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In This Issue



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*Japan Evangelical
Missionary Association
exists to network and equip
its members to make
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President's Pen



Dale Little serves in Japan with the Evangelical Free Church of Canada Mission, living in Higashikurumeshi, Tokyo. He is the interim pastor of the English department of Tokyo Musashino Evangelical Free Church, and lectures in theology at Japan Bible Seminary in Tokyo and at Tokyo Christian University in Chiba.

The Big Picture

Whew! The summer and early fall months have been busy for me. How about you? Perhaps your ministry over the past few months has involved caring for and leading short-term missionaries who find their way to Japan each summer. Maybe you have run some vacation Bible school events in your church during the heat and humidity of August. Perhaps your recent ministry in Japan has included church or youth or family camps, which seem to occur during the summer months here in Japan. And maybe you have carried on a normal load of preaching and teaching while doing the various extra ministries that come your way in the summer months. Or perhaps like me you found yourself visiting as many supporting churches as possible in your home country over the summer months. Despite some fun along the way, it does not take too long for the continuous travel and the mandatory perpetual smile to remove any notion of vacation or furlough from the term "home

assignment." My guess is that you have been just as busy in ministry as I have.

So have our colleagues in the Japan Evangelical Association. They have been planning for the Fifth Japan Congress on Evangelism, scheduled for September 21-24, 2009, in Sapporo. The schedule of events and speakers is being finalized. The ideas and wording of the formal declaration are being worked on by the JEA Theological Commission. The JEA folks, like you and me in JEMA, are a busy bunch of people engaged in various ministries here in Japan.

In the midst of our busy ministry, it is good to remind ourselves of the big picture. Why are we doing all this ministry stuff? It is important to ask ourselves what God thinks of our ministry activities. Can we connect what we are doing with what God wants us to be doing? If so, great! We can then keep

JEMA Datebook

Event	Date	Time	Place
Tokyo Prayer Walk-Imperial Palace	November 3	10:00 A.M.–12:00 P.M.	Tokyo
CPI: Sonship	November 3-5		CBC in Nagoya
CPI: Leading Effectively	November 6-7		CBC in Nagoya
Japanese Language Retreat	November 7-9		KFBC
Kansai Day of Prayer	November 10	9 A.M.–12.00 P.M.	Agape Chapel, Shinosaka
CPI: Worship	November 15	9:30 A.M.–4:00 P.M.	CLTC, Higashi Kurume
WIM Day of Prayer	January 29, 2009	10:00 A.M.–2:00 P.M.	TEAM Center
JEMA MLC	February 23, 2009	10:00 A.M.	OCC
JEMA Plenary Session	February 24, 2009	10:00 A.M.–4:00 P.M.	OCC Chapel
JEMA WIM Retreat	March 11–13, 2009		Megumi Chalet, Karuizawa

on keeping on. If not, we need to align what we are doing with what God wants. It seems that the New Testament displays at least three aspects of missional ministry. If we can link what we do in ministry with one or more of these three emphases, then we can have the confidence that our ministry is located within the will of God.

As mentioned in my previous President's Pen, one of those New Testament emphases is proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We, the people of God, have been chosen by God for his glory and for the sake of his mission. This Biblical idea is found in the writings of Lesslie Newbigin. "To be elect in Christ Jesus... means to be incorporated into his mission to the world..."¹ Is your ministry in Japan an evangelistic ministry? If so, then you can rest assured that your work is in fundamental alignment with God's missional purposes.

But there is more to mission in the New Testament than evangelism. Kostenberger and O'Brien remind us that mission ministry described in Acts and the Pauline letters resulted in the establishment of Christian communities or churches. Pauline church founding began with gospel proclamation but did not stop there. Paul sought to bring believers to full maturity in Christ within the context of a local church community. For Paul, church founding included pastoral care and the general strengthening of believers in the new churches.² So if you are involved in church planting in Japan, your ministry is firmly located within the purposes of God.

The third aspect of mission emphasized in the New Testament could be called church watering. This is the phase of theological, ethical, and spiritual consolidation of the new churches. Schnabel has clarified that this third aspect of mission ministry was important in Paul's ministry. "Paul accompanied those local congregations born as a result of his missionary ministry on their way to the dynamic maturity of faith..."³ Are you involved in strengthening believers and churches, seeking

to encourage them toward maturity in Jesus Christ? Or are you involved in training church leaders? If so, then your ministry is connected with the heartbeat of mission we find in the New Testament.

Perhaps thinking theologically in this manner might help you formulate the big picture for your ministry. This kind of thinking energizes me for ministry. It is one of my sources of encouragement for ministry. But we also find encouragement on a more practical level. JEMA can provide you with some of that practical encouragement. We at JEMA want to encourage you in your ministry here in Japan. One way we do so is through JEMA commissions, cooperative ministries, and endorsed ministries. JEMA commissions (e.g., Communications (this magazine and our website), Women in Ministry, Prayer, Pioneer Evangelism (CPI)) and the cooperative and endorsed ministries (e.g., Member Care, CRASH Japan) are the combined face of JEMA to its members. These commissions and ministries, though connected to JEMA in different ways, are what JEMA looks like to its members. They are ministry resources made available to you. My hope is that through these commissions and ministries of JEMA you might find encouragement to carry on your ministries of evangelism, church planting, and church watering.

Endnotes

1. Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 86-87. See also his *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978, 1995), 70-73.

2. Andreas Kostenberger and Peter T. O'Brien, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP, 2001), 179-84, 262-70.

3. Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, vol. 2, *Paul and the Early Church* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004), 1484. See also pages 948, 950-53, 981-82, 1416-19, 1480, and 1484-85.

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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.

Staying in Contact

Usually I take this page to write about the contents of the current magazine, but this time I'm going in a different direction. I'll let you find all the interesting nuggets in this issue on your own.

With December just around the corner, it's hard to believe the end of the year is almost here again—especially since as I write, Barbara and I have just returned from three months of visiting churches and individual supporters in the USA. If you're a missionary with a "faith mission"—as many of we JEMA members are—you know what a whirlwind that can be. But despite the "interruption" to our regular ministries, having periodic contact with our network of supporters is essential if they are to feel a connection to the work in Japan and continue their involvement in prayer and finances. The end of the year is a key time to be in contact. So how do you stay in touch, especially at this busy time? Whenever I start talking with co-workers about what they do I'm surprised with new ideas, so let me share some of the things we do throughout the year, and then a couple of end of the year things. Even though we think our efforts are pretty standard, maybe one of them will surprise you and give you a more creative idea. And please e-mail us with some of your ideas! Furthermore, if you're in the "supporter" category and reading this, drop us an e-mail and let us know how you best like to hear from your missionary!

21st Century Prayer Letters

There are entire books on writing interesting prayer letters, so I won't duplicate that information. But if you manage your own mailing list and much of your support base is in the USA, check out www.prayerletters.us. You can manage everything—from updating your mailing list to uploading your color or black and white prayer letter—at the same website, for competitive rates.

Mass E-mails

Commercial e-mail services involve a monthly fee, but they improve your

delivery chances and give you tracking options—important when so many providers are taking measures to eliminate spam, thereby limiting your ability to send out mass e-mail reports to your supporter lists. Check out www.icontact.com or www.constantcontact.com as options.

Birthday Cards

Many people send periodic personal postcards to their partners, but for years we've been sending birthday cards that we design and print on A4 paper folded into fourths. The cards are inexpensive, but supporters constantly comment on our remembering their birthdays.

Christmas Postcards

For years we designed and printed out a Christmas postcard to mail from Japan, but in recent years we've designed our card and then uploaded it to www.amazingmail.com. The high gloss card, including mailing, costs about the same as mailing a card from Japan, and looks much better than a standard card.

Third Party Letters

A letter from your mission president or supervisor summarizing your ministry and giving your supporters an opportunity to remember you with an end of the year gift during the December giving season can be a way for God to provide an extra boost to your support account when it's sorely needed. Don't overlook a November letter such as this from someone who is enthusiastic about your ministry.

Well, I told you my ideas would be pretty standard. No videos, no blogs, no CDs or DVDs. But simple is good! Let us know what has been helpful for you.

Your partner in the harvest,

Gary



Letters to the Editor

James Fraser Documentary

...it was really good and encouraging reading [Karol's] article on J. Fraser (and the importance he put on prayer) in Japan Harvest [Spring 2008] this morning. My husband Peter and I are at the moment in OMF's Diaspora work amongst Japanese in London and UK and find it very important to keep in touch and stay informed about what's going on in Japan itself. JH is a great help in that.

I was wondering if you have heard that because this year it is 100 years since Fraser went to China, a 30 minute drama/documentary DVD about his life has been produced. You can find out more about it on www.jofraser.org.

—Renate Yonge, London

It is a joy to hear from you! God bless you and your husband as you work among Japanese in London and UK. What a wonderful opportunity to share God's love and truth with them. I will remember you in my prayers.

Thanks for letting us know about the 30 minute drama/documentary DVD that has been produced about James Fraser's life. I believe the DVD will be an inspiring testimony of God's faithfulness and will bring much glory to Him.

*Blessings in Christ,
Karol*

P.S. Thanks for being an international JH subscriber.

Remembering Ralph Cox

I noticed there were some remarks about Ralph's passing [in the Sum-

mer 2008 issue]. Ralph and Stella helped me (when starting out single and then after we got married) start our first two churches. God "kicked me out" of a church I was working with (the pastor used Easter to preach a sermon about how Jesus could not have risen bodily from the grave!). The next week, I was in Takamatsu talking to Ralph. I asked him what he thought I should do and he said, "I think you should start a church in your house." I asked him when and he said, "How about next week?"!

So it was that the Asakura Joy Christ Church started on May 3, 1981 (with one in attendance besides me). Then, on April 4, 1982, the Ikku Hope Christ Church was started. Both are now in the hands of Japanese pastors. Ralph was always so giving, of himself, his time and the resources God had placed in his hands. It was he who bought the 40 chairs that started those two churches (some of them are still around!). He bought the first books for our church libraries, as well as the Bibles and songbooks we used.

He willingly sent short-term missionaries to help us with English classes and he sent us singing groups from overseas who had come to Takamatsu. For the first two or three years, he came every month to speak in the churches and Stella held cooking classes and Ladies Luncheons. After a few years, though, our churches grew past the "pioneer" stage, for which Ralph was particularly gifted and he also got busy in many other places. So we saw less

and less of each other. But he was always there with a quick smile and a word of encouragement.

We will always be grateful for Ralph and the chance to work with him to start churches here in Kochi. If the Bible were still being written, I'm sure his name would have been listed in Hebrews 11 (by faith, Ralph Cox...). Let me end with the words of so many: Thank you!!!

We are praying for you, Stella, and the family as you adjust to a life that will be different, but filled with memories and the legacy of the man we all loved—Ralph Cox. To God be the glory for that life. Only one life to live; may we live it for the glory of God. Only He is worthy!
—Ken & Toshiko Reddington, Kochi

Contact Us

Are you a JEMA member? If so, have you registered on the new JEMA website? Member forums, special member resources, extra articles are there waiting for you. Stop by and check it out!
www.jema.org

Letters to the editor may be addressed to the JEMA office or by e-mail to editor@jema.org (preferred). They will be edited for length and clarity. Write today! We want to hear from you.



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Karol Whaley works in Tokyo with her husband who serves as Strategy Associate for PacRim JO.

“Turn to me and have mercy on me, because I am lonely and hurting.” —Psalm 25:16 (NCV)

In Japan, this cry for help is voiced by many. With the problem of loneliness so prevalent, how can we make a difference with our prayers? Loneliness is a heart issue. It can be at the center of personal problems such as insomnia, anxiety attacks, addictions, etc. It can also be the cause of social problems such as unhealthy withdrawal from groups, seeing the world as an unfriendly place, and violent behavior towards others. The news coverage this year of the young Japanese man who committed the murders in Akihabara brought this to light. He said he was lonely and couldn't get anyone to notice him or care about him. If only he had met some Christians along the way who could have introduced him to the Savior.

Lonely people often feel sad or dejected because they lack companionship or feel isolated from others. Who are these people? Where can they be found? Loneliness can be experienced in big cities with crowds of people all around or even out in rural areas where the chores of daily living make it difficult to find time for relationships. There are countless lonely people in Japan who have never heard about Jesus or who have not yet believed in him. In addition, new believers in Christ oftentimes express a feeling of isolation from Buddhist family members or others in the workplace. They mention friends who disappeared after their decision to follow Christ.

How can we pray for them? We can begin by praying for ourselves, asking our Heavenly Father to use us to break this loneliness that pervades Japan. In Philipians 2:4 it says, “Don't just think about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and in what they are doing.” Showing a keen interest in others can sharpen our prayer focus as we ask the Lord to lead

us to those who are hurting. By praying with these individuals, we can model sweet prayer times with the Lord. By giving them God's Word, we can share life and hope with those who feel alone. Since the Lord is the only one who can meet their needs for relationship and intimacy, we must turn them over to him by praying for them regularly.

1) Pray that we can share a witness with those who are lonely before they become hopeless.

2) Pray that the Good News, the truth of how we can have a relationship with God even though we are (were) separated from him by our sin, will bring great joy to their hearts and cause them to trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

3) Pray that they will hunger after God's Word and desire to know him intimately through his love letter to us.

4) Pray that they will learn deeply about relationships by examining the lives of people written in his Word. Pray that their relationships would become healthy.

5) Pray for Japanese Christians who feel isolated. Pray that God will raise up those in the family of God to walk alongside of them and encourage them in their walk with him.

6) Pray that Christians in Japan will be able to find each other by seeing the “light” of Jesus in each other and also by experiencing the “salt” of their attitudes and actions.

Let's pray together in unity, asking the Lord to deliver everyone living in Japan from this spirit of loneliness, replacing it with his fullness, for his glory among the nations! Nothing is impossible with Almighty God! Amen!

“I will lie down in peace and sleep, for though I am alone, O Lord, you will keep me safe.” —Psalm 4:8 (LB)

Japan Harvest Interviews Dr. Stephen Franklin

Dr. Franklin is a former president of Tokyo Christian University and the founder of ACTS-es.

What is Tokyo Christian University?

TCU is part of Tokyo Christian Institute, which includes the university, a seminary, a research institute, a Faith and Culture Center, and other components. TCU is the only evangelical university fully accredited by the Japanese national government.

How old is TCU?

TCU is a part of Tokyo Christian Institute, which resulted from a merger of three schools twenty-five years ago. The oldest was founded in Yokohama in the 1870's. The other two, including TCU's direct predecessor, were established right after World War II. The government granted university recognition to TCU nearly twenty years ago.

Tell us about ACTS-es.

ACTS-es stands for Asian Christian Theological Studies for English Speak-

ers and offers a liberal arts degree, which is accredited by the national government of Japan. The major is Theological Studies, with a very strong liberal arts context. There is a separate graduate level seminary on campus; but TCU itself is a university, not a seminary. In the near future, we hope to offer ACTS-es students the possibility of minors in Japanese language/culture, the humanities, and history/social sciences.

What is the language of instruction?

English. But all ACTS-es students must take Japanese as a second language. All participate in the Japanese dorm life and student life. We have options both for students coming with no Japanese language ability and those with advanced Japanese ability.

Who comes to the ACTS-es program at your university?

Students from more than twenty countries in Asia, Europe, Africa, and North America. This year we admitted our first student from South America. All are baptized, believing, evangelical, Protestant Christians.

What are some of TCU's connections?

In the United States, the major group

of evangelical universities is the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. TCU was their first international affiliate. We are sister schools with Biola University in California and Judson University in Illinois. The President of Wheaton College spent a week with us at the beginning of July; we have sister schools in Asia; and we have strong connections with Africa Nazarene University in Kenya as well as many other institutions. Of course TCU is also a member of the Japanese association of Christian universities, and the like.

What is the cost?

The most recent tuition and room-and-board rates can be found on our web site (http://www2.tci.ac.jp/acts/es/text/tuition_rates.html). However, in general, an education at TCU costs between one-fourth and one-half of an equivalent education at an evangelical university or college in the United States. All students must live on campus. So when comparing, please be sure to compare total costs and not just the tuition rates.

That's amazing! Thank you.

You're welcome. Glad to have had this opportunity.

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Quicktionary2 Kanji Reader Pen

By Cindy Dufty

For myself, as I'm sure for most missionaries, increasing competence in the Japanese language has become a life-long learning project, not to be considered as finished, although formal studies may end. As someone who likes to read as a hobby, the goal of achieving something like adult-level literacy in Japanese has been a tantalizing, yet very remote goal.

Of course, the barrier is the sheer number of *kanji* (Chinese characters) that must be learned in their

various readings and compounds to make sense of printed materials. New electronic dictionaries or software programs are of some help, allowing one to look up radicals or even attempt to draw the *kanji* with mouse or electronic pen. But this can still be a slow, error-fraught process.

So when I was offered the chance to try out the "Quicktionary2 Kanji Reader" pen, a handheld pen-like device with an optical scanner and built-in Japanese-English/English-Japanese and Japanese/Japanese dictionaries, I was immediately intrigued. I've had one to use for about three months, and have been trying it out with various kinds of

printed materials.

What to scan? Besides books, I've tried Japanese tax forms, software and appliance manuals, recipes in a cooking magazine, and even an ingredients list on a prepared foods package. After getting used to the pen, I've had a good measure of success. Both vertical and horizontal text can be scanned and most color combinations of text and background work, with the exception of red and white.

I was then emboldened to order a book recommended by a Japanese Christian friend. Sitting comfortably at my living-room *kotatsu* sipping *mugicha*, I spent part of my summer vacation working my way through

WIM Women in Ministry

Mark Your Calendars for the 2009 WIM Events

Winter WIM Day of Prayer

Meeting Place: TEAM CENTER, MITAKA.

Date: Thursday, January 29, 2009

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Come for all or part of the day.

WIM Spring Retreat

March 11-13, 2009 Megumi Chalet

March 14, 2009 Hokkaido Christian Women's Fellowship

Speaker: Dr. Jan Hansen



Dr. Hansen is the wife of Steve and mother of 2 grown sons and makes her home in Minneapolis, MN. She is active in a wide variety of ministries including counseling, retreat ministries, World Relief, and Alpha ministries. Jan's giftedness is bringing together her

expertise in teaching and psychology coupled with her passion for wholeness centered in emotional and spiritual health.

For further information please contact one of the following:

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Ann Little: Tel/fax 042-420-7072 email:wim@jema.org

Look for online registration in January and a registration form in the Winter issue of the Japan Harvest.

the book, with Kanji Pen in hand to quickly find the readings and English definitions for unknown vocabulary. In addition to being more comfortable than sitting in front of a computer, my train of thought was much less disrupted by this method.

While there were some less common kanji compounds I couldn't find in Japanese-English mode, my experience was that I could usually determine their readings by switching to the Japanese/Japanese dictionary. (All of the specially modified embedded dictionaries are from Sanseido and have approximately 70,000 entries each.) Since the kanji used in the Japanese Bible are often obscure, and the print qual-

ity is not so sharp, I wouldn't really recommend this tool for reading the Japanese Bible. But of course, the presence of furigana makes that unnecessary anyway.

With the Kanji Reader Pen, the control buttons and menu interface have been kept to a minimum; I found these technical aspects quicker to master than my mobile phone interface! But there is something of a learning curve in mastering good scanning technique. The company's website (www.kanjireader.net) provides video tutorials and a quick-start guide in English to help you with this.

My verdict? Definitely a tool that fills a gap for the missionary who

wants to continue learning, stay in touch with news, literature or Christian resources, or just needs to read those mysterious communications from the city, the kids' school, or the Tax Office.

(Full Disclosure: Cindy assists Japan21, the company marketing this product in Japan, with English editing and website development services.)

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QUICKTIONARY2

KANJI READER

Missions in Japan: What Is Happening in Church Planting Today?

By Wolfgang Langhans



Is there a change today in how mission agencies are involved in church planting?

These and similar questions were on our minds when we members of the *JEMA Liaison and Membership Commission* discussed sending out a questionnaire to all the missions working in Japan. We were working on preparing a program for the JEMA Mission Leaders Consultation in February 2008 and the results of the questionnaire were to be presented at that meeting.

In response to the questionnaire, out of a possible 105 missions listed in the JEMA directory, a total of 36 missions responded (34%). Six missions could not be contacted because the e-mail address in the directory was no longer valid. Other missions did not reply even after a second request was made later in 2007 and a third one in spring 2008.

Out of the 36 missions that replied, 23 were JEMA member missions. Four JEMA and three non-JEMA missions indicated they were not involved in church planting. The remaining 29 mis-

sions who said they were involved in church planting represented 640 total missionaries (512 JEMA members) of which 388 (282 JEMA members) are involved in church planting. These missionaries are working in 172 churches (92 with JEMA missionaries), and have plans to start 8 more (5 by JEMA missionaries) this year.

I will try to summarize the answers and findings resulting from two questions asked of mission leaders. In order to give authentic responses as much as possible, I will quote some of the replies.

Looking back over the last 10-15 years, what have been the major changes in the way your mission/your missionaries have been involved in church planting?

Mission leaders' responses varied very much on this question. One couple replied that there have been no changes: "We have not changed. We rent a building, announce the start of a new church by advertising through literature, and begin services." But most respondents

indicated that there have been a number of changes happening during the last 15 years. From the answers to this question I can see at least three trends:

There is a new type of missionary arriving in Japan

"It seems that new missionaries are not being steered into church planting."

"My understanding is that lone pioneering work is not typically as inviting as it was in previous generations."

"We have more people in support types of ministries such as projects and administration."

"[It is our] tendency to move into supporting ministries".

It was indicated that the new generation of missionaries has a tendency to work more in teams and want to be part of a larger whole. Many new missionaries would like to be involved in more specialized ministries where their specific gifts are being used, and less in direct church planting.

Japanese churches have taken on more responsibility for new church starts

“More of our churches are starting churches of their own, with or without foreign missionary cooperation.”

“Earlier, the mission decided where to start new work. Now it’s the Japanese church.”

A long awaited trend—and for many missions an answer to prayer—is becoming a reality! The Japanese church is seeing more their responsibility to start churches and not to just leave it to the mission agencies to fulfil this role. One mission leader sums it up well:

“The mission understood a couple of decades ago that spreading of the gospel in Japan had to be led by the Japanese church. Although it may go much slower than the mission would expect or missionaries could have done, it is important for [the] Japanese Church and Christians to learn to take responsibility for the Kingdom work in Japan.”

New church starts happen more often in teamwork with the Japanese Church

As a result of the above trend, missions have often changed from direct church planting to teaming up with their Japanese partners to start churches, whereby often a Japanese worker would take the lead.

“We have partnered with established churches to assist them in starting new church plants.”

[We may] “...join a church planting team that a Japanese church has originated.”

“We have changed our strategy from missionaries planting churches to missionaries working with Japanese pastors in established churches. Our ideal church planting strategy is to start from scratch with Japanese pastors.”

“We still much prefer Japanese leadership of church plants, with missionaries in a secondary role.”

In your opinion, what changes in church planting methodology/strategy need to be made?

Out of the many ideas and suggestions given was one strategy that was mentioned throughout the responses. That was to start churches not on our own, but in partnership with existing Japanese churches.

Church planting should be done with national leaders

“If I were to start a new church again, I would only do it with a Japanese pastor, or even better, with a whole team.”

“I personally think it is absolutely necessary to bring the Japanese pastors behind all our efforts in church planting—whatever the method/strategy might be. They are the ones who take over these churches later and they should not be suspicious about what we missionaries do.”

“Partnering with established churches for new church planting involves a lot of time and hard work, but I believe it will be better in the long run than for missions to do church planting independently.”

“We must work from the beginning with Japanese leadership to birth churches.”

Church planting has to be a team effort

In the old days a missionary couple would go out to start a church on their own. A number of mission leaders suggest that these days church planting has to be done in a team—with a Japanese as the leader, if possible. Reasons for this include: the high cost, problems with leadership when missionaries go on home assignment, better utilization of different gifts, and a better prepared handoff to Japanese leadership.

Japanese lay people must be empowered for ministry and leadership

“The potential of lay leadership needs to be tapped for the purpose of multiplying the number of

churches in Japan.”

“We need to involve more lay people in evangelization and plant churches with a light infrastructure.”

“We need to work more on empowering our Japanese brothers and sisters in making Christ known and building up His church.”

We need to do a better job in helping the Japanese people become more effective in personal evangelism, and we need to affirm the importance of developing national leaders.

House churches are the answer

Six mission leaders indicated that their mission is either involved in house church movements or they said they see this model as the way forward in starting Japanese churches. It is seen as a good thing to either move away from traditional church planting to house/cell churches, or at least to look at this model more closely.

Other respondents highlighted the need for working on a more personal level with Japanese people, making meetings simpler and less formal (which is the case in house churches). Since the Japanese search for genuine faith that works, house churches seem to provide a better place for finding this.

Conclusion

It was a privilege for me to spend hours reading the answers to the questionnaires, analyzing them and summarizing the results. I think I have gained a glimpse into understanding the changes that are happening with regard to church planting in this country. I go away from this with a longing to learn more from the experience other missions have gained. We can help each other and could provide a platform for exchange of ideas, experiences and insight into church planting so that the Church of our Lord Jesus would grow even more in Japan.



Kichijoji Kirisuto Shukai (Kichijoji Christian Fellowship)

By Mizuko Matsushita

Formation

Kichijoji Christian Fellowship (KCF hereafter) can be considered an independent church in the sense that it does not belong to a particular mission organization or denomination. However, because of its organizational structure, it probably looks different from ordinary independent churches in Japan.

When KCF started about 40 years ago, there were only 20 or 30 attendees. As there is no membership system, it is impossible to count the total number of people who are involved in the church today in Japan, but we can say there are about 10,000 people in all who attend at least one of the KCF meetings. There are about 100 house meetings and 20 Sunday worship locations.

The mother church is located in Kichijoji, Tokyo. From there, KCF has spread all over Japan and even overseas. There are three KCF worship services in Kichijoji itself on Sunday with about 600 people in all attending its morning, afternoon and evening services.

The church was started by Mr. and Mrs. Gotthold Beck, a German missionary couple who came to Japan and started church planting



more than 50 years ago. Everyone affectionately addresses Mr. Beck as Beck-san or Brother Beck, never using the honorific title “Sensei” (Teacher or Master). Mr. Beck believes that Jesus is the only *Sensei* for Christians.

Here are some unique characteristics of Kichijoji Christian Fellowship:

1) There is no pastor

The most important thing is the Word of God and the Lord Jesus is the only center of worship and fellowship. Brothers from a variety of professions and backgrounds voluntarily take and share the responsibilities of the church without any pressure or obligation. However, Missionary Beck is certainly considered the spiritual leader who supports and disciples the people of KCF, particularly those brothers

who are recognized as “messengers.”

2) Organization

There are no board members, no general meetings, no annual conferences, and no church regulations. The most important thing is that everyone gets together to adore and worship the Lord with repentance and joy.

3) Membership

As there is neither legal religious incorporation status nor any membership system, no list of members exists. “Joining” and leaving KCF is left to one’s personal faith and is completely free. However, the church believes that there are few who will abuse the freedom of faith. Jesus is the head of the church and those who love Jesus get together to worship.

4) Offering

There is no obligation to give monthly or annual offerings. The amount of offering is voluntary and not recorded. Only the Lord knows who gives an offering and how much.

5) Sunday worship

There is no program printed beforehand for the Sunday worship. The meeting consists of two parts; the first part is consecrated to worship and praise through Bible reading, prayers, and the singing of hymns for more than an hour. During this time the Lord's Supper takes place every Sunday. If someone has accepted Jesus as his/her personal Savior, he/she can take part in the Lord's Supper even before being baptized. The second part of the meeting is reserved for the evangelistic message, which lasts for 40 to 50 minutes. One of the brothers gives the message. Missionary Beck arranges the plan of messages for all meetings. The Sunday worship service of the Kichijoji mother church is now broadcast all over Japan and overseas through the Internet.

6) Fellowship

The distinctive characteristic of KCF is the house meeting. There are more than 100 house meetings held in Japan and some other countries. Some house meetings are held regularly on weekdays with 50 to 200 people attending each one (in rented space if necessary).

House meetings overseas are also playing an important role. A new house meeting starts when someone from the church is transferred to a foreign country. Messages and testimonies of the joy of the gospel are shared at house meetings and fellowship meals following the meetings.

7) Gathering of Joy (Yorokobi no Tsudoi), or Evangelistic Camps

The Western Karuizawa Evangelistic Center, which can seat 1,000 people, was opened in 1991. As there are also accommodations for 300 people, evangelistic camps can take place there every weekend in July and August, as needed.

In addition, there are many camps held nearly every weekend all over Japan and overseas throughout

the year. Two or three camps are held regularly in early summer and fall in Germany with more than 600 people in attendance. This is a time of close fellowship between Japanese and German believers. It is not uncommon that an unbelieving family member, especially a husband, will turn to the Lord during a camp.

The History of Kichijoji Shukai

As a young boy, Missionary Beck had been influenced by Hitler's militarism, but experienced Germany's defeat in the Second World War as a personal setback. He then completely changed his way of life, became an authentic Christian and started to have a burden for foreign missions. After receiving missionary training at Biblical Seminary, he came to Japan as a missionary with the Liebenzeller mission in 1953.

Mr. Beck was interested in the House Church movement influenced by Watchman Nee. He also found some inconsistencies in the role of the pastor in Japan with which he could not agree. As his mission did not accept his ideas, he, along with his wife, chose to become independent church planters.

Missionary Beck does not like to use the title *Sensei* as has been explained above. Rather than encouraging such an unequal relationship between the pastor and other believers, he believes relationships in the church should be based on brotherhood and sisterhood in Christ. During his early years of missionary work in Japan, he supported himself by teaching German in universities. Later however, he was able to concentrate on his ministry due to financial support being sent by assemblies in Germany.

Brother Beck has told his story and expressed his understanding of the church as follows:

"I was invited to have fellowship with many churches in Germany before coming to Japan. Just before

heading for Japan, I came across a Christian group in the UK led by Mr. T. Austin-Sparks. Previously, he had been one of the main speakers at a big Christian conference held annually in the UK under the theme "All in One in Christ." It was a great joy for those who were brought together to spend time together with brothers and sisters in Christ for a week. However, Mr. Austin-Sparks started to feel a serious concern about a problem that occurred. Some believers who had attended the conference transferred to another church following it, leading to some painful problems of jealousy and accusation among pastors. He found that the goal of becoming 'One in Christ' was just like chasing a dream.

After this, Mr. Austin-Sparks stopped going to big conferences and bought a former primary school building to start a small Christian meeting. I spent three months there before coming to Japan. More than 1,000 people attended the Sunday worship and 36 missionaries were sent out to all over the world. On my way to Japan, I stopped by Manila, Singapore, Hong Kong and China to attend meetings that I had been introduced to. It was a real practical training for me on how to run a church. All these meetings were full of life and there was no clergy, no membership, and no requested monthly offering.

I felt that the Lord was directing me to work in the same spirit and so I continued to pray for my future ministry. As a result, some years later, I quit the mission I had belonged to and became an independent missionary with my wife.

The Lord has blessed us abundantly by his grace. KCF developed greatly and there are many brothers and sisters that serve as the Lord's mouth and feet. What does it mean that the church is the Body of the Lord? It is his will to form not just a crowd of people who are saved,



but a Body that shows the fullness of Jesus Christ through the "Church of All in One in Christ."

Doing Evangelism

Many people who have serious problems such as alcoholism, drug addiction, mental disorders, cancer, or incurable diseases come to KCF. Some are *yakuza* (Japanese Mafia) members, *hikikomori* (people who shut themselves in at home), or have other problems. Having received salvation in Christ, many of them have been completely transformed to become followers of Christ. Missionary Beck feels he must accept anyone at anytime, and go anywhere if requested, to meet

the needs of people. He feels that he is a shepherd who is responsible to his sheep.

Training in discipleship is one of his important tasks. The responsibility of giving messages is reserved only for brothers. Instead of going to all the meeting places himself, which is impossible in reality, Missionary Beck tries to disciple brothers to be messengers of Christ. Sometimes even a newborn believer is not exempt. Mr. Beck sends him to bring a message, and even if he feels incapable, he encourages him that it would be fine to only read verses of the Bible. The person who is trusted to be a messenger makes effort to read the Bible, assimilate it into his heart, and prepare a message.

Today, Mr. Beck records training messages on tapes to give to all messengers as another part of their training. The professions of messengers are varied: professors at universities, schoolteachers, physicians, architects, businessmen, small

shop owners, and so on. There is no financial support for the messengers, but they go many places, even overseas, covering their own expenses. There are many people in the countryside waiting to hear Biblical messages, so it is a great pleasure for the people to open their Bibles, listen to the message, pray together and have fellowship in Christ with the messengers who come. There are now more than 200 brothers (co-workers) who are proclaiming the gospel in this way.

KCF was a small group of less than 100 people until 1980. But its growth started to take off around 1980, when the Beck's daughter Linde died of cancer at age 20, and her personal testimony, *Bearing Fruit for Christ—A Girl Named Linde is*



Pruned from the Vine, was published. The theme of the book is “What attitude can a girl take to God when she is confronted by death?” It is not a story about a brave girl who overcame an incurable disease, but how a person who has a hope in heaven can face death. There is a chapter dealing with the prayer that is granted by the will of God. Her parents did not ask the Lord to cure her illness, but prayed only that the glory of God should be revealed.

This book was first written in Japanese, then translated into German, English, Korean, Chinese and Hungarian, and more than 400,000 copies were printed. This book made many people reflect on their purpose in life as Christians, and to desire not to live for their own sake, but to serve the Lord. A Christian

life is not grounded in obligation but consists of working for the Lord with joy and love. Nine books with 900 people’s testimonies have been printed since then. Now a semi-annual magazine called *Shu wa Ikitenarareru* (*The Lord Is Alive*) is printed which includes many testimonies.

The greatest desire of each Christian in Kichijoji Christian Fellowship is the salvation of family members, so earnest prayer for unsaved family members is a priority. Also, praying for those who are experiencing difficulty, and introducing those people to Jesus Christ, are very important themes. This is because the understanding of KCF is that the wisdom of man is quite limited, and that only the Lord can provide what men really need.



Publications of Kichijoji Christian Fellowship available at Bäckerei Kaffee Linde.

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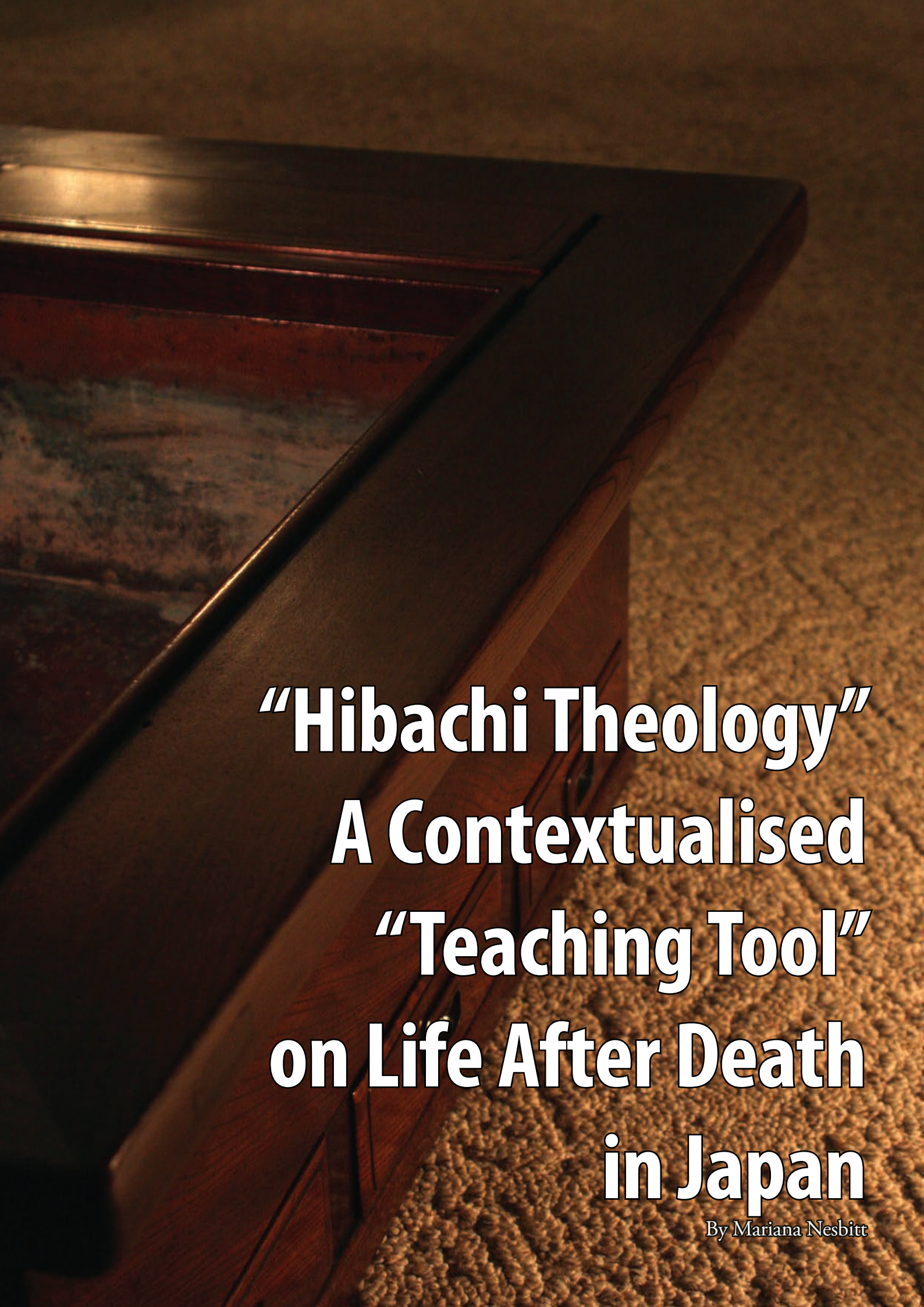


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**“Hibachi Theology”
A Contextualised
“Teaching Tool”
on Life After Death
in Japan**

By Mariana Nesbitt

Contextualisation is often written about, but we usually don't get to the next step—actual, concrete implementation. In this article, I would like to introduce a contextualised “teaching tool” on an important subject in Japan, life after death.

How can we talk about death and funerals? Missionaries often find that people clam up and don't want to discuss death or anything connected to it. In metaphor and a new manner of approaching the subject we might find answers. Japanese use right brain thinking and are intuitive thinkers, preferring emotive thinking to logical propositions. *Mono no aware* (sense of pathos, sadness) is revealed in all Japanese literature, art, architecture and music. Poetry is particularly useful in this regard. In our search for contextualisation in Japan, we can make use of metaphor to express meaning.

Dr. Billy Nishioka, church planter, missiologist and lecturer, has written powerfully on this in *Rice and Bread: Metaphorical Construction of Reality—Towards a New Approach to World View*. The theory of metaphor can contribute to the development of a theology that is sensitive to human experience. Metaphor plays a significant role in integrating the two aspects of human experience, body (practice) and mind (reflection). A root metaphor may be used to help understand something new. An often used object will likely serve as a key symbol. One can then use this object as a source for metaphor. In this article, a hibachi metaphor is used to link the idea of communal warmth to a cold, generally taboo subject in order to enable discussion, sharing and learning. The Japanese mind will move from the warmth and comfort of the ‘hibachi idea’ to the possibility of discussing a taboo subject, because of the warmth metaphorized in the hibachi.

In this way, old knowledge is connected to new knowledge—the three-layered Japanese worldview of life after death is connected to transformed Christian ritual and belief by strong, positive feelings. Japanese are able, in a Zen-like way, to suddenly see the link in thought, the poetic feeling invoked by the metaphor.

... a hibachi metaphor is used
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This is a culturally-practised way of understanding. A “hibachi group” metaphor can become a symbol for the church community that meets and shares in discussion.

The Japanese Hibachi

Although the hibachi (火鉢) is no longer in common use, all Japanese are familiar with this household article of yesteryear. Hibachis were used as early as the Heian period, with commoners starting to use them during the Edo period. Hibachis were used to heat water for green tea, to heat sake, and for cooking—making omochi, rice-cakes or grilling fish, and so on. Food cooked on hibachi charcoal has a special nostalgic taste.

Hibachis were often made of

wood that was lined with copper. These wooden containers were sometimes elaborately carved and used for entertaining guests. In well-to-do families, the family maid would see to the charcoal each morning and put out the coals at night. She would polish the *nagahibachi's* (long hibachi) copper lining with powder until it was clean and shining. Of course, the rules regarding fire were very strict around the wooden houses of the day. Only lazy people left the coals burning all night. The maid would use *hibashi*, fire-chopsticks, to pick up the coals at the end of the day, put them in a clay pot and close the lid. Used charcoal pieces from the night before were used again the next morning. Gas was used to restart the fire. By covering the charcoal with ash, the fire was kept burning slowly. Only wasteful families kept the kettle aboil, rather than just simmering.

The area around the hibachi served as the family's central meeting place—where people would gather, enjoy the warmth, and make conversation. This was where harmony prevailed and people usually did not argue. Elders would tell younger family members traditional stories and sometimes a local ghost story. Occasionally a naughty child would be banned from the warmth of the “hibachi circle” and be sent outside to stand in the cold.

“Hibachi Theology” as a “Teaching Tool”

Domestic experience is filled with repetitious, bodily and imagery qualities. The household is the most important space in Japanese history. Japanese society is in crisis. In such a period of social change, various metaphors are needed. They can play an important role because the available symbolic systems do not provide appropriate meaning structures.

The hibachi can provide just such a meaning structure for the Japa-

nese. We are not advocating a teaching tool in the Western sense, in fact not even a “teaching tool” as such, but a manner of sharing ideas and

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experience in a warm environment, which is Japanese to the core.

Eating around a hibachi is important. In some Japanese local churches the value of actual eating practices in the religious community has been overlooked. How can the hibachi be used to bring understanding and order to the experience of other domains?

The hibachi is the quintessential metaphor to the Japanese, denoting warmth. When Japanese were outside in the cold, they would long for that warm, comforting space—dreaming of the mild, tender feeling that awaited them around the hibachi. The hibachi has been the communal space of warmth for the Japanese family for thousands of years. Many coming into the church suffer from a similar coldness, so in Christian community there can be

empathy, sympathy and friendliness “around the hibachi.”

The following might be suggested ideas for discussion, display, or activities relating to the hibachi:

1. Hibachis were first used by Japanese nobility—the church member is a priest in the priesthood of believers. Special people, specially loved by God.
2. The beauty of carved wooden hibachis could be given meaning and eternal significance by linking them to the schema of the cross, where Christ’s body was “carved.”
3. Some hibachis are made of malleable clay and then fired to produce a beautiful, durable ceramic. The Christian and the church are fired by trial and become beautiful and persevering.
4. Sitting around the one central hibachi gives meaning to the idea of one Body, with diverse parts, where each individual has a place and is welcomed.
5. Rice wine could be warmed and rice cakes grilled over the hibachi as one way of contextualising the Lord’s Supper.
6. Hibachis can be fixed, not thrown away. The Christian is safe with God, not thrown away and rejected when one makes mistakes.
7. The hibachi lining is polished. God polishes the Christian so that the face of Jesus can be seen in him or her.
8. One needs to be careful with the use of the charcoal—so we need to be careful in our relationship with the Holy Spirit. We need to appreciate the Church, “discern the body”, not stir up trouble, just as we must take care when we stir up the charcoal.
9. Conversation around the hibachi could be seen as *nemawashi* (preparatory discussion), before going to speak to the

family about death-related matters. The senior of the group would gently interject subjects for conversation or necessary information and then the normal dynamics of Japanese group discussion would take over. This allows for decision-making and learning in a culturally non-threatening way.

10. Hibachis had various uses—the hibachi group can be used to discuss and bring the church together.
11. A hibachi may be displayed as an artifact of beauty, rather than a flower arrangement.
12. A small hibachi could be used as an offering plate, again conjuring up the feeling of warmth, beauty and togetherness.
13. A hibachi could be used as a baptismal font.
14. Teaching could be given on the necessity for regular church attendance, using the metaphor of the hibachi: if you move away from the hibachi and stay away, you become spiritually cold.
15. The hibachi represents the warm Body of Christ, where the family is welcomed; where there is empathy and warm feelings towards each other. There is a feeling of safety—the top emotional need in the hierarchy of needs in Japan. Death can safely be discussed and considered. Hard truths can be reflected upon, existential matters can be faced in the company of others. These matters should not be faced alone, or in the company of an unsympathetic, unbelieving family.

Here members of the family of God can help each other by speaking, sharing, listening, lapsing into intimate silence together, practising *haragei* (intuitive communication), knowing that others understand and accept their fears and complex difficulties concerning their family situations—family funerals, *hōji*

(Buddhist memorial services), grave visits and matters of personal fears and stumbling blocks.

Of course, a key issue in Japan is showing respect for elders/ancestors. What about “hibachi discussion” relating to how one can give honour to elders before they die and so be a witness for Christ?

McGavran (Ro 1985:315), admitting he doesn't know the Japanese situation intimately, suggests a number of possibilities:

1) a daily Christian ritual to remember and honour the ancestors;

2) a book telling of the good and great deeds of ancestors, reaching

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back in the genealogy;

3) a large board, with names recorded, hung in a prominent place in the doorway;

4) a daily reading of a section of the family history, together with family prayers be read with thanks for the whole family and prayers for God's guidance for the family in the

future;

5) a memorial service on the anniversary of their death; and

6) a photo with Bible verses displayed near it.

Respect to the living family could be shown with those over the age of 70 (for example) having comfortable chairs at the front of the church; more personal ceremonies on Mother's and Father's Day, with children going forward and giving presents to their own parents; special efforts made to teach the showing of honour and love to family members—taking birthday cards, gifts, special favourite tidbits to grandmother, going to read to those who find it a struggle to read, having parties on birthdays, making frequent visits, setting up systematic church visiting of the elderly, holding marriage enrichment seminars, scheduling family-building retreats, home dedication ceremonies, etc.

In using the hibachi metaphor as the place and manner for discussing, and ultimately teaching, about life after death we have attempted to reach a contextualisation suitable to the Japanese religious and social problem of life after death—not using western methods of teaching doctrine, but using the advice of experienced Japanese missiologists and taking seriously Japanese culture and concerns.

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A “Hibachi” Catechism

The following content for learning and discussion around the hibachi is written in FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) style, the traditional form of Christian catechisms. Basic emotions are treated first, following the Japanese order of interest and importance. Someone not knowing the Japanese worldview or basic cultural background about life after death would perhaps start with: “Here’s how to get to heaven”, when issues of *ie* (family, household, or lineage) should come first—issues of ancestor “blessings” that are in actuality the Creator God’s blessings. A whole new dimension will be opened here to the Japanese believer, coming from his three-layered worldview, acceptable to what is in his mind (not necessarily the missionary’s mind), because we are starting at the right place culturally.

Q. Do I need to fear death?

A. “Oh death, where is your sting, oh grave, where is your victory?” The horror of death, the deep unease is taken away by Jesus.

Q. Who brings the rains and gives the harvests?

A. The Lord God, the Creator of the heavens and earth.

Q. Who gives the blessings of health, the ability to work and protection for the family?

A. The Lord, our Creator and Protector.

Q. What about the future of my *ie*?

A. In his covenant God promises blessings to the descendants of believers. So we put effort into praying for them and sharing Jesus.

Q. What is my relationship to the *ie*?

A. It is unbroken. Sincere thanksgiving and respect is appropriate.

Q. Does my church relationship replace my *ie*?

A. It enriches it and enables me to be a better relative.

Q. What is the function of the eldest son?

A. As we learn in the Passover story, he is special to God, he has a special place in the family. Our priest and mediator is Jesus.

Q. Are genealogies important to God?

A. Yes, there are many genealogies in the Bible, especially those of Jesus. People’s ancestors are often mentioned.

Q. What is my role in the family?

A. I imitate Jesus in sacrificial service and love, forgiveness, in deep respect of my parents, in patient training of my children, of mutual partnership with my spouse.

Q. When will I remember my ancestors?

A. Every day I will thank God for their *on* (favours) and for their lives in my prayers. I will thank God for them at visits to the graveyard as appropriate (on the day of their death, their birthday, at *Higan*, Easter and Christmas).

Q. How do I show honour to my parents?

A. By strong, creative efforts while they are alive.

Q. Who are my original ancestors?

A. Adam and Eve.

Q. Will I be forgotten?

A. No. There will be annual church memorials, graveyard visits, family memorials, and regular remembrance and thanks at communion.

Q. What is appropriate to my memory?

A. Thanks, respect, and gratitude for my contribution to the family and society. Worship to God for my salvation and life.

Q. Where will the church keep my ashes?

A. In the church graveyard or ossuary.

Q. Why do I receive an inheritance? What will I do with my inheritance?

A. I will use it wisely to provide for my family, especially those, who through no fault of their own are suffering financial stringency. I will provide for our old age and I will tithe my inheritance in thankfulness to God my heavenly Father. I will use it for the spread of Christ’s kingdom. I will use it for the upkeep of the family grave.

Q. What will I do to repay my parents for my inheritance?

A. I will honour their memories in thanks and respect. I will make extra efforts to show love and honor while they are alive. I will regularly visit their graves.

Q. Do my descendants ever need to fear me?

A. No, I am in bliss with Jesus in heaven. I cannot return.

Q. Can I bring misfortune to my family?

A. Viruses, bacteria and ac-

cidents bring bodily harm. Sinful relationships and events of history (e.g., bankruptcy) bring other forms of harm.

Q. Can I come back and bring misfortune to my family?

A. No. Jesus said a great gulf exists between those in the afterlife and those on earth—there is no return or possibility of contact.

Q. How will I handle difficult family relationship?

A. I will value forgiveness and practise it, leaving no place for revenge.

Q. Who protects me from *'tatari'* (malevolent power of an ancestor)?

A. In his death, Jesus broke all power of evil against me.

Q. What about the unseen powers that cannot be seen?

A. Jesus disarmed these powers and authorities, triumphing over them by the cross.

Q. Do I need *tsuizen kuyō* (special sutras)?

A. No. My salvation is fixed when I call on the Name of Jesus, repent and confess my sin. On the cross, Jesus declared that salvation is accomplished.

Q. Do I become *kami* (a 'god') after death?

A. No, only Jesus is God.

Q. Do I stay connected to my husband's family in heaven?

A. We become the Bride of Jesus.

Q. What down payment, what

assurance do I have of heaven?

A. God gives me his Holy Spirit, Christ in me, the hope of glory.

Q. Will I be lonely?

A. In heaven we join with billions of believers who worship Jesus.

Q. What is my function in heaven?

A. It is part mystery. It is clear that we will be worshipping Jesus.

Q. Do I hunger or thirst in heaven?

A. There will be no hunger or thirst in heaven.

Q. Are the believing people dead or alive?

A. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, so the dead are alive.

Q. Why is your spirit important?

A. I am made in God's image, my spirit stays personal after death.

Q. Is there any *chuuin* (purgatory)?

A. Jesus told the thief that he would be with him in heaven that same day.

Q. Is the *danka* (temple registration) system still law?

A. It was revoked.

Q. Is the *butsudan* inheritance still law?

A. Yes, I will sensitively discuss with my family the issue of *butsudan* inheritance.

Q. My parents never heard the

gospel. What is my attitude to God about this?

A. "Righteous art Thou, O God." God is just when he judges, and full of mercy. He will judge them according to their thoughts and actions regarding his law in their consciences. This is also a mystery, but we can trust him.

Q. The gospel reached Japan for the first time (so far as we definitely know) in the fifteenth century. What is my attitude?

A. "Righteous art Thou, O Lord." God will judge them according to their secret thoughts, their consciences, actions, and according to his mercy.

Q. What about Christians who commit suicide?

A. God knows their hearts, their sufferings and loves them. They are not a danger to their families. They are accepted in mercy and are in heaven.

Q. What about the unsaved who commit suicide?

A. They were a danger to themselves, but cannot be a danger to us. We are protected by the blood of Jesus.

Q. What about the future of aborted babies?

A. God is a God of mercy and love. The church accepts that babies who have died are in God's loving care. There is no need to think that they are suffering or will be a danger to their families.

These FAQs should cover most of the questions that a Japanese Christian thinks about, but will probably not readily ask.

Creating Synergies through Reaching Japanese for Christ Network

by Jill C. Stewart

A few Washingtonians planted the Reaching Japanese for Christ Network (RJC Network) seed while on a mission trip to Japan in August 2000. What if they could connect with other Japanese for Christ enthusiasts right in their home area? They formed a committee and began planning a conference. A school nurse involved in a homestay program for Japanese, an insurance worker, a Japanese outreach Campus Crusader and a missionary in Japan worked together, united by a strong desire to reach Japanese. Eighty attended that first conference. The next year they planned another. And another. Although some committee members have changed, RJC Network is now eight years strong. Along with the annual international conference, there have been regional conferences in Hawaii, Northern California, Los Angeles and Vancouver, Canada.

The phrase “unity in purpose, diversity in approach” identifies one strength of the RJC Network, in which each participant contributes knowledge, experience and vision toward the common goal of reaching Japanese for Christ. This network crosses organizational lines with representation from Japan Christian Fellowship Network (JCFN), International Students, Inc. (ISI), Campus Crusade for Christ, Japanese Evangelical Missionary Society (JEMS), visionSynergy,

Chi Alpha, InterVarsity and local churches, to name a few. True to its website statement of seeking “to connect people around the RJC vision, to provide resources that will help equip people, and also to help develop partnerships that will result in better helping Japanese come to Jesus in North America and grow in their faith, assisting them to return to Japan as active Christian witnesses,” every aspect of a conference revolves around these goals. Seminar topics (20 in total) from the 2008 conference included “The Gospel in a Shame-Based Culture,” by Bruce Young (Mission to the World), “Reaching out to Japanese Businesspeople,” by Andrew Ichimura (VIP

is what happens as people stand next to strangers in line for the lunch buffet or sip cups of coffee between seminars. Names are exchanged and ministries discussed—connecting, energizing, and supplying fresh perspective and ideas.

Facilitator/Chairperson Don Wright ardently pursues this sort of synergy. While in Japan, he told the Lord he would leave when 5% of the Japanese population followed Christ. He says his time “ran out” when retiring from 35 years of ministry in Japan in November 2004. Although physically relocated to North America, he continues to channel that energy, possibilities-seeing vision, and love he has been given for linking others in order to strengthen them for together reaching Japanese for Christ.

The opening words of the RJC Network website read: “[This is] a place for you to create synergies with other Christian believers who share a love for and interest in Japanese people, particularly those who come to North America on a temporary basis.”

How do these synergies come about?

DW: Creating synergies happens through our conferences, e-mail network, and website. At our RJC Hawaii conference, a representative from a Southern Baptist outreach attended. When she shared about her weekly lunch for internationals at a local college, some of the Japanese pastors said they hadn’t known this was happening and asked if they could also participate. Both sides were delighted to have this new connection.

Another example is the JxJ Ministry (www.jjseattle210.spaces).

... What if

[local church members]

could connect with other

Japanese for Christ enthusiasts

right in their home area?

Club founder), and “Cultural Insights for Returnees & Those Who Prepare Them to Return” by Corey Grinder (Hope Chapel Tokorozawa) and Yo Masui (Hakodate Zion Church). While year-long planning goes into lining up expert speakers and seminar leaders, a vital element



live.com), a monthly outreach event sponsored by some Japanese students and former students in the Seattle area. The organizers originally met at an RJC conference and started working together to figure out what they could do to reach out to Japanese in their area—resulting in the birthing of J×J.

Concerning the website, the other day a person who was going to Japan found our site and sent me an e-mail asking for advice as to how he could stay in Japan and work there for Jesus. I sent out an e-mail to the 900 people who get our RJC e-mails and also put it on the website. One person who had just been to Japan saw it, and immediately shared about a need for a teacher. A few minutes later a missionary in Japan saw it on the web and volunteered to be of help. And we were able to connect them... Synergy!

Who are these half a million Japanese who live temporarily in North America?

DW: Japanese are coming to the USA and Canada as students, business people and their families, and as tourists. RJC is seeking to help link various organizations that are reaching out to students and business people. What a tremendous job organizations like Campus Crusade, ISI, InterVarsity, and VIP Club are doing!

Also, we have talked about the many tourists from Japan who rarely receive any kind of a Christian witness. We are just at the beginning stages of this, but would like to have a website that centers on Japanese coming to the States. Here they could find information about opportunities for experiencing American culture. They might be interested in having a surfing lesson at Waikiki, a meal with an American family in Columbus, Ohio, a friend to meet them at the airport and take them to the Mall of America in Minnesota. This brief contact with Christians could be an important first step to-

ward Jesus. Perhaps we will call this "America from the Inside."

RJC Network focuses on connecting with Japanese people in the USA and Canada. How is this relevant to missionaries in Japan?

DW: Several things come to mind: one is the opportunity to connect with concerned Christians in the USA and Canada; a second is to be available for Japanese who are returning to Japan [by providing] RJC and JCFN contacts. Also there have been ministry connections, like Ray Sidney leading a Black Gospel choir at the last RJC conference, which attracted many Japanese young people. That happened because of [Japan missionary] Ken Taylor and his connection with RJC.

If any *Japan Harvest* reader is interested in finding out more, please go to www.rjcnetwork.org. Also, if anyone would like to participate in one of the RJC conferences, help out with the RJC Academy, or perhaps be on the ground floor with developing "America from the Inside," please email me at donwright@rjcnetwork.org.

We look forward to many readers attending future RJC conferences and connecting with us.

Where do you hope to see RJC head in the future?

DW: We'd like to have regular conferences in areas where Japanese live. We'd also like to continue developing RJC Academy, an online course that helps English speakers learn how to minister to Japanese with better understanding. We'd love to have the RJC website be a central tool for linking those concerned about Japanese ministry around the world. Along with ministries like JCFN, we want to more effectively prepare returnees to become active evangelists. Our great desire is that RJC could play a small part in bringing Japan and Japanese to Jesus.



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The Mac Guy

Are You Ready for an iPhone G3?



July 11, 2008 was an auspicious day, as it was the day the iPhone 3G was launched in 21 countries around the world. I witnessed the long line in front of the AT&T store in the mall that morning. The guy at the neighboring kiosk selling cell phone accessories was hoping that the line would diminish the next day so he could get his. It was a great day in the US, but it was also a great day in Japan, as Apple introduced the iPhone for the first time in this country in partnership with Softbank.

But a big question for missionaries in Japan is, are you ready for an iPhone? “I don’t know. I have all the gadgets I need. I have my nifty Japanese cell phone that has more features than I know how to use. I have my small pocket-sized camera. I have my iPod with all my music and podcasts. What do I need the iPhone for?”

Well, you can get all those things in one device and then some. The iPhone, of course, is: 1) a phone, 2) an iPod, 3) a camera, and also 4) an Internet device that I can use to download my e-mail and Web

sites. All of this packed into one small, sleek device that feels so good in your hand. Actually, as I write this I am beginning to feel this must be too nice for a missionary to own. How can I have something that feels so good, does so much, and is so cool all at the same time? Aren’t missionaries supposed to be behind the times, deny themselves, and generally uncool?

Okay, let’s look at this again.

The iPhone is a phone

It is a 3G, that is, third generation phone. One of the reasons the iPhone was not introduced in Japan until now was that the Japanese cell phone system bypassed the 2G system and moved directly into the 3G system. Apple needed to wait until they had a device that could work with the Japanese cell phone system. We in Japan all know how mature the cell phone market is here with just about everyone having their own *keitai*.

The iPhone is a wide-screen iPod

You can listen to your music, watch videos and movies, and listen to podcasts. You can synch your iPhone with your PC or Mac using iTunes to make sure that you have everything you want; everything from your cool jazz to your home church’s worship service podcast. And with the Wi-Fi capabilities of the iPhone you can access music and movies directly from the iTunes store.

The iPhone is a camera

You can take photos using the built-in camera. You can also use your iPhone as your handy photo book. You can load your digital photos into your iPhone and share them around.

The iPhone is an Internet device

You can use the Safari Web browser to download and view real Web pages. With the iPhone touch screen technology you can zoom in, zoom out, and isolate sections to view and read any Web page. The Safari browser gives you all the features that you expect from a full-blown browser. The iPhone downloads and manages your e-mail. You can use Gmail, Yahoo mail, AOL, or standard POP or IMAP systems. The keyboard allows you to use Japanese input as well. Along with these basic features you can maintain your calendars, check the weather, use Google maps, check your stocks, and many, many other features provided by third party developers. (To view a fuller explanation and description of the iPhone

3G just go to <http://www.apple.com/iphone/> and view the guided tour.)

So, are you ready *now* for a new iPhone 3G? The iPhone incorporates many of the features and services that missionaries need everyday. We need to have a phone to keep in contact with our colleagues and family. We need to have the Internet in our pocket to keep abreast of our e-mail. We need to have a camera available to have photos to share with supporters. We can use our iPhone to keep and show photos and videos as we visit supporters. We can use the many Bible programs that are now available as part of the third party applications. The iPhone 3G is an exciting addition to the tools available as Modern Tech for missionaries.

The Mac Guy

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Ask Questions to Help Others Focus

Want to help others focus on the right things? Ask questions. Ask questions that provoke reflection, for example:

1. What's going on in your ministry?
2. What people/projects are you spending your time/energy on?
3. What are your goals for this next week/month?
4. Whom do you talk to about your ministry?
5. What's been satisfying/frustrating?
6. What are the reasons for your feelings of satisfaction and frustration?
7. How can you build on your progress/minimize your roadblocks?
8. What do you think you'll do?



Want to increase productivity? Talk regularly with others who have similar ministries. For example, the cell church planters pictured above meet to encourage each other, reflect, share best practice, and get input on ministry challenges.

Do Right Things, Then Do Things Right

Imagine the following 5 situations:

1. You dribble the soccer ball toward the goal, check where the goalie is, kick the ball into the upper right corner, and score—at the wrong goal.
2. You're prepared. You've made copies of materials for a workshop on church leadership, brought the copies to the church, and placed copies on the tables 30 minutes before the workshop begins. You feel good—until someone says, "Thanks for doing this parenting workshop."
3. You're seated on the plane, heading off to a 3-month home assignment. You relax, knowing everything on your list is done, including submitting reports, emptying the refrigerator, and stopping the newspaper. You think about sharing at your home church the day after you land—until you realize you haven't prepared at all for your presentation.
4. You're done before the deadline. You've updated the summer mission team recruitment materials, you've even customized the materials for students at Bible U, and you've sent the materials to Bible U two weeks before the deadline. You feel good—until you realize that you have not gotten a single new staff member from Bible U in the past 3 years.
5. You provide training. Staff complete the training. You feel good—until you realize that you targeted staff completing the training, not staff using the training.

Make sure you are working on the right thing.

Bottom line?

Do right things, then do things right. Make sure you are working on the right thing before you spend time fine-tuning what you are working on. This is a challenge. Why? Because, for example, it is easier to edit than it is to develop high quality content. Discipline yourself to do right things, then do things right.

Work smart. Today.

Michael B. Essenburg (Christian Reformed Japan Mission) serves as a coach, consultant, and trainer at Christian Academy in Japan. Time permitting, Michael works with missions.

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Faith De La Cour,
Human Resource
Development
Coordinator for
Asian Access, serves as
the chair of the
JEMA Member Care
Committee.

The Power of a Good Conversation

A recent online survey answered by over 2000 missionaries from around the world asked what type of agency care was desired in the next year. (Bosch) Five of the top seven responses had to do with listening to workers. This included “someone to listen to me, friendship with co-workers, regular debriefing, regular accountability and prayer partnership on the field.” Whether or not our mission agencies themselves provide this support, there is power in a good conversation.

Most of us are concerned that we are doing the right things in our ministries and in our personal lives. Yet I have heard from several sources that missionaries tend to be busy, but often we are doing the wrong things. In an effort to prove to ourselves, our co-workers, our supporting constituencies, and perhaps even to God that we are of value, we fill our schedules with activities that may be good, but not right.

Over the course of the next three issues, we will explore different kinds of evaluation and debriefing tools to help us to grow personally, spiritually, emotionally and professionally. This time, however, I challenge you to find a peer with whom you can meet on a regular basis for a focused and deliberate conversation, using the questions at the top left of page 30 in the sidebar “Ask Questions to Help Others Focus” as your template for discussion.

How can a good, focused conversation help you do the right things in your work? We posed this question to a group of Member Care facilitators in May:

A good conversation gives perspective. Sometimes there is power in talking—as if the creative juices get going when we begin to verbalize. In interaction with one another we can receive feedback, and discover gaps in our thinking.

A good conversation provides encouragement. It can be motivational and serve to reignite our original passion and call.

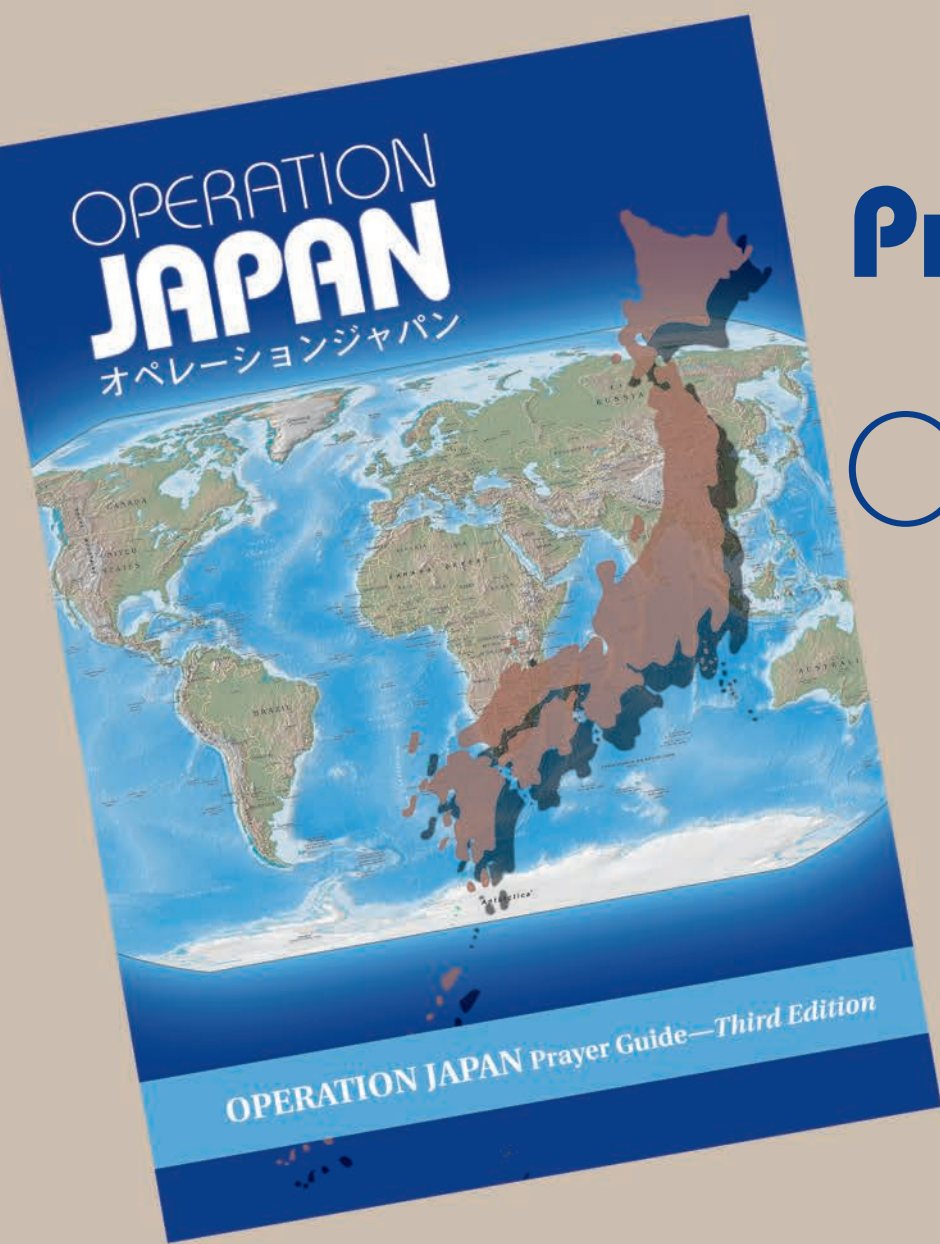
A good conversation can lead to shared resources, and increase the possibilities for solutions. There is synergy that comes from the input and reflection of another person.

A powerfully good conversation doesn't have to be lengthy. We have used the questions in the previously mentioned sidebar in a “15-minute per person” exercise. Follow the last question with one more—“How can I pray for you?” Try this at your next mission gathering by breaking up into pairs. It will take 30 minutes to practice this conversation!

Doing this with a peer once a month, or more frequently, could help you be more strategic, focused and effective in your service for Christ. Hopefully it will help you avoid spending your time on the wrong things!

Reference

Brenda Bosch, “New Research on Stress for Mission Workers”, from Ethne Member Care Update, Issue 2: August, 2007 (<http://ethne.net/memberscare/updates/>)



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From “MacArthur Missionaries” to “McDonald Missionaries”

The Birth of Japanese Foreign Missionaries

*by Evangelists
Kenny & Lila Joseph*

We begin where we left off in our previous article about revival among foreign missionaries who came to Japan following MacArthur’s call:

... We praised God and gave him the glory. This revival among we missionaries was not of man... nothing fanatical, just quietly guided by God. On April 14, 1953, we got to bed at 2:30 a.m. but didn’t feel like sleeping. A few hours later at 7:00 a.m. my Japanese associate, teacher/evangelist Takami-san, came from Tokyo for a conference on our next campaigns, having fasted and prayed with the same burden we had. Then, without even eating breakfast, we were called into the Soul-winning Tent Meeting Training Institute where they were having three days of special meetings. The leader, Gerry Johnson, asked me to share with the Japanese students what had happened the night before. First I asked the students to pray. These young students poured out their hearts to God asking him to bless us on our upcoming evangelistic campaigns. This moved me deeply as I realized that I came to Japan to be a leader, and now these young Japanese converts—brands plucked from the burning—were praying for us. Then I began to share.

“A Broken and a Contrite Heart, Oh God, Thou Wilt Not Despise”

Even though I thought weeping was effeminate, God gave me a broken heart and in tears I told them how the Lord had met us the previous night. After sharing how the Lord had met my need and how I had claimed his power, love and wisdom to go out and reach these people, I sat down. Then I realized that for an hour I had spoken in Japanese without one note—simply overflowing in praise to the Lord and giving him the glory. This was a miracle, because it would normally take me 40 hours to prepare a one-hour message in Japanese.

Gerry told more about the revival meeting and how he also received a new love for the Japanese. He, too, broke down and this again touched the students’ hearts. He told them of how we had put a chair in the middle and prayed over each one who came. He then asked, “Who wants to be prayed for among you students?”

One young man blurted out, “The devil has bound me. Pray for me.” One by one they came forward and were prayed for. One came and left with tears. Many had unconfessed sins. A couple had made love

under a bridge and were to be expelled, and they came and confessed. Pride, lack of love, fear and wicked sins were mentioned as students came forward one by one and asked for prayer.

We put our hands on them and prayed; quoting verses overcoming Satan through the Word, the blood, and the resurrection power. We praised God for a wonderful spirit of victory.

Even the Stones Would Cry Out

Everyone came forward but one. We went back to our seats, sang a few songs, and the Japanese TEAM Pastor Tsukigara asked if anyone was left out. Nobody raised their hands, so he said, “Brother Tanaka, how is it with your heart?” Tanaka said, “I’m OK. I’m Anglican and don’t believe in all this emotionalism.”

Tsukigara-sensei loudly proclaimed, “This is of God. It is not sensationalism. It is the first time I’ve seen such a thing, but it is of God! We can’t pass you by.” He broke down in tears exclaiming, “Tanaka-san, I love you. I love you. I want you to get God’s blessing, too.”

But there was no response from Tanaka, after which Tsukigara

quoted from the Bible where the Pharisees rebuked the people for praising God and crying “Hosanna” when King Jesus came riding on a donkey. If these people should be quiet, even the stones would cry out. “Tanaka, are you a stone?”

Finally the young man reluctantly came forward, knelt and prayed, but it wasn't real. The Spirit of God didn't melt his heart. Two weeks later the five tent teams went out. They went to a gas station to get gas and water. Around the curve came a truck, hit Tanaka-san and he was instantly killed. That put the fear of God in all of us! His poor wife raised chickens to survive.

We thanked God for the moving of his Spirit. The Holy Spirit was working overtime in 1953, but so was Satan. The verse we all took was II Timothy 1:7 as we were delivered from the spirit of fear and received the spirit “...of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” It was agreed that we shouldn't touch an atom of his glory... we would glory in only the cross of Christ!

After seven months in grueling evangelistic meetings every day, I caught tuberculosis and the doctor ordered complete bed rest. “Get off the road.” My TEAM-mate Don Hoke invited me to teach at the Japan Christian College (JCC). After I got a clean bill of health from the Mayo Clinic, Don married Lila Finsaas and me at the Karuizawa Union Church and we moved into our new Japanese-style home just two minutes from the college. I was ordered to just teach for 50 minutes and then lie down. The German Dr. Eitel said, “You are healed by God and the newly-discovered TB medicine. You will take an afternoon nap. If you don't, you will die at 40. If you do, you will live past 80! Understand?”

Wait 99 Years, Toshiko!

Can you believe that Japan's post-war foreign missions began at that

Soul-winning Tent Meeting Training School at Shizuoka? I saw the potential of young Japanese as missionaries not only in their own homeland, but also overseas.

One of the classes was “Foreign Missions.” Of the 33 students, five were called to the mission field in a student-initiated prayer meeting: Toshiko to Taiwan, Jokura to India, Yokouchi to Singapore, Horikiri to Bolivia and Ozaki to Ecuador. When the Domei pastor Matsudasei spoke in chapel, Toshiko told him about the 5 missionary volunteers, but her broad smile vanished when he told her to “forget that idea... 99% of Japanese are unsaved and going to hell. Wait until we evangelize Japan, which could take 99 years.” Toshiko answered. “I'll be dead by then.”

That was how JEOM (Japan Evangelical Overseas Mission) started. We met weekly with Christian businessman Tsuyoshi Tadenuma (at our JCC Quonset hut Evangelism Department) and prayerfully planned Japan's foreign missions. After sending out Rev. Reiji Oyama to the Philippines on a “repentance mission,” etc, it took off. One by one they came, “Send me to Brazil... to Peru... to Indonesia.” We told these volunteers to ask their denominations to start a mission and send them out. The Free Church did, followed by the C&MA, AG, TEAM, etc. JEOM became JOMA (Japanese Overseas Missions Association).

Rising nationalism, anti-Westernism, anti-colonialism, encircling Islam, exploding population and retreating liberalism have changed the climate of “who sends and who receives,” so that “the missionary obligation is no longer the monopoly of the West or the special preserve of traditional missionary organizations.”

We asked:

1. Can the “Lord of the Harvest”

call, commission and thrust out as foreign missionaries, nationals from the “younger” churches of present mission fields in obedience to the first Commission?

2. Can these foreign missionaries Scripturally be sent out to other fields while their own country is not yet completely evangelized?

3. What type of training, internship and screening is right for the health of the indigenous church?

Although the principles below apply to most indigenous situations, the research and conclusions we came up with are limited to the Japanese situation in particular, and to the Asian field in general.

Five Basic Definitions

1. Mission

“The sending forth of men with authority or commission from God or the church to preach (or spread) the gospel (John 20:21) and administer the sacraments. ‘Christian mission’ is the proclamation of the gospel to the unconverted everywhere according to Christ's command.”

2. Missionary

“One who is sent on a mission; an agent or emissary, sent to propagate religion especially,” or “do educational or charitable work in some place where his church has no self-supporting local organization; hence, one who spreads any new system or doctrine.”

“A person sent out by his church to preach, teach and proselytize in a foreign country, especially in one considered heathen.”

3. Older churches or “sending or giving churches”

Those older, established churches or mission agencies that send out foreign missionaries, money, Bibles, build native churches, schools, hospitals, presses, etc.

4. Younger churches or “receiving churches”

Those newly formed indigenous churches on mission fields which should mature toward the four-fold ideal of self-supporting, instructing,

governing, and expanding their own faith in home missions and foreign missions.

5. Evangelization

“To evangelize is to present the Lord Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit so that men shall come to put their trust in God through him, to accept him as their Savior and serve him as their King in the fellowship of his Church.”

Five Basic Assumptions:

1. The Great Commission, written in all languages and addressed to all Christians, must be obeyed by all true believers in all lands, with no exemptions.

2. Since there are only 42,250 active Protestant foreign missionaries trying to evangelize 6 billion people, an obvious need exists for more experienced, evangelical, effective missionaries today.

3. The Lord of the Harvest also calls nationals from younger churches in today’s mission fields to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” (Mk. 16:15) They must obediently go, even though their own home missions program is not completed, as did the Apostle Paul, the Eastern Church, Count Zinzendorf and William Carey, and today’s Western missionaries.

4. Evangelical leaders in the sending societies, missionaries on the fields and national leaders are privileged to work with the Lord of the Harvest as he purposes to call out a people for his Name from every tribe, tongue, kindred and nation before his return.

5. The indigenous principle of self-propagation has a two-fold meaning:

a. Home missions: Evangelizing the people of similar tongue, not only in their own country, but also overseas.

b. Foreign missions: The “younger churches” must also reach out in foreign missions to people

and countries different from their own in language, food, culture, customs and race.

We did the same thing in Korea with Rev. David Cho as he became the Korean KEOM.

Heartache

My greatest heartache 50 years later is that Koreans, Japanese and Filipinos have missed the main point, or the fifth point of missions—going to different countries, speaking different languages, eating different food, ministering to different cultures and people. To a large extent, the 300 Japanese missionaries into 24 countries and over 10,000 Korean missionaries into 40 countries are not doing numbers 1 and 2. Japanese first reach out to the Japanese natives, Koreans first reach out to the Korean restaurant and get the owners to pay the fabulous rent near a train station. But the restaurant owner can’t keep it up too long and the missionaries go back home. The Filipinos do the same. I know. I’ve sponsored them and preach in their churches.

150th or 1800th Anniversary?

As the 150th anniversary of Protestantism in Japan is celebrated in 2009 the Catholics snicker, “We’ve been here for 450 years!”... the Buddhists say, “We’ve been here for 1200 years!”... and the *Keikyo* (Church of the East) says, “We’ve been here for 1800 years.”

Please, young Japanese (JEA) pastors and missionary agencies, don’t fall into the same trap I did when I was the Public Relations Director for the Japan Protestant Centennial (JPC) while at Japan Christian College. We boasted of our “100 years” while the Buddhists laughed up their sleeves at “these new kids on the block.”

J.M.L. Young’s English book, *By Foot to China* (soon in Japanese) proves that *Keikyo* was the early evangelical missionary force. *Japan’s*

Jizo and Jesus, as well as *Japan: The Country of the Erased Cross*, by myself and son Ken Jr., are out in Japanese in inexpensive pocketbook form (*bunko ban*) with “Cross” having been re-released as “Bible,” published by Tokuma, and available at 14,000 secular bookstores.

While we experienced revival on a personal and social level in those early years in Japan after MacArthur’s call, today we continue to call out to God for an omnipotent revival on a national scale. With only 4% of Japan’s 127 million professing Christianity (according to the recent Gallup survey), nothing less than divine intervention will do.



Kenny and Lila Joseph have spent a combined total of over 100 years in Japan with Youth For Christ, TEAM and REAP. Joseph’s two Missionary Language Handbooks are now in one combined bilingual edition. Also, the trilingual message CD and bilingual illustrated book on Japan’s 1800 years of Christian history entitled “Jizo and Jesus,” now changed to “Japan’s Christian Roots” and “Japan: Country of the Erased Cross” (in Japanese only) are available on the website: www.kennyjoseph.com

(Japan’s 91-year old Evangelist Koji Honda called me twice: “I just read your book Japan’s Jizo and Jesus and I am glad and mad. Glad because you’ve brought together all the un-written history of early Christians in Japan. Mad, because you, an American Assyrian preaching in Japanese as an evangelist in Japan for 50 years knew more about my country than all the history professors in their vaunted universities. Send me 10 more copies to give to my close friends. Thank you.”) Just as I wrote that, Paul Clark said, “Send me 10 more Jizos.” I give them away to key men. Go thou and do likewise.



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.

The Arts in Mission: From Peru to Japan

Roger and Abi Lowther are talented and gifted artists, but what really counts is their heart for God in their sincere desire to see Japanese come to know Christ. In their role as missional artists to Japan, empowered to use their gifts and abilities within the context of a church planting team, they have made a significant contribution to building up the church. We can learn much from them and how Mission to the World has wisely created a "space" for them, so I have asked Roger to write the Worship and Arts department for this issue of Japan Harvest.

—Paul Nethercott, August 2008



Monica Ghali, a young missionary in Peru, wanted to tell the street children around her that God loved them. An eyesore of stepped on, run-over,

water-stained bus tickets littered the streets of Lima, so she asked neighbors and friends to help collect them for her. When questioned why, she replied, "I want to take that which has no value in the eyes of the world and give it value. I want to take that which is ugly and make it beautiful." Using her artistic training, she arranged the tickets into a collage of great beauty and worth. As Monica and the children continued to work and build relationships with each other, they "fleshed out" the tremendous beauty and value they have before God.

Joel Klepac, missionary with Word Made Flesh, finds art to be essential to the way he builds the church in Galati, Romania. Using sand, clay, paint, and a myriad of other materials, Joel develops community among street children and children at risk, giving them hope in life. With the children, Joel

made a movie about two apple seeds that were thrown away but eventually grew into a full and vibrant tree that produced fruit of its own. It had tremendous impact on these kids as they realized God saw them as those apple seeds, redeemed from a broken world and given the ability to flourish. This project brought these kids into Christian community and into nearby churches.

Sarah Lance works through the arts to build the church in Calcutta, India. As an artist, Sarah saw the tremendous value of old pieces of sari considered worthless as clothes. She taught women



who had been caught in the sex trade how to cut and sew sari pieces into beautiful wall hangings, bags, and other goods to be sold abroad. Now these women are given wages, retirement, and medical care in order to make art. At the same time they are given the Word of God through church services and Bible studies. The art of making these goods along with Sarah's friendship "speaks" the gospel to these women. Previously cut off in their sin, now they have been redeemed into beautiful creations in the hands of the great Artist, who came to cleanse them from their sins. These women have gradually come to see their beauty in the eyes of God through every knot stitched.

Japan can be a graceless and hard society, yet art through the gospel can enable the formation of freedom-filled community. Through the evangelistic concerts of a black gospel choir from Jackson, Mississippi, scores of people have joined gospel choirs, English classes, and Bible studies in the Tokyo area and are now hearing the Scriptures

preached every week. After Mrs. M_____ joined a choir, she regularly brought her son to church. Her husband soon followed. It was exciting to hear his thoughts upon attending a Christian worship service and opening the Bible for the first time ever! I invited the husband to join my English class, where we talked about the Bible every week. Through angst and beauty in the arts, Japanese come to know the gospel message of forgiveness and grace and people are brought into the church.

In Peru, Romania, India, and Japan, the arts help to flesh out and express "The Word." The gospel is being heard,

seen, and felt through stories like these repeated in many places of the world! Have you invited artists to be part of your church planting team? Do you also have great stories of the role of the arts in missions? I would love to hear about them! Please write me an e-mail addressed to rogerlowther@gmail.com.

Roger Lowther, missionary through the arts with Mission to the World, has been serving in Japan with his wife Abi and two small boys since 2005. You can learn more about them and their ministry through their website www.missionart.org.



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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

STACKZ: Japanese Flashcard Organizer for PC, Pocket PC and Palm OS

There are a bewildering number of software programs and websites for learning Japanese. In this issue I would like to introduce just one flashcard system for learning vocabulary and kanji that is being used very effectively by students at the OMF Japanese Language Centre in Sapporo. The program only works with Windows but there is similar software for Macs.

First I downloaded a 30-day free evaluation of Stackz Dictionary Edition from www.stackz.com. The only disadvantage of the free evaluation is that you are not able to copy or save your lists. If you buy, the cost is ¥5,908 (according to the exchange rate at the time I wrote this article). There is also a Standard edition without the dictionary but it is only 14 US dollars cheaper so the Dictionary edition seems a better buy. There is also Pocket Stackz (¥2,291) and Palm Stackz (¥1,809) and you can buy a Stackz Dictionary Edition plus Pocket Stackz bundle for only ¥7,114.

Having downloaded Stackz, I followed the instructions in the first tutorial and imported a word list from the online archives to test both myself and the software. What immediately impressed me was the massive range of word lists available for import. You can, of course, make your own and will want to tailor make Stackz for your own purposes, but it is a great help to have usable lists already online. There are lists for a number of well-known textbooks such as *Mina no Nihongo*, *Introduction to Intermediate Japanese*, *Genki*, *Kanji in Context*, *Remembering the Kanji*, *Basic Kanji Book* and *Intermediate Kanji Book*. There are lists for the 4 levels of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), grammar lists, verb lists, radical lists and a host of other useful material. There are even 2 lists of Christian vocabulary. If you contribute a new vocabulary list you may be able to buy a license

at half-price. Some lists are available with translation equivalents for languages other than English including German, French and Spanish.



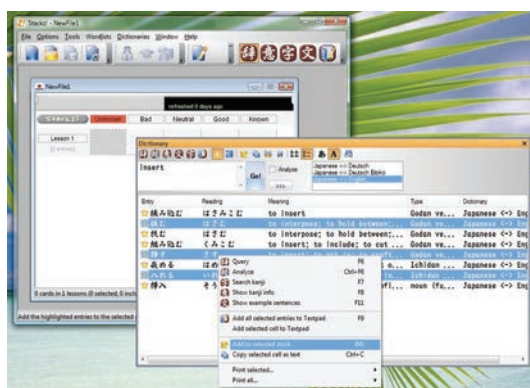
I chose to import the list 2 *kyu* for intermediate students. As instructed in the tutorial I clicked on Retention Manager under Tools, Select your learning task and Introduce New Cards. 590 cards in 7 lessons appear in a dialogue box with 5 divisions—unknown, bad, neutral, good, known. When you click on neutral you can immediately begin to test yourself. In the test dialogue box, you can change the options for testing with a click of the button—kanji/ word only, hiragana and translation. You decide whether you know the word or not and it slides into the appropriate one of the 5 divisions above. Each time you get it correct, the word moves one box over to the right, and vice versa to the left when you get it wrong. A very nice ‘match’ function allows you to test your ability to match the word or kanji with both its reading and meaning. The cards are colored according to the date you last ‘mastered’ them, so they become darker over time. This system allows you immediately to pick out difficult from easy cards, and, at the same time, see which cards must be refreshed because they have not been reviewed for a long time.

It is easy to create your own new stack or file (vocabulary list) and edit it at a later date by following a tutorial. Of course, it

takes time to input, but the input process itself can be a valuable way of interacting with the language that aids memory.

The dictionary used is *Jim Breen's Edict Dictionary**. The direct links to this from Stackz didn't work for me but you can also download the dictionary from

http://www.csse.monash.edu.au/~jwb/j_edict.html along with Kanji and other dictionaries. A helpful feature of the dictionary when used in Stackz is that vocabulary items are listed in their compound forms regardless of whether they appear in first, second, third or fourth place. For example, *kyoukai* will also bring up all its variants such as Catholic church, Armenian church, Orthodox church, church member and church history. The common entries button is a neat feature for reducing the range of dictionary items so that you are not overwhelmed by new vocabulary.



You can add a new word or words from the dictionary to a stack simply by clicking the add button. No copying and pasting is required. Likewise, by double clicking on a dictionary item, you can get all the information you need about a particular kanji including radical, stroke count and joyou kanji number.

This is a program that I wish I had had years ago when the only way to learn was creating piles of vocabulary books that were rarely reviewed and painstakingly write out each kanji on paper cards. If you enjoy learning through using a computer, Stackz is well worth investigating.

*NB: Jim Breen's Japanese page has a tremendous amount of helpful material listed under a variety of categories at <http://www.csse.monash.edu.au/~jwb/japanese.html>

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