

Volume 29, Number 4, 1979-1980

# JAPAN HARVEST

The Magazine For Today's Japan Missionary



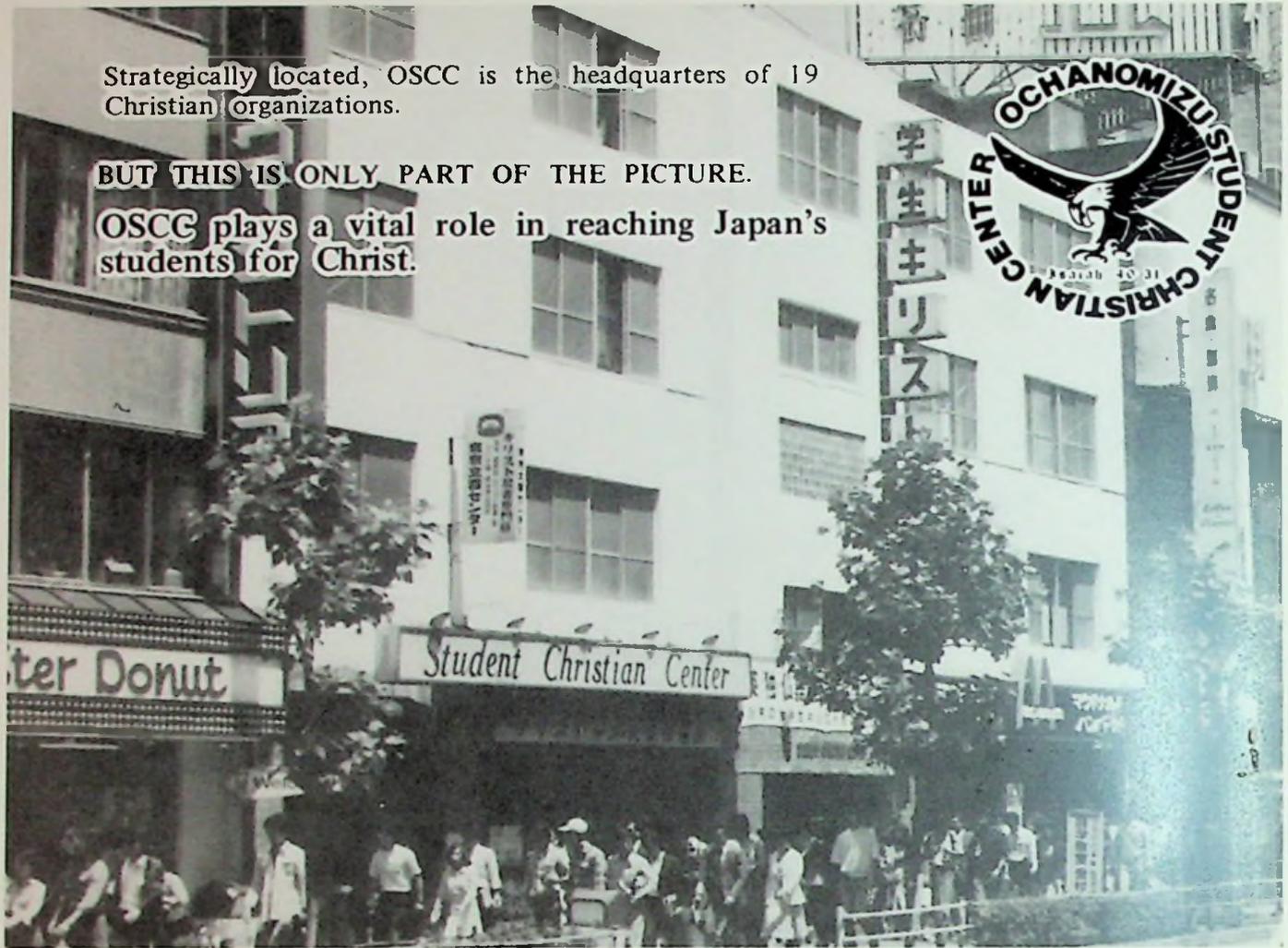
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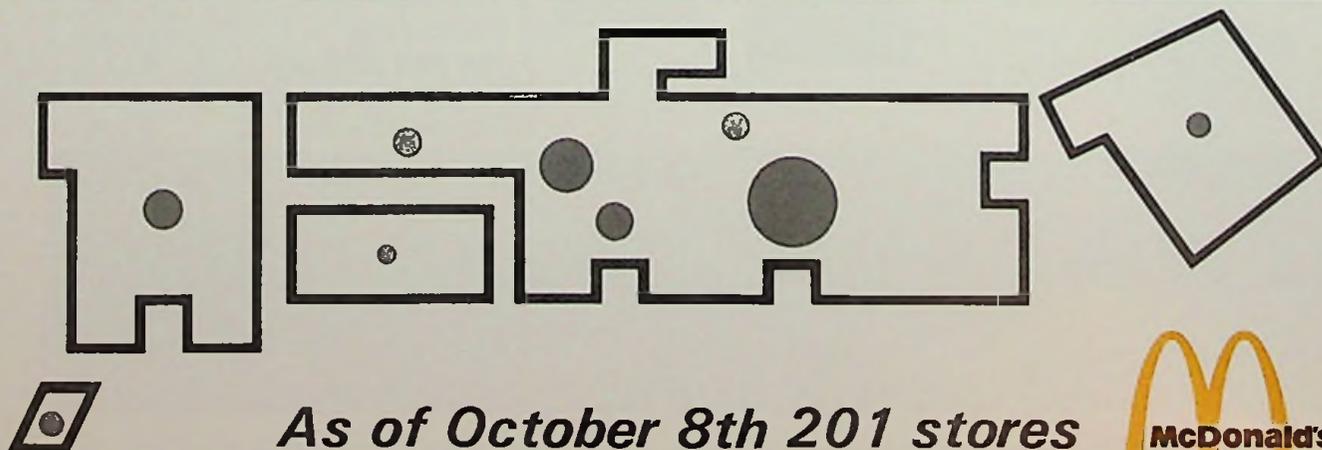


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The Magazine For Today's Japan Missionary

1979/1980, Volume 29, Number 4

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## THE WEAK THINGS OF THIS WORLD

*When missionaries in Japan meet to consider, as they frequently must, whom they will get as a special messenger or conference speaker, they may look around at the missionary community and reluctantly be forced to admit, that although there are some great scholars and some outstanding executives among us, there just doesn't seem to be a great preacher among us. And the ones that we did have seem to be drawn into other ministries. So what can we do but get in a big name from abroad.*

*Not that we haven't profited from the ministry of our brethren. We have, and richly. But you know how it is. When so many people gather together . . . well . . .*

*Not that that's necessarily wrong.*

*But this "lack" may be our greatest strength. As a matter of fact, this "weakness", according to the first two chapters of First Corinthians, may be a prerequisite to the most fruitful ministry.*

*Paul reminds the Corinthians that they weren't exactly the cream of the nobility of Corinth when they came in contact with the Living Word of God. As a matter of fact, he says that "God purposely chose what the world considers nonsense" and "what the world considers weak" in order to shame what the world considers wise and powerful. Now I don't know what the Corinthians thought of this description of themselves, but I imagine they had to admit there was some truth in it.*

*When you come to think of it, why didn't God give the first call to the smooth-speaking Aaron rather than his slow-spoken younger brother Moses, or to the silver-tongued Apollos rather than to his precursor who was obviously suffering from an inferiority complex.*

*Paul seems to have been small physically, and to have had weakening eyes. He confesses that his words themselves would not have caused much of a ripple and that he was trembling all over with fear when he spoke to the Corinthians as lowly as they were. And yet, somehow, Christ's kingdom was established, flourished and gave birth to the Church fathers. As Jesus predicted, the gates of hell could not stand up against it.*

*Why? I think the secret can be found in chapter one verse thirty. "But God . . ." and "And God . . ." and "By him . . ." describing the work of the Father; and "in union with Christ Jesus" and "Christ our wisdom" describing the work of the Son; and the work of the Holy Spirit as described in chapter two, verses ten to fifteen.*

*And this three-fold ministry of the Trinity can bring glory and honour to God through the vessels of clay that he has chosen to call to the land of Japan. To him be the glory.*

*Vernon Stobbe*

# *A Decade of Reaping*

*The eighties are here! From all indications this decade should be one of challenge and opportunity perhaps unparalleled in the history of missions in Japan. Before looking into the future it may be appropriate to briefly review the post-war period.*

## *I. The 1950's – Decade of Sowing*

*The tremendous influx of missionaries after the War resulted in the forming of many small congregations throughout Japan. Missionaries had a greater measure of mobility since schooling of children was not yet a problem. The impact was great and fruit remains to this day with much of the present church leadership coming from these early contacts. There was an optimistic pioneering spirit, a bold adventurism that reflected youthful vitality. It may have also been an era when missionaries were somewhat overbearing and overpowering in their relationship to the Japanese. Likewise, a great opportunity to communicate more effectively was missed by missionaries who approached language study only half-heartedly.*

## *II. The 1960's – Decade of Growing Pains*

*Missionaries found that the soil was hard, that converts were few. The number of those who left the church through the back door became a cause for concern. Campuses were torn by student unrest and the Vietnam War spread an anti-American feeling that was not left unnoticed in Christian circles. Teaching at a seminary or on a Christian college campus brought few tangible rewards to missionaries. In many ways those were difficult days.*

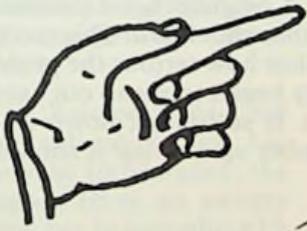
## *III. The 1970's – Decade of Consolidation*

*An increasing number of Japanese Bible school and seminary graduates joined hands with the missionary force. A new relationship emerged in the 70's in which the missionaries and pastors worked as equal partners. Many projects were transferred to Japanese leadership. The spirit of cooperation and understanding in general was excellent. The Japanese church matured noticeably. The Kyoto Congress on Evangelism provided needed impetus and showed laymen their role in making Christ known. Scores of missionaries were sent forth to many parts of the world by the church in Japan. The Evangelicals gained in strength while the liberal camp was torn by internal strife and registered little or no growth.*

IV. The 1980's – Decade of Reaping

Optimism fills the evangelical church as it looks into the future. As the decade opens with the coming of Billy Graham, excitement and anticipation as to God's working in Japan is evident. There is a remarkable sense of unity and cooperation. The evangelical church is on the move and is picking up momentum. A young generation of leadership is emerging. With it comes a greater degree of flexibility and adaptability to current needs as well as opportunities. Lay leadership is also gaining in strength. Their voice is increasingly felt in the decision-making process. Their generous financial support also makes possible new ventures in TV programs, church growth research, workshops and seminars of specialized nature, etc. Missionaries enjoy a good relationship with their Japanese co-workers. While pioneer evangelism still remains an area in which missionaries are most effective, the Japanese church continues to look for specialists to supplement their rank. The diligent effort of the past thirty years is beginning to produce fruit: the time of harvest is at hand.

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## *JEMA President's Page*

### ***WHO IS AGAINST POLLUTION?***

On October 19 Typhoon 20 struck Tokyo – the first large tropical storm to hit Tokyo in 13 years. As the rain and wind roared across the whole Japanese archipelago, it swept the atmosphere clear of smog and air pollution. That evening I saw stars that had seldom been visible before. The next day dawned brilliantly clear. Mt. Fuji was plainly visible from Tokyo, and the pure morning air was a delight to breathe. . . a special delight to morning joggers.

Japan has really made great progress in cleaning up the environment. Because air pollution was a problem that grew so gradually for years, it increased without anyone's special notice until it began having drastic effects on people. We moved to the Tokyo suburbs of Nerima Ku from the inner-city in 1971. We happily anticipated enjoying the clear air of the suburbs, when to our dismay, we found that air pollution had already reached beyond these suburbs. A neighborhood elementary school was hit with such photo-chemical smog that children fainted in the schoolyard. This received nation-wide attention in the newspapers. People suddenly began to realize how serious the problem had become, and both individuals and organizations were alerted. They began to speak out against runaway pollution and to point out apparent sources of the problem. It still takes, however, the severity of a typhoon to cleanse the atmosphere so that we can remember again what it should be like. Pollution is a disease that takes strong medicine to cure.

But what of the moral and spiritual pollution? I am shocked daily at the accelerated speed at which moral pollution is inundating the world. I am shocked at the extent of its effect – apparently worldwide. I am shocked at the depths of its depravity. The steady decline of both public and private morals seems unstoppable. It has invaded the home, and is not content to stop at the door of the church, but has filtered in there as well. Think of the terrible inroads of pornography (available to anyone, any age, for just a little over ¥100 at any neighborhood automatic dispenser), obscenity, aberrant life styles, family breakdown, abortion, etc., not to mention the problem of public crime by elected officials.

As with air pollution the weak are affected first and then gradually the strong. Sad to say, in the moral realm few are strong enough to be unaffected. Who will speak out and call attention to this spreading evil? Who will be the prophet to call attention to national sin? Will the church remain silent, or will it serve as a light to the world and expose this evil? Will it serve as the salt of the earth, or will it allow corruption to spread to the whole body? As is the case with air pollution, it takes the violence of a typhoon to rid the atmosphere of its filth, and enable us to delight in breathing clean air. A typhoon is the strong medicine needed to bring even a temporary arrest to this disease. In the realm of the moral, it will take even stronger medicine to cure this malignancy.

Verner Strom

# Victory Over Worry



DAVID FOSTER

*The message that follows was delivered by Dr. David Foster at the 1979 JEMA Karuizawa Conference. All services were recorded. Cassettes are available. Contact Mr. W.G. Barnes for details.*

Phil. 4:4-7, "Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance; the Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (RSV)

You may say, "Well, I know I am not supposed to worry, but if you knew my problem..." And then we begin to rationalize. But God is saying to stop worrying about everything. God wants to give us life, and life in abundance. Life in abundance must exclude anxious care. Now it is one thing to know that it is wrong to worry, and be anxious, and it's another thing to stop. I think we can agree to that. And you may say,

"But David, I have really tried. I know I am anxious by nature. It's just an involuntary reflex with me to be anxious and fearful. I've wanted to stop." I've never known anyone yet who said, "I've really set out in life to learn to be anxious." No one wants to be anxious. No one wants to be a worrier or fretting, stewing, or pulled in different directions, or anticipating different fears and simply being consumed by them. You don't want that. You say, "I've tried to stop, but I can't." And so I want to suggest to you God's way of stopping anxiety.

### Three Guidelines

This sixth verse, "But in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" is the secret of a worry-free life. This is God's formula for victory over worry. It basically has one statement and is supported by three guidelines. In fact, the New English Bible states it in the order that I would prefer to give it to you, which says simply this, "Make your requests known unto God." That is the major point. Guideline number one: "in prayer"; guideline number two: "and petition"; guideline number three: "with thanksgiving". Let your requests be made known unto God. How? In prayer, in supplication, and with thanksgiving. Those are the three guidelines.

Let us move back to this major point of letting our requests be made known unto God. My first reaction to that was simply this: "Doesn't God already know my need? Why on earth do I have to go back and tell God every day what I need, when He already knows?" Why do I have to request bread every day, when God knows? He's omniscient. He knows what I need. Why do I have to ask Him again and again and again?

And yet, in our Lord's Prayer, we are told to pray, "Give me this day..." Not tomorrow or the next day, but for this day He said, "Give me my daily bread." "For this day." There are probably several reasons, and you may have more than I have, but there are several reasons that come to me why I need to let God know my needs on a day-by-day basis.

### Recognize the Giver

First, and probably foremost, it is so that I will never, never take God and His gifts for granted. That's a very human tendency. I don't think there is anything that will do in a marriage much faster than for one partner to take the spouse for granted. I have a wife who has been very faithful in preparing meals, doing laundry and having clothes ready to wear, the children taken care of and

the house in order, etc. And how easy it is for me to begin, after twenty-some years, to take that for granted. That's what ruins a lot of marriages. You know, the first few months you are so excited about everything they do for you and they are excited about what you do for them, and then after the weeks and the months and the years set in, you begin to take those things for granted and a marriage goes stale. And in fact, it not only grows stale, you begin to gripe around a little bit if things aren't just there the way you want them when you want them! And then you're in trouble. And we do that with God. We begin to take His gifts – every good and perfect gift has come from God – the bread I have, the rain last night, the sunshine. . . I take those for granted. Yet Jesus said to pray for them daily. Recognize where every good and perfect gift comes from.

I've had parents say, "My kids take me for granted as they get older." And I agree that that is not right. I need to come to God day by day. I received a letter some weeks ago from a family who are not members of our church, but we have met them on a number of occasions. They live just a block from us. Wonderful Christian people. He is a Christian contractor. At almost any given time he has eight or ten churches under construction. Very, very dedicated Christians. But they were going through a period of time in their lives just a few months ago where she had had major surgery and he was having a type of illness the doctors have not yet diagnosed. He seems to be improving, and is able to be back at work, but he was going through a long period of time when it was really tough for him physically. And during this period of time we had an opportunity in a very special way to befriend them, to take some things up to the house, to drop them a card or two, to stop by, etc. And what do you know. . . I received a beautiful card from Esther. And in this card she said, "I want to take time to personally thank you for that human touch of caring." And then she took the time in that card to list six things that Joy and I in our relationship with them had done over a period of a few weeks. And when

I opened that card and began to look at those things, they seemed in a way so small, and yet she was so appreciative of them. It really moved my heart. I rushed in and said, "Joy, look, I want you to read this." And so it is with God. How easy it is to take the things He does day by day for granted. We need to recognize the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

### Keep On Requesting

Secondly, I think we need to bring our requests to God day by day. And as I make those requests, I must measure my needs, my requests to God, so that I can monitor where I am. Nothing reveals more who I am and where I am going than by what I petition God for. Some things that I ask God for should really, really disturb me. I run them by so quickly I never stop and reflect on them, but if I would stop and listen to my own prayers, I might be really disturbed. Nothing is probably more self-revealing than prayer. Even the things that I DON'T ask for reveal something about me. A child was overheard to pray, "Lord, clean my room today." Well, it told you something about the kid. A demanding little soul, wasn't he? You can learn a lot about yourself by what you pray for, or what you do not pray for.

And then, making my requests known unto God reveals my confidence in Him. I do believe God. I really do. I cast on Him my every care because I know He cares for me. And by my coming to God day by day with requests both great and small, I am saying to God, "I know You're there. I believe in You." I know those needs in God will be met. And so I express my confidence in Him.

Now when Paul said, "Let your requests be made known unto God," this is present tense, continuous action. "Keep on requesting." And this is the same expression and the same construction of a sentence that Jesus gave in Matthew 7:7,8 where Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened unto you. For everyone who keeps on asking (that is present tense, continuous action) receives; and he who

keeps on seeking, will find; and to him who keeps on knocking, it will be opened." God does not get tired of our coming to Him with our needs. He said to just keep bringing them on, keep bringing them on. Never stop. God is not too busy, not too pressed, not too pressured. He delights in our coming.

I had a staff member in my early years in the ministry, who every time I would see him had some kind of a demand to lay on me. I had to change our whole structure of organization, get a personnel committee, etc., so that this person would have someone to go to, because every time I saw him I was burdened down with the fact that he needed this, or he could not understand why the church board had not approved that. . . would I go to them and do this, that and the other? Finally one day I said, "Gordon, I get to where I never want to see you again. You're a great guy in what God has called you to, but you're just pressing me to death." Isn't it a wonderful thing to know, though, that God never gets pressured as we do. We can come to Him again and again and again. "In everything," He said, "In everything." Nothing is too small and nothing is too great for us to bring to God.

Let your requests be made known to Whom? To God. I have been interested upon occasion in looking in the newspaper at the personal column. There will be a whole list of requests which may go something like this: "Middle-aged man. Would like to meet woman from 30-45 years of age who likes travelling, camping, country western music, hunting, who cooks, etc. Write: Damper Dan, P.O. Box 46, Springfield, Ill. (or whatever it may be)." What are they doing? They are letting their request be made known. Whoever is out there who can fill this bill should write in. But Paul is saying, "In everything." Whatever your need may be – Damper Dan, or whoever it is – whatever your need may be, let your request be made known to God. We sometimes talk about our problems to others, sometimes by the hour.

I had one lady that I counseled with for a long period of time whom I had known most of my life and she would go on and on and I thought, "Well, she has to be able to talk to somebody." So she'd get on the phone and talk for 45 minutes. And then I found out that as soon as she hung up with me she'd call somebody else. She had about five preachers she was calling about every day and five pastors' wives, and she had some other people in Bible studies. She just spent the day on the phone talking about her problems. If you'd ask her to read a book, she had read ten books on any subject you'd bring up to her. She let her requests be made known to just about every Tom, Dick and Harry that she could bend an ear of.

Paul didn't say, "Stop everyone you can find." And I'm not putting down interpersonal relationships and being able to discuss things with someone who can bring us to a point of help in God. But Paul is saying, "In everything let your requests be made known to God." Isn't that wonderful! The presence of God is so real. God can help me. What is my need? What is your need this morning? Great or small, let that request be made known unto God.

### **God is Omnipotent**

Who is God really? To Whom are you bringing that request? God is omnipotent. Latin: all-powerful. I bring my request to One Who is all-powerful. The Psalmist said, "He spoke and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast." (Psa. 33:9) In the Book of Job, the 26th chapter - every time I read this my goose flesh stands up to think, "I can come to God!" - and here's what it is: "He stretched out the north over the empty place." Where is the north? It goes on and on and on. He took the north and stretched it out over the empty place, and "hangs the earth upon nothing. He binds up the waters in His thick clouds; and the cloud is not torn under them. . . . By His power He stilled the sea. . . . By His wind, the heavens were made fair. . . . These are but the outskirts of His ways; and how small a whisper do we hear of Him. But the thunder of His power, who can understand?" That's GOD! When I come to God in prayer, that's the One that I come to. With God all things are possible.

At a church camp in the late 30's my oldest sister was then only about six years of age, and it was hot and dusty at this particular camp. Mother had gone home to wash. She had spent the day getting water from the well, heating it outside, washing the clothes, starching them, drying them, ironing some things so that she could get back to the church camp that evening. She started just at dusk, hoping to get back in time for the evening service. All of a sudden, winding down some of these little country roads, she discovered that she was lost. She couldn't tell north from south, east from west, and Iris was on the seat beside Mother. Finally Mother said, "I am really lost." And she was frightened; she had a real fear of sense of direction or lack of it. She said, "I'm lost and it's getting dark and I don't know which way to go." And my sister just jumped off the seat almost by instinct and dropped on her knees right at the front seat beside Mother for just a few moments, got right back up on the seat just as they came to a crossroad. Mother stopped there in utter frustration. She looked to her left and saw a man and his little girl walking who had come right around the corner and there they stood. Mother called out the window and said, "Can you tell me which way to the Durley Camp?" He said, "Lady, just turn to your right and stay on this road and it will take you right past the camp." Mother thanked him and turned and started down the road, when my sister looked up to my Mother and said, "Whenever you don't know which ways to go, God just puts a man in the road to show you." He does! We can pray about anything and everything. We don't have to be anxious about it. We pray about it. We come before God and let our requests be made known to Him. And He Who is all-powerful can put a man in the road, or whatever it is to meet that particular need that we have.

God is not only all-powerful, Paul said to go to that One Who is omnipresent. Ubiquitous. He is everywhere present at the same time. He is the God of the universe. The Psalmist said in the 139th division of the Psalms, "Where can I go from Your presence? Where can I flee from Your presence? If I go to heaven, You are there." That doesn't surprise us. "Even in hell, Thou art there. . . . The darkness I think can cover me, but it becomes light." God is everywhere.

### **God is Omniscient**

This morning as my wife prayed at the table, she mentioned our children, and I thought how far they seem from me today. Many of you have children who are far from you geographically and yet so near to God. He is there. And He is here. And He can minister to them. He is omnipresent. Paul said to go to that One with your requests. Go to that One Who is omniscient. His knowledge is boundless. He knows all things, past, present and future. Nothing is hidden from God. You know, the ancient Egyptians expressed their concepts by hieroglyphics and they made the eye the symbol of deity, inferring that all things were open to God. God could see everywhere as far as they were concerned. Well, we know that is true. With our God, He sees not only everywhere now, but He can see the past. He can see the future as well. He has an all-seeing eye. Paul said to let your requests be known unto this One Who is omniscient.

### **God is Unchangeable**

God is also unchangeable. From time to eternity. Malachi 3:6, "I'm the Lord; I change not." One of the Gospel songs that has blessed my heart down through the years has been the song, "Yesterday, today, forever, Jesus is the same; All may change, but Jesus never, Glory to His Name!"

Paul said to go to Him. Make your requests known to Him. So I bring my requests to the One Who is all-powerful, everywhere present, all-knowing and changeless. I am then to worry about nothing, but I am to pray about everything. That is the secret of a worry-free life. "It is God's will that I should cast on Him my

every care. He also bids me not to cast my confidence away. But, oh, I am so dumb when taken unawares; I cast away my confidence, and carry all my cares." Do you ever have that happen to you? I have had that happen to me many, many times.

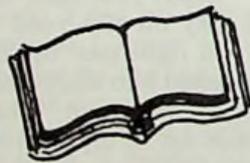
The secret of a worry-free life: making our requests known to God – briefly in resume right now and then moving on – in spite of the fact that God already knows our needs, so that we will never take His gifts for granted. I make my requests known – present tense, continuous action. I keep on requesting day by day. He never gets tired. In everything, great and small, I pray to One Who is all-powerful, all-knowing, everywhere present, and unchanging. That is the one major statement, letting all my needs be known unto God.

And then Paul gives three guidelines that really support this, and on which rests the peace of God. Verse 6, "By prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving." You look down to verse 7 and you find that the peace of God which passes all human understanding, ALL understanding – even the angels must be confounded at the peace that God gives – keeps the mind and the heart and it's guarded by God. On what rests that peace? That peace rests on this sixth verse, "In prayer and supplication with thanksgiving." These three guidelines are like the legs of a three-legged stool. If you have a stool with only two legs, you're going to have a problem. You're going to fall off in one direction or another. And so we need these three legs on which the peace of God will rest, three guidelines that we must have in operation to avoid disaster.

The first is prayer. In all things we are to pray. Now you say, "All right, when I look at this I see prayer and supplication. What is the difference?" There are several Greek words used in the New Testament that are translated "prayer". But in this particular case, "In prayer", prayer is an exclusive use of a relationship with God. You might want to just underscore that in your mind. In this case, prayer is not so much concerned about expressing needs. In fact, it isn't concerned at all about expressing needs, but it is concerned about developing a relationship with God that is warm, rich, vital and growing.

Let me pause just one moment to

ask you this question: Do you have that kind of relationship with God? There are people who know God, but have not developed an ongoing relationship with God. I may know you, and still not develop an ongoing relationship with you. And this is what Paul is saying: First of all, develop a relationship with God, one that is warm and vital and real. Prayer then becomes an ongoing act of worship, devotion and adoration. God wants us simply to take time to truly be with Him. Take time when your mind is focused on God. Have you ever been in conversation with someone when all of a sudden in talking to them you are aware of the fact that they are not there at all? They are looking over your shoulder and you think, "I wonder what's going on?" And you want to stop and turn around, but you keep on talking and then their eyes come back and you pick up again, or they start off in another direction completely in the conversation and you realize that while they were looking at you and apparently listening to you, they didn't hear a thing you had to say. And sometimes I think in prayer that is what we do. We're talking about this, that and the other, and just unconscious at all that God is anywhere. We have no relationship with Him. Take time to do that.



### Towards a vital Relationship

I Thessalonians 5:17, "Pray constantly." That means that we begin to truly practice the presence of God. Eight hundred years before Paul, Isaiah in the 26th chapter and the third verse said, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." Peace, then, is for the one who rivets his thoughts and life on God. God is brought into every act. Day in and day out, moment by moment, their minds turn to God. God, then, is not a last resort. His presence and fellow-

ship is not sought only in time of need. But it's a walk; it's a life; and it's a fellowship. You see these little things around in public buildings, "In case of emergency, break the glass and pull the chain." That is to alert the fire department many blocks away that there is a need. You really don't care about the fire department and you don't care about the fellows down at the fire department. You don't care about anything until there is a need. Then you want them to come. When the need is over, you can forget them. They can go back and roll up the hose and the whole business and you could care less. All you want them to do is to be ready to come and meet that need and then you forget them. And God is to many people simply that. "Oh, Lord, You know the biopsy has come back and it's positive and I'm in trouble. I need You to come down quick." And we have a great relationship until we find out that the operation is a success and we can go on our way and forget God until the next biopsy comes back. Paul said, "Don't do that. I want you day by day to be building a relationship with God until God becomes more real, more vital to you than anybody on earth."

### An Unchanging Friend

A very personal friend of mine, a pastor, told me about his father dying in the hospital. He and his mother were very godly people. In that hospital room there were two men, both dying with cancer. And Rev. Thompson said, "My mother was there with my father. She would read the Scripture to him. They'd have prayer together and then they'd go out to the little waiting room for a while and the wife of this other man who was dying (who was not a Christian) would come out and she was in pieces. This had gone on for many days and finally she said to Mrs. Thompson, "How can you be so calm? You know that it won't be long until your husband will be taken from you and what will you do? Who's going to care for you then?" Mrs. Thompson, in the love of Christ and the Spirit, reached out and took this lady's hand and said, "Oh my dear, we have a Friend, my husband and I; we've walked together and we've talked together, and we have fellowshiped with Him through the years. And while my

husband will be taken, He will walk with me. He will be a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." She had the opportunity to witness to her about Jesus Christ in a relationship that transcends all human relationships. She had a fellowship; she had a joy divine; she had everlasting arms that could hold her even in the presence of death. Hallelujah! I thank God for the fellowship that we can have in God!

This doesn't happen over night, developing that kind of relationship. I think sometimes people think that in one magic moment they can come down to an altar and develop a relationship with God that is deep and rich and lasting. It takes time. It requires discipline.

### Practical Helps

For just a few moments let me share some of the things that can help you in developing this relationship of prayer with God, and fellowship.

First, discipline yourself to memorize the Scriptures at the point of a relationship in prayer with God. My Associate Pastor, Sam Watkins, just one of the dearest men I have ever known, is now at the age of retirement. He is a real health buff on what he eats. He has his Excercise. He gets up early in the morning, I mean really early. He's kind of a John Wesley fan at that point. He's up long before daylight. And he's down there on his Excercise. And he pumps and pumps. I don't know how long he pumps that thing. But it's not wasted time. You know what he does? He has a big board right there in front of his Excercise down in the basement and he puts Scripture verses on this board and memorizes while he pumps. He pumps away and he's memorizing the Scriptures all the time. He makes these little flash cards and carries them around. He flips them over and there's a verse of Scripture that he is committing to memory.

You can read the Bible through in about two months, about five or six pages a day, depending on how big it is, and read it through with one or two or three things at most in mind, and as the passages of Scripture come, write them down. Make your little flip cards. Carry them with you. Commit them to memory. God comes alive through His World. You'll be surprised. At

almost every turn in the road, the presence of God through the Word of God comes to you. Develop your theology of prayer in a relationship with God.

This kind of relationship really takes time. It has been interesting to me to watch our children grow up. As small youngsters they came to me only in time of need or request. It's so wonderful now to see them come and simply become friends, who come not demanding, not requesting, but come nurturing and supporting, and there is fellowship.

It takes discipline to maintain a relationship. Now, I warn you, it is possible to have that kind of relationship with God and then lose it. Have you ever been really close to a family and then due to circumstances, maybe beyond your control, you are separated from them. They move away, or you move away. And when you have that last meal together, you put your arms around each other and have prayer together and say, "We're never going to let anything happen to this relationship. We don't care if it's 2000 miles or 8000 miles; nothing is going to happen to this relationship. We're going to write to one another and keep in touch. We're going to call." If you're not careful, though, something will happen to that relationship. And after ten or twenty years, all of a sudden there is not the interest that you once had. And it doesn't happen over night. But all of a sudden you become aware of the fact that what happens in their lives is not as important to you as it once was. And it can happen with God. It's so subtle. It comes over a period of time. It is like growing old. That doesn't happen over night. It's just one little gray hair here, and another little gray hair there and then you begin to hold your Bible a little further away from you. You know how that goes. It didn't happen over night. It wasn't on April 26th, 1971, that you got old. And this relationship with God, vital and growing, the coolness and drawing away from God, doesn't happen over night. It's not a volition of your will. But it is something that comes about through carelessness and neglect. God is not as real today

as He was ten years ago, or five. A growing relationship with God demands discipline, the study of His Word.

Another thing that I have found that helps is memorizing the great hymns of the church. Any hymnal you pick up has hymns on prayer. We sang some of them this morning, and I appreciated that so much. My mind went back to one of the first hymns on prayer that I remembered as a child. That is, "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed; the motion of a hidden fire that trembles in the breast." Another hymn comes to mind, "Sweet Hour of Prayer". We sang it so much that at one point I wasn't sure whether I ever cared to hear it again or not. And I haven't heard it that often lately. All of a sudden the other day it came to me in the shower. That's the only place I do much singing. And as I was there, it came to me, "Sweet hour of prayer, Sweet hour of prayer. That calls me from a world of care. And bids me at my Father's throne. Make all my wants and wishes known." Oh, how the great hymns of the church can draw us again into a fellowship with God!

This last winter I was speaking over in the Okanogan Valley on a week end, and in the Sunday School period I was speaking to a large group of young people, but Joy was attending the pastor's class. And in that particular class he said, "I want to give you a word that will help you in your prayer relationship with God." Joy made a note on that and shared it with me. And it's the word, "ACTS". Maybe you have heard of the little formula.

### ACTS Applied

"A" is for adoring. Take a few minutes when you come into the presence of God to express your adoration for Him. Oh, how I adore God! How I magnify the Name of God! When I see the world, when I see nature and the beautiful 8th Psalm as a background, I begin to praise God. "What am I that You are mindful of me?" I walk through a nursery in a hospital and I see a new little life, and I praise God and adore Him and think, "How could God create something as beautiful as that!" And I know that one day that person will stand in the presence of God.

"C", confessing. The next step in this is to begin to confess. "Lord, You know my need. You know my weakness. You know my human frailty. You know the failure of yesterday. You know the temptation of today. I confess my need."

And "T" is thanksgiving. "Oh God, how I thank You for answered prayer. Yesterday I asked You for this particular need, my daily bread. And You fed me so well. In fact, Lord, I'll have to go back and confess, You fed me too well. Forgive me for that extra piece of toast."

"S" is supplication. "God, I come to You for my needs today. I come to You recognizing that I need food and clothing. I need rain and sunshine. I need the touch of a friend." Well, that's helped me a great deal. I trust that it will help you.

### God's One Need

Why did God make man in the first place? He made a beautiful earth. Why did He make us? I believe in my own mind and heart that God has but one need. I have so many: I can hardly imagine that

someone has only one need. From what I know and understand about God from the Scripture, God has, as far as I know, but one need. God is absolutely self-sufficient in meeting every need but this one. What does He do? He creates a beautiful world. And then, as the crowning act of His creation, He bends in the dust and shapes man in His own image. And then He bends over and breathes into his nostrils the breath of life. And man becomes a living being. And what happens for the next ten million years? Does He put man off in a garden and leave him alone? No. What's the next thing that God does? He fellowships with him. He comes to us in the cool of the day. He created us for fellowship. God doesn't need my sermons, you know, as far as HE is concerned. He may want to use them for others that He has created, but God doesn't need me to preach to Him on faith, or on the goodness of heaven, or all of this. God doesn't need my sermon or yours. As beautiful as our music has been, God doesn't need that. He doesn't need someone to sing the praises to Him to stir His heart or warm His soul or call Him to con-

secration. He's consecrated! He doesn't need a hymn to call Him to purity. He's pure! He doesn't need my money. What's that? What can I give God money-wise to meet any of His needs?

The only thing that God needs is my fellowship. And I am humbled and honored to think that I, His child, could come and meet Him at His need by simply fellowshipping with Him, coming into His presence, being actively alive, with mind and heart focused on Him. I meet His need.

I heard about a grandfather and a grandson who lived close together and often walked together. One day the little fellow walking hand in hand with grandfather down a country road said, "Grandpa, have you ever seen God?" The old grandfather, a saint who loved God, to whom God meant more than anything else, said, "Son, sometimes I think I can't see anything BUT God." Oh, that God would draw us so close to Him, and that we would draw so close to God, that as we walk through life, we see God! He is the most real, the warmest, and the most vital relationship that we have. ✝

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# Foxwell Farewell

We have gone out laughing and happy. "How did he do that? Could you figure it out? He moves his hands so fast!" and so on, is heard as his friends have left one of Phil Foxwell's magic shows. We have never left disappointed – and neither has Phil. He put on a show of light entertainment to give a laugh, and invariably he met his goal. Over and over this was repeated – at Christian Academy, in a military recreation room, in rented halls and country churches, and in a hospital ward of seriously wounded GIs from Viet Nam. Phil always made everyone smile and relax for a while from the day's tensions.

Before Phil Foxwell came to Japan in 1948 he was a professional magician. He was a member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians and one year placed first. He could easily have remained in America and made good money in the magic show business. But he could not forget God's call on his life.

Phil studied at Wheaton College graduating the same year as his roommate, Billy Graham. After receiving an M.A. he went on to study for a B.D. from Northern Baptist and an M.S.T. from Faith

Seminary. For a while he taught at Shelton College in New York city. But he knew that this was not God's calling. He applied to the Independent Board for Presbyterian Missions stating his preference for China.

While at Wheaton Phil became acquainted with Jane Buswell, the daughter of Dr. James Oliver Buswell, president of Wheaton College. They were friends but there was no real romantic attachment. Jane graduated ahead of Phil and went on to nurses training in New York. Her goal was the mission field and she applied to the same Board but asked to go to Jordan to work in their hospital. The war was still on when Jane completed her training and so she entered the U.S. Army Nurses Corps. By this time, letters and visits from Phil were a regular occurrence. The day came when Phil felt he had pressed his suit long enough and asked Jane to press her uniform and polish her shoes! They were married in New York City on August 18, 1945. He was not able to change a scheduled magic show that night and so Phil introduced his wife by having her step out of the doll house! He did show some restraint though in not asking her to place her head

on the guillotine! Phil was not in uniform but he was very patriotic. He said at that time, "My one regret is that I have only one wife to give for my country!"

With one partner heading for China and the other for Jordan, some compromise had to be made! General McArthur solved the problem! After his earnest appeal for missionaries for Japan, the mission directed all their candidates this way. Jane and Phil Foxwell with their new baby, Mary Carol, arrived in Yokkaichi on Feb. 2nd, 1948. They brought with them a house trailer and a ton of food! With severe shortages of housing and food, the first post-war missionaries had to bring their own. Many labels were torn off the cans and so meals started with a guessing game! Vegetables and rice were in short supply and there were other privations that we can scarcely imagine now in affluent Japan. But missionary work was exciting for these newcomers. They had to speak through interpretation – Mary Kobe, now Mary Takahashi of Bethel House, was their interpreter – and they didn't lack an audience. The halls were full and people stood outside pressing to get in. Young people anxious to learn English gladly attended church in order to get one of the coveted tickets needed to attend a class.

Some Japanese pastors who had studied in the States were anxious for the missionaries to start a seminary to train young men to be pastors. The war had scattered so many Christian workers that a training school was a great need. In late 1949 the Foxwells moved to Tokyo to help from the beginning when the seminary opened its doors in Hori-nouchi to ten university graduates. In 1966 the Presbyterian Seminary moved to Higashi Kurume where it has been located up to the present. In the spring of 1980 the amalgamation with TCC will be in effect and it will move to the campus in Kunitachi.

Phil and Jane always showed great love and concern for the students of the seminary. Jane has been a gracious hostess and their home has been open to entertain them and to counsel them in finding God's will for their lives.

As their own family increased to four to include Martha, Linda and



Phillip Jr. their interests widened to include the school the children attended, the Christian Academy in Japan (CAJ) with Jane active in PTA as well as serving as a school nurse. Phil has served the Kurume Bible Fellowship, the church that meets in the school to minister to students and staff and other foreigners. Their other activities were teaching English classes at the Ochanomizu Christian Center and the YWCA where they also made many friends with whom they shared their faith in Jesus Christ.

But without a doubt, the unique feature of the Foxwell's ministry in Japan has been Phil's magic shows with his wife assisting him. When they first came to Japan, no one suggested to Phil that he include all his magic paraphernalia on his equipment list! But after their first furlough Phil brought back some of his props and soon found that a little magic opened many doors that gave opportunity to witness about Jesus Christ. After Foxwell, the magician, made his audience laugh for a while, they were more relaxed and receptive to the gospel message that followed.

In show business the big thing is the crowd and the audience. Phil was

trained in the business and when he was in the magician's role he was a show man. But off the stage he was a very ordinary man in his baggy pants and felt hat. He was very approachable and many beat a path to his door to ask him some favor. They were never turned away. Many a single girl needing help with moving or a repair job or what-have-you could count on Phil. "Let's see what we can do" was his usual comment. If someone needed a household item he would get it - at Thrift Shop or the Yokota flea market, places where he loved to poke around for the best buys. Not only that, he gave wise counsel: he was ready to give time to talk over a problem so that a troubled person left feeling that someone really cared and was sharing his burden. He was generous and gave when he saw someone in need, expecting nothing in return. He laughs when he tells how rich he could have been if he hadn't given away property that has now soared in value!

Some of Phil and Jane's many friends tried to express their appreciation at the Foxwell Farewell on October 4th., held in the CAJ dining

room. Nearly 120 friends gathered to wish them bon voyage. On the beautifully decorated cake was written, "Sayonara, Phil and Jane! 31 years - Well done!" Harold Johnson was MC for the evening that started off with a get-acquainted game and a time of singing. The CAJ brass ensemble led by Del Corbin played some rousing marches that delighted all the guests. Dorothy Brook composed and read "Phil and Jane, this is your life!" which disclosed some of the lesser known interesting and amusing incidents of their lives. Rollie and Margaret Halberg, along with Dave Davies and Harry Westberg rendered some beautiful musical items. Vern Strom, Ann Wiggleworth and Steve Young shared some remembrances of what Phil and Jane had meant to them through the years. After a lovely decorative clock to remind them of Japan was presented by "magician" Dave Brook, Phil amused us with a short last show of magic. Joe Gooden gave the final salute in his tribute of honor to Phil and Jane. The evening was arranged by David and Dorothy Brook with Dorothy Strom's help.

Dorothy Brook

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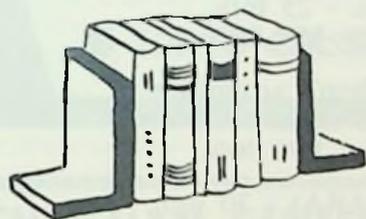
## BOOK REVIEW

These books were reviewed by Edith Buss and are available through Christian bookstores.

*Affliction*, by Edith Schaeffer. Fleming H. Revell Company, Old Tappan, New Jersey.

"Now this talented author turns her attention to the universal problem of affliction, offering new hope and counsel for this age-old concern of all Christians."

Edith Schaeffer comes directly to grips with the question that plagues us all when affliction comes: why? Whether we know the answer or not, we can know the God who is with us, sustaining and strengthening us to bear what must be borne. It is not that affliction comes from God; it is rather that he uses it to help us grow in faith.



*Object Lessons for Children's Worship*, by Mary Foxwell Loeks. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The preface begins, "My father, Philip Foxwell, is a master in the use of the object lesson, so as a young child I came to see its value for communicating biblical principles." In this book for children's workers, twenty-five entire lessons complete with songs, Bible verse, Bible story and activity are given.

*China: A New Day*, by W. Stanley Mooneyham. Logos International, Plainfield, New Jersey.

China is the news of today and for sure, there will be a China in your future. This is a well-written introduction to China - past, present, and future. For Western Christians the most important message is the lesson which the Christian church in China, purified in persecution, can teach us.

*Crying Wind*, by Crying Wind. Moody Press, Chicago, Ill.

Her god was Niyol, the great and mighty wind god of the Indians but in her distress she found he could not help her. When her grandmother died, Crying Wind was brought from the reservation to the city by her uncles. In the loneliness of a hotel room she dialed the telephone number of a church. The minister who answered the phone was the one who introduced her to a bigger God.

*He wanted to die . . .*, by Dorothy R. Pape. OMF Books, London.

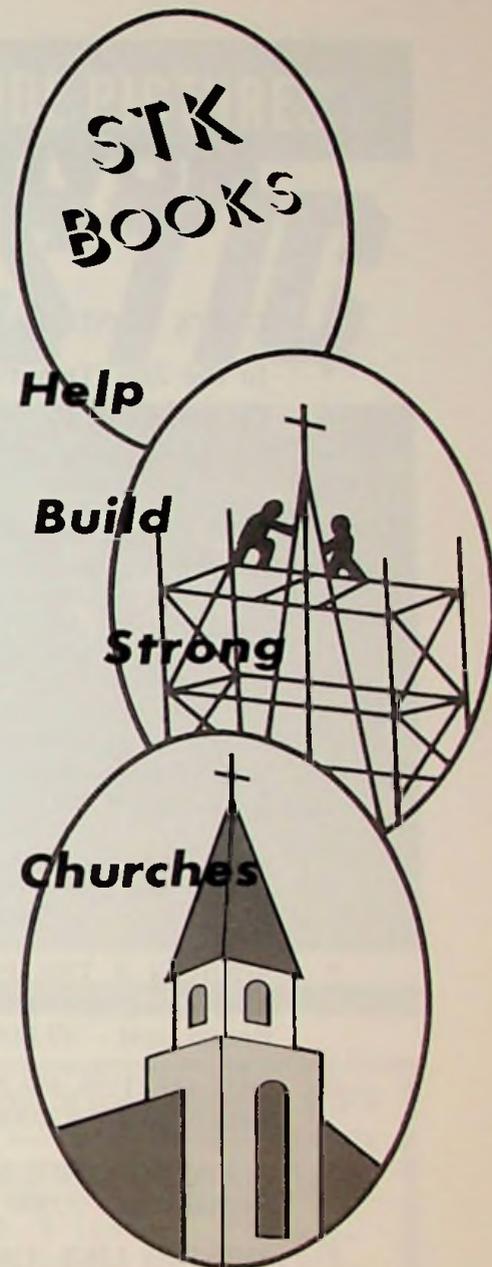
Jiro, a Japanese schoolboy, was thoroughly fed up because everything was going wrong. He wanted to escape but he couldn't even die. Turning on the radio in his hospital room he heard a Christian broadcaster say something that made him want to live. Today he is a radio singer and the magic of his folk and guitar music is being used to introduce other Japanese to the One who made him want to live.

*How To Read Slowly: A Christian Guide to Reading with the Mind*, by James W. Sire. InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Ill.

This is not a book that encourages rapid reading. In fact, the author asks you to read and re-read until you are made to think. He suggests that all literature should be read with the purpose of understanding the world views of the writers, for each one writes from the perspective of his own world view. Poetry, prose and commercials all have this in common. This deep book must be read slowly!

*The Holy Spirit*, by Billy Graham. Word Books, Waco, Texas.

This is a systematic study of what the Bible teaches about the person and work of the Holy Spirit. It is a little more interesting than the books you read in theology class. It was written to answer the many questions asked by the people in all walks of life who are hearing the messages of this radio and television evangelist, Billy Graham. The Holy Spirit is introduced as One who can indwell and empower modern man.



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- \* On the Farm (Nojo de) ) Rental cost - ¥2,000 (Japanese only)
- \* In the Meadow (Nohara no naka de) ) Purchase cost - ¥45,000

- \* THE FINAL HOUR (OWARI NO TOKI) - the solemn contemplation of what will happen to this world in the face of a growing population and widespread pollution - 30 min.  
Rental cost - ¥3,000 per day - (Japanese only)  
Lease cost - ¥40,000 plus customs duty and shipping charges.

- \* IN THE BEGINNING (MIWATASE) - seeing God's hand in the wonder of creation from the opening chapters of the Bible. - 30 min.  
Rental cost - ¥3,000 per day (Japanese only)  
Lease cost - ¥40,000 plus customs duty and shipping charges.

- \* THE RED GLOVES (AKAI TEBUKURO) - drama type film for children emphasizing how a knowledge of Christ leads to obedience to parents. - 25 min.  
Rental cost - ¥3,000 per day (Japanese only) Purchase cost - ¥90,000

- \* SHOICHI & THE PERSIMMONS (WANPAKU NIKKI) - a children's adventure story bringing out the message of salvation and restitution. - 25 min.  
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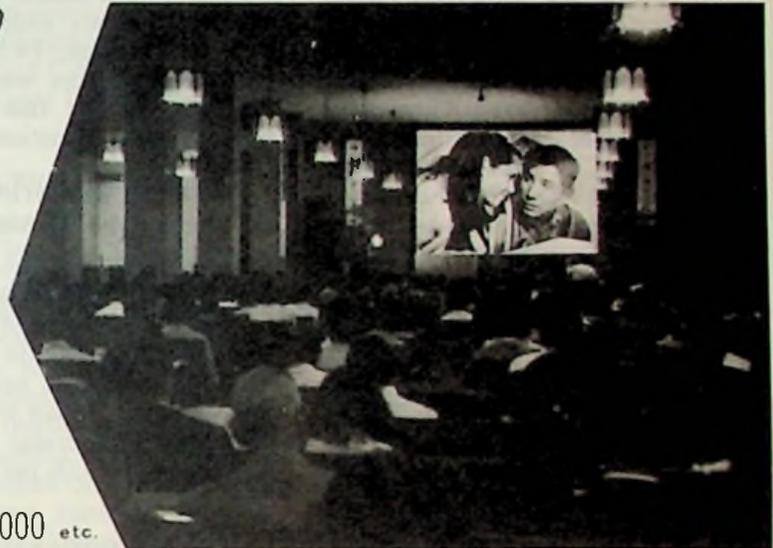
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## MISSION 2001

April 27-29, 1980, are the dates for Mission 2001 which will focus on issues confronting Japan and the world in the next century. The conference at Amagi Sanso is open to committed Christians in their 20's and 30's (post high school). There will be twenty workshops to choose from. Rev. Kishi of *Sodoin Dendo* serves as coordinator for Mission 2001.

## SURVEY FINDINGS

A survey taken at the 1979 National Conference of *Kirisutosha Gakusei Kai* (KGGK) revealed the following about 343 students who answered the questionnaire: 43.8% became Christians during high school days; 29.6% became Christians

during university days. It is noteworthy that 60 made decisions during their freshman year, 26 during their sophomore year, 15 during their junior year and only 1 during the senior year. 13% of the students indicated that they accepted Christ during middle-school days. 74.5% of the students came from non-Christian homes, 14.5% indicated that both parents were Christians and 11% stated that one of the parents was a Christian.

## SUBSCRIPTION RATE INCREASE

Keeping Japan Harvest Magazine operating in the black is no small task. Costs are rising steadily, necessitating a subscription rate increase beginning with the next issue. The new rates for Japan will be ¥2,300 (four issues); overseas subscriptions will become \$13.00 per year.

The Editor

## GROUND BREAKING AT TCC

October 2, 1979, was a day of celebration on the campus of Tokyo Christian College. A ground breaking for a building complex which will headquarter the graduate division was held. The new Board Chairman, Rev. Nakaichi Ando presided. Japan Christian Theological Seminary which has merged with Tokyo Christian College will transfer all its operations in the spring of 1980 to the spacious Kunitachi campus of TCC.

## FALL 1979 HOLY LAND STUDIES TOUR

Twenty-five Japanese pastors, seminary students and laymen attended the Institute of Holy Land Studies in Jerusalem. The tour leader was Japan Christian College President, Shinpei Higuchi. The thirty-five-day schedule included a trip to Greece.

## THE LAST CLIMB

On Saturday, June 30, 1979, at 7:00 a.m. Dr. J. Barton Payne left to climb Mt. Fuji, 13,000 feet. As an experienced climber he was not deterred by the fact that Phil (his son, who is a Free Church missionary here in Japan) could not accompany him because of his move to Kyoto that day. He climbed rapidly in hopes of being able to return to Kyoto that evening, but as he reached the eighth station on the mountain he incurred an injury and lost consciousness. Due to the rarity of the air he never recovered consciousness and froze to death, according to the medical examiner. Unfortunately he did not climb on the conventional path and so was exposed to quite a bit of danger.

When we first learned of his death we could only think in terms of the tragic loss to us and the entire evangelical church. He was a very gifted man who stood firm for the inerrancy of Scripture as well as the necessity of evangelism. But in reflecting upon the impact of the seminary students who came to search for his body (discovered almost miraculously 4 days later), the testimony of the family, especially at the memorial service, of what Christ really meant to them, and Dr. Payne's own testimony of having finished the major publication goals that he had set for himself, one feels again that God has turned tragedy into triumph.

It is interesting that Dr. Payne's desire was to contribute to the evangelical church in Japan. This he did through his lectures and life, but perhaps most dramatically through his death. Many Japanese look to Mt. Fuji as an object of worship, but now when we gaze at it we will be reminded of Dr. J. Barton Payne and his faithful testimony for Jesus Christ.

Stan Conrad



### JMLI TEXT PUBLISHED

The Japan Missionary Language Institute is happy to announce the publication of the JMLI edition of Volume 2 of the 3-volume Basic Course of *Japanese by the Total Method*. Dr. Noah S. Brannen, author, assisted by Kyoko Komura, with JMLI Religious Vocabulary. Enrichment sections prepared under the direction of L. Shelton Allen.

The complete Basic Course of *Japanese by the Total Method* includes the following:

Volume 1: *Basic, Part One* (Sound Patterns and the Writing System, and Lessons 1-20) published June, 1976, price ¥6,000;

Volume 2: *Basic, Part Two* (Lessons 21-30) published August, 1979, price ¥2,500;

Volume 3: *Basic, Part Three* (Lessons 31-40) expected to be published August, 1980;

Index: *Basic, Master Index* (complete combined index to all vocabulary, kanji, and grammar introduced in the Basic Course, plus additional

useful materials) expected to be published December, 1980.

For further information, please call JMLI: (03) 295-0037.

### CAJ BOARDING FACILITIES

The Christian Academy in Japan operates boarding facilities for the convenience of missionaries outside of Tokyo. Interested parents are urged to contact CAJ soon as plans for the school year 1980-81 are being finalized.

### OPERATION IMPACT

College courses are coming to CAJ. Azusa Pacific College, based in California, is in the eighth year of offering courses on the graduate level for students overseas. CAJ has made arrangements to invite the Azusa team to its campus.

Operation Impact is designed for teachers and others serving overseas. A Master's degree can be earned by attending three summer sessions. Azusa Pacific College sends two teams of four professors for a period

of two weeks. A very intensive time is spent lecturing and outlining an independent study program that the student will pursue for the remainder of the year.

The four courses planned for the June, 1980 session at CAJ are:

1. Contemporary Trends in Education
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3. Psychology of Group and Individual Attitude Formation and Change
4. The Leader as an Agent of Change

Tuition is most reasonable. Missionaries outside of Tokyo will be able to avail themselves of CAJ's boarding facilities. The missionary community is encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity for continuous education while in Japan. For full details contact Mr. Royce McCarty, Headmaster, Christian Academy in Japan, 1-2-14 Shin-kawa-cho, Higashi Kurume-shi, Tokyo, 180-03. The telephone number is: 0424-71-0022.

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### 1980 Schedule:

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Fall term - September 3

Application should be made one month before the term begins. Please request applications from J.M.L.I.

# JEMA

## CONFERENCE

### ECHOES

Pastoring in southern Kyushu, we find it hard to get away. But since I had to meet an important couple at Narita, I said to my wife, "Go with me, and we'll take in a day of the JEMA Conference in Karuizawa." That one day showed me what I've been missing. It brought back mostly sweet memories of the conferences long ago with Norman Grubb, the same J.B.B. Friend, and John R. Rice. In those days we met veterans such as J.M.T. Winther, Gordon Chapman, Irene Webster-Smith, Mabel Frances. But this year was as exciting as any, and made me want to go back for the whole conference next year. We really need two weeks off, one to rest and one to go to meetings.

Merril Bennett  
Southern Kyushu

As summer workers, it was a refreshing break to spend a few days at the JEMA Conference. It must have been even more so for those who are constantly giving out in a second language. In a day when cassette tapes by many speakers are readily available, JEMA Conference may seem less necessary to some. But tapes are only tapes. The impact of the interaction of speakers, musicians, and listeners has a dynamic that no tape can produce.

At first glance, it would appear that the two speakers were very different from each other; in age, experience, background, training, and even accent. Yet, when we think back on the messages and reread the notes taken, the similarities are surprising. It would seem that Rev. Friend and Dr. Foster had gotten together and scripted their messages to reinforce and complement each other. That scripting must certainly have been done by the Holy Spirit.

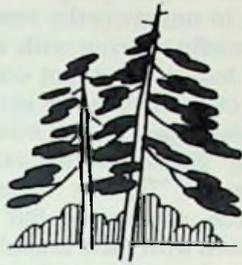
The willingness of the Friends and the Fosters to expose their own failings and foibles encouraged us who have felt keenly our inadequacy and awkwardness, particularly in Japan.

From the early days, Christians have been a singing people, a unique and attracting quality. The ministry through music by Rollie and Margaret Halberg and Tom and Barbara Fox greatly enriched our experience. Each of these gifted and generous musicians was appreciated. Handel's beautiful Flute Sonata No. 5 played at the Ladies' Tea was especially meaningful.

At the Ladies' Tea, the testimonies of Lavinia McCart, Mrs. Foster and Mrs. Friend were a fresh reminder of God's wonderful, enabling power in widely varied events and places.

The deep spirituality of the speakers, as worked out in practical day-to-day living with the Lord, has challenged us to live more closely with Him, as He directs. The reality of Christ in their lives, their practicality, and their sense of humor deeply impressed us. We have been faced with the need to develop a deeper prayer life and a more consistent walk with our Lord. We thank those who made it possible for us to attend JEMA 1979.

Jim and Lois McDougall  
Summer Workers from Canada



When asked to write an article for the Japan Harvest about the Karuizawa Conference I was both overjoyed and afraid. I was overjoyed by the fact that I was asked to write an article for a Christian magazine read by many and I was afraid for I did not know what I was going to write. But "Praise God," He supplies all my needs according to His riches in glory. (Phil 4: 19)

I was not going to go to the conference at all. I had plans for other things to do, but God intended for me to go. It seemed impossible for me to go since I had no train ticket and no money, but then again I underestimated God. It somehow had come about that Erv Meyer, the director of Yokosuka Christian Servicemen's Center, had an extra train ticket to Karuizawa, and I had extra money from my next paycheck. So, I was on my way to Karuizawa for the JEMA Conference. I arrived in time for the last night of the Deeper Life Conference. Through it all, I received a great blessing and a strengthening of my faith. I came to know that with "the mind of Christ" all things are possible. I was also able to work with the youth group and this was a very special blessing for me.

I want to share just a few words from some of the others here in Yokosuka who also went to the conference. Erv Meyer who has been going for many years said, "It was one of the best!" Mike Pageoff of the U.S.S. Hammond said, "The unity was fantastic!" Pat Lebran of the U.S.S. Lockwood said, "Really great!"

In conclusion, we in Yokosuka are very thankful for being able to fellowship with many brothers and sisters from different countries and denominations throughout the world. Truly this is the unity Christ meant for us to have! I am returning next year hopefully with many others. Thanks again from all of us in Yokosuka. Col. 3:16.

Tom Norman  
U.S.S. Midway

The 1979 JEMA Conference was TOPS. As we listened to the speakers for this year's conference we were fully persuaded in our minds that these were men of the Word. They knew the Word through diligent study and through having experienced its power in their own lives. The morning sessions, which lasted from 9:00 until 12:00, were not in the least wearisome for me as these speakers poured out from their rich experience in the study and the practice of the Word of God.

The music of the conference was superb. Rollie and Margaret Halberg and Tom and Barbara Fox thrilled us with their presentations. We learned during the conference that the son of the Halbergs is married to the daughter of the Foxes. I overheard one of the missionaries during the conference say, "Out of this marriage should come some great musicians, probably even of the quality of Beethoven or Mozart!" What a heritage, four grandparents brim-full of music! Readers of the JAPAN HARVEST who were not privileged to hear the music may want to write to the JEMA office to secure a tape of the music during the conference.

I personally shall never forget the wonderful friendships that were established during the days of the conference. One of the exciting moments for me was when I, in conversation with others in a group, learned that two members of the group and I had attended Victoria University on the campus of the University of Toronto at the same time, one of these persons and I having graduated in the same class and yet not having known each other during university days. It was a joy to meet missionaries whom we had known for several years and then to make the acquaintance of new persons who have heard the call of God and are now serving in Japan. A high experience for me during the conference was living at the Karuizawa Christian Center. At the Sunday noon meal considerable excitement took place in the section where we were seated when missionaries shared out of their experiences what God is doing in Japan today.

The ladies told us that the two-hour-long ladies' tea on Saturday afternoon was a highlight for them - amazing testimonies of God's rich grace and a message from the Word through Mrs. Friend. Vern Strom, President of JEMA and wife-less during the conference, since his wife was in the United States, was presented a bag of cookies at the evening service after the tea. This was in compliance with his request that the ladies remember him in his "plight" by making some extra cookies.

Some other "plus" factors of the conference: introduction to new 16-mm films for use in our evangelistic ministries; tapes of the messages and of the music; the bookstore with its wealth of materials, especially selected for the missionary community; cool weather; a relative absence of insects; beautiful tree-lined lanes that invited us to take periodic strolls.

Praise God for 1979 JEMA Conference!

K. Lavern Snider  
Hyogo Ken

As year-around residents of Karuizawa, we witness a dramatic change during the conference season each summer. During the long quiet winter months, from time to time I open the lock and walk around in the Karuizawa Union Church Tabernacle. Standing there in the cold empty church, I look at the empty seats and the dusty podium, and my mind often goes back to sacred moments in years past. The walls of that tabernacle have witnessed scenes where the Spirit of God filled the very atmosphere and God spoke to His people. In those lonely moments I wonder, "What will God do here this year?"

The conferences this year were no disappointment. For the first time in several years, the order of the JEMA-Deeper Life conferences was reversed, with Deeper Life coming first. Nearly all remarked that the preceding four days of meetings with Hegge Iverson of Burden Bearers was the best Deeper Life Conference in many years. It almost seemed anticlimactic to begin the JEMA Con-

ference, but Rollie Halberg and Tom Fox got the meetings off to an excellent start with an outstanding song service. Session after session, Rollie and Tom continued this same high level of leading and singing that was culminated in a tremendous musical concert the last night. This was the first visit to Japan for one of the speakers, Dr. Foster, who brought an appreciated series on the mind of Christ. The other speaker, J.B. Friend of South Africa, was a familiar face to many of us. It was with real anticipation that I personally looked forward to hearing Brother Friend. He is a man in whom I had seen much of Christ in a most unusual way in years past. His straightforward exposition of Scripture was well illustrated by many searching examples of the Lord's personal dealings with him and others.

One unusual sidelight was the night when Vern Strom, JEMA President, was giving some announcements. At that time there was a large

typhoon in the South China Sea. Brother Strom requested special prayer for the thousands of Vietnamese "boat people" who were adrift in unseaworthy vessels. As he was briefly sharing with us how the Lord had given them contact with some of these refugees in their home in Tokyo, he broke into weeping, saying, "Somehow they are no longer strangers." It was a moving experience, and we all felt somewhat identified with these homeless people.

At a church where I worked years ago, we used to say, "You can tell the level of revival in the church by the time it takes to lock the doors after the meetings." By that standard we had a great year. Frequently it was 10:30 or 11:00 at night before the lights were finally turned off. Dozens of friends who hadn't seen each other for a year fellowshiped together in the foyer and the parking lot of the church. Again it was great to be in Karuizawa this summer.

Bill Cook  
Karuizawa

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# practical helps

When Christians try to be helpful and it doesn't work, they sometimes wonder what Jesus would have done. It would be nice to handle things the way He did. In the Old Testament Jesus was predicted to become a Wonderful Counselor. He must have had some dimensions of His behavior that were going to make Him particularly good with human beings. Therefore, it might be a good idea to examine a few of the interactions Jesus had with people. Maybe there are some insights that can be gained in terms of increasing our effectiveness as people-helpers.

In the first chapter of the gospel of John there are recorded six little vignettes in which Jesus interacted with others. In each case there is a principle of effective helping skills. John the Baptist had just proclaimed that Jesus was the Lamb of God. He directed the attention of his two disciples to Jesus. These disciples then began to follow along behind Jesus as he walked along the road. At this point Jesus realized that there were two individuals behind him and said to them, "What seek ye?" That's the first interaction, but there is a principle underneath this particular question. The first principle for people-helpers is: *Find out what the person wants.*

If we hope to be a people-helper, it's imperative that we begin from the recipient's perspective — not ours. We must avoid instant analysis. We must not try to inflict upon him what we think is his problem, at least not at the beginning. What we really need to do is try to understand what the individual is experiencing. We need to get in touch with his motivation and his goal. Try phrases such

as, "What can I do for you?" or "It looks like things are not going as well as you might like." Even a cordial "Hello" signals the person that you're interested in him. There's also something in the manner and tone that must convey our interest in his perspective. People are quite good at reading the extent to which we are genuine in our inquiry. Jesus started by checking out the person's aim.

The answer that the two disciples gave to Jesus' question is rather interesting and strange. They said, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" And he said, "Come and see." That is the second interaction. Very frequently, when we are getting involved with a person for the first time, he needs the opportunity to test out our genuineness. He may ask questions that are innocuous and have little to do with anything of consequence. He may be buying time, checking us out, or giving us a chance to respond to a non-threatening question so he can determine whether he can go one step further with the more important one. The second principle for people-helpers is: *Answer "testing-out" questions with respect.* Well, Jesus apparently came across in a way that made them feel free. He was approachable, inviting, and kind. He seemed to be accepting of these people as they were. Jesus seemed to be available to them. He was reported to be a friend of publicans and sinners, and yet, he wasn't compromised by them.

Some people, because of their personality, are naturally warm and inviting. When they say come to their home, they say it in such a way that it is an offer you can't refuse.

Other people do not find that kind of activity compatible with their personality style. They are more private individuals. They prefer more intimate friendships that require time to nurture and build. The extent to which they are respectful in answering "testing-out" questions is not dependent on whether they are willing to have new people in their home. It's more a quality that says, "I'm genuine; I like you; and I want to help you within the context of my skills." The overriding attributes seem to be respect, genuine warmth, and caring. Jesus demonstrated that when he said, "Come and see."

Well, they did come and see where Jesus was staying. They stayed with him for a while. Then we find that Andrew went out and brought Simon to Jesus. When Andrew introduced his brother to Jesus, Jesus looked at Simon and said, "You are Simon, the son of John. You shall be called Cephas, which means 'a rock'." The principle for people-helpers is: *Identify positive potential.*

Labeling is dangerous business; especially dangerous if it is negative and indicting. Sometimes people will become the labels. Other times they will reject us because we put the label on them. Seldom are labels beneficial. Most of the time we just don't know enough information to adequately label. But giving labels is very tempting. If we are going to give labels to people, let's try to do as Jesus did. If we have a reasonable estimate of a person's potential, perhaps we can share that perception with the person in its most appealing way. Can you imagine Peter's response when he heard, "You shall become a rock"? Perhaps you can see him standing a bit taller and squaring his shoulders. Can you picture him becoming one of the strongest stalwarts of the Lord Jesus Christ? Now, you may say that Peter dropped the ball many times before he became that rock. Yes, he did. You see, a person's potential is not measured by the extent to which he *always* does what he is capable of doing. It has a progressive kind of tone to it. Peter eventually became a rock. But in the meantime there were periods of disappointment as well as victory. There were many other options open to Jesus as he spoke to Peter. If he had labeled in terms of the obvious rather than the

hidden, and in terms of negatives rather than positives, he might have been inclined to say something like: "Peter, you can become a rock. But, first we are going to have you attend several seminars on how to control your temper." Or perhaps, "Peter, some day you'll be a rock. But in the meantime you'd better take this little course on swordsmanship because you're pretty impetuous and your aim's not too good when you fly off the handle." Jesus could have offered a qualifier or some kind of disclaimer. He could have put the emphasis back on Peter's negative attributes, but somehow that would have squelched the impact of, "You shall become a rock." So, if we want to help any person who's not living up to his potential, let him know that we see some potential without adding to it several qualifiers.

In verse forty-three we read: "The next day Jesus found Philip and said to him, 'Follow me.'" "Follow me" is a clear term, yet it's not one that we would readily say in our associations with people. There is, however, an implication behind the statement that merits our attention. The principle for people-helpers is: *Be willing to be watched*. We're willing to let them look at us and, if need be, let their behavior after ours. It's not that we're arrogant or immodest. It's just that we need to keep our lives consistent with what we're talking. When Jesus says "Follow me," there is the idea that he is followable. There is also another idea about "follow me." It seems to suggest that Jesus and the person to whom he spoke were willing to go through some trials together. There is a kind of teacher-consultant role implied. If we do it together, it inspires confidence. It means I'm going to stick by you. It means we're not going to give up. It means that I'm not going to abandon you. Somehow, when we want to be a people-helper, we must convey to the individual with whom we are working that he is important. Together we will hang in there until a particularly tough circumstance is passed.

There is an interesting little paragraph that follows, one in which Philip found Nathaniel and reported that he had found the Messiah. And Nathaniel said, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip's response was, "Come and see."

Apparently, Philip had learned a lesson from principle number two. He was an approachable, inviting person just as Jesus was. He handled the "testing-out" question well.

When Nathaniel, the skeptic, came before Jesus, Jesus once again labeled. He said, "Behold, an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile." And Nathaniel replied, "How do you know me?" The startled response of Nathaniel suggests that Jesus had identified the inner feelings and attitudes of Nathaniel. The principle for people-helpers is: *Identify the person's present experiencing accurately*. This is different from the labeling of Peter which was an estimate of what he could become in the future. This interaction with Nathaniel illustrates how Jesus labels what's going on inside of Nathaniel, now. Nathaniel's character is being labeled in a very positive way. Jesus looked on the heart. For us today the best that we can do is to try to understand what a person is going through and let him know that we see it. To the individual this is comforting and encouraging. He has the feeling that, "Finally, somebody understands me." It frees the individual to take another step in becoming what he can be. Few of us take the time to really explore and speculate on the positive inner workings and experiencing of another person. It's a rare commodity. If we do it, and do it successfully, the person will be very impressed. He will be convinced that we really care. If we want to be people-helpers, one way to show it is to identify his present experiencing accurately.

The next principle of people-helping is illustrated in Jesus' response to Nathaniel's question, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Apparently, Jesus had the capacity to know people and see events that are beyond our capabilities. The implication for us is not that we should be able to see events separated by distance and terrain. The principle is this: *Answer direct questions clearly and judiciously*.

On occasion we know the real answer to a person's inquiry, but the response is too much for him to bear. So we share as clearly as possible what he can tolerate. A little knowledge that is meaningful and useful

is better than much information misunderstood.

Two types of situations are common where we can and should answer directly. When we have applied the principle of labeling positive potential or the principle of labeling present experiencing, we are likely to be asked the basis for our opinions. We really should report those observations that led to our conclusion. If we can't do so, perhaps our labeling is not justified. People-helpers answer directly in terms of how much the person can handle productively.

In the final segment of the interaction between Nathaniel and Jesus, Nathaniel exclaimed, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God." Nathaniel was very impressed with Christ's ability to transcend the physical. Jesus commented on Nathaniel's basis for amazement and went on to give a short glimpse of heaven. The principle for people-helpers portrayed here is: *Give realistic hope*.

Jesus could make descriptive statements about heaven. He could guarantee its accuracy. However, we have to work within the framework of our human limitations and the amount of knowledge God has permitted us. For the person who is hurting, hope is needed and available - but we must provide it realistically. Claims beyond our power to deliver are hollow and insulting. We would do better to give whatever hope that comes from our silent but continued presence with a grieving person than to give verbal false hope for a better tomorrow that we can't deliver. While there is ultimate hope in Christ for improved life, better circumstances here on earth are not ours to promise. We can, however, give the realistic hope that comes from knowing Him and from demonstrating our people-helping skills.

In summary, here are the principles of people-helping found in John 1:38-51:

1. Find out what the person wants
2. Answer "testing-out" questions with respect
3. Identify positive potential
4. Be willing to be watched
5. Identify present experiencing accurately
6. Answer direct questions clearly and judiciously
7. Give realistic hope.

Charles W. Lewis

# PLANTING IN NATIVE SOIL

I've lived in Japan for five years and it's nice to be able to say that (some of the time anyway!) I know Japanese when I hear it! Words like *domo arigato*, *tasukete*, *sashimi*, *ichi*, *ni* and *san* almost always ring a bell with me these days. But, it was obvious that they rang the right bells in a very special way last night at the opera, in Osaka's Festival Hall, among the predominantly Japanese audience. Why should these common, everyday words cause a sedate crowd to respond with spontaneous bursts of appreciation? One reason could be that their language sounded odd appearing in "The Magic Flute" which is in German! I think an even more obvious reason was that the words had been used appropriately. The comic lead singer, Papageno, called out "*domo arigato*" to the stage hands as a set was removed and "*tasukete*" in the middle of a fight. Perhaps the biggest response came when Papageno pulled out chopsticks and began to eat a meal of rice and sashimi which had descended on a tray from the sky. Then when the tray appeared heavy to lift, he assumed the Sumo pre-fight position, slapped his thighs and gleefully scattered rice over the orchestra pit! It was obvious that the audience loved this sympathetic blending of their culture with the great art of Mozart.

It was at a missionary conference in Urbana, Illinois, that I heard the missionary mandate to break the pot (Westernized Christianity) and plant the plant (the Christian Faith) in native soil. I wonder if any of the other ten thousand young people who attended that conference with me have come to Japan and realized the rewards of carrying out that mandate? When Dr. Donald McGavran,

## SHARON GOSDEN



a noted church growth authority, was in Japan in 1968, he pointed out ways that the Gospel could be more effectively propagated in this country. He stressed that the Christian Faith must become "thoroughly Japanese in its forms" and that when such an adjustment to the culture was made, the Bread of Life would be "readily assimilated by and communicated to multitudes of Japanese." When I read these remarks of his and also that the "Bread of Life will look like and taste like *sushi*" (Japan Harvest, Winter 1968-69), I reheard that mandate from Urbana.



A few weeks ago, I was asked to present a talk on the Christian home. I summarized my main points in the closing minutes with an illustration using that well-known Japanese dish *omaki zushi*. The seaweed enclosing the rice is the shaper and protector of the home, God Himself in His wisdom and love. The separate ingredients in the center are the family members with their different roles, each contributing something special to the whole. I compared the discipline in the home to the crucial ingredient vinegar and the Christian training I referred to as the salt of the home. Sugar represented the necessary times of family recreation and relaxation. Finally, the rice itself I chose to stand for the love, acceptance and mutual respect which make up the very fabric of a home. After the talk, I was amazed that most of the questions were framed in terms of the *omaki zushi*! For example, one lady from a broken home asked, "What if the *osushi* falls apart - how can it be put back together again?" Another asked if I would please give him some help on using the salt! It was evident to me that what I had related to the familiar had been assimilated the best.

Jesus lived out the missionary mandate in His person by breaking through into the human situation. He became flesh and lived with us. He ministered to people where they were - within the context of their understanding and need. Plant the plant in native soil -? His example shows us how to do it. His Spirit, planted in the soil of our uniqueness, empowers us for the task. He said, "Come, leave your nets -" (and pots?) "follow me and I will make you fishers of men." †

# Crisis in the Apostolic Church

*This installment concludes Dr. Philip Teng's studies in Acts, originally given at ALCOE, Singapore, 1978.*

## IX The Crisis of Ingrownness – Localism or World Missions? –

It is only natural for people to fall into groups and keep to themselves, more concerned with themselves than anybody else's business. Family spirit, clanism, nationalism, racialism, class spirit, trade unionism, etc., are all expressions of this ingrownness of man. The Church is no exception to this tendency on the human level. This natural tendency of the Church carries with it a great potential crisis in her expansion program. But divine intervention saved the apostolic church from this crisis in four ways.

### 1. Through the giving of the Great Commission

The Great Commission is the conceptive foundation of Church expansion. It is the *Magna Charta* of world missions and the corner stone of evangelism. It is the basic orientation of the Church of Christ. Every church leader and church member must be well taught on this subject.

The Lord made special and emphatic preparation for the giving of the Great Commission. Three times the disciples were told to go to a mount in Galilee where the Lord was going to meet with them – once before the death of the Lord and twice after His resurrection. These repeated orders from the Lord caused them to wonder greatly and to become expectant as to what the Lord was going to do with them there. When they got there, the Lord appeared to them, and then

the Bible says emphatically that He drew near to them and gave them the Great Commission. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature!" Go! Go! Go! This was the resounding voice in the ears of every disciple in the early church.

### 2. Through the promptings of the Holy Spirit

In prophesying about the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the Lord said something which was as true as it was vivid in John 7:37. "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water". That is exactly what the Holy Spirit does with a Christian – flowing in and flowing out. Flowing in to fill and flowing out to bless. The fullness of the Holy Spirit never means to get filled only, it also means flowing out. When you stop flowing out you also stop being filled. We are filled in order to overflow. The Holy Spirit is ever reaching out. He thrusts us out into the field to reap the harvest. The battle cry of the Christian Church is forever Acts 1:8, "When the Holy Spirit is come upon you, ye shall be my witnesses. . . to the utmost part of the earth". The Holy Spirit points to the utmost part of the earth. As soon as we are filled with the Holy Spirit we begin to lift our eyes and look at the field of the whole world and start to press for the furtherance of the Gospel.

### 3. Through persecution

The Apostles were busy building up their church in Jerusalem and they remained too long inactive in sending the Gospel to the surrounding areas. Maybe they were getting a little ingrown, so God had to use persecution to thrust the disciples out for evangelization. It is most interesting to read in 8:1, 4. "At that time there was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. . . And they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word."

They established many churches in those areas as we see in 9:31. We find that none of these churches were started by the Apostles who had to stay behind at Jerusalem to look after the church there. As I mentioned before, the Gospel spread at least five directions because of this persecution.

### 4. Through Missionary outreach

We find in Acts that from 9:32 onward, Peter was outside Jerusalem for missionary trips which took him to many places in different provinces. Although the Bible does not tell us that Peter was formally sent out by the Jerusalem Church as their missionary, yet we can reasonably infer that he must have had the blessing of all the leaders of the church when he, as the top leader of the church, left Jerusalem for evangelistic journeys in regions around that city. The Jerusalem Church sent out their Chief Apostle to the mission field before the Antioch Church sent out Paul and Barnabas as their missionaries, although usually it is the Antioch Church that gets the honor of being the first church that sent out their best men, mainly because of the longer and better known missionary ministry of Paul.

The Antioch Church was a marvelous church in every way. It was a church whose leaders fasted and prayed; it was a church of strong lay ministry which laid the foundation of the church; it was a church blessed with a Spirit-filled leader in the person of Barnabas who expressed his deep spirituality by his willingness to turn over his leadership to somebody else who was better than himself, namely, Paul, a wonderful instance of self-denial; it was a church which was really international in its leadership which was made up by two African brothers, Simeon the Niger and Lucius of Cyrene, two Hebrew brothers, Barnabas and Paul, and one member of the royal family, Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod; and, above all, it was a missionary-minded church which was the

forerunner of missions. The Holy Spirit spoke to the leaders of the Antioch Church about missions when they fasted and prayed together, and they prayed more about it, and then they obeyed, and they took action, and they did the hardest thing, namely, they sent out their best and most needed leaders, Paul and Barnabas, as their missionaries.

This was an event of the greatest significance and consequence. It set an example for all churches of all times to follow. Missions was born of three factors: the guidance of the Holy Spirit, prayer, and obedience – obedience on the part of the Antioch Church which was willing to give their best, as well as obedience on the part of Paul and Barnabas who were willing to go in dedication and faith.

The missionary call has come to the Asian churches today. No, more accurately, I should say that the missionary call has always been there all the time, but more and more Asian churches are now responding to it in a more visible way and it has the potential of becoming a general movement whereas in the past there were only lonely voices pleading for the cause with sporadic responses here and there. Now time has come for all Asian churches to join hands and get involved in missionary outreach – both home missions and foreign missions. It is a great encouragement to us that the Asian Missions Association has been organized as a clarion call to all of us, urging us to be more actively engaged in the united effort of executing our missionary responsibilities.

As the missionary movement in the early church was born of prayer, let us pray more for Asian missions. Let us educate ourselves and our people about missions. And let us seek concrete ways and means to implement our vision. If you think your group is too weak for foreign missions, you can do four things: first, pray for faith and strength to do it;

second, start a separate collection for missions as a help to existing missionary projects outside your group; third, start preaching on missions; fourth, push local missions.

There are those who have raised their voices in objecting to missions. If you are one of them, will you please examine your position more deeply and thoroughly to see whether you are doing a service to the Asian church or doing a harm.

I am absolutely convinced that when missions has become a general movement in Asia, that will be the time when we have the greatest church growth as well as the greatest revival we have ever had.

“Ingrownness” is a great hindrance to the growth and expansion of the Christian Church. We must teach our people against it. We should train our church members to have a wide outlook in service, fellowship and evangelism.

The following are some of the symptoms of “ingrownness”:

1. No or little fellowship with other churches on account of unbiblical reasons.
2. No or little regular evangelistic outreach either in terms of local missions or foreign missions.
3. No or little participation in interdenominational or inter-church evangelistic efforts.
4. No or little budget for evangelism or missions or church expansion.
5. No personnel for expansion work.
6. No plan for church planting or church membership increase.
7. No annual goals to be reached which are adopted at church committee meetings to be communicated to the whole congregation for prayerful implementation.
8. No or little preaching on the Great Commission or on church members' responsibility for evangelism.
9. No or little prayer for evangelism, missions and church expansion.
10. Presence of a sense of complacency for what a church has already accomplished.
11. Greater emphasis on deeper life than on evangelism.
12. Self-centred prayer meetings with a small circle of concern.

We should be alarmed by the appearing of these symptoms and positively deal with them. “Ingrownness” is probably the greatest threat to church growth.

#### X The Crisis of Prejudice – Tradition or Vision? – Acts 10:9–20

The Apostles shared traditional concepts which belonged to an older era in spite of all the teachings and examples of the Lord as well as their own experience. They did not learn from the Lord's teaching that He had “other sheep” which He must gather into the same fold (John 10:16). They did not learn from the Lord's own example of showing grace to the Gentiles (Matt. 15:28). They did not learn from their own experience in the city of Samaria that the Holy Spirit was also given to Gentile believers (Acts 8:17). We find that Peter still hesitated whether he should accept the invitation to go to Caesarea to preach to the household of Cornelius. This shows how difficult it is for a person to rise above traditional concept and practices. It took a vision from God to change Peter and liberate him from the bondage of tradition and prejudice.

This vision (10:9–16) was of far-reaching significance. I am inclined to call it a “vision of transcendence” because it enabled Peter to transcend limitations imposed on him by tradition and he began to preach to the Gentiles. This vision together with the vision given to Paul created a new age of worldwide evangelization!

There are six points in regard to this vision that are worthy of our attention:

1. It is a vision born of prayer. Peter received it when he had been praying (10:9).
2. It is a vision born of need. Peter felt hungry and he needed food (10:10), but God showed him another need through this vision which was greater – the need of a break-through which was going to feed many souls with the Word of God.
3. In this vision, Peter answered the voice from heaven and said, “Not so, Lord” (10:14), or in other words, “No, Lord.” “No” and “Lord” are contradictory

to each other, yet they were joined together by Peter. How difficult it is for us to learn anything which is different from our old concepts.

4. The voice from heaven in this vision was repeated three times which means a strong emphasis. Yes, we, like Peter, need repeated reminders from the Lord before we can learn anything from Him.
5. It is a vision of seeming self-contradiction – God was calling something clean which He Himself called unclean in the Old Testament. Peter was greatly puzzled to hear God contradicting His own Word! How could God be self-contradictory?

This seeming self-contradiction of God teaches us at least three lessons:

1. God is a God of paradoxes. To the eye of the finite man, the infinite God by necessity appears to be self-contradictory. In our finite mind, we can never harmonize between time and eternity, between the plurality and the singularity of God, between the divine nature and

human nature of Christ, between the “eternal” and “generation” in the eternal generation of the Son by the Father in the holy Trinity, etc. We have to be infinite before we can understand things that belong to infinity. These paradoxes are a part of the higher unity of the things of God. We must know our limitations as human beings and never stretch our claims beyond our finite territories. The things that belong to infinity are the “hidden things” of the “hidden God” (Isaiah 45:15).

2. The letter of the Law is only a shadow of spiritual and moral truth. The letter is transitory leading to the fulfilment of the spirit of the Law. The shadow automatically disappears when the substance of truth comes into full light. The commandment not to eat anything under the category of the unclean in the Old Testament was the shadow of the spiritual truth that God is a holy God and His people should be a holy people. Now that the spiritual reality of

holiness has already been fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the shadow automatically disappears and the unclean things have become clean.

3. All commandments, traditions, regulations and measures of a transitory nature must give way to new features and new approaches for a new age. God has different methods for various eras. This fact is very important for evangelism today. We should find out the methods that God wants us to use in evangelism and missions today. The realization of this truth generates in us a sense of contemporariness – a sense that seeks to preach the Gospel effectively to the modern man, and to relate Gospel truths to contemporary issues through the best methods of communication that command the attention of the modern man.
4. We must learn to be readily responsive to Biblical truths and patterns as soon as God shows them to us, no matter how different they may be from our traditions and old concepts.

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worldwide evangelization through baptism and discipleship. Both confession and discipleship were included in the goal of the great commission. The early church had a clear vision of this twofold goal and they applied the right strategy for this goal and they did a wonderful job!

What was the apostolic strategy for carrying out the great commission? There were two aspects to their strategy: the one in terms of principles and the other in terms of methods.

A. Principles in apostolic strategy for evangelization and church growth as means to fulfill the great commission.

The early church applied principles to church growth and evangelization which the Lord himself taught them. In Matthew's Gospel, the Lord spoke fifteen parables about the Kingdom of God. From these parables we can gather ten principles of the expansion of the Kingdom of God. Since the expansion of the Kingdom of God is parallel in essence to the expansion of the Christian Church, we can legitimately apply these principles to church growth and evangelization as the early church did. In applying these principles, we are, in fact, applying the wisdom of the Lord.

1. The principle of quantity – In the parable of the sower (Matt. 13:3–11), the Lord tells us that the seeds that fall into good ground and bear fruit form only one of the four groups of seeds. For the sake of convenience, shall I say that about one fourth of all the seeds sown bear fruit. How can we increase this good part of the seeds? There is only one way to do it, and that is to sow more seeds. You have a bigger “one-fourth” when the total is bigger. This means that quantity provides opportunities for quality. It is impossible to have quality without quantity. A great deal of injustice has been done to quantity in favour of quality. Quantity is the basis for quality. Quantity is always good as long as you have a good program to convert quantity into quality.

We find a very interesting situation in the early church. That is, all the people who confessed faith in Christ on the day of Pentecost were soon baptized – three thousand of them! Was it not dangerous to baptize people too soon? Yes and

no. Yes, if you baptize people and that is the end of it. No, as long as you have a good program for training new converts. The early church did have a good program, so they grew bigger as well as stronger.

This principle was implemented in the apostolic church by planting many churches both in Jerusalem and in the surrounding regions (9:31–32). All pastors and lay leaders in Asian churches today should be taught to aim at starting at least one branch church every five years. This itself will start a great movement of church growth.

2. The principle of quality – In the parable of the tares (Matt. 13:24–30), the Lord makes it very clear that it is the wheat that the householder wants, not the tares which will be gathered together for burning. When the servants bring in the harvest, only grains of wheat are accepted by the householder. Only quality will be accepted in the Kingdom of God. Quality produces quantity and the good seed yields fruit, thirty, sixty, or one-hundred fold. The early church practiced this principle by properly training their new converts (Acts 2:42–47). The good result of their training program was shown in the fact that when the Christians were scattered by persecution, they were able to serve as evangelists – preaching wherever they went (Acts 8:4), and they drew large crowds to the Lord, resulting in the expansion of the church.

3. The principle of faith – The parable of the mustard seed shows that the Kingdom of God grows and expands through the exercise of faith as symbolized by the mustard seed. It begins small but ends up extraordinarily big. There must be the factor of faith before any church can grow or launch out into any program for expansion. Faith always says, “It is possible – not possible with me, but possible with God.” The early church had an outstanding record in the application of this principle. Today, there is always a battle going on in every church between the “possible” members and the “impossible” members. Things get done when the former are in power. Let us pray for the rise of a new generation of believing church leaders in Asia through whom God will do great things for the expansion of the Kingdom of Christ.

## XI. The Crisis of Strategy

– Rambling or Goaling? –

There is a vast difference between a walk and a race. In Chinese, we say a walk is *hsin pu er hsing* which means a walk led by the feet – no destination, no goal. Many people follow their feet rather than their heads. They do not really know where they are going and consequently they never get anywhere, just circling and circling. It is totally different with a race. In a race, the athletes set their minds and eyes on the goal and their feet follow their minds. Not only that, they also do their best to find out the quickest and the best way to reach their goal. That is exactly what strategy is – the quickest and the best way to reach the goal.

There must be a goal, before you can have a strategy. There must be a right goal before you can have the right strategy. What was the goal of the apostolic church? Unquestionably it was the great commission. But what was the aim of the great commission? Was it baptism only? If that is the case, then it could be done by swords and spears. No, it was

4. The principle of the power of the Holy Spirit – There are different interpretations in regard to the parable of the leaven. I believe there is good hermeneutical ground to take the leaven in this parable as referring to the expanding power of the church through the work of the Holy Spirit. Again, the early church set a wonderful example in this respect as mentioned above. Today we need a renewed interest and zeal in seeking after the power of the Holy Spirit in our personal life as well as in our church life.

5. The principle of sacrifice – In the parable of the hidden treasure, the man who found the treasure was willing to pay the highest price for it – he gave up everything for it. He was laughed at and ridiculed by his friends and even by his dear ones, but he did not mind it because he knew what he was doing and he was sure that it was worth all the price he had paid for it.

The apostolic church showed a great spirit of sacrifice for the cause of Christ. They plunged into evangelism without any reservation. They gave everything including their lives in order to make Christ known. They counted it a privilege to suffer for the name of Christ. This factor constituted the greatest thrust that the apostolic church had made in evangelism.

The Asian churches have not shown too much Christian heroism in evangelism, especially in pioneering evangelism except in very few cases. That is partly why very few well educated young people in Asia have been willing to become missionaries or pioneering evangelists. It is Western missionaries who have been willing to go to the hardest places in Asia. Yet they have been criticized by Asian Christians and Christian leaders as living too comfortable a life. Time has come for Asian Christians to show their spirit of sacrifice in giving and serving if we expect our churches to grow fast.

6. The principle of total mobilization – Although the main point of the parable of the vineyard (Matt. 20:1-15) is the sovereign grace of God, yet we find another aspect to this parable that is important for us. That is, the Kingdom of God is a vineyard and we are all invited to work in it! Likewise, the church is a vineyard of God where all church members are expected to have a

share in the service of the church. This is, in modern terminology, total mobilization of the church.

The early church was a marvelous model for total mobilization. There was a strong lay ministry which started many churches including the renowned church at Antioch. Today Asian churches are still in the theoretic stage of mobilization. We have got the concept of total mobilization, but not too many churches have implemented it. In the past ten or more years, conferences on evangelism have done a great deal in spreading great concepts and ideas in regard to evangelism to all church leaders in Asia. I believe that the period of holding conferences is nearly over now and implementation should occupy all our time and energy.

7. The principle of the development of spiritual gifts – The parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30) points our attention to the great importance of the development of spiritual gifts. The exercise of spiritual gifts has greatly to do with the growth of the church. Today, specialized ministries are based on this principle of developed gifts. There is a great need for specialized ministries in Asia, such as Sunday-school promotion, youth work, literature, leadership training, mass media, management, church music, theological education, school evangelism, etc. We are beginning to move up step by step in these areas in Asia but we still have a long way to go. All denominations should make definite plans to upgrade themselves in these areas. Interdenominational services in these specializations are a great help to churches.

8. The principle of binding the "strong man" – The parable of binding the strong man (Matt. 12:28-29) shows us the secret of overcoming Satanic power as the key to the expansion of the Kingdom of God. Victory over Satan indicates the presence of the Kingdom of God (Matt. 12:28). How do we obtain power to bind the "strong man" who is Satan? Through prayer in the name of Jesus. Prayer moves the mighty arm of God. It is foolish of us to try to pluck things from the house of the "strong man" before we bind him. Spiritual warfare without prayer is doomed to failure. No one knows the power of prayer as well as the early Christians did.

9. The principle of service – In the parable of the sheep and goats, we find the Lord's emphasis on service of love (Matt. 25:31-40). Love service has always been a part of the total ministry of the church and it also has been a strong force in the furtherance of the gospel. Many hearts have been opened by it for the gospel. Love service has its own value and does not derive its merit solely from its contribution to evangelism, because it in itself is a manifestation of the glory of God. But it renders a double service when it is wisely used as a channel of evangelism.

There are two outstanding instances of love service in the apostolic church. The one is caring for widows in the Jerusalem Church which later on became a general practice in all churches (I Tim. 5:9). The other was a special collection of funds by Christians in different areas to help people who suffered from a great famine in response to the prophecy of Agabus (Acts 11:28-30). Today, social service is a part of the Christian witness which should not be overlooked by Asian churches.

10. The principle of wise compulsion – In the parable of the wedding feast (Matt. 22:2-14), there is a word which has puzzled many readers and Bible commentators. This word does not appear in this passage of Scripture but it does in Luke's version of the same parable (Luke 14:23). The king in the parable ordered his servants to "compel" people to come to his feast. What does this word mean? Does it have any significance for evangelism? No one can be dogmatic about the meaning of this word, but we can make guesses based on our best judgment. You can dismiss it if you do not like my attempt.

Personally I feel that there is a place for a special kind of compulsion in evangelism. It is not compulsion by force, but a spiritual compulsion which leads people to make voluntary decisions for Christ by building up a spiritual pressure on them, or by placing them in a position where they cannot but be exposed to a Christian atmosphere that influences them for Christ. For instance, in some evangelistic meetings, the speaker builds up emotional force and pressure on the audience at the close of the message which

inspires or compels them to make decisions for Christ. It could be dismissed as emotionalism. But man is an emotional being. His emotion is created by God and God is entitled to make use of his emotion for his own salvation. More people are controlled and motivated by emotion than those by reason and will. As long as the purpose is good and the appeal honest, there is nothing wrong with applying emotion to evangelism. All great things are emotional – great literature, great heroism, great music, etc. Why not add great evangelism to the list? When the heart is opened by emotion, the gospel will have a better opportunity to touch the intellect and the will.

Another instance is the sending of a boy to a good Christian school. You are in one sense pressuring him to become a Christian without forcing him to do anything. This is exactly the kind of tremendous compulsion that the television programs are applying to shape the thinking of our children.

Is there a place for compulsion in evangelism? Yes, not only a place but there is a great need for it. In fact, that is where we have failed. Let us move to compel people to come in and fill the hall of the feast of the gospel!

#### B. Methods in the apostolic strategy of evangelism.

There are four methods in the apostolic strategy of evangelism that we find in the book of Acts which are worthy of our special attention.

1. Concentrated evangelism in responsive areas – This method is illustrated by three instances. First, the responsive city of Samaria was doubly visited first by Philip, the evangelist, then by the Apostles Peter and John (Acts 8:5, 14). Second, the Apostle Paul worked at Ephesus for two years because of the great opportunity there. Third, Paul worked at Corinth for eighteen months in order to make the full use of the good response there, with the result that “many Corinthians believed.” (18:8)

2. Capture of a key class of people for Christ – This is illustrated by Philip, the evangelist, who made a special effort to reach the powerful eunuch for Christ, thus preparing the way for the gospel to reach Africa.

3. Movement into new areas by

sending the best workers – The Antioch Church sent Barnabas and Paul as their missionaries. What a contrast to the situation today! Only second and third rate workers are usually sent out by our churches to open up new areas. Of course, the result is poor! Time has come for us to organize teams of strong evangelists for pioneering evangelism and support them by pooled resources.

4. Promotion of non-professional missionaries and Christian workers – Aquila and Priscilla are examples of this. Today doctors and nurses, teachers and writers, musicians and artists, etc., can do great work in evangelism while they support themselves.

## XII. The Crisis of Leadership

– Fumbling around or inspired following? –

Good leadership is indispensable for the success of any cause or movement. This is certainly true with the greatest of all causes – the cause of making Christ known through evangelism. In Acts we find wonderful leadership in the Apostles which inspired the whole church for powerful action in evangelism. The lack of leadership creates a great crisis in a church. Without adequate leadership the churches will not move forward in reaching out for Christ. We pray that God will continue to raise up more and more real leaders in Asian churches.

What kind of leaders did the early church have?

1. When the church at Jerusalem suffered under great persecution, many Christians left the city and went to other places. But what did the apostles do? They were the ones that had the greatest danger to their lives. They should be the first ones to run for their lives. But we find in Acts 8:1 that “all” Christians left Jerusalem “except” the apostles! We cannot but be moved by their faithfulness, and their spirit of dedication, and their sense of responsibility! Today we often see in Asia that it is the church leaders who are the first in running to a safe place when danger comes and they leave their flocks without shepherds! On the other hand, we also find great examples of dedicated leadership in Asia today. For instance, before the Communist take over in Vietnam, a group of pastors of the tribal churches in the mountains of Viet-

nam walked for many days on their way to Saigon, with a view to be transported to the United States for safety. Upon arrival in Saigon, they had a prayer meeting together when the Holy Spirit worked in a mighty way. They rose from their knees to make a totally different decision – they decided to walk back to their villages because they felt that their flocks needed them. The head of the largest church group (C & MA) in Vietnam also decided to stay in Saigon, refusing to be evacuated to safety.

2. The leaders of the early church showed a great selfless spirit. The two most outstanding examples are Peter and Barnabas. In the case of Peter, he stayed in Jerusalem during the persecution, but he left the city after the persecution was over. He left the top leadership of the church to James so that he could travel and preach the gospel. From Acts 15 we can easily gather that Peter never took back the leadership again. In the case of Barnabas, he went to look for Paul and brought him to Antioch in order for Paul to take over leadership of that great church from him. He did it for the good of the church at the expense of his own leadership. He did not think of position and privilege at all! What a real act of selflessness!

3. The leaders of the early church had a deep sense of identification with their people. Perhaps the most moving illustration of this deep sense is the martyrdom of Stephen. He longed for the salvation of his own people and he pleaded with them to accept Jesus. So much so that when the wild Jews were stoning him to death, his heart was still filled with compassion for them and he prayed for their forgiveness. The Apostle Paul expressed an even greater sense of identification in Romans 9:3, where he said that he was willing to be cursed from Christ in order that his kinsmen, the people of Israel, might be saved. There is still a clearer illustration of this sense of identification in the life of the Prophet Ezekiel. God commanded Ezekiel to lie on his left side for 390 days, then on his right side for 40 days, to symbolize God's judgment on the people of Israel. As a servant of God, he was identified with his own people, which created a great burden in his heart for them.

4. The leaders of the early church

had great eloquence. The preaching of the apostles had great persuasive power which turned people to God in faith and repentance. What constituted their eloquence? There were at least four factors:

- a. Their eloquence consisted in their experience with Christ. They simply testified to what they had seen and heard of their Master. They proclaimed with certainty and boldness the Risen Lord whom they had seen with their own eyes. Peter said before the officials of Jerusalem, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." That testimony was powerful itself.
  - b. They had been taught by the Master. They passed on what they had received from Christ. We are reminded of God's words to Ezekiel, "When I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them. Thus saith the Lord." Ezekiel 3:27
  - c. Their eloquence was an outward channel for inward grace. Their spiritual qualities were heightened by the fulness of the Holy Spirit, and eloquence resulted. Spiritual gifts can be divided into two categories: gifts as spiritual qualities, and gifts as instruments which are usually called talents. When the former are uplifted, the latter are improved.
  - d. Their eloquence came from the authority of the Word of God. The apostles always based their preaching on the Word of God and, therefore, their messages carried divine authority with them.
5. A wonderful spirit of unity was expressed among the leaders of the early church. Unity in spirit and service was one of the outstanding features of the leadership of the apostles. The first apostolic council as recorded in Acts 15 is a very good example of this unity. The book of Acts is filled with this spirit from cover to cover. The precious words "of one accord" appear six times in the book. There is no wonder that under this influence of the apostles, the whole congregation exhibited a wonderful atmosphere of loving fellowship together.

Humility was one of the elements of this unity. For instance, when the

Apostle Peter performed a miracle, the people of Jerusalem admired him audibly. But Peter said, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? Or why look ye so earnestly on us as though by our own power or holiness we have made this man walk?" (Acts 3:12) Unity was easy to keep when the leaders of the church all gave glory to God, and not to themselves, in true humility. Co-operation was a natural product of this spirit of unity.

Leaders of Asian churches are not known as good at cooperation with one another. But if we want to do greater things for God, we have to learn the lesson of unity.

6. The leaders of the early church had absolute confidence in the gospel. The apostles were perfectly convinced that the gospel was God's plan of salvation for all who believed. They were absolutely sure that Christ was the only Savior of the world and that He was going to appear as the ultimate Victor in history. We have a most moving passage in Acts 4:24-31, where the apostles, after having suffered from persecution, prayed together with great faith and exaltation, expressing jubilant confidence that everything was going to happen as God had revealed in prophecy.

Only those leaders who have this confidence in the reality of the gospel are willing to pay a real price for its propagation. Others will look for substitutes for the gospel and they will never be keen on evangelism.

7. The leaders of the early church were men of moral integrity. The apostles commanded respect of the common people (Acts 5:12). They handled an extraordinarily large sum of money, as offerings from church members came in. These people had sold all their possessions and given everything to the church. With the amazing ability and integrity of this kind of leadership, the whole congregation won the good will of all people (Acts 2:47). This became a great force in evangelism.

The early church made it a special point that their leaders must be of "good report" before they could be elected as such (6:3). The church at Antioch also followed this principle and they chose Barnabas as their leader who is specially mentioned as a "good man" (11:24).

8. There was real internationalism

among the leaders of the early church. As I mentioned before, both the Jerusalem Church and the Antioch Church were international in the make-up of their leadership. In the case of the Jerusalem Church, at least one of their leaders was a foreigner (Acts 6:5). As for the Antioch Church, two of the five top leaders were black brethren, Simon the Nigar and Lucius the Cyrene. They worked together in harmony and mutual respect. It was only natural that this international-mindedness produced international missions.

An international outlook is very important for Asian churches today. Nationalism is never a Christian concept and emphasis. Christians are for a nationalism which means love and loyalty to one's country, but they do not approve of the kind of nationalism which promotes hatred, national pride and prejudice. Politically speaking, all nations in the world today need a new international outlook which cultivates mutual understanding and good will. All narrow nationalism should be discarded by all thinking people. Spiritually speaking, all Asian church leaders should aim at closer fellowship and cooperation with one another through schemes on an international level, such as missions, theological education, etc.

9. The leaders of the early church were men of vision. The book of Acts is a book of visions. We can count twelve visions in all. These visions were all necessary for the enlightenment of the leaders of the church. At the same time, many of these visions were received during prayer. In the Bible, prayer and vision are usually hand in hand with each other. The Bible shows that visions were given to prayerful leaders in all generations. Prayerless leaders have imaginations and dreams but not visions. The visions that the leaders of the early church received opened their eyes to see new possibilities and set their feet on new roads leading to new growth and new development of the church.

May I conclude my message by referring to what I said at the beginning: A leader is a seer - he sees a vision; and he is a follower - he follows his own vision; and he is a drummer - he rouses others to follow his vision with him.

Are we real leaders?



# “SOMETHING I’VE NOTICED ABOUT CHRISTIANITY”

We are studying the Book of Mark in our monthly ladies’ Bible class. We have reached the end of chapter eight, where Jesus was trying to explain to His disciples that He would have to suffer and die on the cross. Peter objected to that kind of talk. He had other ideas concerning the future of the Lord whom he served. Peter was the kind who always had to say something, even though “he knew not what to say” as in chapter nine, verse six. He took Jesus aside to talk to Him, to “rebuke Him,” we are told.

Jesus listened briefly, then turned to look at the other disciples who were with Him – men with whom He had walked the roads of Palestine and whom He loved. He knew that unless He went to the cross they would be separated from Him forever. “Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of man,” Jesus said to Peter. This is one of the strongest rebukes Jesus ever gave during His days on earth.

Why did Peter’s words remind our Lord of Satan? Perhaps He was remembering the days of temptation in the wilderness when Satan tried to persuade Him to seek recognition and obtain a kingdom without going to the cross. Or He may have been thinking of Satan’s first encounter with man when he suggested to Eve that she could forget the rules, ex-

pand her horizons, and live a happier life. Sin was not a thing to be concerned about. Of course the enemy of men’s souls would be expected to talk like that but not one who had left his fishing business to follow Christ.

One of the newer members of our class speaks up. “There’s something I’ve noticed about Christianity,” she says. “You talk a lot about *sin*. Other religions don’t say much about this.”

I look at this woman sitting on the floor beside me at the low table in our living room. If there were a way to avoid the subject, I would welcome it. I sense her hostility. I want to talk about the Love of God. I want her to think that Christianity is not all that tough. I can show her examples of the tenderness and caring which Jesus showed toward those around Him. But I can’t go around the sin problem; it stands out as prominently as Mt. Fuji. Unless she can understand the seriousness of sin, she cannot appreciate the ultimate expression of God’s love. The Japanese translation of John 3:16 suggests the measure of the love of God: “To the extent of giving His only Son, God loved this world.”

EDNA KRUSE

The leader for the day gives a helpful illustration from my husband’s sermon the previous Sunday. It is about a big, healthy man who is told by his doctor that he has cancer. “How much does it weigh, Doc?” he asks.

“Only about five to ten grams,” comes the reply.

“Oh,” the relieved man says, “then I guess I don’t have to worry about it. It’s such a small part of me, and the rest of me is quite healthy.” And then the faithful doctor has to explain that if the cancer is not removed it will spread and kill.

My friend goes home. As I think over what she has said and pray for her, I realize that she has come face to face with an essential teaching of Christianity. She is outwardly a lovely person – kind and thoughtful, respected in the community, a fine wife and mother. Like most Japanese people, she is not troubled by guilt of sin. The Japanese word for “sinner” indicates that this is one who has broken a law of the country. She has never done this. How can I help her to see that she is a sinner? By handing her the mirror of God’s Word and by sharing its knowledge, which the Holy Spirit can use to lead her to repentance and faith. ✚

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