



JH
Japan Harvest
Spring 2009

**Special
Center Insert
JEA Japan Update**

**Mission Confusion
150th Anniversary of
Protestant Missions
Dirty Laundry
ANRC Conference
Japan's Growing
Homeschooling
Movement**

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

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SUNDAY

9:30 AM PRAYER
10:00 AM WORSHIP SERVICE
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Conference Highlights

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM
IN ENGLISH & GERMAN

FAMILY FUN
MONDAY AUGUST 3

YOUTH CONFERENCE
TUESDAY 4 - THURSDAY 6

KUC ANNUAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY AUGUST 5

LADIES BUFFET
THURSDAY AUGUST 6

KUC PICNIC
FRIDAY AUGUST 7

MEN'S BREAKFAST
SATURDAY AUGUST 8

For further information
please contact:

Cindy Cox
Conference Chairman
E-mail:
cindy@cox5.com

Please visit our website at
<http://church.ne.jp/kuc/>

"I am the Way,
the Truth
and the Life"
-Lord Jesus Christ-



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July 26 – August 30

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Summer Conference Sun August 2 - Sun August 9

"There's so much more"

This year we are very privileged to have Rev. LEIGH ROBINSON as our guest speaker.

Leigh was born in South Africa into a non-Christian home. Converted and called to ministry at about age 10. Studied at Prairie Bible College in Alberta, Canada, graduating in 1971. Taught Bible and Practical Theology and served in the Deans' Department at Prairie Bible College for 7 years following graduation. Spent the past 30 years in pastoral ministry, 27 years in South Africa and 3 years in Canada.

Currently Senior Pastor of Rosebank Union Church, an interdenominational, evangelical church in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg. Married to Irene (a Canadian) since 1977. They have three adult children (one married) and two grandchildren. Together with Irene he has ministered to missionaries in about 10 countries.



Rev. & Mrs.
Leigh and Irene
Robinson



Partnering in Mission

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 broad strokes of a biblical framework for mission can be found by tracing the good but not yet holy creation of Genesis, through the New Testament people of God as members of that not yet finished creation, on to the eschatological holy re-creation. This template understands mission to be God's progressive consecration of creation, beginning with a garden in Genesis and ending with a city in Revelation¹. At first glance the two motifs (a garden and a city) seem to imply disparity or discontinuity. This is because a city seems significantly different than a garden.

However, the eschatological city is not like a city made by human hands, for according to Revelation 22:1-2, the city is characterized by a river. This river flows down the main street of the city, and on both banks (plural) of the river is planted the tree of life (singular). So this eschatological city seems very much like a garden. The urban and rural motifs seem to be intermingled, implying a kind of cohesiveness, or continuity, between the two. The two motifs do not suggest an exclusive disjunction as do our ideas of the rural and the urban. Further continuity between the two poles of creation—the ancient garden and the eschatological city—is evident in the fact that the Creator of the garden is also both the Archi-

tect of the city and the Redeemer of the people who inhabit the city.

Nevertheless, despite this continuity, at least two elements of discontinuity stand out when contrasting the ancient garden with the eschatological city. First, the city is called "holy" (Rev. 21:2), whereas in the account of the garden only the Sabbath is called holy. So the story of the garden points toward and begs for an ultimate completion. It needs fulfillment in an eschatological hope.

The second element of discontinuity between the garden and the city is that the city is teeming with residents, whereas the garden story depicts the first solitary couple, though indeed representative of the entire human race (1 Cor. 15:22). The eschatological city is a community. The holy city is inhabited by God's people. They together worship God. This is a story of a people, not of lone individuals. The number of people is countless, but there is a single community. Yet the people of this single eschatological community are as culturally variegated as the peoples of earth itself (Rev. 5:9, 7:9). Residents of the city display a plurality of cultures (Rev. 21:3-4, 24-25).

JEMA Datebook

Event	Date	Time	Place
Eastern Japan Coed Prayer Summit	May 12-15	12:00 p.m.-	Okutama Bible Chalet
Western Japan Coed Prayer Summit	May 18-21	12:00 p.m.-	VIP Alpine Rose Village
Prayer Walk	July 6	10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Sano Tower, Akasaka
The 150 th Anniversary of Protestant Missions in Japan	July 8-9		Pacifico Yokohama
JCE5: 5th Japan Congress on Evangelism	September 21-24		Sapporo Conference Center
WIM Day of Prayer	September 29	10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.	TEAM Center
Prayer Walk	October 5	10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Diet Building

So the city's citizens are the fulfillment of the command given in the garden to be fruitful and to multiply (Gen. 1:28). They are the redeemed people of God who have not gathered automatically or naturally, but as a result of the intentional mission of God. He has redeemed them and they inhabit the city he has built. At least two implications for mission flow from this biblical template of God's progressive consecration of creation.

First, a theology of God's mission emphasizes community as significant. Churches are a showcase of God's new redeemed re-creation, microcosms of the eschatological community, pointing to the future completed mission of God's consecration of the ancient creation. It is no surprise that church planting missionaries hold to a communal understanding of evangelism which views the missional task as incomplete until new believers are integrated into communities of God's Son that we call churches. Evange-

lism contributes to building God's community.

Second, mission understood as God's consecration of creation emphasizes cultural variety. The multicultural scope of God's mission dwarfs our petty differences such as race, nation, denomination and mission organization, requiring that we think together, worship together, do mission together, and educate together across these borders which are ultimately not so significant. Our cooperative, cross-cultural partnerships in mission align well with the nature of God's mission. Thinking across borders implies learning, ministering, and worshipping alongside people who are different than we are. Doing mission internationally implies partnering with missionaries, mission agencies, and churches from other nations so that strategy, finances, leadership, and the actual carrying through of the missional task all become a joint effort.

Partnership and community are two key concepts for understanding

God's mission. We in JEMA can understand our equipping, networking, and resourcing of missionaries for ministry to Japanese people as our ministry of cross-cultural partnership with one another. I encourage you to join our JEMA partnership, our JEMA community, by linking up with a JEMA ministry. For example, you could join other JEMA members in a retreat, seminar, or networking event with our Japanese counterparts here in Japan. As we minister together in this kind of partnership, we display the fact that we are God's community.

Notes

1. For an example of this framework, see Willem VanGemen, *The Progress of Redemption* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988).



See what you missed at the March 2009 WIM retreats!



"It was so refreshing."

"Excellent programme – God spoke to me."

"I enjoyed it very much."



"This is a great conference. I pray that more ladies will attend in the future."

"Appreciated Jan's humility and honest sharing."



"It was great to laugh, go deep with God, and worship with all my heart!"



March 11-14 WIM Retreat
Megumi Chalet Karuizawa



March 14 Hokkaido Christian
Women's Fellowship

**Next year's speaker will be SEND missionary Anita Hallemann from Germany.
More details coming at jema.org**



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.

Good News, Bad News

Today as I write, the cherry blossom season is in full swing, the sun is beaming down amidst scattered clouds, the temperature is nearly perfect, the mosquitoes have not yet realized spring is here, and all seems right with the world.

At our recent JEMA meetings we heard news of the growth of the Church in various contexts, were motivated by new tools for ministry, and encouraged by opportunities to cooperate in the proclamation of the gospel. A portion of this issue of Japan Harvest relates to those themes in a number of areas. One is cooperation, as we package the JEA Japan Update newsletter as a supplement stapled into the center of the magazine. Let us know what you think of this approach to providing you with this information.

We are also encouraged in this issue by reports on the recent *All Nations Returnees Conference*, the spring JEMA Women in Ministry retreat, and plans for the upcoming celebrations of the 150th anniversary of Protestant missions in Japan—not to mention the practical information on how to use QR codes (Modern Tech), DVDs to rent for language development (Language Lab), and what is happening in Christian education in Japan (“Japan’s Growing Homeschooling Movement”).

But of course, not all is right with the world. Recently I have become aware once again of the all too frequent train line interruptions here in the Tokyo area (and maybe your area as well) as the despondent seek to end it all, the constant news updates about the world economic crisis, and reports of problems within the Church in Japan that seem to be on the increase in both secular and Christian media.

The portion of this issue entitled “Dirty Laundry: What Do We Do When the News about the Church is Bad?” was not

an easy one to include, but it is also another aspect of the world around us. We trust that our reporting in this area will help us all grapple with important matters we need to consider in order to maintain the integrity we absolutely must preserve in this world of secular skepticism. Obviously, Satan wants to paralyze churches and he wants to discredit ministries. Whether that is by causing God’s people to fall into sin, or by using others to falsely accuse God’s people of sin, the result is the same... loss of credibility and distraction from the spread of the gospel.

So in this 150th anniversary year we continue to be faced with the challenge of sharing the Word of God in the midst of a spiritual battle affecting both church leader and church member—a battle that demands we consciously and deliberately clothe ourselves in the full armor of God: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. As we engage ourselves in this conflict, let us recommit ourselves to prayer for each other and God’s Church in Japan.

Your partner in ministry,

P.S. To all who responded to the online *Japan Harvest* survey in February, thank you! As we make improvements over the course of this next year in response to your answers, we trust we will continually be able to make our communications more helpful for your ministries.



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The Gospel for All - A New Beginning

Sweden Alliance Christ Mission / Word of Life Press Ministries



Announcing the relocation of the headquarters of Word of Life Press Ministries (WLPM) to Nakano-ku.

WLPM began in Nakano-ku at the kitchen table of TEAM missionaries Ken and Olive McVety in 1950. Early sales included hawking books in front of Nakano station. After 15 years in Eifuku-cho and 43 years in Shinanomachi, WLPM headquarters returned to Nakano-ku beginning January 5, 2009. It has grown to become Japan's largest Evangelical publishing, retailing and distributing ministry with 190 staff members from 50 denominations and 14 Gospel Shop stores nation-wide. It serves churches and endeavors to give the Gospel to all in Japan and build up the Body of Christ. Please pray for God's blessing as we continue this ministry from a new location on Okubo Dori near Nakano ZERO Hall and Momijiyama Park. Dedication and open house March 30, 2009.

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English Fax 03-5341-6916

E-mail gospelhq@wlpn.or.jp



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Word of Life Press Ministries

2-1-5 Nakano, Nakano-ku
Tokyo 164-0001 JAPAN
Tel. 03-5341-6911

A Help in Sharing Your Christian Faith



I am very glad for this opportunity to introduce my book *Watashi no Shu, Watashi no Kami (My Lord and my God)* to the readers of *Japan Harvest*. This book began in the trees in our garden in Numazu, Shizuoka Prefecture when I was still a child.

I am an MK (missionary kid) born in China, and I came with my parents to Japan in 1950 when I was eight. The first Swedish school for MKs started right in our home and our homework assignments included memorizing hymns and Luther's little catechism with its questions and answers. I used to do this on my favorite tree branch. I enjoyed it so much that when I came back to Japan as a missionary with my husband Bo and found the catechism *Kami no sukui no michi* both in Japanese and English, I was thrilled!

Later however, I found that both the language and the style were too formal and old. After attending a seven-week Japanese language course in Karuizawa and taking private lessons from a former Japanese

language teacher for about a year, we started to get more and more contacts. As we had church in our home, people would come all day long. At times we felt overwhelmed about how to guide and teach.

I started to make my own notes, teaching the way of salvation according to the Creed. Later I noticed that one of the first questions in my notes, "How do I get to know God?", brought many to Jesus right from the beginning. As time went by, we found it very time consuming to teach each person individually. So when I saw a fascinating book about Christian foundations of the faith with lots of cute drawings during a visit to Sweden, I started to dream about writing a similar book in Japanese that any Christian could use to teach and guide others.

As I returned to Japan with this vision within me, God provided many friends, both Christians and non-Christians, very eager to help me not only write it in good Japanese but also to make it easy to understand. Mr. Shusaburo Abe, an artist and member of our church, kindly offered to draw all the illustrations. After writing and rewriting it many times it was finally published in 1984. Since then, many of our church members have been using it to teach seekers, neighbors and friends. It is exciting to see the joy they experience when they see people starting to put their faith in Jesus and asking to be baptized.

In our present church here in Fuji we have run many Alpha courses. As a result, many small groups have been born. In these groups, the leaders often use this book to guide members to commit their lives to

Jesus. As all the books have been sold out during these past 25 years, a new edition was printed last autumn (September 2008). It is my prayer that this book will be a help and a good tool for not only missionaries and pastors, but also for ordinary Christians with a burden for reaching this nation with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Main Contents of this Book:

The Creed (from Creation to the Second Coming of Christ, the Christian Life, the Church, etc.)
 The 10 Commandments (with the first two especially adapted to Japanese culture)
 The Lord's Prayer, Baptism, Communion, Offering, Praise
 A practical guide to "The Armour of God" has been added to this 2nd edition

The book has 95 pages and 120 illustrations. The price is ¥1000.

If you are interested in using it, we will be happy to send you a free copy (you just pay the postage by *chakubarai*)

We also hope to bring it to the CPI conference in November. If you have any questions please contact us.

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Ken and Toshiko Reddington are church-planting missionaries in Kochi-ken. Ken, an MK who returned to Japan as a missionary 30 years ago, is on the Servant-Leader Teams of the Prayer Summit for Western Japan and the Kochi Prayer Summit. He is also on the executive committee for the Kochi Global Day of Prayer. He is secretary for the Kochi Citywide Interdenominational Pastors Group.

A Fresh Encounter with God

Have you ever been to a “prayer meeting” and no one prayed (except for the “preacher” before his message)? Or if they did, it was for just the last five or ten minutes? Have you ever had the feeling you were “dumping on God” in your personal prayer life?

I would like us to focus on prayer, what it is and how we can really get more involved. Knowing what to pray for is fine. But before we get to that, let’s see what we can find about what prayer really is—or should be. Then we can see how it naturally enters into our ongoing relationship with our living Lord. Bon Voyage!

Let me tell you a little about my dad. When he was six years old, he was sent to live with his grandparents. His dad would always drink away his paychecks, so the state took my dad and his two older brothers from their parents and sent them off to live with different relatives. So it was that he stayed with his grandparents until he was twelve years old. Now, what kind of a relationship do you think my dad had with his mother and father? He did come back to them at age twelve, but those six years had created a

separation between Dad and his parents. Dad’s father died when I was young, so I don’t remember much about my grandfather. But I hear that to the end Dad never had a good relationship with him.

His mom, though (my grandmother of course), lived to be 87, so I knew her well. I really liked her. Eventually, she too became a Christian and she even came to live with

us in Japan for about half a year. So she was close to our family. But even in her later years my dad always called his mom “Mother.” That sounded so formal, but those six years of being away from his mother kept him from being able to relate to her properly.

Martin Luther, the Reformist, once said that it was very hard for him to consider God as a loving father. That was because his

own father was a cruel, mean man. But as Luther spent more time with God, he realized what a true father is, and so learned to call God “Father.”

What I am saying is that there needs to be constant contact if we are to feel close to anyone. Prayer does just that. It gets us close to God. How amazing! But it’s true. The more time we spend with God, the more we get to know him. That is prayer—not telling God what to do, but spending time with him. It should be fresh—new every day, not a memory of something that happened long ago.

As I begin writing this focus on prayer for the upcoming issues of

Japan Harvest, I would like to discuss four topics relating to prayer, though we will only get to the first this time. Those four topics are the appointment, the plan, the pattern and the promise. Let’s look at the first—the appointment.

Number One: The Appointment

Let me ask you a question: Do you have

A Fresh Encounter with God

Prayer is:

Man falling on his face before
a holy God, drinking in the
grandeur of His majesty, appropriating the marvel of His grace,
claiming the assurance of His
promises, and surrendering to
the marvel of His will.

—Russell Kelfer, Bible teacher

for Discipleship Tape Ministries,

San Antonio, Texas, USA

a set time to pray regularly? Every day? Alone? I know I'm "preaching to the converted," but this is important. Praying with others (corporate prayer) or in front of others (pastoral prayer) is good; we probably find ourselves doing it all the time. But first, we need private time with God.

I Thessalonians 5:17 says, "Pray without ceasing." In other words, prayer is an attitude, always being in constant awareness of God and our relationship to him. But how does that happen? It starts by having a set time to pray—making a commitment to pray.

Why should we do that? Because as humans, we forget easily. But there are also two basic motivations for making sure we take time to pray.

First, if we don't pray, there will be consequences—just the same as if you don't go to work each morn-

ing, there won't be any work to go to. You'll be fired! If we don't pray, the results will be clear. That should motivate us to pray regularly.

A second motivation is because someone we love is waiting for us. How many of us forget our kids at kindergarten? No one, right? Why not? Because we love our children, and they are waiting for us. So we do what it takes to get them. It should be the same with prayer.

Psalm 139:18 says, "When I awake, I am still with you." It is similar to being sick in a hospital bed and waking up in the middle of the night. Our wife or husband (or father or mother) would still be there, always there. You see, God has been there all the time. He is waiting for us to wake up, so that we can continue to spend time with him.

So, set a time to pray. Remember, if you don't make a decision now,

it makes it easier to put off making it. And a promise unmade can be easily broken. That's not good when it comes to prayer. (Stay tuned—next time, we'll look at the plan for prayer.)

P.S. I just got back from an overnight Kochi Mini-Prayer Summit. It was our first time to have such a meeting and I think it was a great success. We had 15 (including the two facilitators). That's a lot—especially for Kochi! And many of them said they wanted to have another Summit next year (a "real" four-day one this time). They realized two days wasn't enough. Some might even join us at the Prayer Summit for Western Japan in May. God seems to be moving in Kochi! We're excited! It's been worth the 30-year wait! (That's how long I've been a missionary here.)

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New Dues Structure Approved, New Officers Elected at 2009 JEMA Plenary Meeting



(L to R) Bryan Thompson, member-at-large; Max Oehninger, member at-large; David Scott, secretary; Carol Love, treasurer; Gary Bauman, communications (non voting); Dale Little, president; Ken Taylor, vice president; Nathan Snow, member-at-large

In a major decision that has been years in the making, delegates to the JEMA Annual Plenary Session approved a significant change in how the JEMA budget is funded, with a dues increase and a corresponding member benefit package. All JEMA members/member couples now receive with their membership: 1) login privileges to the member area of the JEMA website, 2) a subscription to *Japan Harvest* magazine, 3) a copy of the *JEMA Directory*, and 4) discounts on resources and various JEMA events (for complete details, see the JEMA website at www.jema.org). The 2009 Executive Committee was also formed, with new officers elected to terms that were expiring. Bryan Thompson was

elected for a special one-year term to complete the two-year member-at-large position vacated by Scott Parrish, who has returned to the US.

JCE5 (5th Japan Congress on Evangelism) - September 21-24, 2009

A full slate of activities is planned for this long anticipated event taking place at the Sapporo Convention Center. For an English summary of the schedule, see page 5 of the JEA Japan Update supplement in the center of this issue or download it from the JEA website at: http://jea.dtdns.net/jea_data/index.html. Registration is available online at: <http://jce5.dtdns.net>

Konnichi wa Kiwi

Warren Payne, who served with his wife Doreen in Japan for 26 years with OMF, stopped by the JEMA office in March with a copy of his 2007 book, *Konnichi wa Kiwi: Who ME... called to mission?*



This 124-page testimony of how the Lord called Warren and Doreen

to Japan has become one of OMF New Zealand's best sellers, with over 1000 copies sold nationwide. For more information about the book, contact Warren at WandDPayne@omf.net or OMF NZ at nz-bamboo@omf.net. (*Long-time current or former Japan missionaries: Has a book been published about your life and work in Japan? We know of a few such biographies, but we'd like to develop a bibliography of books like these sharing how God has used people from all walks of life to reach this nation during the past 60 years.*)



Sweden Alliance Christ Mission (SACM) / Word of Life Press Ministries (WLPM) held the dedication ceremony of its new headquarters building, located in Nakano-ku, Tokyo, on March 30, 2009. Over 114 representatives from churches and ministries in Japan and overseas were in attendance. Those participating in the ribbon cutting included (l-r) Yoshio Kanayama (President, Murasaki Sports), Rev. Akira Izuta (Board Chairman, Japan Kings Garden), Kenneth McVety (Founder, WLPM started at he and his wife's kitchen table in Nakano in 1950), Ryuichi Doi (Member of Parliament), and Rev. Akira Yoshimochi (Board Chairman, SACM).

[ICYDK (In case you didn't know): MK = Missionary Kid]

You are invited to the First Annual 2009 MK Camp!

Camp Raphayada
philmelton@aol.com JEBM

The Mino Seki Grace Baptist Church
1-10 Asakura dai, Seki shi, Gifu ken
〒501-3808 Tel. (0575) 23-8464
Cell 090-1788-1182

(Ask about family member discounts and Scholarships Available to qualified campers!)

▶ **Camp Raphayada** in Seki will sponsor our first annual MK Camp this year, and



if you are an MK, you are invited! Hosted by missionaries with JEBM who are former MK's in Japan, the goal of the camp is to provide an atmosphere of wholesome fun, unique opportunities for fel-

lowship, shared understanding, and spiritual edification

geared toward motivating MK's to deter-

mine to serve where God gives them the

opportunity to serve as fellow believers

and co-workers with their families here

in Japan. You come, too! **June 22-27**

Registration Coupon: "I'm coming to camp, too!"

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(Cost: 15,800)

Recognizing the need for evangelism, Bible study, and Christian fellowship, the reality of Camp Raphayada (Heb.: "Be still and know," Psalm 46:10) took shape with the purchase of property in 2000. Construction began with three buildings in 2001, which were utilized for camp programs that very year.



Phil and Debbie Melton [son of missionaries Pat and Wanda Melton], their children, family, and friends undertook the massive task of large scale construction with limited resources and even fewer laborers over the following seven years, yet so far, using only volunteers, have completed the Hub (above), which is the center of all activity at the campground, two sixty-person bungalows, a director's cabin, shower facility, outdoor chapel, guestrooms, and a clubhouse.

Today camp Raphayada is utilized both by the churches of JEBM as well as area churches and groups. Missionary kids from far and wide have always enjoyed serving at the campsite during church camp weeks, and this year Camp Raphayada is hosting the first of what is planned as an annual MK Camp, just for missionary kids to come meet others of like faith and service and to grow in their relationship with the Lord and with each other and to become better servants of the Lord as they minister with their parents in Japan.



Above: The Outdoor Chapel, Bungalow 2nd floor game area, storage area and guestrooms, and girls' bungalows and restrooms!

Mission Confusion

Dale Little, JEMA plenary session address (Feb 23, 2009)

Over the 25 years of my missionary career, I have heard many comments made by missionaries about their ministries. I list a few here. These comments have been made by North American missionaries. My own personal responses to these comments are noted in the italicized responses that follow each comment.

“My ministry as a missionary is to develop profit generating employment for the people of this country who do not know how to start their own businesses in their new democratic or capitalist environment.”

Is the winner the one who dies with the most “stuff”?

“As a missionary I am drilling wells for clean drinking water and building houses for the poor people in this country because they have so little. Someone else will need to try to reach these people with the gospel.”

Is someone really a missionary if she does not desire to proclaim the gospel? What makes a Christian missionary different than an atheist or secular non-government organization worker?

“I joined this two week short term missions team in order to have an interesting cross-cultural and international experience.”

Is the purpose of missions to give the missionary a good experience?

These kinds of comments lead me to suggest that mission confusion might be a problem among our North American evangelical churches and missionaries. Evidence for the confusion is sourced in what seems to be a lack of clear focus upon the purpose of our missional ministry. I have probably made a few of these kinds of comments myself! And maybe you have too.

But is our confusion limited to a place like North America? How about here in Japan?

On December 1, 2008, the Japan leadership of Lausanne III (Cape Town, 2010) convened in order to begin the process of nominating people from Japan to attend Lausanne III. I represented JEMA at that meeting. A few expatriate missionaries in Japan can be nominated to go, but they will have to cover their own costs.

In early February, several leaders of the Japanese Lausanne III planning team visited Seoul, South Korea, in order to meet with the North Asia Lausanne III planning committee. One of the documents coming out of that meeting in Seoul includes a brief history of the influence of the Lausanne movement in Japan.¹ The following four paragraphs summarize that document.

John Stott was one of the main speakers at Lausanne I in Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1974. Shortly thereafter, Stott was the keynote speaker at the first Japan Congress on Evangelism, held in Kyoto in 1974. He taught that mission ought to give equal weight to evangelization and social responsibility. This teaching had a great impact on Japanese evangelicals. As a result, Japanese evangelicals quickly moved through the following three models for thinking about how evangelization and social action might be related: from “salvation of soul as primary,” through “social responsibility as pre-evangelism,” to “evangelism and social responsibility as the two equal arms of mission.”

The impact on Japanese evangelicals was not only due to Stott’s teaching on this issue. It was also due to the fact that Kansai Mission Research Center had translated into Japanese several Lausanne I occasional papers on contextualization

and social responsibility.²

Lausanne II was held in Manila in 1989. Japanese evangelicals were well represented. But the theological perspective of Lausanne II is said to have had an overemphasis upon the charismatic movement and evangelization. Many Japanese evangelicals were disappointed and therefore withdrew from the Lausanne movement. Apparently no important documents of Lausanne II were translated into Japanese.

But Drs. Makito Masaki and Gyoji Nabetani began to pray about bringing Japan back into the Lausanne movement. At the Lausanne Forum in Pattaya, Thailand, in 2004, Dr. Masaki became the leader of the Lausanne movement in Japan and as a result formed the Japan Lausanne Network. The first official meeting of the JLN was on December 1, 2008—the meeting I attended. JLN desires that a solid theology of mission be presented at Lausanne III and hopes that Japanese evangelicals will appreciate the meaningfulness of that theology.

What can we learn from this description of the Lausanne movement and its influence upon the Japanese evangelical world? The meaningful theology of mission that JLN wants to see developed at Lausanne III is the kind of missiology that gives equal weight to evangelism and social work. In this way of thinking, evangelism has no higher priority than social work. The idea is that if we do not give equal weight to these two arms, we are not balanced in our theology of mission.

I wonder how many of us expatriate evangelical missionaries in Japan share this desire to give equal weight to evangelism and social action in our understanding of what mis-

sion is. Viewing ourselves from the perspective of the Japanese leaders of the JLN, I would guess that we are seen to be unbalanced. We are probably seen as giving inappropriate emphasis to evangelism. We are probably considered dualistic thinkers, separating the soul from the body. We are probably seen as placing too much emphasis on saving the soul, and not enough on social action.

If so, then I suggest that confusion about mission is not a uniquely North American phenomenon. There also seems to be some confusion in Japan.

So what is mission? In attempting to provide one possible answer to this question, I will ask two more questions.

1) What do we find in the New Testament, especially in Paul, about mission?

When it comes to the issue of mission, there is an immense amount of material in the Bible for us to

digest, especially in the New Testament. I will concentrate here only on Paul's missionary ministry. What were Paul's priorities in mission? Was he as confused in his mission thinking and practice as I think we might be today?

To see Paul's priorities in mission, one of the best kinds of texts to use are his statements about his own understanding of mission. One such text is Romans 15:20-25, where Paul describes his personal ambition about his mission work.

Verse 20—"It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation."

Paul's goal was to preach the gospel where there was no foundational knowledge of Jesus—where there were no churches.

Verse 21—"Rather, as it is written: 'Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand.'"

Paul saw his ministry as a fulfill-

ment of OT prophecy in Isaiah 52-53 about the Messiah, Jesus Christ. That is, the Messiah will be seen and understood by those who hear the preaching of the gospel.

Verses 22-23—"This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you. But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to see you..."

Paul's work of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ resulted in new churches being established throughout the Mediterranean world. That is, churches were birthed in the places where he preached. When Paul penned the letter to the Romans, he had already served as a founder of new churches for many years. Paul and those who worked with him started dozens of churches.

This gospel-centered, Christocentric preaching and church founding ministry and passion of Paul prevented him from visiting Rome. He was so focused on this work and so busy in it that the church in Rome

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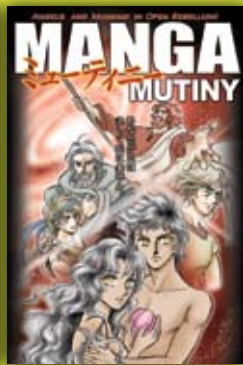
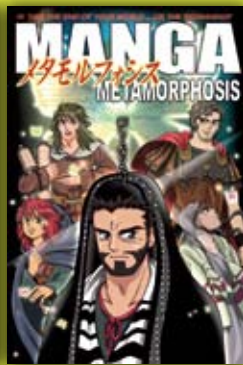
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had to take a back seat to his work in Asia Minor. He really wanted to visit the church in Rome, but could not. At least, he could not visit right away. But he eventually considered that the birth of these new churches signaled the end of his ministry in the eastern part of the Mediterranean world. In some fashion, he reasoned that his work there had come to an end. Thus being released from that work in Asia Minor, he could at last begin to fulfill his dream of heading to Rome.

But even then, his planned and hoped for visit to Rome did not have the purpose of simply visiting Rome.

Verse 24—“I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while.”

So Paul planned to visit the church at Rome while on the way to Spain, where he planned to continue his work of preaching and establishing churches. Rome was not the destination for Paul. It was a stopover on his way to Spain. He desired a partnership with the Roman church—a church he had not founded. That sounds like what we missionaries do when we take home assignments. We sometimes seek churches to become our ministry partners. Paul wanted the Roman church to partner with him in his work of preaching the gospel way out west in Spain.

Verse 25—“Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the saints there.”

However, before going to Rome enroute to Spain, Paul would first take a financial gift to Jerusalem from the churches he had founded in Asia Minor. This was a relief project that had significant theological meaning for Paul. He understood both his preaching and this financial offering as a fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecies. In the case of the offering, he understood it as bringing the

wealth of the nations to Jerusalem.

So Paul had the ambition of preaching the Christ-centered gospel so that new churches would be started. This was his ambition because he understood that he was fulfilling the Biblical injunction to help others know and believe on Jesus Christ. He had already done all this in Asia Minor, and now, with the partnership of the believers in Rome, he wanted to do the same in Spain.

2) What was the main mission thing for Paul?

It is difficult to reduce the answer to one point. Rather, it seems Paul displayed three major commitments in his missionary ministry.

1. Paul was committed to proclaiming the gospel (evangelism).

Proclamation of the gospel was central to Paul’s understanding of mission. Everywhere he went he was a proclaimer of the gospel and of the power of God found in the gospel.

2. Paul was committed to founding churches (church planting).

As he proclaimed the gospel, churches were born. Churches seemed to spring up everywhere Paul went! That was no accident. It was Paul’s intention. Jesus commanded his disciples to go and make disciples. So Paul went forth, preaching the gospel and founding churches.

3. Paul was committed to strengthening churches (church strengthening).

Moving beyond our focus on Romans 15, Paul did not stop with evangelism and church founding. He also had a heart for strengthening the new churches and the new believers in those churches. He wanted to move those microcosms of the kingdom of God that we call local churches toward maturity in Jesus Christ. Paul was more than a church founder—he was also a church strengthener. Evidence for this can be found by recalling the names of many of the letters we find in the New Testament. Many of those names are taken from the

places where Paul founded new churches. The New Testament provides convincing evidence that Paul was more than just a starter of new churches. He was also a teacher and one who strengthened churches.

So a strong case can be made that for Paul, evangelism, church planting, and church strengthening were the primary foundation stones of his missionary work. That is a descriptive statement. But there is a valid way to consider it to also be prescriptive. That is, if the Bible is truly authoritative for us who claim to be evangelical Christians, then we should be able to connect our mission work to these major mission themes found in Paul’s writings and in the New Testament.

This would mean that rather than an outreach English teacher viewing herself as an English teacher, she should be able to see herself as using her English teaching as a means of evangelism. Or, if her English teaching takes place in a church, then she should see herself as strengthening that church’s ministry. She is not merely an English teacher. Rather, she is an evangelist who desires to proclaim the gospel or the evangel through her English teaching. She could understand herself to be a missionary disguised as an English conversation teacher. If she uses the tool of English wisely, people will come to believe the gospel she proclaims. She is a missionary English teacher with a passion for the gospel.

Rather than a missionary saying, “I am here to dig wells for fresh water! That’s my job!” he should be able to envision his digging of wells as a practical way to earn credibility so that at the appropriate time he can share the gospel (if permitted). His greatest desire is to proclaim the light of God’s salvation in a world of spiritual darkness and lostness. This is his heartbeat. Digging wells for drinking water is merely the means.

Missionaries have many jobs. They do many different kinds of

work. But they should have a purpose that aligns with the New Testament idea of mission. They might do the work of a nurse, a doctor, a Bible translator, a missionary kid schoolteacher, a writer of curriculum, an airplane mechanic, or a construction worker. But they should all have a desire to proclaim the gospel, or plant churches, or strengthen churches. And they should be able to describe how their job fits with those kinds of missional purposes. When they are able to envision their own ministry in this way, then they are missionaries in the New Testament sense of the word.

Certainly this kind of prioritized way of thinking about mission leads us closer to the Biblical way of doing mission. This way of trying to link what we do in mission with what we discover to be New Testament foundations for mission will, I believe, take us a long way toward reducing the confusion about mission that might be present in our sending constituencies.

Here in the evangelical world of Japan where there is apparently a desire to place equal missiological weight upon evangelism and social action, we would do well to ask whether evangelism and social action are given equal weight in the New Testament. If our conclusion is that evangelism, along with church planting and strengthening, receive the highest priority in the New Testament, then the appropriate question to ask is this: "How does social action connect with the major missional themes found in the New Testament?" We could reply that social action is the result of evangelism. We could say that social action is the context for evangelism. We could say that social action brings credibility to our evangelism. But I am hard pressed to find a solid foundation in the New Testament for claiming that social action and evangelism should be equally weighted in our understanding of mission.³

How about you? May the clarity of Scripture clear away our mission confusion.

Endnotes

1. Satoru Kanemoto, "Future of Japan Lausanne and the Evangelical Movement in Japan" (Feb 6, 2009).
2. Lausanne documents are available at <http://www.lausanne.org/documents.html>
3. The following publications have been helpful: David J. Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict: 10 Key Questions in Christian Missions Today* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005). See especially Chapter 5, "Incarnationalism and Representationalism: Who is Our Missionary Model—Jesus or Paul?" (pp. 141-65). Andreas J. Kostenberger, *The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples According to the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1998).]

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The 150th Anniversary of Protestant Missions in Japan

The 150th Anniversary and Three Other Anniversaries

By Kenny and Lila Joseph

Half of this feature was written... 50 years ago. At the 2009 JEMA Plenary Session I was invited to put up a wall display of what JEMA (formerly EMAJ) did to celebrate the 100th anniversary, with 50-year old posters and the four full pages of the May, 1959 articles in the *Yomiuri*, *Japan Times*, *Asahi Evening News* and the *Mainichi*—plus a whole loose-leaf notebook full of archives of 50 years ago. We missionaries started two years before the centennial to prepare. Led by born-in-Japan Will McIlwaine, EMAJ president John Schwab, Chuck Corwin, and me as vice president and PR head, we scoured the country to raise enthusiastic support.

This became the joint Missionary/Japanese JPC (Japan Protestant Centennial). We invited every missionary and pastor to join on the simple sentence, “I believe that the Bible is God’s inspired, inerrant Word, our only guide to faith and practice.” Anyone who didn’t believe that separated himself.

Featured were Protestant evangelists from China, the Philippines, India, Hong Kong, Borneo, Japan, and Taiwan, emphasizing that this was an Asia-wide celebration. Crusades and campaigns kept on for five years afterwards.

Fast-forward 50 years to the McDonald era. The 150th anniversary celebrations are 100% Japanese-led, directed by a representative from the Japan Bible Society. When I called to ask the name of the missionary on the committee, he said there was none. They did try to get Rick Warren and Billy Graham’s daughter to

come and speak, but failed. Franklin Graham will come in 2010.

While I appreciate the committee’s desire to give credit where credit is due, I personally was discouraged to see the main poster only showing the first five long-gone-to-heaven white Protestant missionaries. To me, this only succeeds in reinforcing the deeply held prejudice in Japan that Christianity is a foreign religion from the west.

Even before seeing what others had planned, I launched my own “Four Japan Christian Anniversary Celebrations.” With the recent homegoing of beloved TEAM-mates Ralph Cox and David Martin, that leaves Stella Cox, Lila and myself among the few last survivors of that group of Protestants who celebrated the 100-year Centennial.

I now think I made a colossal mistake as PR head back then in focusing only on the 100 years since Protestant missionaries arrived in Japan, so this year I am adding three more anniversaries to my special anniversary presentations:

199 – the first Christian missionaries from the Middle East (Assyria) come to Japan via India, China and Korea – 1800th anniversary

1459 – the Portuguese Jesuits arrive – 450th Anniversary

1859 – American missionaries land in Japan – 150th Anniversary

1949 – Post-war missionaries re-enter Japan – 60th Anniversary

The Buddhist Nichiren Sokka Gakkai (Komeito) put out a half page colored ad with a Japanese flag and “since 1232 in Japan,” celebrating a foreign religion from India/Tibet, so let’s boast in the Lord and our long history in Japan since the second century. Go to your nearest secular bookstore and ask for *Japan*, *the Country of the Erased Cross* and/

or *Erased Bible*, published by Tokuma Shoten. When they say, “Sold out... sorry,” the magic phrase is *toriyosete kudasai*. (Please order it.) Just those 3 words are worth 200 requests to the publisher, believe me. The store will call you when it’s in. Just give your name and phone number.

If you want A3 size copies of the 50-year old full page articles from the four Japanese newspapers reproduced on the facing page, go to your local Japan post office, ask for a sheet of the latest commemorative set of stamps, and send that with your printed name and address and telephone number to us at 7-39-6 Higashi Oizumi, Nerima-ku, Tokyo, 178-0063 so we can paste it on a big envelope and send it to you. OK? If your name and phone are correct in the 2008 JEMA Directory, just write your name and “Correct.”

God bless, keep, use and prosper you.

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. His trilingual message CD and bilingual illustrated book on Japan’s 1800 years of Christian history entitled Jizo and Jesus, (now renamed Japan’s Christian Roots) and Japan: Country of the Erased Cross (Japanese only) are available at www.kennyjoseph.com. E-mail Kenny at REAPJapan1@aol.com.

From Arrivals to Reunions to Celebrations

Arrivals

When Commodore Matthew C. Perry of the US Navy arrived off the coast of Uruga, Kanagawa (near present day Yokosuka) in 1853 to force open the ports of Japan to the rest of the world, he started a chain of events that resulted in the arrival of the first Protestant missionaries in Japan.

American Episcopal missionaries Rev. John Liggins and Rev. Channing M. Williams of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States were the first to arrive in May and June of 1859. They had been ministering in China.

They were followed in October by Dr. James Hepburn of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, who played a central role in the translation of the Japanese Bible and was the founder of Meiji Gakuin. He is also known for the system he devised for writing Japanese in *Romaji*.

Rev. Samuel R. Brown, Rev. Guido F. Verbeck and Dr. Duane B. Simmons of the Dutch Reformed Church in America arrived in November. They also applied themselves to Bible translation work. It took over 20 years, but in 1880 the New Testament was completed and in 1887 the Old Testament.

Although Japan did not officially allow freedom of religion until 1873, the first Protestant Church was established in 1872 by 11 Japanese who were led to Christ by missionary James Ballagh. It was called Japan Christ Church. Today it is called Yokohama Kaigan Church.

Reunions and Celebrations

For celebration and mutual encouragement, Protestant churches in Japan held several "Christian reunions" during the first 50 years of Protestant missions in Japan. During the Meiji period, they were held at least four times: in 1878 and 1883 in Tokyo, in 1880 in Osaka, and in 1885 in Kyoto. In 1909, the 50th anniversary of Protestant missions in Japan was held at the YMCA in Kanda, Tokyo, October 5-10.

Numerous celebration events were held in 1959, including two missionary Bible conferences: one at Nojiriko in early July and the EMAJ Conference in Karuizawa in early April. The Japan Protestant Centennial held two large Bible conferences in Tokyo and Osaka, and smaller conferences in Nagoya, Sendai, Hiroshima and other key areas. A Centennial Celebration was held at the Metropolitan Gymnasium from November 1 to 7.

Events in 2009

This year, on July 8 and 9, the largest 150th anniversary event will take place at the Pacifico Yokohama (capacity 5000). The Executive Committee for this event includes representation from a cross-section of Japanese Protestant groups, including Nobuhisa Yamakita (JNAC), Tatsuhiro Mineno (JEA), and Koremichi Ookawa (Pentecostal).

Many other celebrations are taking place around the country to commemorate this 150-year anniversary. Watch your JEMA e-mails and check the JEMA website (www.jema.org) for updates on various events.





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Dirty Laundry:

What Do We Do When the News about the Church Is Bad?



Several months ago while meeting with the JEA *Japan Update* staff I was asked if the missionary community was aware of all the negative press Christian churches are getting in secular Japanese magazines today. As a result, I thought it might be instructive to have excerpts of reports that millions of Japanese around us are reading translated into English. Please note that even though some of the AERA magazine reports on the following pages may seem excessively graphic, we are only printing excerpts, and the emotional impact upon our Japanese neighbors who read the full reports is even greater. Also remember that what is printed in these reports as “fact” may or may not be 100% accurate, but your

neighbors who are already suspicious of “religion” in general will tend to read reports such as these at face value.

In the Christian media, reports of alleged abusive leadership practices are also on the increase. Recently, extensive coverage of sexual harassment allegations against a well-known pastor with a nationwide discipleship ministry appeared in the *Christian Shimbun*, *Kirisuto Shimbun*, and *Revival Japan*. The pastor in question, his wife, and several church staff assert his innocence of all such claims. It is yet to be seen what the final result of this particular situation will be, as there are a number of complicating factors.

Our main point in addressing

the topic of abuse and allegations of abuse in the church is this: In light of today’s world, what steps should be implemented to insure that we personally, and our churches collectively, do all that can be done to minimize the possibility of being accused of impropriety? Furthermore, since we all know of Christian leaders who have fallen into sins they never imagined they would ever commit, what accountability structures do we have in place to guard against the unthinkable possibility of gradually slipping into gross sin ourselves? “So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!” —1 Corinthians 10:12

— the Editor



Allegations of Abuse Reported in AERA Magazine

Summary excerpts with comments by translator Atsuko Tateishi

Asahi Shimbun's weekly magazine *AERA* reported in the two issues dated April 14 and July 28, 2008, some deeply disturbing allegations of abuse by Christian pastors in Japan. The April issue covers three sexual abuse cases, while the July issue covers abusive and cult-like practices in Christian churches. Following are excerpts from the two articles. Note that the victims' names are not their real names.

Sexual Abuse Cases – April 14, 2008 issue

A former pastor of Takada Christ Church of the Anglican Episcopal Church in Japan, in Yamato Takada City, Nara Prefecture, was sued for sexual abuse of Akemi while she

was in fourth grade till ninth grade. Akemi's family had been faithful members of the church for generations. Her parents entrusted her to the pastor for private English lessons, during which he molested her until he was eventually transferred to another church. It was much later that Akemi realized she had been sexually abused. The pastor had repeatedly told her that what he was doing was "a necessary step for her to become an adult woman," and she had never doubted his words. The Osaka High Court affirmed essentially all the claims by the plaintiff in March 2005.

A former pastor of Hiratsuka Church of the Japan Holiness Church in Hiratsuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture, was also found guilty by the court. While the pastor was involved in a parachurch ministry, he would go to or near the Kyushu region about once a month. Kaori, then 21 years old, living in Fukuoka Prefecture, got acquainted with the

pastor through the ministry, and had a great respect for him. However, when the pastor invited her to come see him in his hotel room in Hakata City, he raped her. This forced sexual relationship continued each time the pastor visited the area. In the face of the pastor's highly manipulative words, including prayers, Kaori was quite unable to refuse him. After a year, Kaori gained the courage to definitely end the relationship. Later, she developed an eating disorder. Even a victory in court did not heal her wound completely. In the fall of 2002, a year after the court decision, Kaori committed suicide. She was 26.

A third case took place at Kumamoto Shirakawa Church of the United Church of Christ in Japan, in Kumamoto City, Kumamoto Prefecture. While working for the church, Sanae was repeatedly subjected to improper touching by the pastor for over two years. She quit her job and brought the case

to court, hoping there would be no more victims. As it turned out, six other women testified of sexual harassment by the same pastor. The court affirmed the pastor's sexually inappropriate behavior in April 2005.

In the first two cases, it is obvious that manipulation by a religious authority figure was a significant factor. In all three cases, the pastors denied their charges in court. The pastor in the first case resigned, following defeat in the Supreme Court. The Japan Holiness Church excommunicated the pastor in the second case. In the third case, the pastor claimed a conspiracy by one of his assistant pastors. In fact, the pastor continues pastoring the church with the support of the church board, even though the Diocese of Kyushu has been urging the pastor to resign. Each denomination involved has since developed guidelines for prevention of sexual harassment and set up a system to deal with potential cases in the future. But what about other denominations? Professor Yoshihide Sakurai, a religious sociologist of the University of Hokkaido says, "We should never assume that sexual abuse will not happen in Christian churches. Our assumption should be that it could happen."

Cult-like Practices in the Church – July 28, 2008 issue

Four former members of the independent Hallelujah Community Church Hamamatsu (HCC) in Hamamatsu City, Shizuoka Prefecture, filed an action in court against the pastor of HCC, alleging the repeated use of force and sexual harassment toward the plaintiffs. One female plaintiff claimed that the pastor typically would beat her buttocks with some metal object such as a large frying pan, for totally unjustified reasons. One time, it was the way she greeted the pastor that displeased him. Another time, he accused her of having looked away

Leading with Uprightness and Integrity

As an American missionary in Asia for over 20 years, I have been a constant student of how culture impacts the way church is expressed. One issue with which I have become increasingly concerned is an unwillingness on the part of some pastors to listen and be open to significant spiritual input and correction. Another concern I have is the lack of checks and balances to the personal and organizational power of a considerable number of pastors.

It is a particularly dangerous combination when checks and balances to power are lacking, and there is no true spirit of openness on the part of a pastor. At best, this situation can cause a pastor to lead a church in an unfruitful direction and fail to live up to that pastor's personal God-given potential. At worst, it can lead to severe abuses of power and moral failure on the part of a pastor as well as the potential disintegration of a local church.

Robert Clinton's research into biblical examples of good and bad leadership suggests that certain practices can help a leader finish well—to go the distance in life and ministry, fulfill God-given potential, and avoid major pitfalls and moral failure. These are:

- Sustain a vibrant personal relationship with God right up to the end
- Continually maintain a network of meaningful relationships and have a variety of mentors and/or coaches throughout life
- Develop perspective that enables proper focus
- Be disciplined in important areas of life
- Maintain a lifelong learning posture*

While these practices can't guarantee pastors will always lead their churches with uprightiness and integrity, I believe the first two, in particular, will go a long way toward helping them do so. A tender heart toward God and an openness and listening ear to others will enable a godly response when a pastor inevitably stumbles in some area and is confronted with that sin. Contrast the response of King David to Nathan's rebuke over his sin with Bathsheba (Psalm 51) with King Hezekiah's response to Isaiah over having shown the Babylonian prince all that was in his kingdom, without regard for future consequences (Isaiah 39).

How widespread is this issue of pastoral power abuse and lack of openness to input and correction? Does strong leadership necessarily mean that such abuses are inevitable? How can this issue be addressed and overcome? These are questions that missionaries and church leaders alike need to wrestle with in order to prevent further abuses and unleash the full potential of a new generation of pastors who are strong—yet soft-hearted and teachable—pastors who will lead the church across Asia and around the world.

* Five practices adapted from: Clinton, J. R. (1993). *Leadership Perspectives: How to Study the Bible for Leadership Insights*. Altadena, CA: Barnabas Publishers.

—Stu Lynch, *Asian Access*

from him during a worship service. Yet she endured all the punishment, believing the suffering would produce personal growth. Another female plaintiff was once beaten because she did not look cheerful enough. In the middle of the punishment, the pastor suddenly told her to push down her panties. In total confusion, she pushed her underwear halfway to her buttocks, and the pastor struck her with his hand. Though the Hamamatsu Chapter of Shizuoka District Court dismissed the case due to an expiration of the statute of limitations, it did affirm that the defendant had repeatedly used abusive force against the plaintiffs and other church members in the name of discipline.

In Kitami City, Hokkaido Prefecture, 20-year-old Yoko found herself at a Christian church when she showed up for an appointment with a counselor. She had made the appointment through an advertisement, seeking help for her social phobia. The counselor turned out to be the pastor of the church. At about the fourth session, the pastor asked Yoko if she had ever been embraced by her father. Then the pastor turned off most of the lighting in the room, and embraced Yoko. Two weeks later, he asked her to have sex with him. Yoko was soon baptized, and two months later was asked to marry the pastor. While she was a bit perplexed with his instructions that she must not tell anyone about their relationship, she felt she owed a great debt to this man who found value in her. About six months later, Yoko heard a rumor about the pastor sleeping with several women. When she asked him about it, he yelled in her face, “Shut up, or I’ll kill you!” Soon after, he broke off the engagement. Yoko left the church in the summer of 2007. As she talked to some former church members, she learned that the pastor also had caused trouble with a few women in the church 20 years before, result-

ing in a church split. Moreover, from what Shiho, a former church member, told her, Yoko realized that during the period of her engagement with the pastor he was carrying on a sexual relationship with Shiho. Like Yoko, Shiho got into the disturbing relationship through confiding in the pastor about her family problems. At the time, Shiho believed that refusing the pastor meant turning against God.

Both of the above pastors deny the charges against them. In fact, each insists they are victims of a conspiracy. As both churches happen to be independent, the pastors continue to pastor their respective congregations.

Professor Sakurai offers advice to avoid getting victimized in a cult. “Don’t take in blindly what you are told, even when you are told by a pastor. Process information in your mind before you decide to join a religion. Try more than one church and compare. If a pastor tries to stop you from going to another church by criticizing your behavior as lack of faith, then you may as well quit going to such a pastor’s church.”

Comments by the Translator

All the reported cases seem credible. No one is perfect. Pastors are no exception. God certainly uses broken vessels. I would not be surprised if some of the pastors in these articles are very good preachers or counselors. If a pastor appears to be a good person in public, and victims do not realize they are being abused, it can be extremely difficult to detect. In fact, some of the pastors in the articles seem to genuinely believe that they have done nothing wrong. I wonder if they have become so good at manipulating that they manage to deceive themselves, too. I am reminded of a passage in a book I translated into Japanese. In chapter six of Dr. David Thompson’s book *God’s Healing for Hurting Families* (Wesleyan Publishing House, 2004;

Japanese title: 傷ついた心をいやす旅, Japan Holiness Association, 2008), he confesses how he managed to deceive himself before he was brought to the painful realization of his deeply hurting family. He then notes that delusion is, in fact, typical for many in darkness. He also states that getting out of the darkness is certainly possible by the grace of God, but takes time and practice. As for abusive leaders who get as deeply into self-deception as the articles seem to indicate, I must wonder how long it would take before they would be able to see that they are in darkness in the first place.

It is clear that pastors need to be more aware of the danger of getting into codependent relationships with those they serve. The danger seems even greater in Japan than elsewhere, because pastors are addressed as *sensei* (teacher) and are treated with much respect by church members. Moreover, people in Japan often come to church with desperate need, as we see in the *AERA* articles. Unless a person is from a Christian home or has a Christian friend, they will try everything else before knocking on a church door. By then, they will be very tired and easy prey for a manipulative authority figure.

We must assume, as Professor Sakurai argues, that abuse within the church, even by pastors, can happen. For that reason, churches are strongly encouraged to develop guidelines for prevention of abuse and to set up a system to deal with potential abuse cases at the level of diocese or denomination. Independent churches should do the same, but it would be difficult to maintain an accountability system without involving some third party. Independent churches should probably seek to be part of a local church network for the sake of accountability. At any rate, there is no universal preventive.

On the opening page of this section on our theme "Dirty Laundry: What Do We Do When the News About the Church is Bad?," we asked what steps the Church should be taking to proactively deal with potential problems in church leadership. As the members of the Japan Evangelical Association, one of the main associations of Protestant churches in Japan, have grappled with this issue in the past, they have found it difficult to agree on a specific statement. However, the news over this past year has brought some urgency to the matter, and the JEA has now adopted the following general statement as a first step toward addressing this sensitive issue. Following this shortened version, on page 26 we present the English translation of a longer version that was first presented to JEA leadership but not been adopted, as it does include some helpful guidelines to consider.

A Warning About Cult-like Practices in Japanese Churches

Thank you for your support of and cooperation with the Japan Evangelical Association.

As you are probably aware, in recent years there have been unfortunate reports of church leaders resorting to violence, sexually harassing church members, and forcefully seizing property. The authenticity of some of these cases is being debated in the courts, and some have become the focus of secular news reports.

Up until now, it was thought that these types of incidents could never happen in a Christian church. Or, even if they did take place, they were relegated to the sphere of a certain denomination (that has become cult-like) or regarded as the exotic behavior of some individual. However, as has already been reported in secular magazines, these incidents can occur in traditional denominations, churches, and evangelistic organizations, and we no longer have the luxury of standing by idly and doing nothing about them.

It is essential that we do research to determine the cause of these unfortunate incidents, and also take measures to prevent them from happening again in the future. As one step in that direction, we feel there is a need to make some critical self-evaluations about the role of leadership in each denomination, each local church, and each para-church organization. Leaders who have been raised up as shepherds of the flock are called to follow in the steps of the Great Shepherd Jesus Christ and serve the flock, rather than be served (Mark 10:45). They are also instructed to not lord it over those entrusted to them, but be examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:3).

As the representatives of denominations, local churches, and para-church organizations, let us discipline ourselves and encourage one another to not lord it over the sheep but rather become examples for the flock to follow.

We pray that the blessing of Christ, the Chief Shepherd, may be richly upon all those who are representatives of the flock.

(Adopted by the JEA and distributed to its members - translation provided by William Wood)

A Warning About Cult-like Practices in Japanese Churches

(Original draft presented to JEA leadership but not adopted - translation provided by William Wood)

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of reported cases of violence, sexual harassment, offering coercion, etc. involving pastors. The authenticity of some of these cases is being debated in the courts, and some have become the focus of secular news reports. Up until now, it was thought that these types of incidents could never happen in a Christian church. Or, even if they did take place, they were relegated to the sphere of a certain denomination or regarded as the exotic behavior of some individual. However, as has already been reported in secular magazines, the possibility of these incidents occurring in traditional churches has increased, and we no longer have the luxury of standing by idly and doing nothing in the face of these tragedies.

The fundamental cause of the problem lies in a misunderstanding and misuse of spiritual authority. As the Bible states, a pastor, as shepherd of the flock, has authority given to him from God to protect, feed, and guide the sheep. It is only when he, with conviction, speaks from the Bible and declares “Thus saith the Lord” that the sheep can have peace and experience spiritual growth. That growth is the development of a strong personal relationship with God and results in a healthy self-reliance whereby Christians can experience freedom, peace, and joy in the Lord. However, unfortunately, in a number of churches there are reports of believers becoming dependent (losing their ability to think for themselves) upon pastors who claim absolute authority, pastors who place a divine mandate on their own human ideas (visions), pastors who punish (use violence on) any disobedient members, coercion to give offerings, and general disregard

for the basic human rights of church members. The attitude that, “I’m the pastor. You don’t need to think. Just obey!” may *appear* to be an effective method of spiritual training, but in reality, this is a form of mind control common to all cult groups, and does not encourage growth. Rather, it causes growth to stop. Believers who become dependent on their pastor stop thinking, stop making judgments, and stop making decisions for themselves—becoming like robots that move via remote control. Needless to say, this is not the spiritual growth that the Bible teaches.

We must strive to make sure that the way of truth is not brought into disrepute any further (2 Peter 2:2). Because the church belongs to God, we need to undertake a serious self-examination. We should not criticize one another, but rather strive to repent in a way that is worthy of a church that has been entrusted with proclaiming forgiveness of sins through the gospel. In order that the church’s holiness and God’s righteousness might be testified of to the world, let us give serious thought to the following questions.

1. Am I claiming spiritual superiority over others?

If a spiritual leader is using expressions such as: “I have a special anointing of the Spirit,” “I have a closer relationship with God than you have,” “When it comes to spiritual issues, I know what is best,” this is not only a sign of pride, but is a denial of one of the pillars of the Reformation, the priesthood of believers.

2. Am I using methods of mind control instead of waiting upon the Holy Spirit?

Planting fear in people’s hearts (“If

you don’t obey me God will judge you”), putting pressure on people to give offerings or do service for the church, and controlling information is a fleshly method of control and does not promote the work of God. Evangelism and church growth are the work of the Holy Spirit.

3. Am I causing church members to become dependent upon me? Do I have a correct understanding of education?

The goal of proper education is to cultivate self-reliance. A self-reliant person is someone who can think, make judgments on his own, and take responsibility for his life without relying on other people. The attitude that says, “My church members are spiritual children, and without the help of me, their spiritual parent, they cannot understand anything or accomplish anything. They need me to tell them what to do.” is an attitude that stunts spiritual growth.

4. Am I exercising authority over my church members?

As it states in 1 Peter, spiritual leaders are not to lord it over those entrusted to them, but be examples to the flock (5:3). They are not dictators, but servant leaders.

In order to keep the way of truth from suffering further disrepute, we feel that now is the time to examine our pastoral practices and training/educational programs to see if there is anything that is cultic in nature or that deviates from Scripture. Let us return to a healthy form of spiritual leadership, not using fleshly or cultic methods but relying on the Holy Spirit and waiting for God to reveal His works in us. Herein lies the key to revival in Japan.

Hungry Hearts: Reflections on the ANRC Conference

by Brian Snider



The Holy Spirit showering his grace and mercy upon hungry hearts like rain falling upon freshly plowed soil—this is the image that came to my mind as I thought about the recent All Nations Returnees Conference (ANRC), held March 19-22, 2009 in Kumagaya-shi, Saitama-ken. I sensed so strongly that God was ministering to hungry hearts, young people who had given their hearts to the Lord overseas, but in the hard times of adjustment upon returning to Japan, had gotten discouraged or maybe even given up on their faith.

The worship times during the three day conference were wonderful, and I sensed that many young people whose hearts had been feeling spiritually dry were soaking in the Presence of God in a refreshing way. I sensed many returnees were making a renewed commitment to Christ. On two occasions, numbers of young people stood when an appeal was made for a deep commitment to Christ.

A healing of hearts was also taking place. The messages were punctuated with laughter, and there was a spirit of joy, both in the service times as well as the informal times. There

was much laughter and joy in the cafeteria as students and ministry leaders shared together over meals.

The overarching atmosphere of the conference, however, along with joy, was love. Love for God and love for one another. Everyone, it seemed, was constantly meeting someone new and making new friendships. It was very refreshing, I believe, for returnees to meet one another and establish friendships with other young people who had had similar experiences and understood each other. Small group times were sprinkled throughout the program.

“Returnees” in this context is a term that refers to Japanese people who live abroad and then return to Japan. Christian returnees are typically young students who have received Christ while living overseas. Upon returning to Japan, they often face great difficulties in adjusting back and become discouraged in their faith.

Very often young people who have accepted Christ overseas face opposition from family members when they return home, ranging from passive tolerance to worse. Often returnees have experienced a great deal of freedom in wor-

ship services and much openness in relationships among believers in the churches they attended while overseas. The lack of this freedom and openness upon their return to Japan is very discouraging. Often, too, returnees sense a lack of acceptance and even suspicion in Japanese churches when they return. This adds to their pain.

Statistics say that 80% of Christian returnees will drop out of church within 3 years. But this is a statistic I believe can change dramatically! Seeing the desire for worship and commitment among returnees at the ANRC, and their tremendous joy with newfound friends was thrilling. The potential to see returnees established in their faith and become a growing part of the army of young people God is raising up to bring revival harvest to Japan is, I believe, very great. Every year, 1600 Christian returnees return to Japan. Many of them have grown rapidly in their faith and are eager to serve God.

There were some extremely practical results that came out of the conference and some important truths I learned regarding helping returnees. First, as already mentioned, developing connections

between returnees is quite healthy and healing. Second, more than one returnee mentioned that after they arrived back in Japan, continued encouragement over a period of weeks and months through prayer, email,

a number of representatives from overseas ministries who minister to Japanese at the conference. Connecting overseas ministries to ministries and churches here in Japan has great potential, first in helping ministries

many returnees to keep going.

Something that we as missionaries to Japanese can do to help them is to understand the difficulties and challenges Christian returnees face when they come back to Japan, arrange opportunities for them to have fellowship, and provide settings where they can openly share their challenges, adjustment difficulties, and pain.

My prayer is that there will be an expanding base as more and more overseas ministries and churches and missions in Japan who understand the needs of returnees connect in an ever-expanding network.

The conference this year—the first ever—was so successful that it was agreed upon to have another ANRC next year! This was decided even though there is great personal sacrifice for the staff and leadership who are involved in the preparation of the conference. Make plans to attend next year!



on both sides of the “pond” to know how to more effectively minister to returnees, and also in helping returnees get quickly incorporated into a church that understands them.

I also learned the importance of “soft landing.”

Preparing returnees before they return to Japan to be ready for some of the adjustments and challenges they will face is most helpful. Helping newly arrived returnees get quickly plugged into a church through this kind of international networking is essential for

the phone, etc., from the overseas church or ministry that led them to Christ helped make the difference for them not to give up.

Another valuable outcome of the conference was the interconnection between ministries. There were

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Japan's Growing Homeschooling Movement

by Tim Cole

In recent years, America's homeschoolers have become a force to be reckoned with in educational and social and political circles, with estimated numbers topping 1.3 million. Some might be surprised to learn that Japan, while not comparable in scale, has a growing and enthusiastic group of homeschoolers as well. A few months ago my position with Family Forum Japan took me to the CHEA (Church & Home Education Association) Japan's Fall Convention in Hakuba, where over 300 parents and children gathered to get input and to interact on home and church schooling issues. The atmosphere was joyous, somewhat chaotic, and unlike most Japanese gatherings, anything but reserved. There was also a generous mix of nationalities present, which added to the flavor of the conference.

The main guest speaker was biblical counselor Louis Priolo, who has written some outstanding books on the family, including *The Heart of*

Anger, and *The Complete Husband*. Lou's lectures dealt not so much with the subject of homeschooling as with marriage and parenting from a biblical perspective. Other main sessions and multiple electives dealt with such subjects as: "The Purpose of Education in the Christian Home," "The Essence of Church and Homeschooling," "Teaching Children of Different Ages," "The Bible vs. Humanism," "How to Start and Develop a Church School," and "Principles of Biblical Sex Education" (taught by yours truly!). Word of Life Press, Creation Research, Family Forum Japan, CHEA itself, and other organizations had resource tables, offering various educational tools of interest to conference participants. Meanwhile, a lively kids program was provided (including plenty of play in the freshly fallen snow) by volunteers from Philip Bromen's Meisei School in Sendai, and churches in the US.

Homeschooling has been some-

what controversial in the West, and Japan is no exception. My wife and I sent our five kids to a Japanese public school (and were very satisfied). We were involved in establishing and running a small scale Christian school (what Japanese believers call "Church School") for a few years (with mixed results), as well as having homeschooled our kids for various lengths of time. We topped their educations off with 3-4 years of high school at CAJ. All of which is to say we've had a broad experience, and tend to be very much in the "middle" (wherever that is!) regarding the controversy mentioned above. It is from this hopefully somewhat objective perspective that I cautiously share the following observations:

1. Japan's homeschooling movement is much needed. As Japanese families (Christian and otherwise) become more varied, and today's society produces children with a wider range of special needs, the "one size fits all" approach of Japanese public



schools is proving inadequate for many situations. Add to this the nationalistic bent of the Ministry of Education (Monkasho), the general slide toward Comprehensive Sex Education (“Safe Sex”), and the increasing lack of competent classroom control by teachers in some parts of the country, the result is more and more Christian parents deeply concerned about the negative influences evident in the public education system. However, I do not believe Japan’s public schools should be completely written off by all Christian parents. Overall, there is much that is positive in the public system, and it can remain an option for many parents. Surprisingly enough, I have heard of several cases where school principals have been very supportive of homeschooling parents, allowing their children to attend only the classes of their choice at the local school. Among Japanese educators, there does not

appear to be the kind of antagonism toward homeschoolers that has sometimes been demonstrated in North America and Europe.

2. The resources available to Japan’s homeschoolers, including texts, curriculums, coops, networks, etc. are inadequate. This means that many homeschooled children are not receiving an education on a par with the public schools in the core subjects. This is a cause for great concern, but is also an inevitable stage the movement must pass through, as was true in North America. Time and experience will remedy this situation, but in the meantime the generation of kids who “pioneered” the movement may need to figure out how to fill in the gaps. The problem is that it is not enough to simply provide a biblical perspective in education. Parents also need to equip their children so they can grow up to be competent and productive Christians in all walks of life. Much work remains to be done before this goal can be achieved on a broad scale through homeschooling alone in Japan.

3. The main thrust of the homeschooling movement in Japan is one I both heartily agree and disagree with—that parents are responsible before God for the education of their children (Deut. 6:4-9). I heartily agree that parents are to raise their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). But I also heartily disagree with the notion (sometimes implied by homeschooling

advocates) that this means parents should directly oversee every detail of their children’s education. For example, I myself attended Japanese and American public schools and a non-Christian international high school. I was never homeschooled. But my parents were very involved in my education, proactively helping me interact with the non-biblical content I occasionally encountered, filling in the gaps, and especially, grounding my heart in the Scriptures. The result is that I was uniquely prepared for the ministry I’m involved in today. The point here is that each child’s needs and each family situation is unique, and parents have a responsibility (in dependence on God) to discern what is best for each child, and actively participate in the child’s education, whether it be in a public school, a “church school,” in a homeschooling context, or in some combination of the above.

4. A serious cause for concern in this movement is the significant percentage of parents looking to homeschooling as a cure-all for their



parenting issues, including their own personality disorders, lack of parental discipline, children's special needs, marital conflicts, and a host of other problems. One mother I talked to suffers from depression and can't get up in the morning to feed her children and get them off to public school. Nor can she confidently interact with teachers and other parents. Her solution: homeschooling. Never mind that she lacks emotional stability, self-discipline, or sense of organization, and that her two children only get taught what she has the energy for on any given day. Another mother (a pastor's wife) never disciplined her son while he was small. As a result, he caused no end of trouble in school. This mother also struggles with serious marital tensions with her husband. Her solution? Well, you already guessed it. This poor woman is clueless as to what or how to teach. She has no support from her husband. And she is on the brink of emotional collapse because she is a total failure at homeschooling, but has been told it's the only truly spiritual way

to educate one's children.

Thankfully, at the CHEA Convention I met many families competently and positively engaged in this venture. One unique couple is raising their nine children on a huge tract of wilderness land in Hokkaido, not only homeschooling, but also raising all their food on their land. Another energetic couple in southern Nagano Ken mixes in a generous dose of adventure learning—rock climbing, white water rafting, horseback riding, etc., into their curriculum.

5. Another trend among homeschooling parents is dissatisfaction with typical traditional Japanese churches, as they see such churches failing to meet the needs of their children. Some are bringing a new energy and creativity into their churches. Others are dropping out of church, with the misperception that the family unit and the church can be the same thing. In one church, a homeschooling couple overzealously pressured other families in the church to also homeschool, much to the consternation of a father who is an officer in the Self-Defense Force. This father strongly believes



public schooling is necessary to build patriotism, and that Christians who opt out of the public system are failing in their duty to their country. The resulting confrontation almost split the church, and the SDF family has since departed. Pastors will need to learn how to advise and bring harmony to families with these kinds of varying perspectives, as well as leading churches to be more relevant to this emerging generation.

In conclusion, it's genuinely refreshing to see Japanese Christian parents getting engaged in their children's education as a vital extension of their faith. This is a tremendous change from the days when 99% of Christian parents relegated it all to schoolteachers. Today's courageous Japanese homeschoolers are challenging long-held complacent viewpoints on parenting and education, and are having a positive impact on the Japanese Church. But like any movement, people must guard against excess and divisiveness, which could potentially damage Japan's already tiny Christian community.

For more information (in Japanese only):

<http://www.cheajapan.com>
(Church Home Education Association)

<http://ahsic.com/> (Association of Homeschoolers in Christ)

<http://www.ffj.gr.jp/> (Family Forum Japan)





John Gibbs is filling in as guest author for the Missionary Geek this issue. John was a software engineer in Silicon Valley for seven years before coming to Japan in August 2008. He was motivated for missions by taking the Perspectives on the World Christian Movement course in the fall of 2007. John's ministry as a WorldVenture missionary is to equip Japanese churches and ministries with mobile phone evangelism and discipleship. He currently resides in Tokyo.

Mobile Phones and Ministry

Anyone who has lived in Japan for any amount of time in recent years has noticed the pervasive use everywhere of mobile phones (*keitai denwa* - 携帯電話), hereafter “keitai” for short), from restaurants to trains to stores. Keitai are becoming the primary method of communication for Japanese young people, even eclipsing the use of computers.

The Numbers

Sixty-nine million Japanese people access the Internet on their mobile phones. This is more than the number of Japanese PC Internet users.

The average Japanese high school student uses her keitai for two hours a day (notice I say her, since on average girls use their keitai slightly more than boys). Yet the average student talks for less than 10 minutes a day, with the vast majority of the two hours of keitai usage being e-mail and the Internet. This trend of using one's keitai primarily for e-mail and Internet, and not verbal communication, is true of nearly all keitai users, not just students and young people.

As a result, computer illiteracy is a growing problem among Japanese youth, with many of them completely bypassing computer usage and using only their keitai for all electronic communications.¹ This trend is only expected to increase in the coming years.

How it works (techno jargon)

Email on keitai

All Japanese keitai come with their own e-mail address, usually ending in docomo.ne.jp, softbank.ne.jp, or ezweb.ne.jp, for the cases of NTT Docomo, Softbank, and AU, for example. You can send e-mail from your keitai to someone else's keitai or a PC e-mail address, or you can send e-mail from your computer to a keitai the exact same way as

sending e-mail to another PC, with no extra steps required. Sending e-mail is the primary method of using keitai in Japan, by far eclipsing actual talking.

Internet on keitai

All modern keitai are able to view the Internet. Keitai Internet websites are specially formatted in order to be viewed efficiently on small screens and slower data connections. Many of Japan's most popular websites actually receive more visitors on their keitai site than their PC site, reflecting the trend of moving away from PCs and toward mobile communications devices.

Blogging

A blog is an online journal that others can view. Japanese are the most prolific bloggers in the world, with some 37% of all blogs in the world being in Japanese, whereas English comes in second at 36%.² Individuals as well as businesses in Japan use blogging as a way to connect with people. Since this is such an established medium for communication, and most people are familiar with it, it is probably a great opportunity for the Christian community to connect with Japanese. Blogs in Japan can easily be both viewed as well as written from either a computer or a keitai.

QR Codes

A “QR Code” is a square-shaped barcode-like image you have probably seen on signs and handouts. A QR code represents an encoded block of text, usually containing a keitai website address and contact information. All Japanese keitai come with the ability to take a picture of these QR codes (“barcode scan” mode). Once the QR code is snapped by a keitai, the decoded website and/or contact info is displayed on one's keitai phone for easy access.

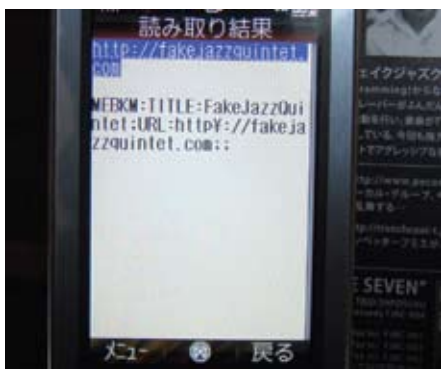
Accessing a Website with a QR Code



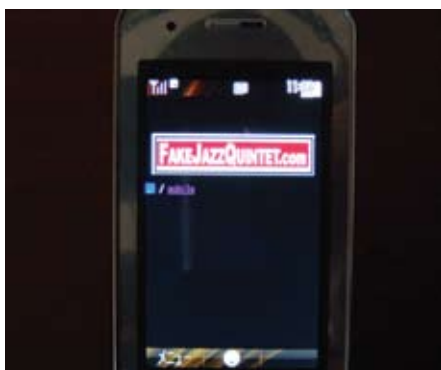
The QR code you would like to scan.



Put your phone in barcode reader mode and snap the QR code.



After successfully snapping the QR code, it shows up on your screen. You can now click on the decoded website to visit it.



The actual keitai website.

An Opportunity for Sharing

One phenomenon happening with Internet usage in Japan is that since it is relatively anonymous, Japanese people are more open about sharing on the Internet than in real life. For example, on Facebook, America's most popular social networking site, more than 90% of users use their real name and real picture on their profile. By contrast, on mixi, Japan's most popular social networking site, less than 5% of users use their real name and real picture.

Therefore it is not hard to find Japanese people engaging in discussions on their blogs or Internet forums that they would not do in real life, perhaps even more so than their Western counterparts. This means using the Internet may be a key way to get Japanese to open up at the heart level, in different ways than might be possible in person.

Furthermore, since unlike a computer, one's keitai is on one's person all the time, Japanese are able to engage in online sharing much more frequently than on the PC. As a result, one recent study found that Japanese people engage in the deepest online

relationships using their mobile phones, and shallower online relationships using PCs³. This would suggest that the keitai, even more than the PC, may be a medium to get Japanese people to open up more deeply about spiritual and other issues.

Recommendations

The following are some concrete steps that you, or the tech person at your church or ministry, can use to get your mobile presence up and running quickly:

- Create a mobile portal for your church. You don't need to create a brand-new website from the ground up. Rather, you can sign up at one of the existing popular web portals (see below) and create your own profile and blog within minutes.
- Create a QR code for your mobile portal, and put it on your church flyer, business cards, and posters. This way Japanese can easily access your church's contact info and mobile portal.
- Create a keitai mailing list to send daily or weekly Bible verses, announcements, or other info, to your church members' keitais.

1 "A nation's youth all thumbs with PCs"

<http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2007/04/13/1175971346787.html>

2 "Shy Japanese Make 37% of the World's Blog Entries"

<http://www.asianoffbeat.com/default.asp?Display=1254>

3 "Longitudinal Effects of Mobile Internet Use on Social Network in Japan"

http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/0/9/1/0/4/p91047_index.html

Site Info

http://qrcode.jp/	Easily create your own QR code for free.
http://mixi.jp/	Mixi is the most popular social networking site in Japan, with more than 16 million users. Create a community for your church. Join existing Christian communities.
http://blog.fc2.com/	FC2 is a popular blogging website in Japan, and unlike most other sites, has an English interface.
http://plaza.rakuten.co.jp/	楽天 (Rakuten) is a popular blogging service with both PC and mobile interfaces.
http://ameblo.jp/	Ameba, another very popular blogging service, also has good PC and mobile support.

Ask Questions to Help Others Prioritize

Want to help others prioritize? Ask questions that provoke reflection, for example:

1. What are you working on?
2. What satisfies/concerns you about your progress?
3. What do you want to accomplish in the next month?
4. Which of these things would you categorize as big priorities? Medium priorities? Small priorities?
5. What can you do to ensure that the big priorities get accomplished?
6. What do you think you'll do?
7. Would you like to talk again about your priorities?



Got a lot to do? Prioritize your tasks. Be sure to schedule time to address your key priorities first. Then schedule time to address your other priorities. This will help you get your most important tasks done.

Schedule Your Key Priorities First

You're away for a couple of days. You're reflecting on what's going on: "I'm not feeling really good. My blood pressure must be up again... I want to eventually transfer the ministry to local leadership, and I'm not spending time to develop leaders... When's the last time I had five home-cooked suppers in a week? Seems like I've been home for supper about only twice a week, so I haven't been talking with Mary (wife) and Thomas (son) as much as I used to."

You decide to take action. You establish three key priorities. One, to lower your blood pressure by going walking for 30 minutes four times each week. Two, to develop leaders by mentoring Sato-san and Fujishima-san on a weekly basis for 30 minutes each. And three, to talk more with family by eating supper at home at least four times per week.

But when you get back, you hit reality—143 emails in your inbox, 11 meetings to attend in the next week, 3 unexpected tasks to complete by Wednesday. You have to deal with these things. So, you respond to your email, attend the meetings, and complete the tasks. On Friday, you review your three priorities, only to find that you've eaten three dinners at home, walked once, and haven't mentored Sato-san and Fujishima-san at all.

This doesn't feel good.

What can you do? When planning your week, schedule your key priorities first. Then schedule time for your email, meetings, and tasks. In other words, don't schedule email before you schedule walking, dinner at home, and mentoring.

Discipline yourself to do this. Doing this will help you stay focused on your key priorities.

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.

Faith and the JEMA Member Care Committee welcome your feedback at membercare@jema.org

Monthly Review

I recently had to get a new pair of eye-glasses because, while I could see distances clearly, I had trouble reading. With my new pair of glasses, I am able to see the computer screen and books so much better. Just as I need two different prescriptions for far and near, so we as missionaries need to take time to evaluate our life and ministry in both long and short time frames. We discussed Annual Reviews in the Winter 2009 Japan Harvest.

When our Missionary Care Personnel focus group met in January, we looked at several missions' short-term review processes. While each one has a different approach to short-term reporting, their reasons are quite similar. Doing a Monthly Review (or in one mission's case, Weekly) acknowledges and encourages the personal well-being of a missionary. It provides a structure to give information to and receive feedback from a supervisor. A mission can use it to monitor ministry, trends, and staff needs. Proper use of the review by the mission can prevent crises.

Missionaries benefit from the Monthly Review because they have a place to evaluate what they are doing and see if it is in keeping with what they are supposed to be doing, in light of their job descriptions or annual plans. Submitting the Monthly Review to a supervisor (who responds appropriately) can keep missionaries from feeling like their work doesn't matter, or that no one knows or cares. A popular management consultant writes that anonymity, irrelevance and immeasurability are the three signs of a miserable job.* A well thought out Monthly Review would address all three areas.

Both missions and missionaries should find that developing a pattern of Monthly Reviews leads to greater satisfaction and less frustration within their organizations

and ministries. This provides information both for organizations and individuals to make better decisions. This contributes to missionary retention because issues can be spotted and dealt with proactively, rather than waiting until they become too big. It provides a place to document challenges and successes.

What makes a good Monthly Review? The objectives of the Review need to be clear and understood within the organization. This includes a common definition of the vocabulary used in the tool. It needs to be easy to use—the variety of forms we looked at included web-based reports with pull down menus, Word document forms, and printed protocol questions. It should take between 30 minutes to two hours, depending on the format, to complete the Review. An effective tool can include personal and ministry-related questions. And finally, any review process needs to have some flexibility to be tailored to the missionary's life stage and the desired outcome—a mother with young children might possibly benefit more from a scripted conversation with a peer or mentor as opposed to filling out a form.

Our focus group had a few words of caution. If a Monthly Review appears to be only a record of the past, which is unalterable, a missionary may resist participating, but if its purpose is to help structure the future, he or she will be more open. Also, people need to know where the information goes, who will see it, and have assurance of agreed-upon levels of confidentiality. And finally, don't start this if you aren't going to use it!

*Lencioni, Patrick, *The Three Signs of a Miserable Job*. (2007, Jossey-Bass)



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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.

Eight Ways the Internet is Impacting Missions in Japan

In our mission to transform the people of Japan through the power of the gospel, the Internet is presenting us with both amazing opportunities and complex challenges. Based upon my reading far too many articles (on the Internet, of course), and working with a great number of young adults on missions projects, I offer the following observations as my personal perspective. I want to acknowledge the influence of *The Millennium Matrix*, by Rex Miller, which has challenged me to think deeply about the impact of the Internet on missions.

1. The Arts are Rising in Importance

When the *Japan Harvest* editor asked me how my plans for an article on the Internet “fit” in the area of Worship and the Arts, I replied that the Internet is driving a revolution in the arts. Printed words are, well, just letters on a page—whereas the Internet brings together many types of media: film, video, photos, various other graphic arts, spoken words, music, and text. The intensive use of so many diverse forms of visual and auditory media on the Internet is conditioning people to be comfortable in such an environment. And beyond that, the Internet is not just passive entertainment. It is interactive, giving users the opportunity to create content on their own, which they are doing on a massive scale.

Outside Japan, many Protestant churches are shifting from an emphasis on the spoken word and music to a “multi-sensory” approach that includes candles, incense, visual art, dance, drama, and liturgy. Communion is a ritual—an artistic multi-sensory reenactment of a historical event that helps us worship God with all our heart. The Japanese that we work with are extremely responsive to an artistic, multi-sensory approach in both classroom settings and where the emphasis is on worship. In the aesthetically sophisticated culture of Japan, I think that embracing the arts in worship and teaching has always been one of the most important “keys” to reaching Japanese for Christ. Furthermore, one of the unanticipated results of universal accessibility to the Internet has been that the “talking head” approach to communication has become even less effective than in the past.

2. Changing How We Get Things Done

Geographic location is far less important than it used to be. Our film project “Studio Re:” is utilizing an online tool called “Base Camp” to plan a

film shoot that involves an international team. The TEAM finance manager returned to Australia last year but he continued doing his finance job using the Internet. Black gospel singer Ray Sidney is a “short term missionary” who is involved in effective year-round outreach in Japan, but he is in Japan for just several weeks per year. What do we call someone like that? The Internet is breaking down old categories and changing the way we go about reaching our goals.

The ability to do missions work in Japan no matter where we are geographically is a challenge in terms of managing our time and resources. To what extent is it healthy to stay involved in Japan projects while on home assignment?

Recruiting is happening through connections made on blogs, Facebook, and other websites. My impression is that this is now the **main way** people become involved in missions in Japan. You can expect interested individuals will “Google” you and/or your organization as one of their first steps in “checking out” how to serve in Japan.

Networking is a big part of Internet culture. Facebook, one of the biggest social networking sites, functions like a small town café; a place where people gather to gossip, exchange news, show photos, and watch others. Mission personnel are using social networking sites to communicate vision, to recruit, to form support groups, to raise funds, and to keep in touch with family and friends. The Internet is a place to “hang out,” a place to connect with a wide variety of people from around the world. I have a number of friends who I have yet to meet face to face.

Paperless, digital communication is becoming the norm. The CAN (Christians in the Arts Network) “community” on Mixi (the biggest Japanese social networking site) is how we announce events and other information—it works well for us, and there is no cost. Churches can set up communities on mixi and use them in a variety of ways. John Gibbs’ article (see page 32) shows how mobile phone technology can be an effective tool for churches in Japan.

I have heard numerous reports of how when Japanese are looking for a church to attend, the first place they go is to the Internet. It is no longer hard to create a simple “home page” with a map, a few photos, and some text. This can be done in less than an hour using blogspot.com, which is free of charge, and not much harder than e-mail to set up and maintain.



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Using Rental Movies in Japanese Language and Culture Learning

I had given away my ancient television before home assignment, and sheer busyness kept me from acquiring another one for several months after returning to Japan. Instead I enjoyed exploring what the local video rental shop had to offer. The question, as always, is “What’s worth watching?” My choices were sometimes a bit hit and miss, and some movies with strong regional accents are difficult to understand. But below are three movies I think are real winners (though your tastes may differ)—great for learning language, culture, current social issues and thinking—but also for relaxation!



Hotaru no Haka (The Grave of the Fireflies)

This is an evocative, beautiful movie about the sad fate of a 14-year-old boy and his four-year-old sister who lose their mother and home in an air raid on Kobe. They find a temporary home with a distant relative in Nishinomiya, but the relative’s struggle to provide food for her own children in the grim conditions towards the end of the war leads her into increasingly inhumane treatment of Seita and Setsuko. They end up in an abandoned air raid shelter where Setsuko eventually dies of starva-

tion. *Hotaru no Haka* powerfully portrays the greed and selfishness of men in a fierce battle for survival, but also the touching self-sacrificing love of a boy for his little sister. It is a movie I would watch again. This version was produced for television in 2005 for the 60th anniversary of the end of the war, but note there is also a famous 1988 cartoon version of the story with the same name.



Ashita no Kioku (Memories of Tomorrow)

In *Ashita no Kioku*, Watanabe Ken plays Saeki, a 50-year-old advertising executive whose life is practically perfect. He commands the respect of his employees, loves his wife, and is soon to see his daughter happily married. But increasingly, Saeki has trouble remembering names and figures. The doctor delivers a devastating diagnosis—Saeki has Alzheimers. The movie follows Saeki and Emiko as the couple embarks on a journey in which every day marks a step closer to losing everything. A thought-provoking and moving human drama.



Okuribito (Departures)

I actually saw *Okuribito* in the cinema, but it was released on DVD in Japan on March 18, 2009. It clinched the top prize at the 32nd Montreal World Film Festival in

2008 under its English title *Departures*. The film explores the meaning of human dignity and its cultural nuances through death rituals. The main character, Daigo, (Motoki Masahiro) thinks he is applying for a job in a travel agency only to discover, to his great shock, that he is instead being employed to prepare the bodies of the deceased for their placing in coffins. The movie is a fascinating insight into the variety of emotions that Japanese experience in the face of death and how some come to terms with it. One character even talks about death as being a gate and not the end, a very Biblical sort of comment that I have been able to use as an illustration more than once in messages. The movie has humour, heart-warming themes

of family conflict and reconciliation, and the scenery of Yamagata prefecture is stunning.

Three issues ago I wrote about internet dramas and their value in language and cultural learning. The same holds true for video rentals, with some added advantages. They are easily accessible for those who find it less easy to use the internet, or lack the required software. It is often possible to borrow a whole series at once without waiting for your favorite episode to appear next week on the Internet. Cost is low, and video rental shops abound. So happy viewing and learning! And watch for an introduction to some good drama series in the next issue of *Japan Harvest*.

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