. That’s why he could pen the final words of this prayer:

“Though the fig tree should not blossom ... yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer’s; he makes me tread on my high places (Hab. 3:16-19).

Do you hear the passion of this prophet for God’s glory? The prophet here muses over a dire yet hypothetical situation, something that hasn’t happened. Regardless, he can say, even if it does happen, “yet I will rejoice in the Lord.”

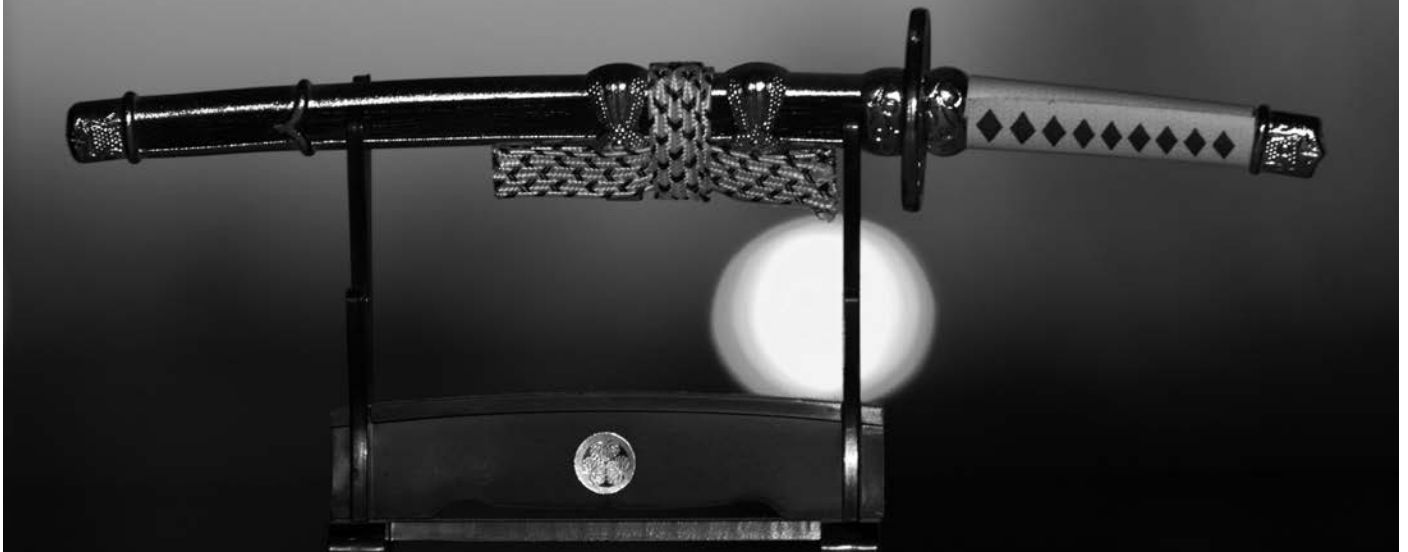
Why? Because despite the bloodshed and war that surrounded his life, Habakkuk had a vision for God’s glory and Kingdom to fill the earth... because he knew he worshiped the *true* God who was in his holy temple, not the false idols spread throughout the land... because he knew God was merciful and had a plan.

God knows what he’s doing. God keeps his promises. Remember the words of 2 Peter 3:8-9, “God is not slow as some count slowness...”

I believe God has a plan to intervene in the history of Japan. And as we wait for its consummation, we are to wait in the way the prophet did. We are not to be passive as the Thessalonians were but active as Habakkuk was, focused on the character of God and actively pursuing a righteous life of faith as we wait and work and look with hope to that day.

Sword Saint: Warrior of a Different Breed

By Andy Meeko



When you understand yourself... and you understand the enemy... you cannot be defeated.

I hear the slow friction. A blade drawn from the scabbard, long and gleaming, laden with a meditative intent and certainty, quite unlike the swift and unruly draw of eager opponents. In the following flash of steel and blood, the events of lifetimes explode in minds—then fade, and the world, for better or worse, is a different place.

Doubtless the inundation of pointless violence or destruction for the sake of entertainment has given valid warfare a bum rap. Valid warfare—where justice is satisfied and the innocent are protected, where the sword becomes what's known as *katsujinken*, a means to give life.

The aura of the battle and glory of the sword first enraptured me as a boy growing up in a land where samurai once trod. My heroes were figures like *Kozure Okami*, the child-accompanied “Lone Wolf” or *Zato Ichi*, the superhuman-sensed blind swordsman. Of course, my blades were wood and plastic—until the day I found a real, well-rusted sword

in a bamboo thicket and was certain I had “arrived.”

My battles existed uniquely in my imagination, but as I grew I learned that battles of the mind, the ones where no molecular-steel can clash, are altogether as real as those that are visible—maybe even more so. Battles not of flesh and blood, but of attitude, desire, motive, volition... battles against unseen, dark entities, continuously raging in a conflict that only a sixth sense can perceive... battles in a war that is at the core of all life... battles of spirit and eternity—the ramifications of which only someday we will realize.

A recent discovery has given me a sobering estimation of my flimsy stance as a warrior. It comes from a quite unanticipated source, a Japanese swordsman who lived over 350 years ago. I have read many works on the warring arts, both classical and contemporary, but Miyamoto Musashi's *The Five Rings* had a very different effect on me, an effect strangely similar to devotional reading. Strange indeed, in that the book is focused entirely on how to kill another man. Although this was not particularly on my list of things

to do, I did see a natural and easy translation of what he taught into the realm of spirit. This was the very place I was at each and every day, in the thick of war, and Musashi's warrior spirit smacked me to wake up and reposition.

Regarded as *kensei* (sword saint) and perhaps the greatest swordsman in Japan, Miyamoto Musashi was also a master of over nine weapons and formalized the technique of *nitten ichi* (two heavens as one), which consisted of wielding two swords simultaneously (with a mere two-finger grip on each!). He lived a life dominated by solitude and endless training, seeking to maximize the potential of *bushido*, “Just as one man can beat ten, so a hundred can beat a thousand, and a thousand can beat ten thousand. In my strategy, one man is the same as ten thousand.” In the following paragraphs I have aimed to distill several of Musashi's unique characteristics as they apply to the battle in the nether realms... for our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but with cosmic powers over this present darkness.

Bold Advance

“Go straight into the heart of the enemy.”

A warrior is anything but a passive being—he is “intent-ful” and undistracted. Musashi was known for an intensely direct advance in battle. When faced with one opponent, he unleashed a torrent of force immediately into the enemy’s face. Each blow embodied full force, and the fewest exertions possible, “Always maintain the attitude of defeating the enemy with one strike.” When faced with numerous opponents he would take on the strongest first, cutting down the hero, then wrapping up the rest. In this way the energy for his best fight was reserved for the most critical clash, and the ramifications of the first victory insured each remaining opponent was already beaten in their heart—now they also had to fight with the fear that they were about to die. For Musashi, there was no showing-off, no cat-and-mouse. The goal was clear and simple, “Attack with one purpose and one purpose only—to destroy the enemy.”

Musashi’s challenge to me is potent. I would prefer not to confront. Perhaps it’s a lack of affirmations in life, a lack of realized identity, or maybe just having grown up in a Japan where the straight-on approach was to be avoided at almost any cost. This tendency carries over into daily labors as well. The temptation is to do an inconspicuous work, at least in the sense that it attracts little attention and opposition from the enemy. But life is short, the need is great, and the God with whom we’re allied is enormous. In examining Musashi’s boldness I’m encouraged

to look at my world and ask, “What is the biggest challenge to be beaten? The most dangerous territory to be taken? The gnarliest enemy to be slain?”

Big Spirit

“You first beat the enemy with your spirit and then you beat the enemy with your hands or your sword.”

Musashi was of such big spirit that legends surrounded him, “He can fly, he can walk on water, he can stomach a bowl full of *natto*”. (Actually, I added that last one, and for the record, I do like *natto*). Perhaps it was only one of those “may-the-force-be-with-you” approaches, but Musashi makes an interesting instruction, to be “one with the supreme power before going into battle.” This preparation enabled Musashi to remain calm whatever the crisis of combat might be, or how many opponents might assail him, and simultaneously enabled him to assert raw power. “Each and every attack you make

must be done with full force and authority. You cannot attack half-heartedly.” When Musashi stood before an opponent, even before he drew his sword, one can imagine authority pulsating from him. He was well prepared for the moment, had lived for it, and would live beyond it. Perhaps this being prepared, this having connected with power beforehand, aided him in piercing the enemy,

even before the first sword thrust: “Drive your spirit through the enemy’s spirit.” The true warrior’s spirit is such that it radiates through—even beyond—the enemy: “Your eyes should be fixed on no-thing. Your stare should be unfixed. When I fight another man, I look through him and think only of making the hit... Look through the enemy, look through his heart, look beyond

his very being... Always look to the mountain beyond.”

Such a spirit must surely have disarmed many a foe. Before weapons actually engaged, perhaps even before they were drawn, the victory was settled. No blood need be shed, and things

had been accomplished, a new way had taken over. “Sometimes you can win by your presence alone. Other times you can win simply by letting the enemy know your intentions... It is possible to win a fight without ever having to go into combat.”

I can do everything through

him who gives me strength.

Ephesians 4:13

The God of peace will soon
crush Satan under your feet.

Romans 16:20

Broad Approach

“You must always be prepared to deal with every situation, regardless of how you are equipped.”

Japan’s greatest swordsman? But then—not always a sword. Musashi was a proponent of “use whatever means.” This unorthodox approach included a punch, a kick, a shove... in addition to the long sword, the short sword, or for that matter, two swords at once. This seems like a carryover from Musashi’s life prior to his up-side-the-head training under the renowned priest Takuan Soho. Musashi’s earlier life had been wild, defiant, and undisciplined... and his manner with the sword had been no better. Survival meant throwing in whatever means necessary to make

up for his inelegant hacking.

Musashi embraced a myriad of approaches and viewed being attached to a particular method as a weakness, a lethal weakness that could be utilized by one's foe. An effective warrior need employ many approaches, never getting caught up in one. "Never permit yourself to become entangled in the small points of combat. Expand your spirit and see both the large and small. Do not become stricken with a single-minded attitude. This is fatal."

"The warrior must never close his mind to the possibility of other possibilities." In battle, far too much is at stake, a closed approach means one poor choice, one poor choice means forfeiture—in other words; defeat and death, or perhaps even worse. In an effort to open the mind and to see connections and relations, Musashi studied broadly: calligraphy, sculpture, Zen philosophy... "To learn the sword, study the guitar. To learn the fist, study commerce. To only study the sword will make you narrow-minded... One thing does one thing, two things do four things."

Imagine, the battle is fierce and the battle is fast. Your blade clashes against the opponent's—over and over—you are gridlocked, there is no progress. At this rate there will be no victory, too much vitality is being wasted on a single foe, and many wait behind him for their chance. Musashi's direction here would be simple. Change. Change your structure. Change your rhythm. Change whatever, and then change it again. "In every situation you must be flexible enough to change

the entire structure of your attack... shift into any other mode of combat

without having to make a conscious decision... change your method of attack... without hesitation.

Change your timing, change your rhythm, change your approach. As you change your technique in the midst of battle, you are essentially becoming better able to kill, because your spirit

is not being forced into any one position."

For me, the heart of the broad approach is not only experience in many fields and being open to complexity, and variety, and inter-connections, but to continually be open to the free flow of the Wind. I believe a great warrior is one who not only has depth and breadth in heart, mind, and weaponry, but stays open, waiting in a sense, for the Wind to blow. "Consider the use of 'empty hands' to be the ultimate physical weapon. Now consider the use of 'empty mind'." "Empty mind" creates space for something bigger, much bigger. Nothing can escape the Wind. It goes anywhere. It shakes anything. It changes everything.

I have seen many a warrior whose vision was wounded long ago, I have seen those whose passion was sorely slain, those who retreated severely wounded, and have even witnessed those mortally wounded. I am sobered. This is no game. This is no time for showing off or play. Far too much is at stake—at a bare minimum, one's survival, but then what about victory, and eternity? And what about glory?

But I also see a breed of warriors who send waves of terror in

the enemy camp. They know who they are, and their opponents know they know. Where they tread, earthquakes rumble, things begin to shake. It's to these saints, Musashi's counsel ripples through the centuries: "Focus your concentration on only one thing—making the "hit." Narrow your eyes slightly and ever so subtly flare your nostrils. Always fight with your spine erect and unbent. Keep your shoulders relaxed and lowered. Tighten your abdominal muscles and root yourself into the ground... slowly work your way toward the enemy."

It's to such saints as these that all direct their hope.

Making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.
Ephesians 5:16

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Hikikomori:

Japan's Hidden Epidemic

By Yuichi Hattori



Yuichi Hattori's original expertise was in multiple personality disorders. In the 1990s, he became known as an expert in that field, publishing three books in the area. His focus then turned to the problem of hikikomori ("social withdrawal syndrome"), regarding which he is now widely respected as an authority. The following interview by Tim Cole (TEAM), director of Family Forum Japan, was originally published by FFJ (www.fffj.gr.jp) and is used by permission. We think you'll find Hattori-sensei's insights both enlightening and practical in terms of reaching Japanese for Christ.

Hattori-sensei, please tell us a little about yourself, and your journey of faith to this point.

I am native Japanese but finished my graduate work in psychology in Southern California in 1992. After we came back to Japan, my daughter was bullied in her local elemen-

tary school. In 2001, after much consideration, we pulled her out and moved back to California for safer schools. Her ongoing struggles with depression created an incentive for my wife to start attending church. Soon my wife became a believer, and I followed her in faith in 2005.

I met my first *hikikomori* client in 2000, and came to the awareness that this was spreading like an epidemic. In 2005 I published a new book, *Hikikomori and Family Trauma*, which explained the causes, clinical features, and treatment methods of *hikikomori*. With the increase of new clients, I trained two new therapists for Sayama Psychological Institute. We treat people with *hikikomori* at two offices: Sayama City (Saitama) and Mito City (Aichi), and are extremely busy, with each therapist treating five to eight clients a day. This social withdrawal phenomenon continues to rip at the fabric of Japanese society. I have made the study and treatment of *hikikomori* my highest priority.

How would you describe hikikomori?

The Japanese government has defined it as a state of social withdrawal in which:

- 1) a person shuts himself at home for at least six months,
- 2) has no intimate relationships other than with family members,
- 3) does not display symptoms of other psychotic disorders, and
- 4) does not take part in social activities, such as school or work.

In other words, it describes certain forms of self-confinement particularly common among males and females in their teens to thirties.

From my clinical experiences, patients are characterized by:

- 1) distrust of people,
- 2) a history of attachment problems,
- 3) impaired abilities to relate to people, and
- 4) a dual personality system.

Experts estimate that there are 800,000 to 1,400,000 cases nationwide.

However, I have observed that the distinctive features of *hikikomori* are actually more common. I estimate at least 60% of the Japanese population suffers from *hikikomori* without full withdrawal symptoms. I recently gathered clinical data on nearly 100 cases of covert *hikikomori*. This data indicates that many Japanese who participate in society have difficulty trusting and relating to people. I am deeply concerned about *hikikomori* as a national disease. People with *hikikomori* seem unable to mate and raise a healthy child because of their inability to relate to humans. Unless treated properly, this disorder will reduce Japan's population.

What are the main causes of hikikomori?

In simple terms, the root cause is attachment problems at early ages, which later lead to fear and distrust of people. By "attachment problems," I mean the lack of healthy

parent-child bonding. Japanese people *seem* to have close family relationships. But actually, many Japanese have dysfunctional parent-child relationships. Emotional neglect, absence of parental-child communication, and inhibition of a child's self-expression are often common in traditional Japanese families.

Japanese mothers and most fathers consciously or unconsciously neglect or ignore the emotional well-being of their children (in Japanese we call this *mushi*). For example, a young mother at church might appear to express love and attention to her toddler when she is with other people. But at home, she may go hours or even days refusing to speak to that child. Most missionaries might find this hard to believe, but it is not uncommon in Japanese families.

As a result, a Japanese child is conditioned to not complain or express his true feelings to parents. A child's core belief is "I cannot trust my parents, and therefore others." The lack of secure attachment produces fear, sadness, and anger. To cover up these feelings, the child develops a dual personality—the distrustful and confused inner self (in Japanese we call this *honno*), and the compulsively pleasing, co-dependent outer self (we call this *tatamae*). While fear and distrust of people are present, some form of bullying or emotional abuse abruptly triggers the social withdrawal syndrome.

What is the treatment for this disorder?

The treatment is to help a client form new healthy attachments with a "therapist." We don't rely on family therapy for new attachment, since the parents themselves have attachment problems. *Hikikomori* seems to be an intergenerational disorder. The lack of secure attachment can be transmitted from generation to generation. The treatment goal is to resolve the fear of loving and being loved. A client eventually

trusts the therapist who is authentic, affectionate, and respectful of his individuality. His job is to offer a secure base for new attachment. In training a new therapist, I always choose a Christian who truly loves people and Jesus. The two therapists of my institute are Japanese pastors faithful to God.

Treatment might take six months to four years of counseling. The patient needs an environment where he/she can safely explore inner feelings. Obviously, the family situation that initially caused the disorder is not easily changed. A client recovers from fear and distrust of people after he/she establishes a secure trust relationship with the therapist.

Why do you say this is a uniquely Japanese cultural disease?

According to [my] clients, many of their parents suffer covert *hikikomori*. Some clients attribute the fear and distrust of people to the cultural oppression of the Tokugawa era. Historical records indicate the Japanese of the Middle Ages were rather similar in temperament to the English. But severe measures to suppress Christianity and control society during the Tokugawa Era resulted in a fearful and distrustful national temperament, in which self-expression almost always resulted in punishment. The fear of self-expression is true even today in neighborhoods, companies, schools, and in families. These traits are passed on from generation to generation.

What are some implications of this phenomenon in trying to understand Japanese families?

First of all we need to assume that the fear of self-expression starts in the parent-child relationship. Many individuals are "living a lie" in their family lives, in order to avoid open conflicts. Distrust is so rampant that spouses can't be transparent with their spouses, nor parents with

children. True intimacy is very difficult in such superficial relationships (Japanese call this *wa*.) Many Japanese are unaware of their distrust of people. Instead, they unconsciously project this distrust onto outsiders, expressing it as xenophobia to foreigners.

Even in church, people will mouth the words they are supposed to say, but remain deeply suspicious of each other. Such relationships are stressful of course, but [in this way] they continue to avoid open confrontations. Even when a group of people appears to be laughing and having a good time, in reality they may be exhausted afterwards. Many Japanese know that people don't express authentic feelings. In this situation a smile can even be a sign of anger or hatred. Therefore, they can't afford to be absent from "the group" for fear that the others will talk about them behind their backs. This partially explains why Japanese stay so late at the office or at school. There is an unspoken understanding that if everyone leaves together, everyone will be safe. Group behaviors always protect an individual from unwanted ostracism (in Japanese we call this *mura-hachibu*).

If this is happening on a national scale, don't you find yourself despairing about the future of Japan?

The answer is yes and no. I believe Japanese society is headed for a meltdown of sorts for denying the well-being of individuals. There are signs of societal and familial disintegration. For example, Japan's population has decreased rapidly, due to fewer marriages and lower birth rates. Japan's suicide rate is the highest of the industrialized nations. *Ijime* (bullying) is rampant in schools. A quarter of middle school students reportedly have depression. Traditional families will produce more *hikikomori* children. It is painful to see the collapse of Japanese society.

How can you be positive in this desperate situation?

Japanese can make a drastic change in desperate situations. History shows that such radical changes took place at the ends of the Tokugawa Era and World War II. At those times, the Japanese people succeeded in radical change and started over on a nationwide scale. The changes were followed by a paradigm shift of cultural values. At the end of Tokugawa era, feudalism was quickly replaced by westernization. At the end of World War II, militarism was quickly replaced by democratization. Trapped in a deadlock situation, Japanese people will be ready to accept a new value system that promises Japanese a new future.

What do you think are the new values?

I expect the new values to be Biblical. The new values are repentance of sins, love for neighbors, following God's rules, and forgiveness. The Japanese problems arise from their excessive devotion to the well-being of groups and organizations. Pursuing individual happiness has a low priority in Japanese life. Therefore, the new values are to respect individual happiness. For example, they need to admit mistakes and weakness, and [then] they will be given a chance to start over. They need the absolute standard for right and wrong that unites people toward a common good. Japanese need to show love to one another, instead of ostracizing others.

Are you saying Japanese will accept Christianity on a nationwide scale?

I don't think Japanese people will accept Jesus so quickly. But a majority of them will be attracted to Christian values. They will not survive if they continue to rely on group-centered values. In this forthcoming change, Christian values will shape the future of Japan. In simple words, only Christ can truly heal the illnesses that plague this nation.

You seem confident about the future of Japan.

I am optimistic about it. Japanese people seem to be guided by "invisible hands." With a lot of pain and loss, the Japanese, who are not God-fearing, will move toward a better life. I think God has a plan for Japan.

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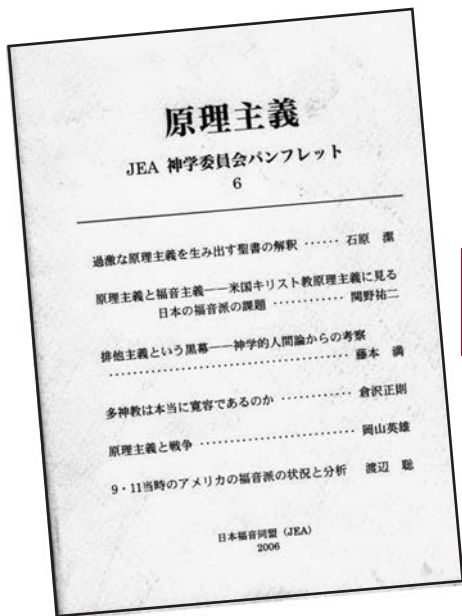
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Cross-Cultural Evangelical Theology in Japan

By Dale W. Little



English publications dealing with global or cross-cultural or contextual theology are not uncommon these days. But writings which describe the actual content of such a contextual theology—its look and feel in any given culture—seem to be few. In this article I will first draw a distinction between metatheology and phenomenology. Then, in light of a recent publication of the Japan Evangelical Association (JEA) Theological Commission, I will suggest that one model of doing cross-cultural evangelical theology in Japan might be characterized as reactionary.

Metatheology versus phenomenology of cross-cultural theology

It seems that most English publications on cross-cultural evangelical theology primarily deal with the theological framework for doing theology.¹ These writings explore the broader theological context within which cross-cultural theology occurs. But they do not fill in the details of particular local theologies so as to help us see how these particular theologies might align with the theological framework espoused. Drawing a distinction between theological framework on the one hand and theological phenomenon on the other might provide

a helpful lens through which to understand cross-cultural theology. The two poles of this distinction could be called metatheology and phenomenology. Metatheology can be considered the higher level of contextual theology. Metatheological discussions center upon theological frameworks, methodology, and the exhortation to do self-theology in a cross-cultural context. By contrast, phenomenology deals with the actual theological arguments and reasoning put forth by various theologians in any given culture. This could be called the lower level of doing contextual theology because it places one in immediate face-to-face interaction with theologians from other cultures. At this phenomenological level the temperature of the discussion can get quite warm!

Contemporary evangelical theology observed in Japan

What follows are some observations and interpretations of some aspects of evangelical theology in Japan. The emphasis is on the phenomenological or lower level of doing cross-cultural theology in Japan.

The JEA has a purpose similar to that of the National Association of Evangelicals in the United States. The JEA is representative of evangelicalism in Japan. In May 2006 the

Theological Commission of the JEA published a pamphlet titled *Fundamentalism*. This Japanese publication of six articles is a short study of religious fundamentalism.² The pamphlet addresses the issue of how Christians should think about war, especially about the current war in Iraq initiated by America in response to 9/11. Christians all agree that war is a kind of evil. Differences among Christians usually center on whether war can ever be justly required. The pamphlet contributes to this discussion by arguing that war can never be justly required because war is not appropriate for followers of Jesus Christ. It is a presentation of Japanese evangelical pacifism. The pamphlet links what it understands to be American evangelical support of the Iraq War with what it describes as American fundamentalistic theology. Thus the title of the pamphlet, *Fundamentalism*. The contributors to the pamphlet respond to this perceived American fundamentalistic theology, which they understand to be characteristic of American evangelicalism.

This is an important discussion for Japanese evangelicals. The pamphlet plays a significant role in forming Japanese evangelical thinking. The fact that the pamphlet has gone through two printings shows its popularity

among Japanese evangelicals.

The pamphlet can be seen in both a positive and a negative light. The positive aspect is the pamphlet's contribution to understanding the nature of religious fundamentalism. A few of the articles are outstanding in this regard. All the contributors have written boldly about sensitive and important issues related to war and the role of the church in peacemaking. However, the negative aspect is the pamphlet's attempt in places to sketch a Japanese interpretation of American evangelical history and theology which contrasts with the way most American evangelicals would understand themselves. This approach results in some misrepresentation of American evangelicals.

Evidence pointing toward a reactionary model of evangelical cross-cultural theology in Japan

Stephen Bevans has identified various models for doing cross-cultural theology. He notes at least five models: translation, anthropological, praxis, synthetic, and transcendental.³ One model not covered by Bevans might be a model called "reactionary theology." It could be that this model has become more prominent since 9/11, especially in the pacifist-oriented evangelical world of Japan.

The Iraq War has generated polarizing responses among evangelicals even in America. Some American evangelicals are more nation-centric than others. Some American evangelicals are conservative in their theology, while others are not. The American evangelical church is characterized by diversity and complexity. So when statements are made about sensitive issues within the diverse and complex American evangelical church, it is inevitable that some people will be offended.

In the context of global theology, fair criticism of the American evangelical church offered by evangelicals who are not themselves American

is welcome. This is because theology is best developed in dialogue with international partners. American evangelicals need to hear from Japanese evangelicals. But there is evidence that the JEA Theological Pamphlet No. 6 loses its theological balance at some places by its negative reaction to what is perceived as American fundamentalistic evangelicalism. Reactionary evidence in the pamphlet includes the following six points. Quotations in the footnotes are taken from the pamphlet.

Potentially divisive strong statements

The pamphlet makes some strong statements regarding views held by many American evangelicals.⁴ These kinds of strong statements have the potential to cause friction between evangelicals separated by the Pacific Ocean.

Rhetoric sourced in a negative attitude toward America

The pamphlet's concern to distance Japanese evangelicals from their American counterparts creates a theological context of negative critique. The potentially positive, constructive, and perhaps unique contribution a Japanese evangelical theology of peacemaking could make to the global evangelical movement is thus overshadowed in the pamphlet by its undertone of anti-American rhetoric.⁵ The result seems to be a reactionary theology of peacemaking. Is it possible to publish a Japanese-flavored evangelical theology of peace without building its case upon the many perceived theological mistakes of American evangelicalism?

Confusion about what American fundamentalism is and who American fundamentalists are

American evangelicalism is historically and theologically complex. Confusion is perpetrated in the pamphlet through its lack of both clear definitions and consistent

use of the term "fundamentalism." For example, some articles in the pamphlet exhibit an overlap in the use of the terms "Christian fundamentalism" and "evangelicalism." Christian fundamentalism is also described as conservative Christianity.⁶ Although among American evangelicals there is a vocal left wing, evangelicals in the United States have historically agreed on such Biblical fundamentals as one God who is Creator and Lord of the universe, the virgin birth, substitutionary atonement, the bodily resurrection, the literal return of Jesus Christ, and the authority and inerrancy of the Bible. However, evangelicals in America usually reserve the term fundamentalist for those who hold to the necessity of other doctrines, such as a literal six-day view of creation and dispensational premillennialism. But doctrinal positions in themselves do not identify a person as a Christian fundamentalist. Therefore, along with these doctrinal positions, fundamentalists have tended to socially isolate themselves from those with whom they have a disagreement on doctrinal and moral issues, including separating themselves from other evangelicals. In the American context, "Christian fundamentalists" often associate themselves with the Independent Fundamentalist Churches of America (IFCA), whereas evangelicals choose to identify with the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). Some of the writers of the Fundamentalism pamphlet overlook this distinction by equating evangelicalism or conservative Christianity and Christian fundamentalism in America. That is, the pamphlet tends to group together American evangelicals and American Christian fundamentalists even though that is not the self-understanding of the Americans being described. The result is that the pamphlet redefines American evangelicals in a way that is alien to them.

Misrepresentation or caricature

Several writers in the pamphlet describe American evangelicals as having a pro-war attitude which leads the American nation to war and that this attitude derives from their theology.⁷ However, the aspects of conservative American evangelical theology which the pamphlet criticizes do not necessarily result in American evangelicals applauding war. The rhetoric which this kind of misrepresentation generates might convince Japanese evangelicals that there is a distinction between Japanese and American evangelicals. That is, American evangelicals love war but Japanese evangelicals love peace. However, the rhetoric misrepresents American evangelicals who know such a distinction is unfounded.

Theological reductionism

Watanabe seems to understand that historical events play an important role in the formation of public opinion, including the opinions of evangelicals. However some other contributors assert a causal relationship between certain theological positions held by many American evangelicals and support for American militarism.⁸ The cause of American evangelical support of the Iraq War is thus reduced to theology. The suspect theological positions include premillennialism, dispensational eschatology, and the young earth theory which is said to be dependent upon a literal interpretation of the Bible. Doubtless, many American evangelicals and Christian fundamentalists who hold these theological views do indeed also support the American war effort in Iraq. However, there are many other American evangelicals, and perhaps even American Christian fundamentalists, who hold these same theological convictions but are opposed to the Iraq War. Among American evangelicals, theology does not conclusively determine one's politi-

cal stance, including one's position on any given war. To suggest that all political decisions of American evangelicals are the direct result of their theology is reductionistic.

A posture of exclusionism

The pamphlet gives evidence of the very exclusionism it criticizes. Fujimoto shows how an "us versus them" mentality results in the confrontational posture often associated with fundamentalism. At least one of the articles in the pamphlet creates just such a posture of exclusion in order to distance Japanese evangelicals from their American counterparts.⁹ There is irony in identifying an exclusionary mentality in what is understood to be American Christian fundamentalism but not recognizing one's own tendency toward exclusionism.

Conclusion

Since the JEA Theological Pamphlet No. 6 gives evidence of a reactionary model of doing cross-cultural evangelical theology, missionaries in Japan need to be aware that this model seems to have become somewhat acceptable in this country. The JEMA ad hoc Theological Commission has met several times over the past eighteen months in order to discuss the pamphlet. Issues of both content and methodology have been on the table. The desire has been to develop a sound response to the JEA Theological Pamphlet No. 6. It is hoped that understanding this pamphlet as an example of reactionary cross-cultural theology might be helpful for JEMA's ongoing interaction about the pamphlet with the JEA Theological Commission.

Endnotes

1. Paul Hiebert, "Metatheology: The Step Beyond Contextualization," in *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 93-103. Paul Hiebert, "The Missionary as Mediator of Global

Theologizing," in *Globalizing Theology: Belief and Practice in an Era of World Christianity*, ed. Craig Ott and Harold A. Netland (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 288-308. Tete Tienou, "Christian Theology in an Era of World Christianity," in *Globalizing Theology: Belief and Practice in an Era of World Christianity*, ed. Craig Ott and Harold A. Netland (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 37-51.

2. *Fundamentalism: Japan Evangelical Association Theological Commission Pamphlet No. 6* (May 2006). The English translation can be viewed and downloaded at <http://www.jtheo.net>. Contributors are K. Ishihara, Y. Sekino, M. Fujimoto, M. Kurasawa, H. Okayama, and A. Watanabe. Much of the description and evaluation of the pamphlet in this article reflects the discussion of the JEMA ad hoc Theological Commission over the past eighteen months.
3. Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1992).
4. Sekino: "There is an ideology in the claims of the Religious Right in America that labels its opponents as devils and foments anger and enmity... At the center of Christian fundamentalism is the emotion of 'anger'..." (V.A.)
Sekino: "Hidden at the roots of both apocalyptic, sensationalist eschatology and creation science are problems with Biblical interpretation. It is easy to fall into extreme claims with a literal biblical hermeneutic, lacking in covenantal and atoning consideration and which ignores the purpose for which the Bible was written or the linguistic and cultural restrictions that were upon the writers at the time. American Christian Fundamentalism, especially in the South where it has widely infiltrated its background with simple-minded (thinking), avoids intricate methods

- of biblical interpretation and has an abusive trend particular to evangelicalism that simplifies the reading of scripture.” (V.E.)
- Okayama, in criticizing pretribulational premillennialism: “The first problem with this eschatology is that it is exceedingly this-worldly, politicized, and secularized.” (II.C.1.)
- Okayama, continuing to critique pretribulational premillennialism: “The emphasis on an eschatological war is also a problem. Christian fundamentalists have a great interest in Armageddon, the final world war, which according to some is identified with a nuclear war. And because the final world war will occur before the return of Christ there is a tendency to perceive war on earth positively as an eschatological sign.” (II.C.3.)
5. Okayama: “The problematic points of contemporary American Christian fundamentalism are nationalism, a simplistic dualism between good and evil, and a secularized eschatology” (Summary)
- Okayama: “Why is it that American Christian fundamentalists even now continue to offer strong support for the Iraq War? Along with strong doubts about the Iraq War many Japanese Christian churches are also developing a feeling of loathing toward it so that the issue is becoming a stumbling block to evangelism in Japan.” (Introduction)
- Okayama, referring to America: “If a country is possessed by the wild idea of conquering the world through its military might, and if that country leads the world toward destruction, we Japanese have the responsibility to point out its foolishness.” (III.B.)
6. After describing American fundamentalists as a “sect” and as “militant,” the same descriptions which are often used in the secular media, Sekino cautions against using “evangelicalism” in the way the media does (II.B.). That is, Sekino does not follow his own cautionary advice.
- Sekino labels both Tony Evans, a frequent speaker at Promise Keepers, and Gary North of the Christian Reconstruction Movement as fundamentalists (II.C.). Actually, both would probably prefer to be called evangelicals. (As a point of clarification, Tony Evans is not the founder of Promise Keepers. That distinction probably belongs to Bill McCartney.)
- After describing the silence of the NAE regarding the Iraq War, Okayama asks, “Why is it that American Christian fundamentalists even now continue to offer strong support for the Iraq War?” (Introduction) In his mind, American evangelicals seem to be the same group as American fundamentalists.
- Okayama classifies Jerry Jenkins, with his *Left Behind* series, as an American fundamentalist (II.C.).
7. Sekino: “Christian Fundamentalism was the undercurrent for the self-righteous, warlike posture that became remarkably apparent in the United States after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, (hereafter, “9/11”).” (Introduction)
- Okayama: “The seventeenth century Puritans held to a strong sense of being an elected people who were the new Israel. Because of their immigration to North America, the genocide of the indigenous ‘Indians’ occurred. The design of White Christians to destroy the pagans of colored races amounts to the indiscriminate killing of three million people: the twelfth century Crusades; the seventeenth century massive killing of the former inhabitants of Central, South, and North America; the twentieth century Philippine atrocity, the bombing of Tokyo, the killing of many Japanese civilians with atomic bombs, and the Vietnam war. The twenty-first century bombing of Afghanistan and Iraq is consistent with this.” (I.B.2.)
- Okayama: “Why do present day American Christian fundamentalists unconditionally affirm their own country’s wars?” (II.A.1.)
- Okayama: “The idea that God’s kingdom expands through the destruction of evil by the military might of the good is consistent in Western Christian society. In comprehensive terms, this is American Christian fundamentalism.” (II.B.)
- Ishihara: The American fundamentalism that is currently at issue is thought to result from a hermeneutic that superimposes on each other ethnic Israel’s Exodus from Egypt and America’s nation-building. That is to say, Israel’s election and mission are taken to be America’s election and mission, and can be seen as guiding the nation toward “wars of aggression” ... (Abstract)
8. Okayama: “Christian fundamentalists have a great interest in Armageddon, the final world war, which according to some is identified with a nuclear war. And because the final world war will occur before the return of Christ there is a tendency to perceive war on earth positively as an eschatological sign.” (II.C.3.)
9. Okayama implies that Japanese churches should not cooperate with any overseas churches other than pacifist churches: “The Japanese church should continue to cooperate with historically pacifist churches...” (Summary, and III.A.)
- Note Fujimoto’s warning about this possible exclusive mentality in the JEA: “...as an evangelical association positioned within a larger church, we ought to ask ourselves if we have fallen into exclusivism, or, in maintaining our own distinctives, whether we are judging others.”

Resolving Conflict When Culture Says “Don’t Confront!”

Part 3 - Conflict Transformation

by Janet Kunnecke

Conflict feels threatening. There is inherent risk. But it is also an opportunity! One thing we can do to help churches handle conflict more effectively is to create a climate in which conflict is seen as a potential catalyst for growth. This is obviously not the prevailing view in Japan, but it is possible to begin teaching and modeling the concept of “Conflict Transformation.” Conflict transformation involves viewing conflict as not necessarily negative, but as an opportunity for transformed lives, relationships, and even systems that may contribute to underlying tensions.

Finding that our ideas, values, and assumptions are different from those with whom we work and worship can be disconcerting; however, it is those very differences that make us essential to the Body (if two of us are the same, then one of us is redundant!) Those differences can lead to greater balance in our fellowship; working through our differences can spur personal growth; and learning to hear each other respectfully can prod us to implement more functional structures in our fellowships. Of course, the opposite can happen—conflict can be negative, destructive of our fellowship. How can we help facilitate more constructive ways of responding to conflict, seizing the opportunity for conflict transformation? How can we help churches embrace our diversity, and use it creatively, to enhance our community and impact our world, rather than see unity as uniformity, and ignore or squelch our differences?

Unmet Expectations and Miscommunication—Two Landmines

Understanding and teaching about the causes of conflict is an important first step. While there is a long list of potential causes,¹ two of the most common ones are unmet expectations and miscommunication. Differing expectations, for example, of what it means to be included, or to feel part of the group, can lead to unintentional signals of exclusion from people with different definitions. We can help our church members to develop shared meanings by **clarifying several important areas: the church’s mission, vision and values, the roles of leaders and members, and our decision-making processes.** Authority and leadership as taught by Jesus is quite different from general Japanese society. Servant leadership and shared leadership must be modeled and taught. People coming from other church backgrounds may assume there’s just one model of church polity. If we are not explicit in stating how it works in a particular congregation, a variety of (possibly mutually exclusive) expectations may result. Even though when trust is high there is usually higher tolerance for unmet expectations in Japanese groups than we may find in the West, clarifying expectations is still one key ingredient in maintaining a healthy church. It becomes riskier to discuss mission and values if there is already a climate of mistrust brewing.

Leaders can become more aware of differing expectations as well as receive needed feedback by **providing structures in which everyone’s voice**

can be heard by leaders. Just meeting once a year at a church-wide business meeting usually will not allow most people to speak honestly to issues that concern them. A more helpful approach would be to provide smaller groups (preferably intact groups that already have a high trust level) a chance to ask questions of leaders and give feedback. In this “safer” environment, people will be more likely to reveal their true opinions and concerns—and not just what they think is expected of them by those in authority—especially if over a period of time it is obvious that leadership is responsive to such input. An alternative idea is to send out reports, asking for questions or clarification before final decisions are made. These methods avoid the disturbing, tense atmosphere that can occur when leadership is challenged publicly by the outspoken few. Undergirding all these efforts must be the leaders’ **building of trust relationships**, first among the leadership team itself, while at the same time throughout the entire congregation, in an atmosphere of grace (not pressure).

Miscommunication is a problem even within our Western cultures, despite widespread training in communication skills. Although common in the corporate world in Japan, such training has not been as readily available for the general public. Especially as Japan changes and incorporates the younger generations’ huge value shifts, it will become increasingly important that communication skills be improved. The body of shared knowledge about what is proper, or

what “everybody knows” is shrinking, as Japan becomes more diverse.² Although it is rather counter-cultural to ask for clarification, there are ways to do it without offense (e.g., blame the need for clarification on yourself, rather than on any lack of clarity by the speaker). I have been surprised that often when I am lost in a group discussion, wondering what we’ve decided, if I ask for clarification, there may be *several* “obvious” conclusions among the group. Left unquestioned, the group may have been unaware of the different interpretations. They might have comfortably tolerated, or even preferred such ambiguity. In healthy groups, this kind of ambiguity makes agreements flexible and easily adjusted as needed. But it is these different interpretations, *assumed* to be held jointly by all, that can lead to serious misunderstandings later, especially if relationships are not deep and trusting. It becomes more difficult to be clear and explicit when tension exists. Therefore, it is easier to clarify communication than to clear up miscommunication.

Similar to this kind of misunderstanding is what happens when two people come out of the same conversation with widely diverging versions of what was said. What happened? Is someone lying? Probably not, although most of us have to witness this first-hand, with two people we deeply trust, before we will believe it! Each person is reacting to their perception, based on their interpretation of the meaning behind what was said and/or done. Our strong emotional reaction to this perceived meaning leads us to attribute our own interpretation to the other party, without confirming its accuracy. Often, when we are in this situation, we even quote the other person as having said something they did **not** actually say...and may or may not have meant. Hence the importance of **clarifying meaning** when we may be inclined to misinterpret.

Dialogue... Very Carefully

The suggestions above fall into the category of preventive measures. What happens when conflict does arise? One hurdle is that the more we care about something, the more likely we are to perceive conflict in that context as a threat to personal identity. It becomes difficult to separate the problem from the person. To criticize a person’s idea may be perceived as an attack on the person. When identity is threatened, which may be true in almost any conflict in the church, it is necessary to handle with care. Conflict experts recommend a carefully facilitated dialogue to help ascertain the **underlying interests, concerns, values, and assumptions hidden behind the “presenting issue.”**

In addition to assisting such conversations, we can also help by teaching the truth of our primary identity in Christ and creating a grace-based community of reconciled people. If a person feels secure in their basic identity, then the source of conflict can be seen as a problem to solve, a difference to be understood, or a balance to be achieved, rather than a threat to one’s very existence or value. People who feel secure, with people they have learned to trust, can also learn to face a problem together, cooperating with each other to solve it creatively, rather than fighting against each other.

Although avoidance is the number one conflict strategy the world over³ (and Japan is no different!), if we can impress upon Japanese believers how valuable our unity is to Jesus, as expressed in John 17, and God’s intent in Ephesians 1-3 to bring all things together in Christ, breaking down the dividing walls, I believe they can become motivated to take the risks involved in engaging conflict. For people who have been taught all their lives, “don’t cause trouble,” this is a real challenge. But one of the problems with suppressing conflict for the sake of harmony is that when conflict does escalate to the point that it can

no longer be ignored, it has often already reached a destructive level from which there is little chance of recovery.⁴ If we can help people **learn to deal with misunderstandings or offenses that are too serious to overlook before they escalate to a destructive stage**, the church will be spared much pain, and our witness to the world will be enhanced.

To achieve the kind of true harmony or holistic *Shalom* that the Bible speaks of and Jesus prays for his disciples, we will need to improve communication skills, learn to respectfully dialogue about our differences, collaborate for creative problem-solving, and help one another practice Biblical reconciliation. It is not enough to forgive one another in our hearts, though that would be a huge step in the right direction in many cases. But beyond that, we need to restore, rebuild and deepen relationships that were once broken. It will probably take more time than we expect, and may require methods that are uncomfortable to us to achieve reconciliation. Sometimes we must wait for God to work in others’ hearts before we can do anything that would be perceived as loving. But I believe it is a clear Biblical mandate that we restore broken community whenever possible. In other words, we need to allow conflict to transform us, becoming a true community of the reconciled so that as Jesus prayed, “the world may know that the Father sent the Son into the world.”

Endnotes

1. The list includes unmet needs, competition for resources, differences in methodology, differences in values, differing assumptions—about truth, about proper relationships, about the use of time and space...
2. David Matsumoto, *The New Japan: Debunking Seven Cultural Stereotypes*, (Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 2002), 28-29.
3. David Augsburger, *Conflict Mediation Across Cultures*, (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 234.
4. Augsburger, 1992, 95.

ASK COACH TAKESHI



Takeshi Takazawa coaches and trains Japanese Christian leaders.

Question: What's important to remember when listening to Japanese Christians?

Takeshi: Use your mouth, heart, eyes, head, and posture.

- Mouth: Use *aizuchi*. Say “*hai hai*” and “*aa so.*”
- Heart: Target understanding.
- Eyes: Don't maintain continuous eye contact. At times, look down.
- Head: Focus on what they're not saying.
- Posture: Sit beside the person.

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Want to encourage and empower others? Listen to them. When you listen, be interested, look interested, and focus on what they're saying, not on what you want to say.

To Encourage and Empower Others, Listen

I like being listened to. When someone *really* listens to me, I feel heard, understood, and affirmed—and consequently, encouraged and empowered to pursue God's calling. How about you? How do you feel when someone really listens to you?

I think you're like me—you like to be listened to. And as missionaries, we both understand that in ministry, listening to others is vital. When we listen to others, they feel understood, encouraged, and empowered. When we listen, relationships deepen. But listening is hard; talking seems easier. So, we sometimes are quick to speak and slow to listen, something James challenges us not to be.

How can you listen more effectively? Read the 3 guidelines for listening given below. For each guideline, ask yourself, “How am I doing?” Then, identify and commit to taking one concrete step to improve your listening.

Guideline #1: Be, look, and sound interested. In other words, find the person interesting and use culturally appropriate posture, facial expressions, and tone of voice.

**...be quick to listen,
slow to speak...
(James 1:19, NIV)**

Guideline #2: Target understanding the person, not judging what's being said. Listen deeply. Listen to what's on her heart.

Guideline #3: Use the 80/20 Rule. Listen 80% of the time; talk 20% of the time. To keep the person talking so you *can* listen, ask open-ended questions. Ask questions like: What is God calling you to be? If you accomplished your goal, what would it look like? How do you feel? What can you do?

Take action to be a better listener. Use listening to encourage and empower others. To learn more, visit <http://closethegapnow.org>

Michael B. Essenburg, member of the Christian Reformed Japan Mission, serves as a coach and consultant at Christian Academy in Japan.



Faith De La Cour serves as the Human Resource Development Coordinator for Asian Access. She first came to Japan in 1984 with her husband Stan. Faith's passion for equipping and encouraging missionaries has included terms of service on the JEMA Women in Ministry Committee, and Member Care Committees. She has also facilitated a group of Women in Leadership. Faith has an MBA in Organizational Behavior from Northwestern University, Chicago, IL.

Keeping Missionaries on the Field

"I often describe my job as an extension of Romans 10:14 and 15—*And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent*—and how are we going to **keep them out there?**"

This was the self-introduction of Dr. Barney Davis, a psychiatrist from Godspeed Missionary Care (www.missionarycare.org), one of the 12 consultants for the JEMA Member Care supplied CPI Consultation Center in November 2007. Dr. Davis went on to say that the percentages of people who are depressed on the mission field and at "home" are about the same. The difference is that we missionaries have less opportunity to have it recognized, diagnosed and treated. Instead, we walk around feeling guilty.

In the past few issues of the Japan Harvest, we have looked at the topics of resiliency and grief. Whereas in the past these and other issues might have forced a missionary to return to their home country, it is now possible to get assistance, coaching, counseling, direction while on the field or in dedicated centers closer to the place of ministry. The JEMA Member Care committee is compiling a list of resources where we can refer missionaries for help in Japan and other locations in Asia, as well as North America. We welcome other regional referrals. Eventually these resources will be linked through the Member Care pages on the new JEMA website that is currently in development. In the meantime, we want to share the following sources.

The Well Member Care Center in Chiang Mai, Thailand (www.the-well-cm.org) sent Dr. Roger and Jan Boyd to CPI. The Well focuses on keeping missionaries healthy and on the field. They serve as a resource for missionary development through training in debriefing, team building and adjustment counseling.

Cornerstone Counseling Foundation, Chiang Mai, Thailand (<http://www.cornerstonecounseling.in.th>) focuses on assessment and counseling for individuals, couples and

families. They do crisis and trauma assessments, and educational and psychological evaluations of children.

Bethany Ministries (<http://www.bethanyministries.com>) in Hong Kong is a retreat center set in quiet and attractive grounds overlooking the sea. They offer pastoral and clinical counseling.

In Japan, several Tokyo-based Member Care Facilitators refer people to **Fumie Kamitoh**, an English-speaking Christian counselor from the secular TELL Community Counseling Service (www.telljp.com) in Tokyo. She has participated in the Consultant Center at CPI three times.

The **Asian American Christian Counseling Service** (www.aaccs.org) in Los Angeles, California is committed to providing visiting counselors for missionaries in Asia. Their two counselors to CPI, Dr. Rie Mizuki and Arlene Yee, are able to work in English and Japanese, and others on their staff speak Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Taiwanese, Spanish and Portuguese.

Link Care (www.linkcare.org) in Fresno, California works through an intense team approach in a residential setting and encourages one-month open-ended stays.

Alongside (www.alongsidecares.net) in Richland, Michigan offers a 3-week Renewal and Growth Sabbatical program and are able to make arrangements for childcare and child therapy.

In closing, Dr. Davis reminded us that our God is in the business of restoration and renewal. In order for us to effectively fulfill our call to preach the Good News of the gospel, he encouraged us to be willing to find the help we need to grow.



*By the Missionary
Geek*

Why Can't I Send My E-Mail?!!

It happened to my daughter downtown last year, it happened in Tokorozawa on November 12th, it happened in Yokohama on November 19th and in Higashi Kurume on November 26th.

What happened? Suddenly, with no notice from Yahoo, users of YahooBB couldn't send e-mail. E-mail came in just fine, but it couldn't be sent. Actually, e-mail could be sent from the e-mail address given by YahooBB, but not from any other e-mail accounts. If this hasn't happened to you yet, it probably will. It seems that Yahoo is making this change area by area. My daughter uses one of the fiber optic providers, and they made the change several months ago.

Many Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are increasingly worried about large amounts of spam being sent through their systems. When an ISP wants to insure that spammers are not using their network, they can block any e-mail being sent through their system **except** from their own e-mail addresses.

When you signed up for Yahoo or a similar service, you got an e-mail address, even though you may never use it. Our office e-mail address that we got when we signed up with Yahoo BB is `xdjbr994@yahoo.com`. You can see why we never use it! When the problem with sending e-mail occurred at our office, we found that we could send e-mail from the above address, but not from our normal mission e-mail accounts.

What happened is that YahooBB started blocking "Port 25." The mysterious port 25 is the route through which e-mail is normally sent. If you look deep in your e-mail settings (for Outlook Express, go to tools, accounts, properties, and advanced), you'll probably see that the "Outgoing SMTP Mail Server" is set to port 25. If you use a Mac, or a different e-mail program, just look at the advanced settings for SMTP.

These days, most e-mail accounts have an alternate route for sending mail when port 25 is blocked. Usually, the alternate port is #587 (Yahoo US and Google Mail use this). If you change the "Outgoing SMTP Mail Server" to

port 587, chances are that you'll be able to send mail again. If that doesn't work, try port 465. If you still can't send e-mail, contact the company that hosts your e-mail server, and ask them how to send mail if port 25 is being blocked. In our mission's case, we had to change to port 2525.

Anyway, because the world is drowning in spam, sending e-mail is going to get harder and harder. You probably already know that usually you can't send an e-mail to more than about 15 people, because of providers' fear that it is spam. Someday soon, with no notification, you might not be able to send out e-mail at all. If that happens, now you'll know what's probably the reason, and how to fix it yourself.

Read Your Suica/Pasmo Card at Home!

At this year's Church Planting Institute, John Somers-Harris showed me a neat gadget built into his Sony laptop. It's a card reader that will read your Suica train card, report how much money is left, and give you a list of all the recent charges! I found the Sony Felica USB card reader at Bic Camera for ¥3,200. The reader plugs into your USB port and lets you put your Suica or Pasmo card into it and then you can see the balance on the card, and print out the last month's usage. To me this is handy for filling out work expense reports, when I need to see how much each work related trip cost. It'll read many other kinds of prepaid cards, but I wanted it for the Suica. The installation was a little tricky, but it works like a charm. (Sorry, this card does not work on a Mac.)

Well that's it for this issue. Write me with questions, problems or suggestions for this column at missionarygeek@yahoo.com

From “MacArthur Missionaries” to “McDonald Missionaries”

Alphabet Soup

by Kenny & Lila Joseph

Are you confused by the Christian “Alphabet Soup” in Japan? You say you can’t figure out the difference between JPF, JBCC, EMAJ, OEF, JBC, JCC, REAP, JCEM, NLL, WLPM, NCC, IBC, FAE, FCM? Well, relax... you’ve got company. But it wasn’t always like this. After the war when the Christian Church was picking itself up from the ashes of defeat, there were only a few alphabets in the soup and among the first were the JBCC—Japan Bible Christian Council, and the NCC—National Council of Churches.

The men of God who founded the JBCC saw what happened to the Church that compromised with Shintoism, modernism, pacifism and socialism during WWII. They determined to build anew on the only true foundation, Jesus Christ and his infallible Word. So they established the JBCC as “an agency unequivocally opposed to all forms of unbelief, idolatry and compromise with them, and unreservedly dedicated as a witness to the faith

once for all delivered unto the saints.”

The big problem then was liberalism and Shintoism. Today are added false pacifism, Soka Gakkai, pro-Communism, marriages of Christians to unbelievers, “anti-missionaryism,” half-pagan funerals, worldliness and the WCC’s universalism, “second chance,” and “no hell”—now even by some evangelicals.

A unique JBCC feature is its ability to take “instant action” on any problem under its purview without going through laborious contortions and endless committees until the action taken is months too late. Thus the JBCC is,

“a servant and voice in matters requiring joint testimony and united action, where mutual convictions are concerned, speaking with the

impact of a united voice.”

Though the JBCC has no official organ, the quarterly English magazines *REAP* and *Bible Times*, and the Japanese *Ketsudan* and *Seisho Jiho* have promoted some of the JBCC’s fundamentalist stand against apostasy and for the pure gospel. One major project was publishing Professor T. Yanagita’s book,

Origins of Japanese Culture and Christianity.

In the confusion of today’s “alphabet soup,” if you like the clear

...you can’t figure out

the difference between

JPF, JBCC, EMAJ, OEF, JBC,

JCC, REAP, JCEM, NLL,

WLPM, NCC, IBC, FAE, FCM?

ring of the JBCC bell to action, why not join Winston Churchill who said, "The only way to go forward is to study the history backwards."

Then there was the JPC—the Japan Protestant Centennial. John Schwab, JEMA president, was the missionary in charge. I, as vice president, was in charge of PR. I got free full-page newspaper articles in the *Japan Times*, *Mainichi Shimbun*, and *Asahi Shimbun*. Then I made a big blunder. Here we were yelling that Protestants had been here for 100 years, and the Buddhists laughed up their sleeves... "We've been here for two thousand years!" When I discovered that Christians had been in Japan for 1,800 years, it was too late to stop the Centennial ship.

Over against the mission-oriented JBCC was EMAJ—the Evangelical Missionary Association in Japan, that was missionary-oriented. That changed when C&MA missionary Paul McGarvey, American pastor turned missionary, made EMAJ and JCEM (the interim name of Japan Council of Evangelical Missions) into JEMA—the Japan Evangelical Missionary Association. (*Bureaucratic chairmen of boards were now in charge instead of entrepreneurial mis-*

sionaries... but if I continue too far with my personal opinions, this article could very well be titled "Controversy in Japan," which is very boring to lady missionaries. Then we'd be getting into "polemical disputes," which happened in the New Testament when Paul sent one of his buddies back and asked for another to join him.)

Moving on, there was OEF—the Oriental Evangelical Fellowship, which was an extension of the FR—Fukuin Renmei (Gospel Fellowship), which would be the same as the WEF—World Evangelical Fellowship, as opposed to the WCC—World Council of Churches.

JCC was the Japan Christian College, which had 153 students when I was there. Now all denominations are griping that they don't have enough young converts to go to Bible school. At least three Bible schools have closed.

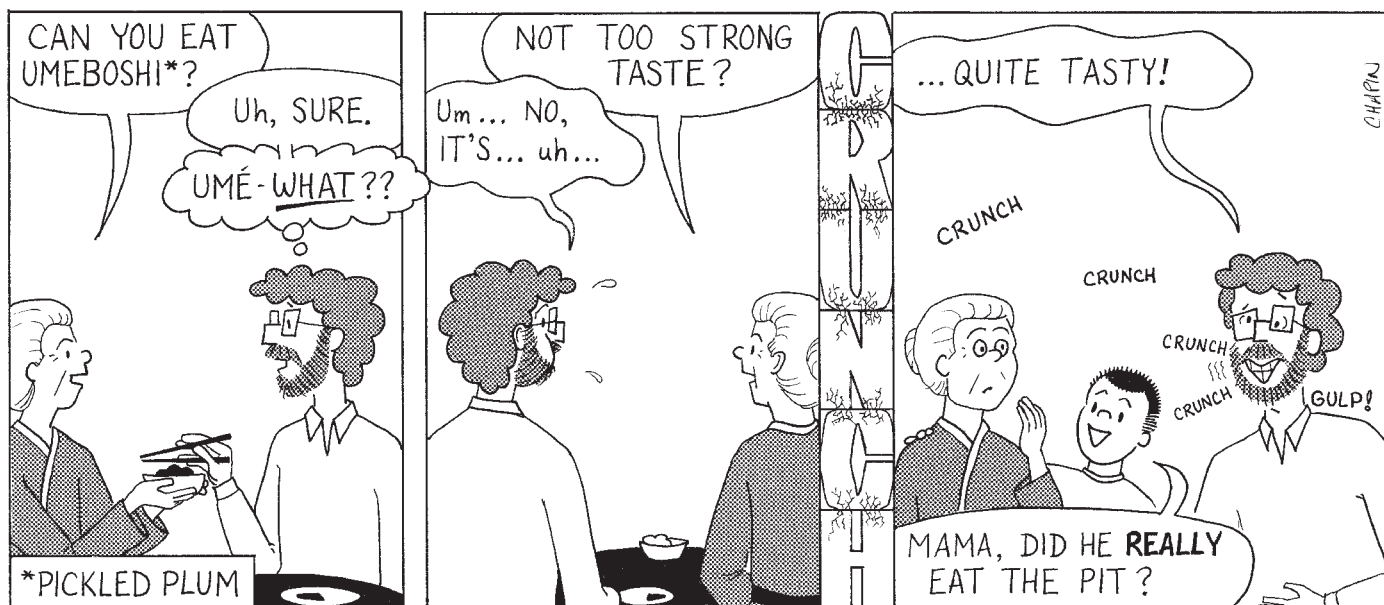
NLL is still New Life League, Japan, but the change in their Japanese name to Shinsei Senkyodan means they are also known as New Life Ministries, Shinsei Senkyodan—NLMS. They have just put out *Manga Messiah*, the first of six *mangas* from the Old and New Testaments. New Life League has sent millions of pages of the Bible to

China and 40 other countries.

The IBC was and is the Inter-Board Committee of Missions, which used to have over 400 missionaries from the mainline denominations, now down to a few dozen. But that's better than Inter-missions in Tokyo, which quit. To confuse the alphabet soup with IBC, now we have FBC—Foreign Buyers Club—in Kobe.

The FAE was the Fellowship of Asian Evangelicals, also affiliated with the ALCA—Asian Layman's Christian Association. I was the foreign coordinator for 35 years. We Asian laymen would go to a foreign country and have a Christian conference in the mornings and afternoons, and then at night an evangelistic service. They were held in the Philippines, Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam, but never got to Indonesia. I was forced to interpret in many places... as in Vietnam when Evangelist Koji Honda preached the gospel message in Japanese, which I interpreted into English, and then a Vietnamese interpreted into their language. So Honda's 10 minutes became 30 minutes, but we saw 644 decisions for Christ just the month before it fell.

Gaijin Jump - by Craig Chapin



The FCM was the Fellowship of Christian Missionaries, which met every summer at Nojiri-ko. You could go there to get a liberal taste and then to Karuizawa—both in Nagano-ken—to get an evangelical message. Slowly but surely the liberals lost members and power. Their JCQ—*Japan Christian Quarterly*—put out some weighty articles, but faded just like their annual directory.

The JBCC had a big convention in Karuizawa and Hachioji when Carl McIntire came out, but since the death of this lone fundamentalist, I can't name one. The word fundamentalist has become a dirty word to be smeared on suicide bombers in the Middle East, who learned the techniques from the 18-year-old Japanese suicide bombers—who after training, drank whiskey on their one-way trip to die for the emperor to live forever. "I'll meet you at Yasukuni" was their call. We are "Protestants," but many are "Tolerants." I prefer the word "Essentialists" not "Fundamentalists."



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Aren't you glad that today there are not so many in the alphabet soup? How about A2, which means Asian Access!

But I haven't finished talking about publications. When I was editor of the *Japan Harvest*, we had a meeting of the elders every summer in Karuizawa during the EMAJ conference and I met with all the older missionaries who had experience to critique the *Harvest*. One old-timer born in Japan, Will McIlwaine, said, "Joseph, I couldn't last at that job for more than one year because you are in the middle of two thousand missionaries who have 2001 different opinions."

That's why I ask you to pray for our present editor, Gary Bauman, which translated into German means "tree man." And he has to be as solid as an oak to put up with all of our criticism, but hopefully also our plaudits.

WLPM is Word of Life Press Ministries—they used to put out an annual directory of their own, but now the *JEMA Directory* is the only one.

The *Kirisuto Shimbun*, put out by the liberals, was challenged by the *Kurisuchan Shimbun* and both are still alive and well, though the latter turned into a tabloid. Joining the newspaper fray is the *Revival Shimbun*, the charismatic voice that said, "If you won't give us a place at the table we'll make our own table." Each boasts from 2,500 to 5,000 copies a week.

Add to this *Jujika no Koe*—Voice

of the Cross—a fourth newspaper put out by a group which doesn't believe in building churches, but renting auditoriums and sending the offerings to foreign missions.

Ready to call for an aspirin for your headache in trying to figure out all the alphabet soup? Then we'll just stop right here!



Kenny and Lila Joseph answered MacArthur's call to come to Japan and met in the mountain town of Karuizawa, northwest of Tokyo. They were married there more than fifty years ago and have four boys who still work in some connection to the land of their birth. During the past 5 decades they have seen adults by the tens of thousands make public decisions to receive Christ and have helped build 41 churches after holding soul-winning campaigns with them. They still live in Japan and minister through R.E.A.P Mission, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ.



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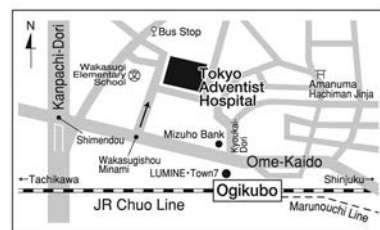
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Christians in the Mainstream



Paul Nethercott has been a member of TEAM Japan since 1987. Paul is the Director of CAN (Christians in the Arts Network). Paul's ministry focus is on training, equipping and empowering leaders. He is involved in church planting, Member Care & Development and teaches at CLTC (Christian Leadership Training Center). His interests include tennis, walking, playing guitar and reading.

On December 1, our good friend and colleague Mika Tsuneda's book/CD set was released. *Kimi No Soba Ni* (Close to You) includes all of the lyrics of the songs on the CD, a collection of photos by Mika, several of her essays, and Scripture. The CD of original lyrics by Mika and music composed by her friend Hidemasa is performed by their group *Wings*.

The set is a wonderful combination of visuals, sound, and printed words—but the really exciting thing is that Book Com, the publisher, is a mainstream Japanese publishing house. This means the book is going to be sold all over Japan in hundreds of bookstores, making it accessible to a wide range of readers in book-loving Japan.

When I went with Mika to Book Com, I got to meet the two men she has been working with (a promoter and an editor). It was amazing to hear them say things like, “this book is for people who are seeking something, this book is for people who are looking for healing, these photos have power.”

They were warm and supportive towards Mika and seemed genuinely excited about the book. One incredible fact they told us is that every day there are four hundred books

published in Japan! That does not include manga, magazines, or newspapers. Amazing.

If *Kimi No Soba Ni* sells well, and I think it will, all kinds of possibilities will open up for publishing other books by Mika, as well as others. Perhaps it will become a series.... with several artists who are Christians publishing similar works of art.

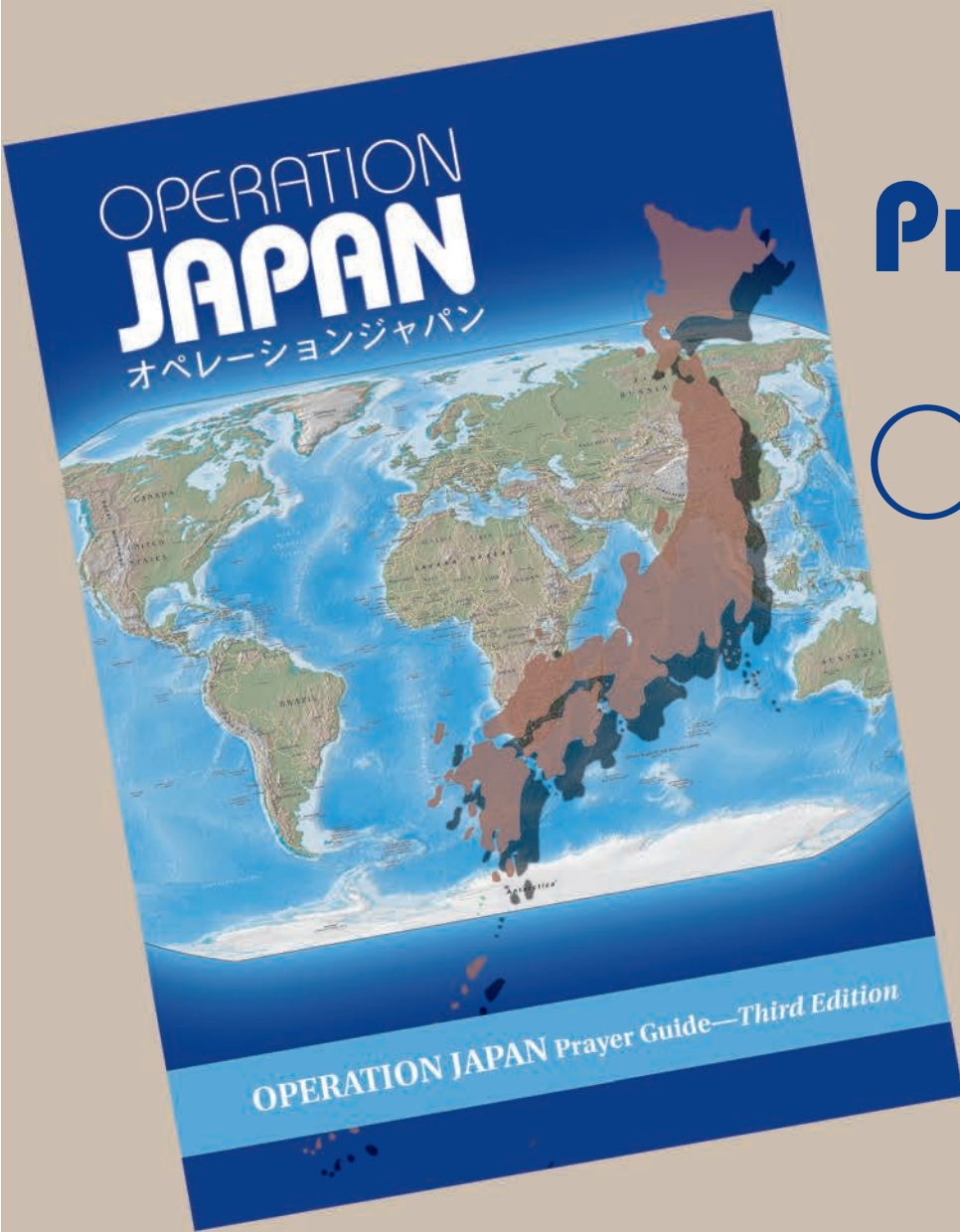
Book Information in Japanese 「君のそばに」CD付フォト&エッセ 常田美香(ウイングス)

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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. la@omf.or.jp www.jp.omf.org/jlc

Words of Encouragement

Emily Dickinson, Hudson Taylor and Thomas à Kempis

The robin in the small circular pane of stained glass glowed vividly in the sunlight of my Japanese friend's living room.

Recently retired, he had taken up a new hobby, and the robin was one of his first completed works. It was inspired by the words of 19th century American poet, Emily Dickinson.

“If I can help one fainting robin into his nest again, I shall not live in vain”

「もしも一羽の弱っているこま鳥をもう
いちど す もど 一度その巣に戻すことができるなら、わ
たしの人生は無駄ではないでしょう。」

エミリー・ディッキンソン

This is a lovely poem to reflect on when faced with the overwhelming task of mission to Japan.

And finally, a challenge from Thomas à Kempis on living each day as if it was our last.

いちにち
一日のはじめに
な
一日が何をもたらすか
だれ
いったい誰がわかりましょう。

ですから

神さま一日一日を
よ さいご
この世における最後の日であるかの

ように
い
生きることができますように

どの日も、この世の最後の日
かぎ
とならないとも限らないのだという
し
ことを私は知っています。

Another quote that always encourages me is from Hudson Taylor: “I have found that there are three stages in every great work of the Lord; first, it is impossible, then it is difficult, then it is done.”

わたし しゅ いたい
「私 は主のどんな偉大なみわざに
だんかい き
も3つの段階があることに気づいた。
はじ ふかのう おも
初めは、それは不可能に思える、
つぎ むずか おも
次には、それは難しいことに思える、
さいご じつげん
そして最後には、それは実現されて
いるのだ。」

New Resource

A recent addition to Japanese language resources/Christian at www.jp.omf.org/jlc is *Sermon Illustrations 26-40*, available for free download, as is the file *Sermon Illustrations 1-25*. *Illustrations* is a collection of stories, quotes and poems of varying lengths for use in talks and sermons or simply as reading practice. There are two separate versions – one without furigana, and one with. In some cases there is English translation or a brief explanation. Thomas à Kempis' prayer in the article above is number 28 in this collection.

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				QTY
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Individual Package Plan*	¥5,500 Single	¥6,500 Couple	_____	_____
* Package includes Membership, Japan Harvest & Directory				
Mission Package Plan	¥3,500 in Japan (JEMA Mission Members only)			_____
Japan Harvest 1 yr Sub.	¥2,500 member	¥2,800 non-member	\$25.00 overseas + \$5.00 SAL	_____
JEMA Directory	¥1,500 member	¥2,000 non-member	\$20.00 overseas + \$5.00 SAL	_____
Operation Japan	¥300 each (Contact the JEMA office for quantity discounts)			_____

If paying by check add ¥450 for Japanese non-Tokyo bank

Postal Furikae: 00130-4-180466 JEMA-Japan Harvest

If you itemize your order on the Furikae in the "This payment is for:" column, it is not necessary to mail the order form separately.

TOTAL _____

To phone, call the JEMA office at 03-3295-1949 or fax this form to 03-3295-1354
Or, mail your completed order form to: JEMA, OCC Bldg, 2-1 Kanda Surugadai, Chiyoda ku, Tokyo 101 Japan
Moving? Contact the JEMA office so we can update our files!

NAME _____ Date _____ Phone _____

ADDRESS _____



Good Day Good Bread.

YAMAZAKI BAKING CO., LTD. Head Office 3-10-1 Iwamoto-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 101-0033





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