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*Japan Evangelical  
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exists to network and equip  
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# Japanese University Students Ministry

by Naoki Okamura, Associate  
Professor, Tokyo Christian University

When I was an educator at a Christian university in California, every year I observed a great percentage of Japanese international students who were transformed from self-professed non-religious students to those who paint positive pictures of religion. More specifically, year after year up to half of these non-religious Japanese international students became participants (some more active than others) in local Christian churches in the area. This is an astounding percentage, considering the fact that most Japanese young people are said to have a quite negative view of organized religion, and that in most estimates, the number of Christians in Japan is less than one percent of the entire population. As a religious educator and a researcher, I became fascinated by this group of students and decided to conduct a study to learn from them.

A group of young Japanese college students, aged from 19 to 24, who had lived

in the United States for at least half a year, were chosen as the research sample. In order to observe the changes that took place in their religious views and experiences related to Christianity, 17 students, who considered themselves to be non-religious at the time of their initial departure from Japan, became the research targets. Out of those 17 students, ten (six females and four males) were willing and available to be extensively interviewed. A variety of qualitative data that focused on their American experiences was gathered by using standardized open-ended interviews, by comparison of their behavior both in public and in private, and by observation of naturally-occurring social interactions that took place as they went about college life.

It was very interesting to observe that during their time in the United States their feelings about religion and their feelings about the American life moved unexpectedly and surprisingly in opposite directions. They arrived in America ("the land of freedom") hoping to escape from their pressure-filled life in Japan. But they discovered their American life to be an experience filled with many restrictions and frustrations—a lack of

personal transportation, an inability to communicate well, and a fear of crime, to name a few. On the other hand, they started their time in America with a very negative view of organized religion, but found it to be rather pleasant as they enjoyed fellowship with many Christians, thinking of it as a "delightful experience." Four of the students went so far as to make a personal religious commitment to the Christian faith and identified themselves as being Christians.

As a result of this study, I have arrived at the following conclusions.

1) Intercultural experience creates crisis situations for Japanese students, which may serve as a catalyst for them to question their existing uncritical beliefs about religion.

2) Japanese students, in general, respond well to approaches that utilize personal affection, love, and nurturing to encourage religious transformation.

3) The presence of caring and loving individuals is crucial to aiding in the religious transformation of Japanese students.

This study was presented at the Religious Education Association conference in Boston (2007) and was published in the May 2009 issue of *Religious Education*.

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## President's Pen



### Peace, Joy, and Hope

*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.*

Happy New Year!

I trust you enjoyed the blessings of the 2009 holiday season as you celebrated the global truth that the “Word became flesh and made his home among us!”

With one son home for the holidays from university in the U.S., a daughter on staff at Christian Academy in Japan, and another son in his last year of high school (also at CAJ), the Little family enjoyed God’s Christmas peace, joy, and hope together as a family.

In contrast, on December 15 my wife had a Christmas party with her English students. After making a candle wreath and reading through the entire Christmas story from Matthew and Luke, they enjoyed a potluck lunch together. During lunch Ann overheard a conversation between several of the ladies about how they take care of the god in their yard, what type of rice and *sake* to serve him,

and when to clean the shrine.

Although she exercised restraint during the meal, Ann wanted to ask, “Do you really believe this god takes care of your house? What would happen if you didn’t serve him rice and *sake*? Or what if he preferred a sandwich to rice, and orange juice to *sake*?”

Rather than enjoying peace, joy, and hope, many around us still act out traditional superstitions in hopes of a better year—or at least protection from some unexpected calamity. May God continue to help us in 2010 spread the peace, joy, and hope of Christ! JH

## JEMA Datebook

| Event                                     | Date                 | Time                  | Place                           |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| WIM Day of Prayer                         | January 20, 2010     | 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.  | TEAM Center                     |
| Mini Prayer Summit                        | February 1, 2010     | 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | ICA near Tokyo University       |
| Missiology Forum-Dual Personality System  | February 8, 2010     | 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.   | NAV meeting room at OCC         |
| JCMN Cell Church Summit CPI Regional Mtg. | February 10-12, 2010 |                       | ANA Gatetower Hotel, Osaka      |
| JEMA Mission Leaders Consultation         | February 22, 2010    | 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.  | OCC Chapel                      |
| JEMA Fellowship Evening                   | February 22, 2010    | 5:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.   | OCC Chapel                      |
| JEMA Plenary Session                      | February 23, 2010    | 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.  | OCC Chapel                      |
| JEMA WIM Retreat                          | March 3-5, 2010      |                       | Megumi Chalet                   |
| JEMA Hokkaido WIM Retreat                 | March 6, 2010        |                       | OMF Center, Sapporo             |
| All Nations Returnees Conference, 2010    | March 24-27, 2010    |                       | Heritage Resort in Saitama      |
| Mini Prayer Summit                        | April 3, 2010        | 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | Tokyo ICA near Tokyo University |
| Eastern Co-ed Prayer Summit               | May 11-14, 2010      |                       | Okutama Bible Chalet            |

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

### Church Planting & Evangelism

With the Church Planting Institute (CPI) Conference at Fuji Hakone Land now a biennial event, it was a treat this past November to be able to touch base with many JEMA friends we haven't seen in a long time. A news item about the conference and a roundtable discussion with representatives of the JEMA Strategy Forum can be found in this issue. Other material resulting from this year's conference will be in upcoming *Japan Harvest* issues.

On the day immediately following the conference, the Tokyo Regional Equipping Seminar was held at Ochanomizu Christian Center. Some material was repeated, while David Geisler, Adjunct Professor at several Bible colleges in Singapore, brought an additional workshop on "conversational evangelism." His progress in developing a pre-evangelism paradigm for Christians in Asia was stimulating, although he was the first to admit he did not have an understanding of the situation in Japan and is eager to learn. In this issue, we start a series of four articles stemming from Geisler's Conversational Evangelism Model.

### The Brazilian Church

As evangelical leaders around the world look forward to Cape Town 2010 in October, this issue's article from the Lausanne movement encouraging us to "join the global conversation" is enlightening as it provides insight into some of the issues Brazilian Christians grapple with as they engage in global outreach. Although JEMA members have enjoyed some interaction with the Brazilian Church in Japan in recent years, over 400 Brazilian congregations are active in this nation. They most commonly communicate with each other in either Portuguese or Japanese, but experience many of the same cultural challenges as we members of the JEMA community. By doing a better job of networking we would be able to encourage each other more in evangelism.

### Totalization Agreements

One of my nagging concerns over this past year has been what the "social insurance totalization" agreement signed between the United States and Japan in October 2005 means in my situation. With this issue of *Japan Harvest*, we have tried to address this issue as it potentially affects the plans of missionaries from the U.S. during the coming year. Canada and Australia signed similar agreements with Japan in March 2008 and January 2009 respectively, so Canadians and Australians also need to begin exploring how the agreements between their governments will affect them in the years ahead.

However, we don't spend much time discussing permanent residency in Japan for expatriates who may be thinking about this option. Those who are considering it may find the "Guidelines for Permission for Permanent Residence" at <http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/english/tetuduki/zairyuu/eizyuu.html> to be helpful when considering what to include with an application.

### Christmas Outreach

Our Christmas outreaches may be a month behind us, but with those activities still fresh in our minds, it's not too soon to evaluate and plan for next year. I mention that because this month's Language Lab talks about a useful Christmas tool you may want to order well ahead of time. When I checked Amazon.co.jp in November for Miura Ayako's したきりすずめのクリスマス, I got a projected delivery date of after Christmas. Rather than waiting until the last minute—to paraphrase an old English proverb—"a すずめ in the hand is worth two in the bush."

In conclusion, *Akemashite omedetou gozaimasu...* God's blessings to you in this new decade! 江



# In the News

(Articles from the Christian Shimbun translated by Atsuko Tateishi)

## Biennial Japan Church Planting Institute Conference Draws 293 Participants

From November 4-6, 2009, 293 adults accompanied by 86 children gathered at the Fuji Hakone Land Hotel to enlarge their kingdom vision for church multiplication and experience gospel renewal. Participants in this year's conference formed the youngest group ever, with an average age in the late 20s and early 30s. A significant number of new missionaries to Japan were represented among the many first-time attendees. Twenty-five percent of the participants were Japanese.

Overseas guests included workers from the Philippines, Myanmar, Ethiopia, and Singapore. A short-term volunteer team of about 40 individuals from several churches in the United States also supported the conference.

Hands-on training was offered in evangelism, small groups, spiritual formation/renewal, vision, prayer, philosophy of ministry, and Japanese worldview. With the exception of one guest lecturer, all facilitators/trainers had Japan-based ministry experience as either missionaries from overseas or Japanese nationals.

The most moving session of this conference was the Concert of Prayer, where many were in tears pleading for God's mercy on themselves and the nation of Japan.

The following day, on Saturday, November 7, the Tokyo Regional Equipping Seminar drew over 40 attendees, with workshop speakers supplied from the national conference, as well as an additional workshop on conversational evangelism

(see article on page 12) by Dr. David Geisler.

The Japan Church Planting Institute has trained over 2,200 leaders and workers in church planting and is celebrating its fifteenth year.



## Autobiography of David and Edna Kruse Completed

Edna Sorrell Kruse, who served with her husband David as a missionary in Japan with The Pilgrim Fellowship from

1952 to 1993, in 2009 saw the publication of her book, *Pouring Out Memories - Forty Years in Japan*. The Kruses' varied ministry experiences in Tokyo, Yatsushiro, and finally Kumamoto are described in this 268-page volume illustrated with photos. For more information, or to order a copy of the book, contact [stradbiz@verizon.net](mailto:stradbiz@verizon.net).

## Survey on Relationships Between Overseas Churches and Returnees

CHRISTIAN SHIMBUN — *The Christian Information Book 2010* published by *The Christian* on September 15, 2009, reports the results of a recent survey on the relationship of Japanese churches with overseas churches and returnee Christians. Survey questions were mailed to some 8,000 churches in Japan from mid February through the end of April, 2009, and 739 valid responses were collected.

Roughly one out of every five churches (18.5%) had a sister church overseas. Of those churches, 32.1% have enjoyed such a relationship for the last one to five years.

Typical relationships included exchange programs (8.3%), and personnel and financial cooperation (8.0%). Cooperation in worship and evangelism accounted for 5.0%. The top five locations of sister churches were the United States (8.1%), South Korea (7.3%), the Philippines (1.1%), Brazil (0.9%), and Taiwan (0.8%).

About half of the churches (50.6%) said they had foreigners involved in their congregations. Slightly more than 46.2% of these churches answered that the foreigners involved were from an Asian country. While 47.8% of the churches said they had foreigners involved in their worship services, 4.6% said they extend practical support to foreigners by serving as guarantors and giving employment referrals.

Returnee Christians, or those who became Christians overseas and have now returned to Japan, were present in 33.8% of the churches. The top five countries in which returnees became Christians were all English-speaking countries: the U.S. (25.8%), Australia (3.7%), Canada (3.5%), the U.K. (2.8%), and New Zealand (2.4%). While 23.4% of the respondents said they did not provide any particular care program for returnees, 22.7% expressed that they would welcome returnees. They say only a small percentage of returnees become regular attendees of a church in Japan. The top three perceived reasons for this tendency were: 1) cultural differences between overseas churches and those in Japan (39.8%); 2) lack of knowledge about how to integrate returnees (21.8%); and 3) differences in attitudes to-



ward faith between overseas churches and those in Japan (19.4%). In order for returnees to become solid members of a church in Japan, among other things, respondents proposed that Japanese churches become more considerate of the sense of discomfort on the part of the returnees (29.1%); and that pastors and church leaders listen to what returnees have to say (21.8%).

### First International Conference of the Study of Asian Christianity Held in Seoul, Korea



On October 20 and 21, 2009, “The First International Conference of the Study of Asian Christianity – Nestorianism” (Keikyo) was held in Seoul, Korea. Countries represented by the various speakers included Japan (Kawaguchi), China (Oukanen, Hyuang), Korea (Lee, Chung), and Iraq (Joseph). Mention was made that books have been published in Korean, Japanese, and English affirming that the disciple known as “Doubting Thomas” proclaimed the gospel across Asia as he traveled by land from Jerusalem, to Assyria, to India, and then by ship to Korea. Two speakers each from Japan, China, and Korea spoke for 90 minutes.

Kenny Joseph, a missionary in Japan with Assyrian ancestry, spoke for three hours using materials from his book *Jizo and Jesus*. His four main assertions: 1) In 199 AD, Christianity was introduced to Japan from the Middle East. 2) Assyrian Christians (Keikyo), of Jewish heritage, were the first to come to Japan proclaiming the gospel. 3) During the early years of the Christian era,

there were more Christians in Japan than Buddhists or Shintoists. 4) Among the names of the 1,300,000 Japanese Christians who were killed for their faith, 80 Japanese Christian names still remain in use today.

### Lecture on the Future of Christianity in Japan

CHRISTIAN SHIMBUN — On August 24, 2009, the Self-supporting Mission Network sponsored a lecture in Tokyo entitled “Is There a Future for Christianity in Japan?” by Haruo Saeki.

Saeki’s early career included both pastoring and teaching. Then in 1967 he was appointed to the position of assistant professor at Miyagi Gakuin Women’s University in Sendai City. He started a monthly home meeting in 1969. The meeting developed into a church the following year, and he served as the pastor of the church while working for the university until 2002.

After looking back at his bivocational career as a pastor and a teacher, Saeki pointed out that Christianity in Japan is facing a major crisis, with declining church attendance, stagnant evangelistic activities, a shortage of pastors, conflicts between churches, and religious practice stuck in formality. Saeki observes that as a result, churches and Christians in Japan have lost their vitality and appeal. Saeki suggests a breakthrough may require Christians to abandon the idea that their version of Christianity is the norm. Saeki professes that he has been largely freed of “fixed ideas” about Christianity due to his interaction with a broad range of theology and Christians over the years.

### PK / MK Fellowship

CHRISTIAN SHIMBUN — God planted a desire to do something for pastor’s kids (PK’s) within the heart of Reika Murakami, a freshman in college and daughter of a pastor in Kyoto

in the spring of 2009. Encouraged by her father to immediately act upon her desire, Reika started calling other PK’s and gathered a group of six. She also went to see Izaya Fujibayashi, Pastor of Kyoto Chuo Chapel and one of the members who launched “Mashed Potatoes,” an initiative for PK’s, some 25 years ago. Having ended the Mashed Potatoes ministry in 2007, Pastor Fujibayashi was more than glad to pass the baton to Reika.

The new group named themselves “mini★stars,” a word play with the word ministers. They organized a camp in Kyoto on August 10-12, 2009. About 20 PK’s and MK’s, mostly from Kansai area, gathered together. Their age varied from junior high students to people already out of school and in the workforce. Eriya Yatsuzuka, Pastor of Tokyo Lighthouse Church and a PK himself, spoke to the campers from John 15:16. The camp experience led Reika to realize that she was not alone, but was surrounded by fellow PK’s and MK’s. She also learned to embrace her church and the vision of her pastor/father.

The fellowship of mini★stars continues as each member strives to work for God in their respective churches. Reika gives all glory back to the Lord and hopes to expand the fellowship into a broader geographic area. <sup>1H</sup>

*Missing from the list on page 28 of the fall 2009 Japan Harvest... a few more names of MKs who have returned to Japan: Carrico, Wright, Hoshizaki, Oue, Sherer, Bennett, Nielsen, and Bridgman. Our apologies to the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention for not getting their list into the article. Are you an MK who has returned to Japan, but your name wasn't mentioned? Let us know!*



*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.*

### True Confessions—Part 2

Have you ever heard the story of the city slicker who wanted to buy a donkey? He went out to the country and saw a farmer with his donkey. He asked him, “If he’s obedient, I’d like to buy him off of you.” The farmer said, “Sure, he’s obedient.” So, the city slicker bought the donkey. Taking the rope from the farmer, he tried to take the donkey away. But nothing happened. The donkey wouldn’t move—it just stood there! Finally, after a while, the city slicker went to the farmer and said, “Give me back my money. You said this donkey was obedient, but he doesn’t do a thing I say.” Just then, the farmer got out a 4x4 (a big piece of wood) and hit the donkey over the head. Then he said, “Of course he’s obedient. You just have to get his attention first!”

I don’t know about you, but that’s the way it is sometimes with me and God. He has to get my attention before I become obedient. Last time I talked about how he did that at the JEMA Prayer Summit (then called the Men’s Prayer Summit; now we welcome women!) in Okutama in May of 1997. For the next decade or so, I was able to adjust my schedule and do what I should.

Then on February 13, 2007, I was told they didn’t need me anymore at the school where I had been teaching English on a full-time basis, Tuesday through Friday, for seven years. The school had lost 300 students in two years (out of an original 900). As a private school, if there wasn’t much money coming in, they couldn’t pay their staff. So I was “laid off,” along with seven or eight other teachers.

Since I am an independent missionary, not supported by anyone in America (or anywhere else), I need to work “on the market” to make a living and pay for my kids (three of our five are still dependent on me). But it was impossible to get a job at a new school in less than two months, so here I was, without a job in April 2007, at the age of 52. I’m not writing this to complain. What I want to share is that I didn’t respond properly to what was happening, and it affected my prayer life.

As God would have it, I’m now doing translation work with a company in Tsukuba, Ibaraki. I’m grateful for the fact that I was trained as an architect, because there seem to be few people in Japan who know the technical language in both English and Japanese. That has allowed me to do these translations.

But doing translation work for a living means I’m home all the time. Besides gaining five kilos (11 pounds!), my schedule has been totally changed around. That’s not good when you are trying to keep a “habit” like prayer going. I’m the kind of person that gets into a rut pretty easily. If it’s something good, like praying every day, that’s not so bad. The problem comes when circumstances change.

For a while, I could keep my schedule up. I got up at 6:00, spent time with God, then made breakfast for the kids before sending them off to school at 8:00. But then our youngest son started having morning practice for his basketball team. He had to leave home at 7:00. That sure threw a wrench into the works! Now I had to get up at 6:00—not to pray, but to start making breakfast for David.

You might ask why I didn’t just switch times—make and eat breakfast from 6:00 to 7:00, and then have my time with the Lord from 7:00. But over the years, I had gotten lax about going to bed early (as I wrote before, you need to make sure you have a healthy lifestyle that includes time for prayer). I’m a “night owl” by nature, as is my wife, so it’s easy to slip back into working late at night. So after sending David off to practice, I was usually tired. And since I could do my translation work anytime of the day or night, I would often end up just going back to bed for a few hours of “shut-eye.”

As you can guess, that is not very conducive for taking time to be with God. As the day goes on, it is so easy to just let the events of the day, what I have to do, or even what is on TV, take control of how I use my day. Yes, I did spend time in prayer and reading the Bible. But I got the feeling that I was doing it more to “ease my mind” than a real desire to follow the Lord wherever he leads.



Then this past May, I was at our Prayer Summit for Western Japan in Sasayama (Hyogo) and again felt like I did in 1997. I felt “out of it,” knowing I should change, but not sure how. I didn’t get any “revelation from the Lord” this time. But I was reminded again of how wonderful it is to spend time in the Presence of God—seeking His Face and drinking in His Majesty. So after I came back home, I started to get up early again—to spend time with the Lord. I ended up getting up at 6:00, having breakfast with David till 7:00 and then taking time to be with God after that.

It might sound trite, but the answer was to just do it. No matter what I felt, physically or any other way, I needed to just spend that time with God. And as I began to do it once again, it got easier.

But it’s a real struggle for me to get that time in, especially on weekends, holidays or other days off. I don’t have to get up early then, so it’s easy to just sleep in and start the day so late that other things crowd out my time with the Lord. Also, I so easily slip back into staying up late at night. So I found myself not spending much time with the Lord—again!

God once more lovingly showed me the way. Recently I helped out at the first Prayer Summit in Yamanashi. Since I grew up there until the age of 13, I wanted to be present for this momentous first time. And again God spoke to me. The facilitator was telling us that it’s not enough to spend time in the Presence of the Lord at the Summit

once a year. What’s important is that we take time in our daily lives. That’s the trouble with life—it’s so daily! But he was right. I needed to make a commitment to spend time with the Lord every day.

I still am not that good with Saturdays and holidays. But I have decided to spend an extended period of time with the Lord every day—no matter what my schedule is.

How is God speaking to you? All it takes is a few simple daily lifestyle changes, and we can “fit God (and prayer) in.” But he is, oh, so worthy of that! To him be the glory!

“Blessed are You, Lord God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, And You are exalted as head over all. Both riches and honor come from You and You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; in Your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. Now therefore, our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious name.” — 1 Chronicles 29:10-13 (NASB)

Amen. How can you go wrong, if you spend time drinking in who our God is and what he has done? 卍

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# CONVERSATIONAL EVANGELISM:

*How Can We Listen So That We May Be Heard?*

*By David Geisler*



In order to challenge pre-believers to consider the person of Christ in today's world, it has become increasingly useful to learn how to engage them in pre-evangelism. In this process, it is often more helpful to allow them to surface the truth for themselves rather than for us to proclaim it to them. For this to happen, we must discover the kinds of questions that can be raised to surface the uncertainty of our pre-believing friends' perspectives, in

order to challenge them to think more carefully through their belief systems, so that they will be open to giving us a hearing concerning Christ. This requires us to play the role of a musician, tuning our ears to hear the "sour notes" (i.e. the discrepancies) in their belief systems. This is at the heart of what the Conversational Evangelism Model attempts to do.

The Conversational Evangelism (Apologetics) methodology can be di-

vided into four types of conversational engagements that we might have with others: hearing what the other person actually believes, asking questions illuminating their beliefs, uncovering real barriers, and building a bridge to the truth. Each of these conversational types corresponds to a role we can play in our pre-believing friend's lives: that of a musician, artist, archeologist and builder. We will examine the role of the musician in this issue.



The first step in the Conversational Evangelism (Apologetic) approach is to hear what others actually believe. Unfortunately many times in our conversations with our pre-believing friends, we either assume we know where they are coming from or we do not listen carefully enough to understand what they really believe. Listening carefully is especially important because I find that people today do not even hold their religious views consistently. For example, a taxi driver once confessed to me that he was a Buddhist but when I asked whether he was a devout Buddhist, he changed his answer and told me he was more of a “free thinker”. Therefore it is extremely important that we learn to listen without forming any preconceptions concerning pre-believers’ beliefs so that we can better understand what they actually believe.

In order to facilitate greater progress in our role as musicians, we will need to develop our listening skills in our conversations with pre-believers. Many times, as a result of not listening carefully, we may end up asking questions that do not surface their honest doubts about their core beliefs but rather cause unnecessary defensiveness and hence cut off any future dialogue. James 1:19 (NIV) says, “My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.” One helpful suggestion for increasing our listening skills is to practice the principle of reflection and “reflect back” what our friends are saying to us. For example, we could attempt to paraphrase what they are saying: “Now what I hear you saying is . . .” or “You are saying that . . .”

“Hearing” is such an important step in pre-evangelism for at least three reasons. First, it helps us better connect with others. People feel appreciated when we understand their concerns and show patience in our dialogue with them. Second, it helps to put the other person at ease in talking with us. If people sense we

are genuinely trying to understand them, they may be less defensive and let down their guard against engaging in honest dialogue. Third, it helps to uncover the nature of their barrier to Christ, whether it is an intellectual, emotional, or spiritual one. The Bible

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The Holy Spirit can use a  
person’s awareness of his  
conflicting beliefs to help  
him take one step closer to  
Jesus Christ and even lead  
him to accept Christ!

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reminds us of the importance of listening carefully for “he who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him” (Proverbs 18:13).

As we are listening to others, like a musician, we want to hear the “sour notes” that people are singing to us. You may ask, “What do you mean by ‘sour notes?’” Well have you ever heard someone singing off-key? Now you may not be sure if that person is singing too high or too low but something just does not sound right! In the same way, in our conversations with our pre-believing friends, we may hear things that just do not sound right. They may sound to us like “sour notes”. An example is someone who claims to be a devout Buddhist and yet has a real desire to win the lottery. Does this not sound like a sour note? Certainly to desire anything in a Buddhist framework goes against the central principles of what Buddha taught. By listening for sour notes, our goal is to detect some of the uncertainties in others’ beliefs, which may give us an opportunity to ask probing questions which will help them to think more carefully about

what they believe and encourage them to consider the person of Christ.

We need to listen specifically for four types of “sour notes” or discrepancies. They are belief versus heart longing, belief versus behavior, belief versus belief, and illogical belief. We will now look at each of these sour notes more specifically.

### **Sour Note 1: Belief versus Heart Longing**

The first type of sour note you might hear is the belief versus heart longing discrepancy, or the discrepancy between a person’s worldview and his heart longing. In our post-modern culture, there is a desperate longing in young people to feel a sense of belonging, to be a part of something bigger than themselves, yet their worldview does not allow for a sense of ultimate meaning and purpose for their life. For example, sometime shortly after 9/11, I was talking to a student who said he did not believe in an afterlife, either heaven or hell. Yet he did believe that the terrorists were somehow going to be responsible after this life for what they had done. While his worldview of atheism informed him otherwise, his heart’s cry was that justice must be done!

All people, regardless of religion, also share the heart longing to know and be known by others and (though unknown to them) the ultimate Other, God. The French mathematician, philosopher, and physicist, Pascal, referred to this heart longing when he said, “There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus.”<sup>1</sup>

Now many world religions contain views that are inconsistent with the longings of people’s hearts. For example, Hinduism holds that people can only have a relationship with an impersonal god. Yet the heart yearns for more than this. In Buddhism the goal is to achieve a state of nirvana, which is an abstract nothingness. Yet

reaching nirvana requires one to lose one's personhood, which goes against the cry of one's heart. Furthermore, Nirvana can only be attained through a heavy burden of living according to rules and regulations<sup>2</sup> that one can never quite completely keep. Islamic teaching betrays the heart's cry to have intimacy with God, but only through Christianity can one achieve his heart's cry.

### Sour Note 2: Belief versus Behavior

Another sour note is the belief versus behavior discrepancy. This inconsistency shows itself in the disjunction between what people say they believe and how they live or behave. An example of this is found in Gal 2:14-16 when the apostle Paul confronted Peter about his inconsistent behavior. Peter was eating with the uncircumcised, yet when the Jews came he stopped doing so. So Paul rebuked him for his inconsistent behavior since his belief and his behavior did not line up. In the same way, many people often do not live consistently with what they say they believe. For example, one day I had a conversation with my Buddhist car-mechanic. I said to him, "Is it not true that one of the main goals of Buddhism is to stop desiring?" to which he replied yes. So I asked him if one of the goals of Buddhism is to stop desiring, how as a parent did he stop desiring to have children? After a few moments passed, he said, "That is a problem," and starting sharing with me some of his other concerns about Buddhism. He believed one thing but his actions were not consistent with it, which caused him to question his Buddhist beliefs. So identifying the discrepancies between pre-believers' beliefs and their behavior can play an important role in surfacing the vulnerable areas of their faith.

### Sour Note 3: Belief versus Belief

Another sour note is having two or more mutually contradictory beliefs. An example of this can be seen in

Acts 17:28-29 where the apostle Paul identified the discrepancy between two different beliefs. Paul said, "For in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have

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### Words of Wisdom

Every generation of Christians has this problem of learning how to speak meaningfully to its own age. It cannot be solved without an understanding of the changing existential situation that it faces. If we are to communicate the Christian faith effectively, therefore, we must know and understand the thought forms of our own generation.

Francis A. Schaeffer

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said, 'For we also are His offspring.' Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver, an image formed by the art and thought of man." Paul identified two major inconsistencies in the beliefs of the people of Athens: he pointed out that on one hand, the Athenians believed they created the wooden gods, yet on the other hand, they also believed that these gods had created them. Paul's

underlying question here is: "Can both these views be true?" Now the Athenians responded to Paul in three different ways. Some said in effect, "Paul you are crazy." Others said, "We want to hear more." And still others actually responded in a positive way by trusting Christ (Acts 17:32-34). So the Holy Spirit can use a person's awareness of his conflicting beliefs to help him take one step closer to Jesus Christ and even lead him to accept Christ!

When I am talking to students on college campuses, I have many opportunities to hear some of these discrepancies. For example, I remember asking a student, "Who is Jesus Christ?" He responded by saying, "Jesus is the Son of God." So I asked him if he believed Jesus was his Savior in any sense, to which this student replied yes. Then I followed up by asking whether he believed that he would be accountable for how he lived his life. He agreed that he would. My next question to him was "Do you think you can measure up?" and I was surprised to hear him say, "Well, I am a pretty good person . . ." So my follow-up question to him was "Why do you need Jesus to save you if you can measure up?" Obviously this got him thinking because after a few moments he said to me, "I guess I don't measure up." This admission was a very important part of the pre-evangelism process because if we cannot get others to acknowledge that they do not measure up, what need is there (from their perspective) for Christ to save them? We will be able to identify belief versus belief discrepancies if only we can tune our ears to hear them clearly.

### Sour Note 4: Illogical Belief

The last kind of sour note or discrepancy is illogical belief. This kind of inconsistency is not between two different beliefs but within one particular belief. For example, the declaration that "there are absolutely no absolutes" is certainly illogical. This



is like sawing off the very branch of a tree that one is resting on! I can say, “I cannot utter a word in English,” but it is not meaningful because I have to use English to say it! In the same way, you will be surprised at how many people make similar statements that fit into this category of illogical belief. For example, I hear people say that “all religious views are essentially true.” Yet can all views of reality really be true, especially when some are mutually contradictory? Furthermore all views cannot be true because a point in every direction is no<sup>3</sup> point at all. If you are pointed in every direction you are not pointed in any one specific direction. To put it another way, if you embrace everything, you stand for nothing. Consequently, in holding all views to be true, you really are being illogical and standing for no particular truth.

To summarize this part of the Conversational Evangelism model, we begin by first earnestly listening to our pre-believing friends to understand what they believe, and to hear the

four kinds of sour notes or discrepancies. These discrepancies are: Belief versus Heart Longing, Belief versus Behavior, Belief versus Belief, and

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Can all views of reality really  
be true, especially when  
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Illogical Belief. Once we have heard them we want to shine a light on them by asking penetrating questions so they can be clearly seen by our pre-believing friends. May God help us to better understand the times in which we live and therefore help us

to be better listeners in our witness to others (Proverbs 18:13). JH

### Endnotes

1. Blaise Pascal, quoted in: William Bright, “*Jesus and the Intellectual*” (Online). <http://www.billbright.com/intellectual/purpose.html>.
2. Ravi Zacharias, *Jesus Among Other Gods* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 78.
3. Norman Geisler, unpublished materials, “*Defending the Christian Faith: Twelve Points that Prove Christianity is True.*”

Please send feedback to [dg@meeknessandtruth.org](mailto:dg@meeknessandtruth.org) and check out the resources at [www.meeknessandtruth.org](http://www.meeknessandtruth.org)

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# More Partners at the Family Table

How do we serve one another in a diverse global Church?



*Interview with Valdir Steuernagel*

*World mission needs partnership—across national boundaries, between different cultures, and between rich and poor. How do we work together effectively in ways that respect our differences? How do we partner so the rich and powerful don't overwhelm the weak? How do we partner to give honor to God through loving “family” relations? Tim Stafford talks with Valdir Steuernagel, a Brazilian pastor and theologian whose role in World Vision gives him wide exposure to the global church.*

## **Q:** Why does partnership matter?

Both Jesus and Paul tell us clearly that the gospel message is a message of community. It's never an individual enterprise. We are called to preach the gospel and do good, and we are called to be a community of the gospel.

Something beautiful is that God himself is community: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And Jesus prayed for us to be a community. The Trinity models for us how to get along, how to be interdependent, how to keep our own specificity without the sense of competition.

We are not talking about a pragmatic *modus operandi*. Partnership is a gospel mandate, which must be expressed in how we relate to each other in a global community. Evangelicals are not very good at that. We look at it through the lenses of pragmatists. We use the word “cooperation” more than “community.”

## **Q:** “Cooperation” suggests a high level of individual autonomy.

It's pragmatism: you put on the table what you have, and we'll see how we can work together. Instead, we should start with being family.

## **Q:** Are there unique challenges to partnership today?

Certainly. In the past our eyes were focused on the European and American missionaries. Today there are many more players at the table, each with their own particularity. It's important for us to discern our own experiences, to understand each other, so we serve well together.

Western missionaries brought tremendous gifts. North Americans came out of an experience of church growth and revival, with positive stories to share. They brought optimism and a can-do spirit. They could say here it is, you do this. And they brought money.

Today it's no longer like that. One key question is how the North American mission enterprise serves in mission while no longer calling the shots. When you come to the table today, you have for example the Koreans, and they will say “We do it our way.”

## **Q:** Or they will just do it.

Exactly. Then we have Brazilians who will say, “Look, we can do our own thing.” This is both good and bad. When I was a young guy, we could say everything is the fault of the Americans: “Yankee go home.” Today I cannot say this, because Brazil too has developed its own empires.

This is good, because today we can

point to Pueblos Musulmanes International, a Latin American mission that works in Islamic cultures with great ability and years of experience. They don't ask the North Americans how to do it, they just do it. That's good.

It's also bad. My wife and I visited Zambia, and our hosts took us to see the huge Faith Cathedral. It was due for inauguration in a few days. We were driving by and saw youths throwing stones against the cathedral. Our hosts told us the Church shouldn't have this land. It was for someone else, but the Church had some contact with the government minister and got the land. As a Brazilian I think I know how they got it. We realized it's a Brazilian church, part of a well-known made-in-Latin-America Brazilian denomination that is working in 100 countries. The front page of the Zambian newspapers told how some of the Brazilian pastors were being kicked out of the country.

## **Q:** ‘Brazilians go home.’

Exactly. We come to the table bringing our own successful experiences, but also bringing our own shortcomings, our disasters, our errors. When we come to the table today we need to come much more vulnerable.

I hope the Third Lausanne Congress in Cape Town will be this kind of table. That's what some of us are dreaming of—a place where we start talking about our own journeys, our histories, our struggles and shortcomings, our painful experiences. When we do that we come much closer together.



It's this table that brings us together, calling each other to fulfil our call to gospel ministry, calling each other to be good stewards of our possibilities and resources, but also calling each other to repentance.

**Q. What do you do with those who aren't ready for that kind of engagement?**

There are two voices in me. *First*, I believe in the gospel. I believe in a continuous call into a new experience with the gospel. I believe in community because I believe in the gospel. I still get excited about the community that the Trinity is modeling to me. We need to continue to read the gospel, and talk to each other about that.

*Second*, I believe in the need for repentance. There are things in my life that I can understand only through pain. So as an older person I need to have patience that allows for younger generations to make their mistakes, and go through pain.

We should all be ready to listen to the gospel and repent.

Also, you don't change systems just by talking to them. Don't be naïve that if you have a good sermon and you pray well together everything will change.

**Q. We need to be hardheaded about the difficulties of change.**

And not only individually. Corporately.

For good and bad you are a product of yourself. Last time I went to Senegal I met Brazilian missionaries starting a simple restaurant, serving *churrasco* – Brazilian barbecue. In India, a Brazilian missionary working with Afghan refugees runs a soccer school with her Argentinean husband. It's crazy. It's beautiful.

Join the global conversation at [www.lausanne.org/conversation](http://www.lausanne.org/conversation)

It's natural that we take our experience to other people: you take with you what you enjoy. I would say it is much better to take soccer than to take baseball. But I'm a Brazilian! We need to be aware of what we bring, but also to laugh about it, and hold it lightly.

**Q. How have you worked through these issues in World Vision? You're a global organization, with staff and money from many countries. What lessons about partnership have you learned?**

The most remarkable lesson was to see World Vision US give up power. Every entity has one vote in the governing council: we in Brazil have one vote; the US that has 40% of the revenue has one vote. I think that was a powerful witness.

**Q. How do you see partnership apply to churches which bypass agencies and make direct contact with people in other countries and send teams and funds directly. They just want to build a church or spend a week running a clinic. How do you help them see that they need to make time and space to listen?**

If you don't listen you will die alone.

**Q. Is there a way to listen? A structure? An approach?**

I am not much of a believer in listening techniques. I am more of a believer in a gospel that shapes you. The most important piece is where your heart is. Are you willing to listen?

If you go on a trip and encounter suffering and poverty and you don't cry, something is wrong. We should stress that. When you feel strong and powerful, you do not listen. But there are moments of vulnerability. For example, if you are part of a rich middle class church in Brazil, and you encounter the poor in a *favela*, you ask why we have much and they don't. Why do they suffer and we don't? If you have the gospel in your mind and heart, you will be hurt by

the suffering of others.

We must also recognize that we dominate those in a vulnerable state who cannot say no to us when we offer all our programs and resources. We must listen first.

Try to find partners who critique you. It's so dangerous only to have partners who want your resources and will do everything possible to make you happy while you are there. You also need partners who engage you and raise difficult questions, so that you establish real conversations.

Try to establish long-term relationships. Short-term missions should, if possible, be aligned to some kind of long-term commitment. In our mission history, the missionaries I really value are those who went for life. <sup>JH</sup>

*Dr. Valdir Steuernagel is Vice-President for Christian Commitments of World Vision International. He lives in Curitiba, Brazil.*

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# Strategy Forum Prepares for February 22, 2010 JEMA Mission Leaders Consultation



*On the evening of November 4, 2009, during the Japan Church Planting Institute Conference at Fuji Hakone Land in Shizuoku Prefecture, Japan Harvest met with (left to right): Gary Fujino (SB), Scott Parrish (A2), Wolfgang Langhans (OMF), and Martin Crowhurst (WEC), of the JEMA Strategy Forum, to get a brief history of the Forum and an update on what is planned for the coming months.*

**Japan Harvest:** How did the Strategy Forum begin?

**Scott:** The whole idea of the Strategy Forum really came out of the consultation process JEMA went through back in 2005. At that time we brought in some organizational consultants to help us think through what kinds of changes we should institute. One of the things they suggested was that JEMA, rather than just focusing all of our efforts on supporting individual commissions and keeping them rolling, should be devoting a lot more effort to strategic initiatives... envisioning new things that should be done to help assist, promote, and so forth. One of the consultants came up with the idea of a “strategy forum” ... get mission leaders together and talk about evangelism strategy. That resonated with me, so at that year’s Mission Leader Con-

sultation (MLC), I mentioned the idea, and said if there were other leaders who were interested, I would love to get together with them and see where we could go with it. So that was the germ of the idea. You, Martin, were one of those who expressed interest. So that’s how it began.



**Martin:** Without knowing what we were signing up for... (everyone laughs)

**Japan Harvest:** So when was your first meeting?

**Scott:** We first met in June of 2008.

We had around seven or so mission leaders gather, among which were those of us here today. I think we met four times before the 2009 MLC, and we’ll have met another six or seven times before the 2010 MLC. Each time we’ve met it’s been for, let’s see...



**Gary:** I don’t think we’ve met any less than two hours. I think one Skype call was two hours. But we’ve generally met six to eight hours, even on Skype.

**Scott:** And in addition to time spent in the meetings, we’ve

each had research assignments, background information to gather...

**Martin:** ...Biblical research... huge chunks for everybody to read.

**Wolfgang:** That took quite a bit of time for each of us, but it was



good. We had the whole New Testament divided up.

**Scott:** This only begins to illustrate how much care, effort and thinking has gone into our work. We've also conducted several surveys of mission leaders, interviews with people who have especially important perspectives, and an in-depth examination of statistics on church growth in Japan. We wanted to make sure the Lord would lead us from facts, and not just from our own opinions.

**Japan Harvest:** So what is the goal of the Strategy Forum?

**Scott:** The goal of the Forum is to produce a strategy that is useful and helpful to missions. Obviously, we can't mandate anything... and we're not. Our vision statement says... (reads) To produce an overall guiding strategy for seeing more rapid church growth across Japan. This strategy is for the missions community and for interested churches across Japan as an aid to their own strategic planning.

**Japan Harvest:** It's a bit difficult to see how you can produce a useful strategy without getting into specifics that only apply to certain settings. Maybe it would be helpful if you could tell us what this strategy is *not*...

**Martin:** It is not prescriptive, and it is not something we would oversee. It is more an overview... suggestive of areas that need attention, areas where we will be more effective if we pay attention to them.

**Wolfgang:** We can perhaps see it as a "paper," in which each mission can compare what is written to their own way of doing things and say, "Oh, these are good ideas! Maybe we can change something in our own ministry to become more effective."

**Japan Harvest:** You presented a draft Strategy Statement during the CPI pre-conference day. What are your plans for that Strategy Statement now?

**Scott:** We will be revising it based upon input we received from those who attended, and then present it for discussion and input at the MLC on February 22, 2010. Wolfgang is working with Ken Taylor and the Liaison and Membership Commission to design a significant working session around this at the MLC. We hope to have plenty of time to present these thoughts and then hear others present their reactions. Then we would like to have mission leaders brainstorm about how these ideas can be expanded and what sorts of things we missions might do to implement some of our ideas. Our prayer is that this entire process will be a tool to help missions adjust their current strategies or produce new strategies that will help see rapid growth of the kingdom of God in Japan.

**Japan Harvest:** We're looking forward to seeing what you will have to share with us in February. Thank you for your time this evening. JH

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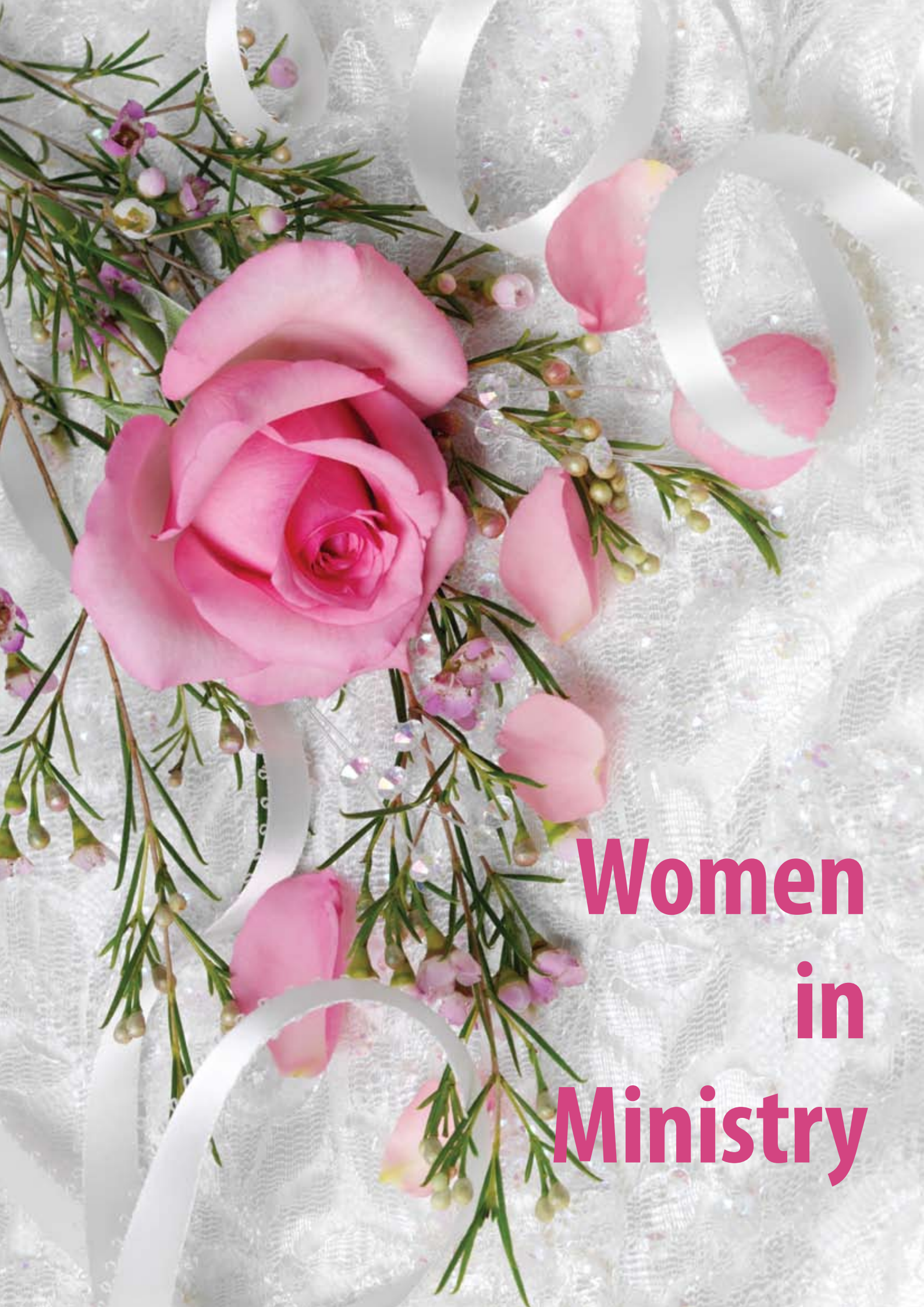
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Ministry**



# It's Love that Counts

By Anita Hallemann

Everybody in this world talks about love—Christians and non-Christians alike, no matter what culture they grew up in or what the color of their skin. More than anything else, people want to be loved. Of course, this word is being filled with different meaning by different people, but most would say love is a feeling. There are those who love things and events; they love anything that makes them feel good. They feel loved when others give them what they want. But there are also those who have a great desire to share love—to give others what they want or need. There is one problem, though—because feelings seldom are consistent, love comes and goes; it brings happiness and frustration; it is limited, conditional, and sometimes even turns into hate.

Not just people talk about love. The Bible talks a lot about it as well. No wonder, because God is love. Whatever God does is motivated by love, because love is his character. Add to his love wisdom and holiness, faithfulness and compassion, and you see a Heavenly Father who is too loving to hurt us and too wise to make a mistake. His love is unlimited and unconditional. There is nothing we can do to make him love us more or less. These facts are overwhelming, but often it seems

as if they have little to do with our everyday life.

In my travels I meet a lot of Christians, missionaries included, who have not given God's love a lot of thought. Yes, they are saved, and many of them serve the Lord. But when they talk about God, it sounds like an employee talking about his employer. The employer gives the orders, and the employee tries to do his best to please him. "The Quiet Time" and "The Ministry" have become a duty; following Jesus has become a hard job.

But God never intended it to be this way. As the coming retreat approaches (*see details on next page*) it is my desire to make us think in a new way about God's love. Love was **the reason for the Cross**. God's longing for fellowship with us was so intense he couldn't stand it any longer to live separated from us. It was his love that sent his Son into this world (John 3:16), and it was Jesus' love that made him willing to give himself for us (Galatians 2:20). As we dwell on the love of God, we'll see the effect this has on our lives. More than anything else, the Lord looks for a **love relationship with his children**. What are the characteristics of this relationship? How can we live it? How can we nurture it? While I was on my first home assignment I realized I was on the move for the Lord without the Lord. I was shocked and knew something had to change. I'll tell you more about that at the retreat.

Besides living this love relationship with the Lord, love needs to

become **the most important factor in our ministry and relationship with others**. Too often, other factors sneak in: our work brings us recognition or praise; we need to "prove" we are valuable members of a team; we need to "satisfy" our supporters or God; we run away from personal hurts or feelings of loneliness...

If love isn't the most important factor, we'll always do what we do with a selfish motive and thus we're not meeting others the way Jesus would. Let's think and talk about this as we get together.

Love is also **the basis for saying no**, something Christian workers struggle with. But when our relationship with God is what he desires it to be, and when love is the most important factor in our ministry and in our relationships, then we want to be free to do the work God has prepared for us. We want to set our priorities according to his will, and that means we'll have to say no to the things that distract us or keep us so busy with good things that we miss the best. Maybe this upcoming retreat should be on your priority list? It is my prayer that at the retreat God can meet each one of us in a new way... that he can fill our hearts (our tanks) with his love so that we become outpouring vessels of his love right there where we are... that we come away overwhelmed and rejoicing, because we are loved by our God who has promised that nothing ever can separate us from his love. In his love all of our needs are met. In his love we find peace and rest and abundant joy. It's love that counts. JH



# Serving with Joy

By Sonoko Maruyama  
Translated by Atsuko Tateishi

It is clear that Christian women play a major role, often behind the scenes, in getting the job done in Japanese churches. The calling and role of women in the church, however, has not been clearly defined even up to the present day. Denominations hold different views about the position of pastors' wives and women ministers, which to some extent has hindered women from cooperating or networking. In addition, women today must confront issues that arise out of being involved in a pluralistic society, while at the same time dealing with issues of self-sufficiency and independence.

In recent years, more and more cases are being reported of pastors' wives experiencing both physical and/or mental burnout, making it necessary for their husbands to leave the

pastorate.

Also, as more Christian women get jobs, it is becoming more difficult for them to get together on weekdays. Women who are active in church women's groups are aging, but they are having difficulty finding women to whom they can hand over their responsibilities. As a result, how to develop a next generation of women workers in the church has become a major issue.

As those of us involved in this project considered these factors, we felt the need to gain some insight as to how women serving on the frontlines of ministry can continue in joyful service. Akira Fujikake, Associate Professor of Seigakuin University Graduate School, in a lecture entitled "Women's Contributions and Mental Health," mentioned the following points:

Life consists of different stages, two of which are adolescence and middle age. While in adolescence we are immature, in middle age we reach maturity.

For women, middle age can present the opportunity to move out of the restricted lifestyle they have experienced up to this point in male-centered society.

However, as men enter middle age they suddenly realize they need to slow down, think more carefully about where they are going, give up some of their dreams, and enter an unknown realm.

In some cases, male and female roles may be reversed during this period. Mature middle-aged women are generally active and bold. As such, they run the risk of becoming brash and pushy unless they use insight and wisdom.

## Bearing this in mind:

### 1. Recognize that you are under a higher authority.

Assuming authority for yourself is a sure way to fail. If you think deciding an issue involves winning or losing, you may be in danger of appearing arrogant and overbearing. On the other hand, if you are in a leadership position, you cannot defer decisions forever. Therefore, you must speak out, at the same time acknowledging there is a higher authority over you.

### 2. Remember that everyone, including yourself, is in the process of growing.

Especially keep in mind that middle-aged men are trying to cope



## 2010 Women in Ministry Retreat Events "It's Love that Counts" with guest speaker Anita Hallemann



Anita will speak to us from her rich experience as a SEND missionary to the Philippines, Bible School teacher and women's conference speaker. More information is on the website, [jema.org](http://jema.org).

**Karuzawa Retreat: March 3-5. Wednesday afternoon through Friday noon, Megumi Chalet**  
Registration form included in this Japan Harvest or register online at [jema.org](http://jema.org)

**Hokkaido Retreat: Saturday, March 6, 9:00-4:30, OMF Center, Kita Ku, Sapporo**  
Registration: [hcwfconference@yahoo.com](mailto:hcwfconference@yahoo.com) or phone Mary at 011-788-7594

**WIM**  
Women in Ministry



with the changes they are experiencing and are under a great deal of stress.

**To combat stress in your life:**

**1. Find little things you enjoy.**

Major projects and activities can add to your stress. It is important to have a number of little options from which you can readily choose whenever you feel stressed. Also, respect the pleasures of your family and friends.

**2. Take time off when you need it.**

It is critical to take time off at the right time. Learn to recognize your signs of stress. Ask your family and close friends to urge you to rest when they notice these signs. Needless to say, it is of utmost importance to take good care of yourself on a daily basis.

**3. Appreciate and give thanks for**

**God's blessings in your life.** Look for ways God is working in every situation. When things seem at a dead end, and when your ability and circumstances remain unchanged, it is extremely important to accept who you are. Profess that you are strong when you are weak. Find and appreciate the little joys and glimmers of hope God has placed around you. Even when all else fails, this can help reduce your stress. JH

*Sonoko Maruyama is the project leader of the JEA study of women in ministry.*





# 愛 の 決 心

## Helping Japanese Women Make Loving Decisions

By Tim Clark

Tim and Wakako became parents through Ai No Kesshin on November 19, 2009.

Midori was 15 and sure of only one thing: she had no choice but to abort her unborn, unwanted baby.

But then Midori's mother called Ai No Kesshin and talked with Ako, a trained volunteer. She quickly found Ako cared about them and their needs. Ako understood the anxiety Midori and her mother felt about Midori dropping out of school, needing to establish a new family *koseki*, and bringing shame on her family. Ako understood how the family felt desperately unable to raise a child at that point in their lives.

Through Ako, Midori and her mom discovered that despite their problems, they did have choices. With the support of Ai No Kesshin counselors, Midori and her mother could stop worrying about the future; Midori's mother could choose to allow Midori to give birth.

### Ai No Kesshin's Mission

Ai No Kesshin exists to meet the needs of children born in Japan without families. It was founded on the belief that a child should never be a commodity. Since its start in 1991, Ai No Kesshin has shown God's love to hundreds of pregnant women and has placed 180 children in Christian homes.

All staff members are Christians and work as volunteers. Their desire is to glorify God as they live in response to scriptures such as James 1:27 and Psalm 82:3-4a:

*Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.*

*Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy.*

### Ricky and Sarah Gordon: No Strangers to Adoption!

Ai No Kesshin is led by Sarah and Ricky Gordon, missionaries serving in Shizuoka under Youth With a Mission. The Gordons made what was supposed to be a brief stop in Japan on their way to India in 1984. Upheaval in India changed their direction and they discovered God's call to serve in Japan. They planted Living Water Church in 1986, now a vibrant congregation of about 100 people from several countries. The Gordons have ten children, five by birth and five by adoption. They also have two grandchildren, one by birth and one by adoption.

### Changes in US Adoption Laws Create Urgent Placement Need

Ai No Kesshin works with healthy Japanese children whose birth parents cannot raise them, children of other nationalities and those with

disabilities. Children with physical and cognitive disabilities include those with Down syndrome, cleft palate, heart problems and genetic defects, as well as some who are developmentally and physically delayed.

Previously, most children with Down syndrome were placed in Christian homes in the U.S. But changes in adoption law in 2006 stopped the immigration of these children when several were in the process of being placed. The result is that Ai No Kesshin has four children urgently needing placement within Japan. The Gordon family has provided foster care to bring these four through various surgeries and other first-year challenges common to babies with Down syndrome. These children are now stable and active, entertaining the adults in their lives with their smiles and antics and slowly-emerging efforts to crawl, walk and talk.

Ai No Kesshin is praying the Lord will provide homes in Japan for these children very soon.

### Placements Decided in Prayer and in Relationship

Ai No Kesshin staff treat each child as a special gift from God. In prayer they seek God's clear leading to determine the very best home for each girl and boy. As they develop relationships with birth moms and screen prospective adoptive families, they look for signs of God at work to arrange each child's placement.

Jonathan and Kendra Kohl recognized how deeply spiritual the work of Ai No Kesshin was from their initial contact to the point of receiving their son and even after. Kendra writes,

*"In every interaction with Sarah and each person on her staff, it is obvious that this is about relationships – not just a 'job' or even 'ministry.' Sarah and the ANK staff know*

*each of these children—details about them, their little personalities—like a mother would. They approached us in the same way, to get to know us as family. It was confirmed in so many ways during our interview process, home study and interactions that they were working for the best of each one*

*of these children—to place them in the right home for them. We were eager but confident during the waiting period, knowing that Sarah and her staff were praying earnestly and seeking to discern God's best for the individual children and were not going to force a fit. We are able to be totally open and transparent, knowing that they are our advocates too, wanting to help us be the best parents we can in God's strength for our child. On top of the years of experience and wonderful reputation Ai No Kesshin has, the undergirding of each child, each prospective parent, and all their activities in prayer really is what gives me total confidence in Ai No Kesshin."*

### Midori's Choice

Six months after Midori's mother first spoke with Ako, Midori gave birth to a healthy baby boy. Ai No Kesshin staff traveled to the hospital to help Midori and her parents say goodbye and to assure them once again they had made a loving decision. They delivered the boy to a Christian couple that had been earnestly seeking the Lord for children. This boy is now an energetic first-grader who loves drawing, riding his bicycle and playing with Taro, his pet gerbil. <sup>JH</sup>

*Tim Clark and his wife Wakako serve in Sapporo with Asian Access. They run a church multiplication network and work with Alpha, helping develop Family Life Ministries such as the Marriage Course. "Midori's" story is a "true to life" example that due to privacy issues does not correspond exactly to any one particular Ai No Kesshin adoption.*

### Seven Ways to Get Involved

1. Request a brochure from Ai No Kesshin to give to your doctor, nurse or pastor.
2. Put up posters with the toll-free number and basic info.
3. Consider adopting one of the babies unable to be placed through immigration.
4. Share the Down syndrome children's need with a couple that might be interested in receiving a child.
5. Volunteer to host an Ai No Kesshin helpline seminar at your church. All prospective staff members start with this seminar; Japanese-speaking helpline counselors are trained and can then begin staffing the toll-free line.
6. Donate. Staff members are volunteers and adoptive families cover placement costs. Your donation will go directly to finding and counseling pregnant girls and women.
7. Pray for Ai No Kesshin and the unborn children of Japan.

For more information contact Ai no Kesshin: Loving Decisions at:  
2-13-7 Karase, Aoi-ku  
Shizuoka-shi, Shizuoka-ken  
420-0937  
Tel/Fax: 054-247-9411  
E-mail: rtgordon@tokai.or.jp



# Social Insurance Totalization Agreements— How Do They Affect Missionaries?

## Totalization Agreements Between Japan, the United States, and Other Countries

by JH Staff

Since February 2000, Japan has been establishing bilateral Social Insurance agreements (known in English as “Totalization Agreements”) that coordinate Japan Social Insurance programs with comparable programs of other countries. The agreement between Japan and the United States was formalized on October 1, 2005. Effective dates of agreements between Japan and other countries include Canada (March 2008) and Australia (January 2009) — see <http://www.sia.go.jp/e/system/index.html>.

Every agreement has differing provisions, but in the Japan/U.S. agreement, for an employee from the United States to not be required to pay into Japan’s *kokumin nenkin* (national pension) system, the “detached-worker”: 1) must have lived in the United States for a full six months before going to Japan to work, 2) his or her U.S. employer must apply to the Social Security Administration for a “Certificate of Coverage,” which may be requested online at [https://secure.ssa.gov/apps6z/coc\\_db/allforms.html](https://secure.ssa.gov/apps6z/coc_db/allforms.html) (a self-employed person must apply by mail), and 3) the individual must be sent (or go) to work in Japan for a period of less than five years. (An “extension for the period of exemption” may be allowed in certain rare circumstances.) As a result, October 1, 2010 is significant for U.S. citizens as the date when the “five year rule” will go into effect.

Totalization agreements, designed primarily with businessmen in mind, provide important financial

The screenshot shows the 'International Programs' section of the Social Security Online website. The page title is 'Totalization Agreement with Japan'. It includes a search bar, navigation links (Home, Questions?, Contact Us), and a search button. The main content area is titled 'Totalization Agreement with Japan' and includes the OMB Approval Number: 0960-0554, Expires 12/31/10. The page is organized into three parts: Part I -- Introduction, Part II -- Coverage and Social Security taxes, and Part III -- Certificate of coverage. Each part has a list of bullet points describing the agreement's benefits and rules.

advantages to multinational corporations, which will not be required to pay into the pension systems of both countries (read a U.S. discussion on dual coverage and the pyramid effect at [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/international/agreements\\_overview.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/international/agreements_overview.html)). However, for missionaries from totalization agreement countries, whether or not this agreement is to each individual’s advantage may be more complicated.

*Japan Harvest* has been in discussion with representatives from a number of different mission agencies within our membership in relation to this issue as it relates to missionaries from the United States. Although there is much concern about what this means for the scheduling and length of home assignments for missionaries, there are also varying opinions as to how the agreement will be interpreted in regards to specific circumstances and individual situations. So although we must include the disclaimer that we are not offering legal advice, we hope the Internet links, accompanying perspective by Steve Kunnecke (SEND), and statements by other missions will help U.S. citizens make informed decisions about whether they should plan to return to the United States

sometime before October 1, 2010 to begin a minimum stay of six months. Unless an individual has been in the United States for a consecutive period of six months sometime during the past five years, this minimum stay will be necessary in order to apply for a certificate of coverage to be exempt from paying into Japan’s Social Insurance system.

Notably, the whole issue of totalization agreements and how they relate to missionaries from the United States will be a featured topic for discussion at the next Mission Administration and Finance Conference being held in Orlando Florida, Feb 11-13, 2010.

For the English home page of the Japan Social Insurance Agency: <http://www.sia.go.jp/e/>

For the Japan Social Insurance Agency “Notes on Individual Rules” of the Japan/U.S. agreement: <http://www.sia.go.jp/e/attention/america.html#a03>

For a U.S. Social Security Administration Internet summary of the Japan/U.S. agreement: [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/international/Agreement\\_Pamphlets/japan.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/international/Agreement_Pamphlets/japan.html)

## The United States/Japan Totalization Agreement—What Do Missionaries from the U.S. Need to Know?

by Steve Kunnecke (SEND)

There is much discussion these days among American missionaries working in Japan about the U.S./Japan Totalization Agreement. This agreement removes the requirement that expatriates pay into the retirement programs of both the United States and Japan at the same time.

One little known provision of the agreement affecting some missionaries is the fact that if a missionary is in Japan for longer than five years without having a six-month continuous absence from Japan (it must be consecutive, not spread out into several shorter times), then the missionary must switch from the U.S. Social Security program into the Japan National Pension program. For many missionaries this is not a problem because they take regular furloughs or home assignments of longer than six months. However, some missionaries are taking more frequent but shorter (usually summer) furloughs.

Since the agreement became effective on October 1, 2005, some missionaries are faced with a choice to make by September 30, 2010—either leave Japan for six months and a day, or stop paying into the U.S. Social Security program and join Japan's pension program (usually *kokumin kenkin*).

I have been helping several missionaries think through this and help them make the best choice. First off, if a missionary has not paid into U.S. Social Security for at least 10 years, I advise them to go back to the United States for at least six months. The reason for this is that if you have paid into Social Security for 10 years (40 quarters) then you are eligible for U.S. Social Security benefits. Switching into Japan's *nenkin* program will not change that. But more importantly, by being eligible for U.S. Social Security, you are also eligible

for Medicare, the de facto health insurance in the United States for retirees. Unless you are absolutely sure you will retire in Japan, you need to be sure you will have health insurance in the United States, and that means paying into Social Security for at least 40 quarters.

### Mission Agency Statements Relating to the U.S./Japan Totalization Agreement

#### *International Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention*

Board policy is to comply with Totalization Agreements in such a way as to (1) maintain its personnel's eligibility for U.S. Social Security benefits, and (2) legally avoid any obligation to pay social security taxes to the foreign government of the country in which its personnel are serving.

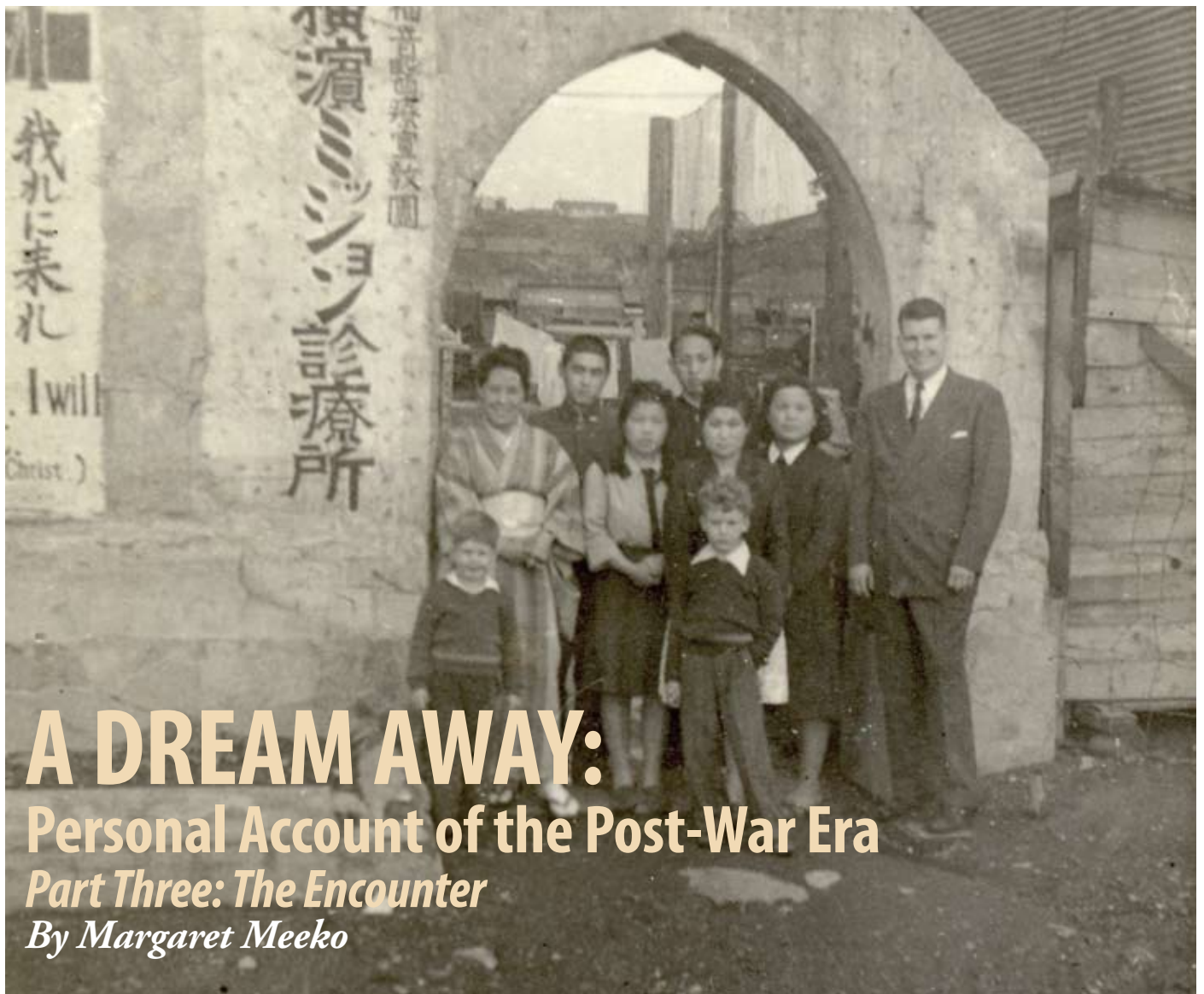
#### *Asian Access*

A U.S. citizen, who is an employee of Asian Access (a U.S. corporation), who is residing in a country which has an established totalization agreement with the U.S., must continue in the U.S. Social Security system and shall either maintain the required certificate of coverage, or if they do not maintain a certificate of coverage and are required to also make payments into their host country's retirement program, the employee will be required to raise the additional funds.

If you do have at least 40 quarters paid up, then you need to calculate how the switch to *nenkin* will affect your retirement benefits. If you switch mid-career, you need to know if the total received from both countries at retirement is at least as much as you would receive from U.S. Social Security. Before this agreement

was signed, a person was required to pay into *nenkin* for at least 25 years in order to collect benefits. However, one provision of this totalization treaty allows for the *nenkin* office to count your years of paying into Social Security toward meeting the required 25 years. In other words, if you pay into U.S. Social Security for 20 years, switch to *nenkin*, and then pay into it even for only five years, you will receive some *nenkin* benefits upon retirement, because you will have paid into both systems a total of 25 years. You won't receive very much from Japan because you will have paid into *nenkin* for such a short time, but you *will* collect *something* if (and this is important) you obtain Japan permanent residency before you retire. (*Ed. note: some missionaries have decided to apply for permanent residency and obtained it with little difficulty other than filling out the application, whereas others have applied multiple times and been unsuccessful. Each case is different.*) In addition to the *nenkin* payments, you'll also receive benefits from U.S. Social Security. The benefits will be reduced because you will have stopped paying into the U.S. system before you retire. However, you will also save quite a bit of money per year in payments if you switch to the *kokumin nenkin* system. The payments into *kokumin nenkin* are significantly less than the payments into Social Security. If you save the difference and invest it until retirement, then add together your reduced benefits from both the United States and Japan and a monthly withdrawal from your invested funds, you will probably end up with as much monthly income at retirement as if you had stayed in the U.S. Social Security program until full retirement age.

There are many good reasons for missionaries to take furloughs of six months or more, but fear of losing your retirement benefits is not one of them. JH



# A DREAM AWAY:

## Personal Account of the Post-War Era

### *Part Three: The Encounter*

By Margaret Meeko

**December 21-27, 1947**

There is so much I could relate concerning this country and our getting settled. We left San Francisco on November 26 and after fifteen days at sea, finally got our first glimpse of this land on the 12th of December. We are now settled very happily here in Tokyo about 12 miles from the city center. We are on the southeastern edge of Tokyo in a residential section that is quite nice as housing goes in this city. We have parked our trailer in the front of another missionary's house and are finishing putting up the auxiliary storeroom on the property here. The trailer is small and cramped for the four of us, but we are nice and warm and don't have rats.

Before living in our trailer we lived with a family who have a large home and two maids. But with the four of

us, the two Beckers, and Miss Culter (a beloved grand missionary, 60 years old and the dean of girls at Biola in Los Angeles, who took a leave of absence to come help in starting a Bible school here), we really have had a gang. I forgot to mention Pastor Aisawa, and the Degelmens—who also have a trailer parked out here along with a jeep. We have had Japanese guests at most meals, and over Christmas had about forty for Christmas supper.

We are getting used to a lot of changes here. "Honey buckets" has already become a part of the children's vocabulary. Sonny has been watching the man go from house to house with his pushcart and the wooden tubs and scoop out our "lovely" bathroom fixtures. Sonny says that the Japanese gardens sure "smell awful!" At home

"going to the bathroom in the street" was a mortal sin for our boys and they are completely horrified at the behavior of the Japanese men, women, and children everywhere in town and country. Miss Culter was shocked and dismayed with her first experiences of the co-educational rest room system in Japan. I also have found that I must dress very early in the morning. The Japanese have a custom of making their social call bright and early. They never knock on doors, but merely open them and call "good morning." I had one experience of entertaining a visitor when I was dressed in a woolen slip.

There are babies, babies everywhere in Japan. Almost all of the women seem to have babies on their backs and the children and men carry them too. Joe went for the midwife for



Higuchi San the other morning and I went to visit the baby. It was the tiniest little baby boy I have ever seen. I gave him a layette for Christmas. Higuchi San is an architect and is making plans for a church building in this area. He has chosen as a location a knoll that is the site of a cemetery over 700 years old. We can see what a wonderful transformation has come into his life since he became a Christian. He is a former Buddhist and would never have considered a burial place as a building site.

Oh, there is so much I would like to tell you. I wish you could have been at our Christmas party at the church. The plays that the Japanese put on would never have been appropriate in America, but everyone enjoyed them here. But the most thrilling thing was to hear the children repeating scripture. Everywhere Christian work is making rapid strides. Four Christian doctors (Japanese) called on us this evening. They are all evangelists and hold street meetings along with Bible classes in their medical clinic. They have a small faith hospital in a church basement and carry on their work with just a pittance of equipment. Joe asked them to come to our Sunday School and administer the santonin we brought to the children to rid them of their worms. Joe gave them two cases of penicillin that we brought with us and they couldn't believe that it was a gift. It is worth hundreds and hundreds of dollars here and will save many lives. They want us to come and visit their hospital and we will go after New Year's.

I have been having a lot of fun

getting acquainted with children and practicing my Japanese on them. When we don't understand each other



The trailer is small and cramped for the four of us, but we are nice and warm and don't have rats.

we just throw in a little pantomime. I give them a little piece of chocolate or a caramel and they are so shy about taking gifts because they feel that they must always be returned. Sure enough, on Sunday morning here came the children with a lovely big bouquet of chrysanthemums for me. I gave Kaneko San a chocolate bar to take home to her children (she is a Christian widow) and she came back next time with a lovely little pair of Japanese slippers for each of the boys made from material she had saved all through the war. They have split toes too and look like mittens on their feet. The children are so lovable and polite. The other day there were three little girls outside the house (trailer) and I broke a candy bar into three pieces and gave it to them. They bowed and said, "gochiso sama, arigato gozaimasu" as they always do. Then I went inside and peeped out the window at them. One of the little girls broke her candy in two and went over and gave half of it to Sonny who was playing outside, as I had forgotten to give him some. The Japanese children never will eat before another child without sharing.

Perhaps that was the first chocolate the girls had for years, as the Tokyo area is one of the poorest in Japan.

Joe and I went to Yokohama the other day to get our trunks and took all six of the kids with us. Here I learned my lesson for travel in Japan: "Never go anywhere without a roll of toilet paper and a lunch." There we were with six hungry children and no Japanese money or military scrip so we couldn't buy a thing. We had expected to be back at noon

and didn't get back until two-thirty. Then the children all had to go to the bathroom and no rest rooms. Oh, we had a wonderful time!

### January 8, 1948

Well, today is January 8th and the boys still haven't received the Christmas presents I bought for them last summer. Joe has gone clear to Yokohama to meet the truck for our freight three times and it hasn't shown up. We have unpacked one load and have three more coming. Our storeroom is going to be packed so solidly that we won't be able to get in the door. After all, our freight weighs 30 tons! Even though we don't need everything we packed, we are unpacking all of it to get out the relief clothing that we packed our things in. These things must all be passed out this winter as the people need them so much. The other day an old man came to help Joe unload boxes. It was such a cold day that we were shivering as we worked and "Ojissan" (grandpa) didn't have mittens or an overcoat. His sleeves were above his wrists and Joe saw that he didn't have an

undershirt on. I unwrapped one of Bill's old sweatshirts from the box I was unpacking and Joe gave it to the old man. He was so thankful and has worn it every day since. We have given him more clothing and food since then and he is a big help to us. Joe calls him "Obasan" (grandma) most of the time (he can't seem to get those two names straight), but he doesn't mind and we have a lot of fun trying to understand each other.

Our Japanese is improving already as we have much occasion to use it. Japanese programs on the radio don't sound like a jumble now, as we can distinguish the words. We are going to the Army language school in the evenings twice a week and Pastor Yuya is teaching us theological terms one morning a week. It is quite a strain on us trying to express ourselves, as we understand Japanese better than we can speak it. When I finished a conversation with one woman who visited me recently I felt like I didn't even want to talk the rest of the day. By the time I think my thoughts in English and then re-think them to the backward order of Japanese, and then try to say it, I feel like I have just been put through a meat grinder. Yuya Sensei told us that our homework was to have our domestic quarrels in Japanese so that while we are consulting our dictionaries our anger will disappear.

### January 12, 1948

Blind School in Yokohama on New Year's morning. Mrs. Suyama (the interpreter for our New Bible School which will start soon) came to assist. We took Hershey bars, caramels, chewing gum, hard candies, and a case of powdered milk with us. We found that we didn't need an interpreter as one of the directors spent thirty years as a Bible translator for the Bible Society in Oxford, England. What a wonderful Christian man he is! He himself has recently become blind because of his many years of using his eyes for translation. He is elderly and very frail and has palsy. But

when Joe asked him, "Are you in good health, Sir?" he replied, "Yes, my eyes are gone, but otherwise I am in good health. I must be in good health in times like these in Japan. Never before has there been such an opportunity to do evangelistic work in Japan. I hold



The Japanese have a custom of making their social calls bright and early.

meetings everywhere and hundreds of blind people come and beg for the Bible in Braille, but we have no paper." This is the only Christian school for the blind in Japan. Mr. Lang, a German missionary was telling us today that there is a hospital here with one or two thousand men who have no legs.

We still had a lot of caramels when we were ready to leave so we gave them to our boys to pass out to the Japanese children. It was so cute the way they would go up to each child and say "dozo." Then the Japanese child would always bow very low as they said "gochiso sama" or "domo arigato goziamashita." Soon we had a crowd of about two hundred people around us on the lawn just smiling and watching the boys. Have you ever heard the sound of a crowd of children smacking on caramels at the same time? It sounded just like rain falling and was music to our ears.

We were invited to go to the war crimes trial, but we already had an engagement so turned it down. We went to the medical clinic in Yokohama and preached. In our missionary work we must have close contact with the people and we completely horrify the Army people. They won't go into rooms without masks and stocking caps (90% of the Japanese have T.B.). Of course we don't take unnecessary risks—we keep the children away from skin disease cases, scrub their hands with a brush and strong soap whenever they come in the trailer, don't let people cough into our faces, etc, but we can't go around with a ten-foot pole all of the time. So today we went to the clinic and preached to people with T.B., skin disease, venereal diseases, worms, etc. I put Paul in a room away from the people and Mr. Lang interpreted for us. As the people are awaiting their turn to be treated there is a Christian Gospel service going on. The people are treated and leave and others come in and many are reached in this way. After we had finished our parts of the service, Mr. Lang showed us around the clinic.

I wish you could all have been there with us to see it. It is in the basement of a burned-out church (the Baptist Church of Yokohama). The church stands alone in a completely devastated area where once there were thousands of homes. The walls are full of bullet holes and patched up bomb holes. The windows melted out and left the frames (metal) twisted from the heat. It is a cement building and there are big cracks and holes all over and everything is smoke blackened. The patients sit on wooden benches while the doctors give treatments in little curtained off corners and perform operations with the wind blowing through the boarded up window frames. The only heat is an electric plate to warm hands. The bare wooden floors are damp and musty from being mopped and not drying out. The antique instruments are sterilized and used again. But oh, the lives

that are being saved here, not only from physical death, but eternal death, and the suffering that is alleviated.

But the most wonderful thing of all is the staff—a full time evangelist, two doctors, one dentist, four nurses, one Christian worker, two pharmacists—all of them born-again Christians. The most highly paid is the Chief of Staff who receives five thousand yen a month, which is equivalent to 100 dollars, and the next highest salary is thirty five hundred yen a month. Any of them could make huge salaries at this time of shortage of doctors, dentists, etc., and the hospitals are begging for help.

We gave them two cases of penicillin (about a three months supply of their work), a gallon of cod liver oil, two and a half pints of iodine, two bottles of aluminum chloride, 2,000 santonin tablets (the most precious medicine in Japan next to penicillin—it is for intestinal worms), one pound Whitefield's ointment (for skin disease), 2,000 calcium capsules, two pounds of saccharin, boxes of bandages, etc. Oh it was such a pittance, considering the need. I just wish we could do more, but everywhere there is such terrible need.

We gave our own supply (for our family in case of emergency) of penicillin to Pastor Aisawa tonight for a friend of his. This young man has been slowly dying in the hospital for months because he needed an operation (T.B.) in which penicillin must be used and there was none available.

### January 19, 1948

I think the greatest thrill of all in Japan for us has been to meet the Japanese Christians and see all the wonderful work they are doing. It makes us feel very humble to see the sacrifices they have made and the stand they have taken for the Lord. Even in this freezing weather, bare



Sonny and Paul by Mount Fuji

hands and feet don't keep the people away from church. They sit in the stark, unheated buildings, with the wind blowing in the broken windows, eagerly listening as the Gospel is taught and preached.

At Christmas I was in Tokyo hearing the "Messiah" at Hibiya Hall. It was something I shall never forget. I have heard the "Messiah" sung every year for years, but this surpassed them all in meaning. There was a thirty-five-piece orchestra and one hundred fifty voices. Along with the Japanese there were about thirty GI's who sang. It was wonderful to see the Christians of both nations singing together of their Savior. As I thought of the Emperor's Palace just a short distance away and the emphasis that was placed upon his deity during the war, I was proud of my brothers and sisters in Christ as I heard them sing, "And His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

There is a strong flavor of resentment with the Occupation growing. One of the Army officers in charge of censoring Japanese mail told us he was very fearful of the future and another war seemed inevitable. Some of the Japanese have already started doing little things to get on the people's nerves, but when we see the GI's deliberately shove Japanese off trains and holler

public insults at former Japanese Army officers (most of the men still wear their uniforms as there is no other clothing available), we can't blame the Japanese entirely. And of course the attitude of the soldiers with the native girls doesn't improve their standing either. Well, I could go on and on about that, but anyhow we are making no plans for the future but must live for the present and do what we can to aid the people in their hunger for the Gospel and win all we can for Christ through our words, when possible, and through our lives also. "For the night cometh when no man can work."

### Postscript by Andy Meeko

After six months in Tokyo, my parents and older brothers—I wasn't born yet—moved north to Yamagata riding a dusty steam locomotive freight train along with their automobile from the US, supplies, and two kittens. No teammates joined them, and they had only scant resources, but within the second year the Higashihara First Baptist church was built on a prime piece of real estate in the prefecture, designed after a chapel pictured on a Christmas card.

Suyama Setsuko accompanied them as interpreter, but did much more than that as she was a stalwart worker and prophetess in her own right. Dad and Mom rose to the level of need for their era, focusing not on planting one church at a time, but three or four simultaneously. When they left the north eleven years later, there were 17 churches and church plants going, not to mention kindergartens. Years later, their ashes were interred in two locations; half in Oregon, and half in Yamagata. Sonny (Joe, Jr.) commented at our father's memorial that he thought the Yamagata portion contained Dad's heart. Their grave marker in Oregon reads, "For me to live is Christ. To die is gain. Either way we win." JH





### Windows 7

#### *The Missionary Geek*

If you're like me, you've heard all the hype about Windows 7 and wondered if it might help you? I recently decided to take the plunge and upgrade to Windows 7. Here's what I found out.

#### **Getting the Correct Version**

First I had to understand all the different versions out there. The Home Premium version is the standard version for home or small office. There are also the Pro and Ultimate versions. These come in "Full" and "Upgrade" versions. For the first time, Microsoft also has a Home Premium "Family Pack" which can be installed on three computers. This is the one I wanted, since it costs only a little more (\$150) than a single license.

Off I went to Akihabara, sure that I could find the English version there. After tromping around all day, I came home empty handed. You can buy the single license English versions, but no one had the English family pack. I only saw the Japanese Family Pack in one store (Yodobashi Camera).

Next I decided to order it online. You can't buy it from Amazon Japan or any other Japanese online vender. I then tried the US online venders. After spending several hours trying, the only place that wasn't sold out was the Microsoft online store. I knew they wouldn't send it overseas but I thought I'd have it sent to my daughter who lives in the US, to send to me.

After two days of hassling with the online store and numerous scary messages that there was something amiss with my credit card, several calls to my US credit card company, calls to Microsoft, calls to my bank, etc. etc., Microsoft finally answered my e-mail saying that if I was trying



to order from a computer located overseas, their web site would say there was a problem with my card! If only they would tell you that on the web site! Finally I called my daughter and asked her to order it. She had it the next day!

#### **Upgrading**

I got the software this week, and immediately started to upgrade my computer that is running Windows XP. I wanted to install a new hard disk at the same time. (This also preserves my current XP installation in case something goes wrong... and it did.) I read up online about doing a "clean install" using the family pack upgrade disk (the family pack software only comes in the upgrade version). Several articles I read made it seem it would be possible.

However, after the first part of the installation it asks for the product key (the serial number for the new software). The number that was printed on my new software wouldn't work! I tried several times, thinking I had made a typo. I even tried changing the "B's" to "8's" since that's a common mistake. In the end, I called Microsoft again and found out that (whoops!)... if you are installing to a new hard disk, you have to install XP first. That's what I had

to do. If the message had said that in the beginning—instead of, “your product key is invalid”—it would have saved me quite a bit of time.

### Reinstalling Programs

Finally I was able to complete the installation. Next came the hard part. Because it was a “clean install,” I had to reinstall all my programs. If you are upgrading to Windows 7 from Vista, then you can do what’s called an “in place” upgrade and all your programs and data will remain in place. I found that my long time e-mail program, Outlook Express, is not available for Windows 7, and has been replaced by Windows Mail.

After a few hours, I couldn’t get used to the different interface and the fact that all my e-mail accounts could not be integrated into one inbox, so I deleted it and downloaded the free Thunderbird program. This one looks and acts a lot more

like Outlook Express. The problem is that I had saved all my data files to an external hard drive, to be imported into Thunderbird. That works for the e-mail, but the address book can’t be imported that way. You have to have Outlook Express loaded, which of course can’t be used in Windows 7! I had to get out my original XP hard disk, load Thunderbird, import the address book, and then copy Thunderbird’s address book files to the new Windows 7 hard disk! Man, it’s times like that when you think seriously about buying a Mac! All the My Documents, Music, Pictures, etc. copied over easily. Luckily both of my printers, web cam and other accessories all worked fine with Windows 7. I did have one older label printer that plugs into the USB port that won’t work. Some older printers and scanners won’t have drivers and will have to be replaced. Oddly enough, my anti-spam software (Cloudmark

Desktop) won’t work. The company says they are working on a compatible version to come out early in 2010. Using Japanese on an English system works the same as before, and functions pretty well. The most expensive version (Ultimate) has a feature that should make the menus language selectable. I haven’t tried this but it looks like this version could be selected for either Japanese or English.

### Conclusion

In the end, I’m pretty happy. However I’m not sure the time, effort, and money are worth it. We have one Vista computer in the house that definitely needs Windows 7, but if I had it to do over again, I’d probably stick with XP until I bought a new computer that comes with Windows 7. JH

*Write with questions, problems or comments to [missionarygeek@yahoo.com](mailto:missionarygeek@yahoo.com)*

## TOOLS FOR EVANGELISM



**Axiom: Powerful Leadership Proverbs**, Bill Hybels

The best leaders not only lead well but also reflect on their leadership long enough and thoughtfully enough to communicate the ideals that cause them to do so. Four key leadership strategies; Vision & Strategy, Teamwork & Communication, Activity & Assessment and Personal Integrity. B6\* size, 272 pp.

(Riidahshippu o Sodateru 76 no Chie) (08440) \1,890

**The Case for a Creator**, Lee Strobel

Author visits with scholars and researchers working each interview into a topical outline. Exposes readers to the works of major origin researchers, theistic philosophers. A solid introduction to the most important topics in origin's debates.

(Uchu wa Kami ga tsukutta no Ka?) (02080) \2,310



**The Jesus Storybook Bible**, Sally Lloyd-Jones & Jago

The whole Bible is about Jesus, not just a collection of stories to teach moral lessons. The story beneath the stories. Center of the story is a baby, the child upon whom everything will depend. Every story whispers his name. From Noah to Moses to the great King David. The missing piece in a puzzle - the piece that makes all the other pieces fit together. From Old through the New Testament, as the story unfolds. 20 OT and 21 NT stories. Hardcover. 15cm x18.9cm 352 pp. (Jiizasu Baiburu Stohrii) (24420) \2,940



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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](mailto:membercare@jema.org)*

## Missionary Care Resources

Those of us who serve overseas increasingly have valuable missionary care resources available to us at the tips of our fingertips. I have chosen several to highlight in this issue.

### Member Care by Radio

I recently attended the annual Mental Health and Missions conference in North-eastern Indiana. While in conversation with one of the representatives of Member Care by Radio, I mentioned that we had posted a link to their site as a resource on our website's Member Care pages. In my next sentence, as I mentioned we were in Japan, her eyes flashed wide. "Japan! My engineer just brought some data showing a

large number of web hits from Japan and we couldn't figure out why!"

This web-based resource, which features voice and text "radio programs," was originally created to be sent via short wave to individuals serving in restricted access countries in Central Asia. Their content is excellent, and since they've gone to web posting, is easily accessed by anyone with a computer. Go to [www.membercareradio.com](http://www.membercareradio.com) and check out their program list. The contributors are a "who's who" of Missionary Care.

### Ron Koteskey Booklets

Dr. Ron Koteskey is a Member Care Consultant for GO InterNational. He has developed a series of brochures with titles that



*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.*

## How Organized Are You?

**We all want to be organized.** We all want to be better organized. The problem is that we might not be clear on what it means to be organized. For example, does being organized mean...?

1. Having SMART goals, having goals, or having values?
2. Using spreadsheets to track progress or being able to tell stories about progress?
3. Having a clean desk with everything filed away or having a messy desk with everything in stacks?
4. Planning ahead or seeing what happens?

### My answer?

1. Being organized doesn't mean having SMART goals, having goals, or having values—being organized means being aware of your priorities.
2. Being organized doesn't mean using

spreadsheets to track progress or being able to tell stories about progress—it means being aware of your priorities.

3. Being organized doesn't mean having a clean desk with everything filed away or having a messy desk with everything in stacks—it means being able to access the resources you need to address your priorities.
4. Being organized doesn't mean planning ahead or seeing what happens—it means being intentional about pursuing your priorities.

**So, what can you do?** Reflect on the following 6 questions: On a scale of 1-10 (10 being high)...

1. How aware are you of your priorities?
2. How aware are you of your progress on your priorities?
3. How able are you to access the resources you need to address your priorities?



begin “What missionaries ought to know about...” that have become available individually and as an e-book on his website, [www.missionarycare.com](http://www.missionarycare.com). He often uses Biblical illustrations to explain cross-cultural situations. There are also e-books on Marriage, Family, and a series on Re-Entry—including books to help you prepare for elementary children’s re-entry. All of these are free and downloadable.

### **Missionary Kid Transition Seminars**

If your organization doesn’t have its own re-entry program for MKs returning to North America for college, try to get your young person into one of these seminars. These fill quickly, so if this is of interest to you, check these sites out as soon as possible!

### **Barnabas International**

[www.barnabas.org](http://www.barnabas.org) Under the

Events link, follow MK events and retreats / MK Reentry Seminars.

### **Interaction International**

[www.interactionintl.org](http://www.interactionintl.org) On the Seminar menu, follow the links for transition seminars.

### **“Must Read” Books on Missionary Care**

If you have a missionary care role in your organization, or have an interest in the field, you need to be familiar with the available resources. The following three books are excellent places to start.

*Missionary Care: Counting the Cost for World Evangelization*, by Kelly O’Donnell, Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1992. This was a pioneering book in the field of missionary care, and has a great compendium of practical articles and resources.

*Doing Member Care Well; Perspec-*

*tives and Practices from Around the World*, by Kelly O’Donnell, Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2002. This practical book has guidelines, personal accounts, case studies, program descriptions, and worksheets.

*Worth Keeping: Global Perspectives on Best Practice*, by Rob Hay, Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2007. This book is the report of the largest research project ever done in the missions world pertaining to missionary retention. It is a comprehensive and user-friendly tool filled with practical information. Anyone involved in training, sending and caring for missionaries should have a copy of this in their library.

If you run across other resources you think we should post on the JEMA Member Care pages, please e-mail them to me at [jemamembercare@gmail.com](mailto:jemamembercare@gmail.com). JH

4. How intentional are you about pursuing your priorities?
5. So, how organized are you?
6. How organized do you want to be?

Remember, being organized helps you pursue God’s calling. Get better organized. Today. JH

### **Empower Others to Get Organized**

Want to empower others to get organized? Ask questions that provoke reflection, for example:

1. What’s your primary workspace like?
2. What tools do you use to get organized?
3. How do you feel when you’re organized/disorganized?
4. For you, what does being organized look like?
5. On a scale of 1-10 (10 being high), how organized are you?
6. On a scale of 1-10 (10 being high), how organized do you want to be?
7. If you were more organized, what might happen?
8. To get organized, what do you need to keep doing? start doing? stop doing?
9. What will you do?

### **Learn More about Getting Organized**

How? By exploring these resources:

1. *Getting Things Done* and *Ready for Anything* by David Allen
2. “Get Everything Done” by Mark Forster: <http://www.markforster.net/blog/>
3. “Work Smart” by Michael Essenburg: <http://closethegapnow.org/consulting/worksmart/index.html>



### Outreach:

#### *When Small is Better than Big*

*Paul Nethercott is a member of TEAM, co-founder of CAN, and has lived in Japan for over twenty years. He likes to read, ask questions, fix old guitars, network, and eat good food with friends. He spends most of his time working with a group of international filmmakers called "Studio Re:" who have a vision to impact Japanese culture through redemptive films. He is available to help with referring artists or to discuss issues related to worship, the arts, church planting, and effective outreach. Send questions, feedback, or suggestions for future topics to [pnethercott@mac.com](mailto:pnethercott@mac.com).*

#### **"Over two hundred came!"**

The combined membership of our two new churches in Kyushu was about ten (including the missionaries), so we were understandably excited when a large crowd showed up for our Christmas outreach. We rented a nice venue in a local mall, had colorful decorations, good music, a gospel message, and we sent everyone home with a tract and a bag of homemade goodies that were prepared by some of the women in our church. It seemed to have been a great success.

However, there were problems: our members complained that it had been too much work; there was disappointment that no one had gotten saved; the event cost more than we could afford; it wore us out. Following up on our new contacts did not work. I called several people, even though I didn't feel like it, but it was clear that those I called did not like the intrusion. The best part was that we learned a few things.

Several years later we had a much more successful experience at another new church, this time in Yokosuka. We established what we called "Gospel Live House." The concept is from mainstream "Live Houses" that are popular venues in Japan featuring live music, food, and drinks.

We held a "Gospel Live House" at our church four times a year. It was easy to create an attractive, relaxed atmosphere. We moved out most of the chairs, added some tables, and provided simple homemade snacks and drinks. We always had a live performance and charged 500 yen per person.

The quality and type of music varied a lot. One time we had smooth jazz by skilled musicians. Another time an awful rock band from a local college performed.

We never had preaching on the program. Usually, one of the performers would share a short testimony and most, but not all, of the music had gospel themes.

This was effective outreach. We had a lot of fun with our Gospel Live Houses and they were one of the reasons that we had a thriving church in Yokosuka. Why did this work out so well when our Christmas event in Kyushu didn't?

#### **Doable**

The quarterly rhythm did not wear us out and gave us adequate time to prepare for the next one. We held it in the church and it did not require a big staff; the 500 yen per person cover charge paid most, if not all, of the expenses.

#### **Consistent**

People looked forward to the next Gospel Live House. They knew what to expect, so they were able to relax and enjoy themselves.

#### **Contextual**

What we did and how we did it was appropriate for our church and for our community. In other words, a "good fit." Copying others leads to problems like we experienced in Kyushu. Almost any wholesome activity of interest to people in your context can be an effective means of outreach.

#### **Relational**

Rather than gathering a crowd so we could preach (very few people like to be preached at and those that do are almost all in the church already) we built relationships. The warm, relaxed atmosphere made it possible to get to know individuals, to become



friends and to let them know that we cared about them.

## Enjoyable

Did I say it was a lot of fun? This was an important reason people kept coming back and why they brought their friends. Let's have more fun in the church!

Are big events bad? No, they have their place and can be positive. However, the good news is that smaller groups can do outreach that is small but effective.

Big or small, the single most important factor with outreach is that the not-yet-Christians we are seeking to reach realize that we care about them—a lot! <sup>JH</sup>

## Our 150th Anniversary Prayer

A Prayer of Apology, Repentance, and Dedication to the Lord of the Harvest  
Upon the 150th Anniversary of the Arrival of Protestant Christianity to Japan in 1859

by Kenny and Lila Joseph

Dear Heavenly Father,

We bow before Thee in apology, because we have slandered, libeled, maligned, and abused Your Holy Name and omnipotent power. We ask that You please forgive Your people for telling, reading, and writing that it took You, Almighty God, 1500 years from the time Jesus died on the cross in 33 A.D. to figure out how to evangelize the Japanese by first sending Francis Xavier.

You promised in Acts 1:8 that all power would be given to be Your witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth. In Acts 8:1, you caused great persecution and sent lay preachers all over the world. Your young thirty-year-old disciples obeyed Your great commission and scattered: Mark to Egypt, Peter to Assyria, Thomas to India. We thank You for Dr. McBynie's books on those twelve disciples' evangelistic lives.

We thank you, dear Father, for the church that Thomas built in 52 A.D. in India. Had those young disciples and evangelists just walked slowly, they could have reached Japan in eight years. But we know that in four years they came—on horses, on camels, and by ships on the seas. And so, Father, we ask You to forgive us for blotting out all the mighty works and great sacrifices made by those bold evangelists going by foot and by horse, preaching the gospel along the seven different Silk Roads. In Your great plan, You had the Assyrians take the captured Jews to Assyria and place them in the mountains of Northern Iraq. We thank you that when they heard the word "He is risen," and that Thomas had been martyred, those Messianic Jews and Assyrians traveled in tribes all the way past India, China, Korea, and into Japan by 199 A.D.

But, Lord, we know so little of all that happened in between 33 A.D., and the day they left those mountains. Thank you, O Lord, for guiding Dr. Philip Jenkins of the University of Pennsylvania to write *The Lost History of Christianity: The Thousand-Year Golden Age*, a historical study of Christianity in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa.

So Father, forgive us, for this blasphemy is against Your Power, Your Name, and all the disciples, evangelists, and missionaries who preached throughout Asia. Forgive us for assuming in history books, references, and tour guides that You were so impotent that all of Your twenty-two great attributes were not being used until that Jesuit from Portugal arrived in Japan 1549 years later.

We ask that You shed more light on the great missing 1900 years of the glorious Light of the World, Keikyo (the Hikari no Shukyo) Christianity.

And Jesus, please forgive us for parroting the lie that the later fifth century "Nestorians" were "heretics" and to be written off as "an evil sect." Forgive us that 1800 years of Your glorious history of martyrs and evangelists were erased by that one word, "heresy," until Dr. John M. L. Young's book, *By Foot to China* proved they were the evangelicals of their day.

Thank you also for Rev. Teshima's book telling how CIM's Hudson Taylor went to inland China searching for evidence of the 5000 Keikyo Churches.

Just as in 1995 the Pope of Rome and the Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East met and apologized for calling each other heretics, we ask You now, Lord Jesus, to get your flashlight of history out and reveal with your great light, the "Hikan" of the luminous bright light and shine it on that history, the unseen story of Keikyo.

Now as we in 50 years have just dug into a tiny fraction of what should be known and brought it together, we pray to You, Lord Jesus, to help it then go like a rolling snowball, gathering more and more momentum, picking up pieces of evidence here and there until we can see the full picture of what You did in these last and lost 1900 years.

Thank you for the Koreans who held the First International Conference for the Study of Asian Christianity — Nestorianism (Keikyo) in November, bringing 100 delegates from China, Korea, Iraq, and Japan together. Thank you for Dr. David Chung's trilingual books on Thomas coming to Korea by ship. Thank you also for more evidence of Keikyo's roots in Vietnam, Indonesia, Mongolia, and the Philippines.

Lord, show us what we should and shouldn't do. Reveal the mistakes they made, so that we don't repeat them. Show us the great successes they had, so we can copy and share them. We thank You for the Gallup poll showing we have 4% of the Japanese calling themselves Christians, up from 1%. Lord, make that 40%, just like Korea.

*Kenny and Lila Joseph have spent a combined total of over 100 years in Japan. The trilingual message CD and bilingual illustrated book on Japan's 1800 years of Christian history, entitled Jizo and Jesus (being re-published as Japan's Christian Roots), Country of the Erased Cross: Japan (Japanese) and Country of the Erased Bible: Japan (Japanese) are available at [www.KennyJoseph.com](http://www.KennyJoseph.com) or by e-mailing REAP1@aol.com.*





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

### **Christmas at the Sparrow's Inn**

したきりすずめのクリスマス

I was searching for creative ways to teach the Bible to Mr I., who recently started attending church with his wife but finds reading difficult. Hearing this, a Japanese friend asked, “Do you know Miura Ayako’s したきりすずめのクリスマス? It’s an old folk tale every Japanese knows, and she rewrote it to include a great presentation of the gospel.” I borrowed my friend’s copy, read it and promptly bought my own.

#### **The Original Folk Tale**

(むかしばなし)

The original *Shita-kiri Suzume* (舌切り雀:したきりすずめ) translated literally as Tongue-Cut Sparrow, is a traditional Japanese fable telling of a kind old man, his avaricious wife, and an injured sparrow. The story explores the effects of greed, friendship, and jealousy on the characters.

Synopsis: One morning the old man goes on a hike into the mountains to cut timber and comes upon an injured sparrow crying for help. He takes it home and feeds it some rice to try to help it recover. His greedy and ill-natured wife resents him wasting precious food on the sparrow. The man has to return to the mountain one day and leaves the bird in the care of the old woman. While she is out, the sparrow finds some starch and eats it all up. The old woman is so outraged upon her return that she cuts out the bird’s tongue, sending the bird flying back into the mountains from whence it came.



The old man goes searching for the bird and finds his way to an inn where the cut-tongue sparrow now lives. The sparrows sing and dance for him. When he leaves, they give him the choice of taking a large or a small basket as a present. Being old, he chooses the small basket as it is not so heavy. Arriving home, he opens the basket and finds an enormous amount of treasure inside. The wife hears there was a larger basket and runs straight to the inn, hoping to gain more treasure for herself. She chooses the larger basket but in her greediness, she can’t resist opening the basket before she even gets home. Out jump a



great number of *obake* (ghosts and monsters). They scare her so badly that she tumbles down the mountain.

The text of this story in Japanese with furigana can be found at [http://my.reset.jp/~comcom/sozai/large/shitakiri\\_suzume.pdf](http://my.reset.jp/~comcom/sozai/large/shitakiri_suzume.pdf)

You can also download an mp3 version of this folktale for five US dollars at <http://www.thejapanshop.com/home.php> (on the left side of the page, click on **Downloads**, then on **\$5 Learning Packs**.) Other folktales are also available. Each pack comes with a variety of helpful materials such as the Japanese text, an English translation, vocabulary and kanji lists, and audio recordings at different speeds. (The Japan Shop website is great for all sorts of other materials too!)

### Miura Ayako's Tongue-Cut Sparrow and the Gospel

したきりすずめのクリスマス was originally written in 1981 by Miura

Ayako (三浦綾子) as a drama, and this manuscript in Japanese as a play can be found at [http://www.fukuin-net.com/konoyubi/daihon/Chinban\\_ShitakiriSuzume.pdf](http://www.fukuin-net.com/konoyubi/daihon/Chinban_ShitakiriSuzume.pdf)

This is the only play she ever wrote, and was commissioned by the Christian Church Association of the City of Asahikawa for the Civic Christmas. The association wanted “a drama that introduces Christianity in a friendly and easy way even for children to understand.” The original story is still there. The Old Woman cuts the sparrow's tongue, the Old Man brings home the lighter basket and the Old Woman the heavier one, but Ayako has written Christmas into the story and included Jesus as one of the characters. Some non-Japanese Christians may be surprised at the use of the word おばけ, or ghosts, for describing the ogres that come out of the box. But the story clearly explains that the おばけ represent the sinfulness of the Old Woman's heart and

are not spirit beings. The heavy box becomes a symbol of the sin that Jesus paid the price for, and even the ‘righteous’ Old Man comes to see that he is also in need of forgiveness and salvation. The original *mukashi banashi* ends with the Old Woman being punished by the ghosts that jump out of the heavy basket, but the core of Miura Ayako's story starts here.

The picture storybook was published by ホームスクーリング・ビジョン in December 2008 at ¥1,680. It is completely bilingual, although I thought the English version left something to be desired in places. There is also a bilingual commentary by Miura Mitsuo and Hoshino Tomohiro.

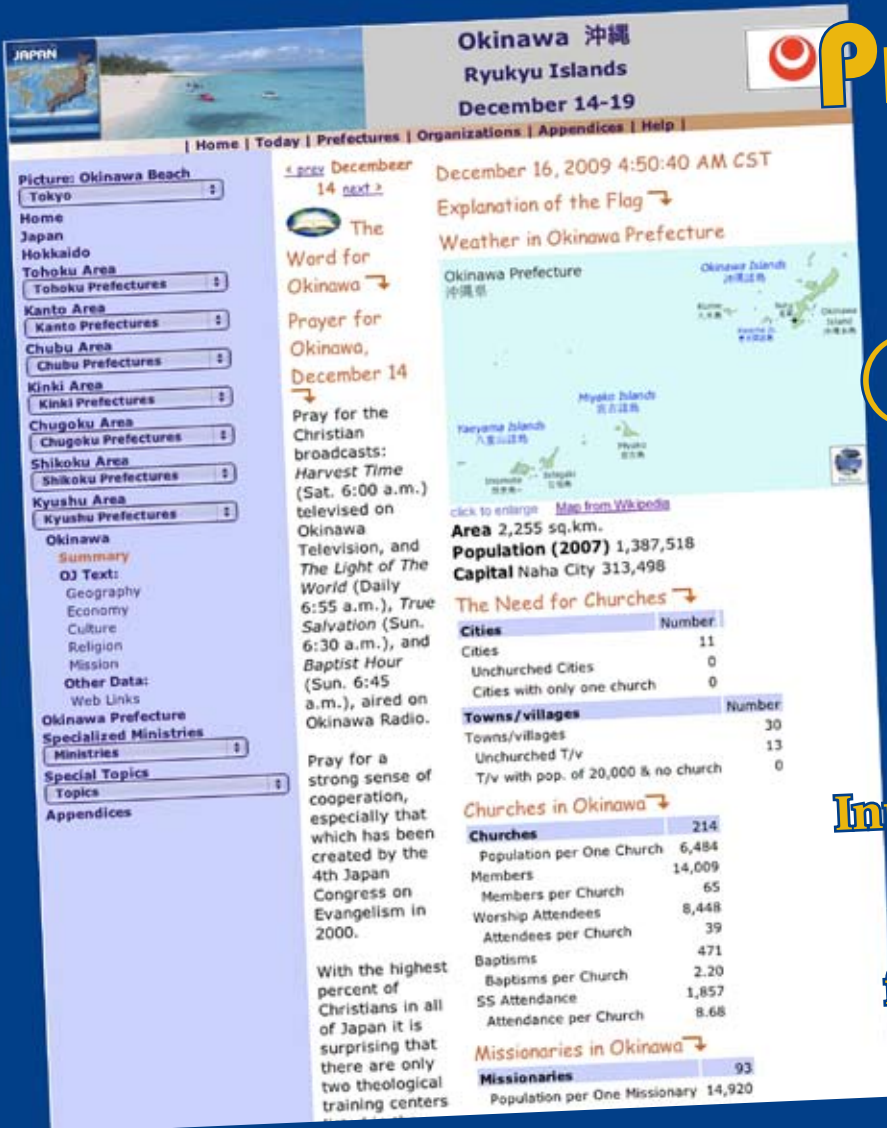
I recommend したきりすずめのクリスマス not just for language and culture study, but also as a fascinating example of contextualization by a Japanese Christian, with considerable potential for use in ministry. 江



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