

Volume 33, Number 2, 1983

JAPAN HARVEST

The Magazine for Today's Japan Missionary



FEATURE: IRENE WEBSTER-SMITH REMEMBERED

The Official Organ of the Japan Evangelical Missionary Association

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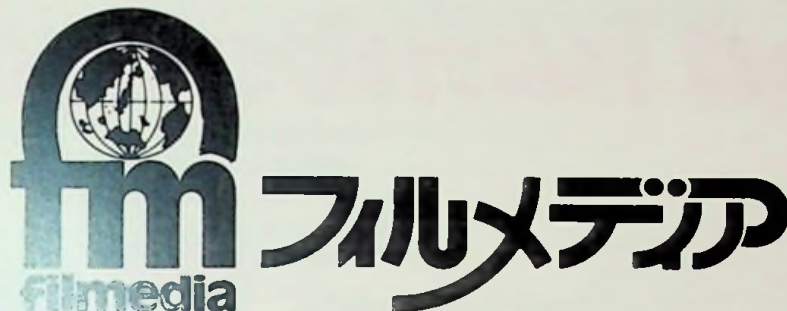
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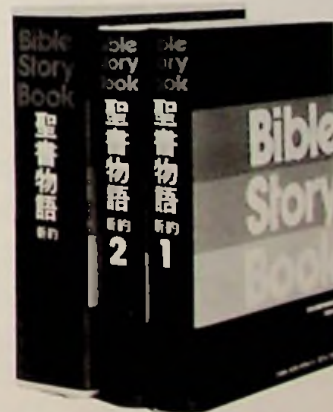
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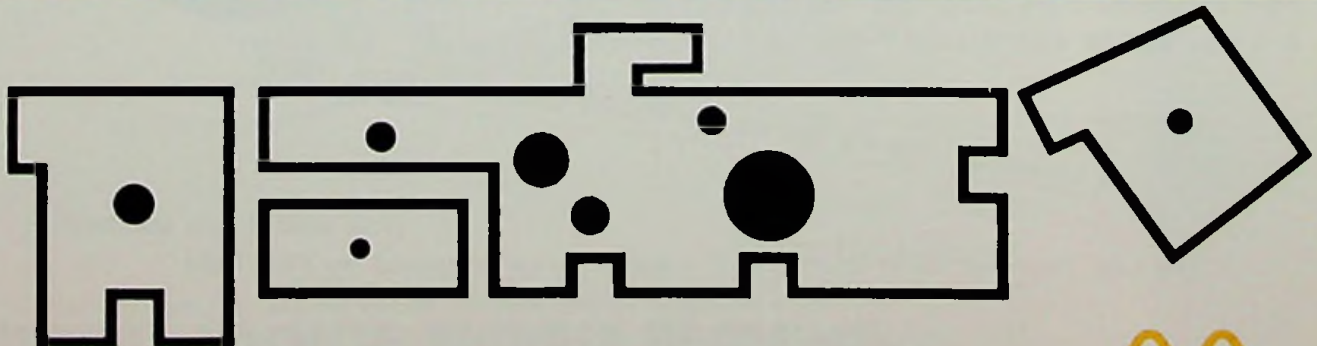
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1983, Volume 33, Number 2
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The JAPAN HARVEST is the official publication of the Japan Evangelical Missionary Association, a non-profit organization which publishes the Japan Harvest four times a year. Its purpose is to promote primarily the cause of the evangelical church and mission in Japan, and secondarily the ministry and activities of the association.

Though the magazine responsibly endeavors to represent these causes, individual articles or advertising express the viewpoints of the contributors and not necessarily those of JEMA. The editor welcomes unsolicited articles. Such material will not be returned.

東京都千代田区神田駿河台2丁目1 郵便番号 101

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Price overseas \$15.00 per year
Price in Japan: ¥2,500 per year; single copy, ¥900

Furikae (Postal Transfer): Japan Harvest, Tokyo 3-180466



Priorities

One of my co-workers at the Ochanomizu Student Christian Center wasn't able to teach the weekly German Bible class and asked me to fill in for her. I gladly accepted the challenge and spent considerable time preparing for the class.

On that morning just as I was ready to leave the house for work the telephone rang. A good friend who seldom calls was on the line with a request. He wanted to know if I would be available that night for something very, very special. "The U.S. Ambassador Mr. Mansfield and the first recipient of the Honda Prize, a distinguished scientist from the States, have been invited to the Honda residence for an informal dinner and the Ambassador would be very pleased if you could join the party and serve as interpreter," he continued.

I gulped for a moment. What an opportunity! Then I returned to reality and to my commitment at OSCC that night. After a pause, I replied, "It is very kind of you and I am greatly honored, but I already have a very important engagement for tonight."

All day I couldn't get that telephone call out of my mind. What a temptation that had been to give a quick "yes" answer and then to work out the details later. But the more I thought about that matter, the more I felt rebuked. Where are my priorities, anyway, I asked myself. Had I not long ago committed myself to serve the Master whatever the cost?

It was no accident that there were six eager Japanese waiting for me to open the Word that night. As I shared with the group the riches that are to be found in Christ Jesus, I had great liberty and joy. It was a wonderful evening, long to be remembered.

In this great land of Japan to which we are called to make Christ known, there are so many opportunities and temptations that can detract us from the task to which we are called. Let us be reminded that it's five minutes to midnight. Soon our Lord will return. We will be held accountable for how we have spent our days as His ambassadors. Do we have our priorities straight?

Siegfried A. Buss
Siegfried A. Buss
Editor

JEA and Evangelical Unity



HARRY FRIESEN

The following address by JEMA President Harry Friesen was delivered during the three-day JEA Consultation on Evangelism, June 6-8, 1983. The consultation concluded with the JEA Bi-Annual Plenary Session.

Fifteen years have passed since April 29, 1968 when the Japan Evangelical Association began its united witness for evangelicals in Japan. This new evangelical association came into being, not from any religious or political coercion, but arose from the common burden and vision of evangelicals in Japan. Four years of prayer and consultation culminated in the *Nihon Fukuin Renmei* (JEF), the Japan Protestant Conference (JPC), and the Japan Evangelical Missionary Association (JEMA), constituting themselves as the three charter members of JEA. From its inception, JEA has been a big factor in displaying true evangelical unity in Japan.

I. *The Unity We Possess.* We firmly believe that unity is not something that is externally created. Unity is primarily organic and not organizational. Unity is not something we *seek* but it is that oneness we *receive* as a gift of the Spirit at the time of our new birth. It is a by-product of the regeneration experienced as a result of the Spirit's work in the individual believer as he places his faith in Jesus Christ. The Scriptures speak of "keeping" or "maintaining" the unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4:3). In the oft quoted "ecumenical charter" of John 17:20-21, Christ expresses His concern for a *spiritual oneness* which is the essence of the trinitarian unity - not *organizational oneness*. Christ makes it clear that such oneness can only come as individuals "believe on me through their word (scripture)". The true path to unity and oneness is through faith in Christ.

Certain New Testament figures further illustrate the existing oneness of true believers. A. *The Unity of the Vine and Branches* (John 15). Christ is the only true vine and all believers, as branches of the vine, bear testimony to the unity of being joined to the one Vine and sharing in His life. The branches are related to each other only through the Vine. B. *The Unity of the Head and Body* (Col. 1:18; Eph. 4:16). Christ is the Head of the church which is His body. The body is vitally connected to the Head and members of the body "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love". Paul clearly indicates that "the members of that one body, being many, are one body . . . now ye are the body of Christ" (I Cor. 12:12, 27). There is thus a close unity of all members to each other and to the Head, Christ. C. *The Unity of the Foundation and the Building* (I Peter 2:5; Eph. 2:19-22). Peter says that the individual believers are like living stones of God's spiritual temple. Paul adds that Christ is the foundation for this household of God "in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit". This is no plea for oneness but rather a clear statement of the unity that already exists among all true members of God's family. All man-made efforts to bring about unity are doomed to end in confusion as did the efforts to

construct the Tower of Babel.

II. *The Unity We Confess.* The modern ecumenical movement appears to be largely based upon shifting sand which is "carried about with every wind of doctrine". We as evangelicals confess that there is a Faith "once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3) A. *The Priority of The Faith.* Ecumenists generally shy away from doctrine since they believe that "doctrine divides". Because of the "diversities of doctrine" among the various denominations, to wait for such a unity would mean an indefinite postponing of any outward organization. Evangelicals, on the other hand, believe that the truth of God unifies. It is a great mistake to stress unity and harmony at the expense of divine truth. The rapid growth and the oneness of the early church was a direct result of their "continuing stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship" (Acts 2:42-47). Apostolic doctrine precedes Christian fellowship. Without real doctrinal agreement there cannot be genuine fellowship. B. *The Perspicuity of The Faith.* Evangelicals believe that there is a clearly defined body of truth in Scripture called, "The Faith". Paul speaks to Titus about their "common faith" (Titus 1:4). He warns Timothy that the time will come when "some shall depart from the faith" (I Tim. 4:1). It must be admitted that there has existed a unity of faith from the days of the apostles until now. The creeds of the ancient church give witness to this fact as they interpreted the teachings of the Scriptures. JEMA's statement of Faith is representative of such Biblical faith: It confesses

that the Bible was given by God, is verbally inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy, and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. The doctrine of the trinity is affirmed. Christ is God, was virgin born, sinless in life, died a vicarious death, arose bodily, ascended on high and will return in person in power and glory. Sinful man is lost and is only saved by faith in Christ, apart from works. This regeneration is by the Spirit. The Holy Spirit indwells all believers for enablement. Concerning our oneness in Christ it declares, "we believe in unity in the spirit of true believers, the Church, the Body of Christ", and lastly, there will be a resurrection of the saved unto life and of the lost to damnation.

It is thus clear that there is a body of truth which evangelicals accept and which is the basis for their oneness. Our agreements are much greater than our differences. There are some non-core doctrines about which evangelicals have "agreed to disagree", but even so, with the maturing of the body of Christ, we continue to press on toward the goal when we will all come into "the unity of the faith" (Eph. 4:13).

III. *The Unity We Express.* The founding Declaration of JEA states that "it is our desire to unite all Christian forces committed to the historical Biblical faith in testimony to, and proclamation of the Gospel, in order that we may be edified and enriched by Christian fellowship within the church, and better serve our nation, Asia, and the world through the church". A. *The Witness To The Faith.* We believe that the unity for which Christ prayed in John 17 was concerned primarily with the spiritual unity of all true believers who through faith in Christ become one. We also believe, however, that the oneness referred to by the words, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (v.21), needs expression in a visible unity. The visible expression of fellowship and cooperation among believers, who are one in faith and love, for the purpose of proclamation and mutual edification, cannot help but impress the world and bring honor to Christ the Head of the church. The oneness experienced in

the fellowship among Christians of various backgrounds, at the Second Congress on Evangelism, was described by a participant as "being like heaven". B. *The Working Of The Faith.* We believe that "there is only one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5). Salvation is made available on only one condition, calling on the name of Jesus. We also believe that in order to do this the name of Christ must be made known to all people. It is noteworthy that the task of fulfilling the "great commission" has been the primary channel of expressing our evangelical oneness. City-wide crusades have challenged evangelicals to combine their energies to give a corporate witness to the gospel. JEA has given encouragement to all evangelicals in Japan by sponsoring two evangelism congresses to assist the evangelical community in carrying out the "great commission". The Relief Commission has also channeled funds to needy persons and groups both in Japan and overseas. C. *The Watchfulness For the Faith.* "The Faith" has been deposited with the believing community by means of the Scriptures. The history of the Christian church is a reminder of the constant struggle between the forces of light and the powers of darkness seeking to pervert the truth. It is imperative that we follow in the train of the apostles and take our stand for the truth and "earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). "The Faith" refers to such truth which is vital to the preservation of the gospel.

But we must not only be careful to guard apostolic *doctrine* but also apostolic *doing*. "Heresy" of life readily leads to heresy of doctrine. As evangelical Christians we must be "zealous of good works". Included in pure religion "is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Js. 1:27).

The evangelical community of Japan has been basking in an oasis of tranquility and peace, amidst a world full of strife and oppression. In the days preceding the founding of JEA, many evangelicals were expressing concern over the matter

of guarding the evangelical testimony in the face of growing threats to the preaching of the gospel by anti-evangelical movements in Japan and abroad. It will be well to remember the words of a veteran Japan missionary who first served in China, Arthur Reynolds. He compared the proposal to form a united evangelical front in Japan to the city walls of China. "In times of unrest, when a city is threatened from without, the function of those who man the walls is to guard the city so that its manifold activities may continue undisturbed. In times of peace the wall requires only a handful of sentries, but it still remains the symbol of unity and the guarantee of freedom. An alliance such as that which we have in mind would not in itself be the framework of evangelism, but with the rising forces of opposition, it seeks to guard us from those incursions which would be a safeguard when the evangelical cause is threatened and at all times a symbol of unity". In unity there is strength.

In conclusion we express our gratitude for the providence of God which brought JEA into existence some fifteen years ago through the cooperation of its three charter members. We thank God for the progress made in evangelical fellowship and cooperation, for its accomplishments and its witness to unity among Japan's evangelicals. We must confess that we have not yet given adequate expression to the ideal of oneness in Christ. We need to answer the questions raised by another veteran Japan missionary, Eric Gosden. Shortly after the founding of JEA, he asked, "Where are the rest, or is this all there are in Japan? Is it indeed a Japan Evangelical Association, or an Association of Evangelicals in Japan?" We might also add a question concerning our fellowship with evangelicals worldwide. Many other questions can and should be raised at the June 6-8, 1983 Consultation which will consider broadening our evangelical base in Japan as well as further joint efforts in carrying out the mandate of the "great commission". May God give us grace that we as evangelicals in Japan may more adequately express our oneness in Christ.

PIONEER EVANGELISM:

THE KUZUHA BIBLE CHURCH

STAN BARTHOLD

Missionary Stan Barthold shared the story of the Kuzuha Bible Church at a Kanto Area JEMA Pioneer Evangelism Workshop.

The Kuzuha Bible Church was started on Sunday morning, the 18th of September, 1977. It is located in an apartment high-rise complex called Century Town. It is an apartment church. Century Town is made up of 6 apartment buildings which house 200 families each. This means that there are approximately 1200 homes in an area roughly the size of an American city block. Kuzuha itself is located in Hirakata City, Osaka - quite close to Kyoto City.

The Kuzuha Bible Church now has 60 adults coming to its Sunday morning worship services. There are 15 couples who attend, 31 baptized believers who are members and 20 men in attendance. Late last fall the church called a Japanese pastor and he was installed on April 10th of this year. The church fully supports the pastor and has also purchased the apartment next to the one we are renting for a church. This purchased apartment is the parsonage. Half of it is used on Sunday morning for Sunday School classrooms.

The Kuzuha Bible Church met in our apartment here in building Number 4 for the first 2½ years. Then in May of 1980 the church moved to building Number 1 here in Century Town.

The following fifteen factors have attributed to the gradual growth of the Kuzuha Bible Church in the past 5½ years:

1. Before the church began, a Team pastor from another church here in the Greater Osaka area came to Century Town once a month and held a home meeting in the apartment of a baptized believer. There were 6 members in this class and all of them came to the first worship service on September 18, 1977.

2. The area where the church is located is in a strategic spot. It is only 5 minutes from a train station where both local and express trains stop. It also only takes 5 minutes from the farthest point in Century Town to the apartment church.

3. Many Japanese wanted to see what our home (apartment!) was like inside and this was an attraction for them to attend church. It was also possible (and still is!) for seekers and newcomers to attend this apartment church without being seen by others. The Kuzuha Bible Church is an underground church - above ground!

4. From the start we have had many prayer supporters. Every month we have sent prayer requests to them regarding the salvation and baptism of the ones coming to church. Those who have been baptized in the Kuzuha Bible Church were given instruction on just how to pray for their unsaved relatives and friends.

5. The two of us have done our best not to attract folk to ourselves

only over a long period of time. In other words, we have attempted to work all seekers into the group so that they felt as close to the people in the church as they did to us.

6. We have had the complete co-operation of the other Team pastors here in the Greater Osaka area. In fact, they are the ones who encouraged us to start the Kuzuha Bible Church in the first place!

7. We have used as few gimmicks as possible. Yes, we recognize the fact that, as foreigners living in Japan, we are in ourselves gimmicks. However, in our teaching and preaching, we have sought to have no-nonsense Bible lessons and sermons.

8. After the church moved out of our apartment and into another apartment, two worship services were started. The first is held at 8:00 am and the second at 10:45 am. This brought a definite increase in the overall attendance on Sunday mornings. It was a pleasant surprise to see how many actually came out to the first service!

9. Following the advice of more seasoned church planting missionaries (like Vern & Dorothy Strom), we urged our women believers to (1) pray for the salvation of their husbands and to (2) live the kind of life at home that would make their husbands want to attend church.



THE AMSTERDAM AFFIRMATIONS

We, more than 4,000 evangelists assembled in Amsterdam from over 130 countries for the International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists, give thanks to God for the outpouring of His Spirit upon us as we have gathered in the name of Jesus. The Lord Himself has been in our midst to instruct us by His servants, to refresh us by His Spirit, and to revive us by His Word.

Before the Lord and one another, we affirm to the church and to the world our ministry of evangelism.

I

We confess Jesus Christ as God, our Lord and Savior, who is revealed in the Bible, which is the infallible Word of God.

II

We affirm our commitment to the Great Commission of our Lord, and we declare our willingness to go anywhere, do anything, and sacrifice anything God requires of us in the fulfilment of that Commission.

III

We respond to God's call to the biblical ministry of the evangelist, and accept our solemn responsibility to preach the Word to all peoples as God gives opportunity.

IV

God loves every human being, who, apart from faith in Christ, is under God's judgment and destined for hell.

V

The heart of the biblical message is the Good News of God's salvation, which comes by grace alone through faith in the risen Lord Jesus Christ and His atoning death on the cross for our sins.

VI

In our proclamation of the gospel we recognize the urgency of calling all to decision to follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and to do so lovingly and without coercion or manipulation.

VII

We need and desire to be filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit as we bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, because God alone can turn sinners from their sin and bring them to everlasting life.

VIII

We acknowledge our obligation, as servants of God, to lead lives of holiness and moral purity, knowing that we exemplify Christ to the church and to the world.

IX

A life of regular and faithful prayer and Bible study is essential to our personal spiritual growth, and to our power for ministry.

X

We will be faithful stewards of all that God gives us, and will be accountable to others in the finances of our ministry, and honest in reporting our statistics.

XI

Our families are a responsibility given to us by God, and are a sacred trust to be kept as faithfully as our call to minister to others.

XII

We are responsible to the church, and will endeavor always to conduct our ministries so as to build up the local body of believers and serve the church at large.

XIII

We are responsible to arrange for the spiritual care of those who come to faith under our ministry, to encourage them to identify with the local body of believers, and to seek to provide for the instruction of believers in witnessing to the gospel.

XIV

We share Christ's deep concern for the personal and social sufferings of humanity, and we accept our responsibility as Christians and as evangelists to do our utmost to alleviate human need.

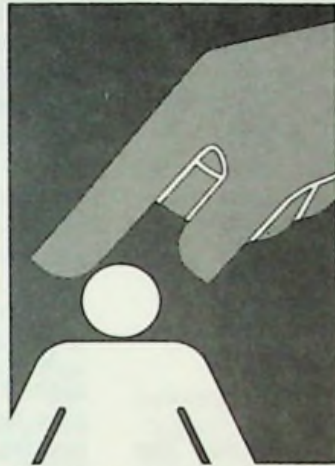
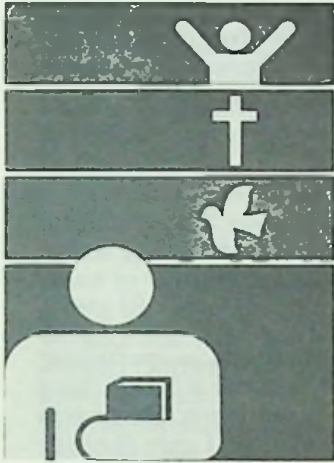
XV

We beseech the body of Christ to join with us in prayer and work for peace in our world, for revival and a renewed dedication to the biblical priority of evangelism in the church, and for the oneness of believers in Christ for the fulfilment of the Great Commission, until Christ returns.

The editor was privileged to attend the International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists which convened at Amsterdam July 12-21, 1983. Twelve basic themes tied together the daily plenary sessions. Japan missionaries, too, will find the topics stimulating and thought provoking. (The material is taken from the Amsterdam '83 Program Guide).

1. I must be clear in my message.

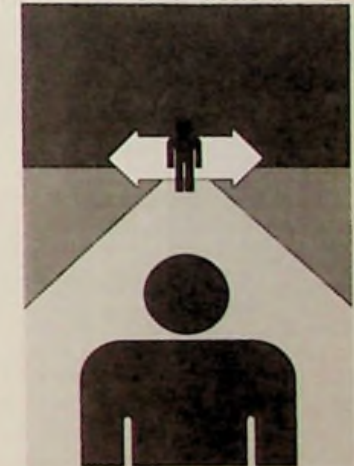
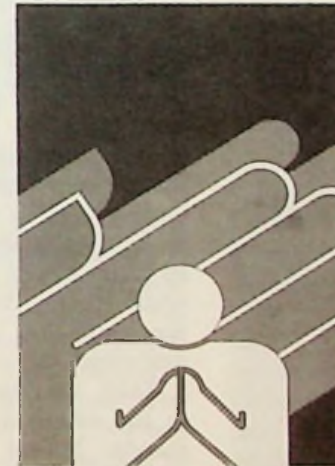
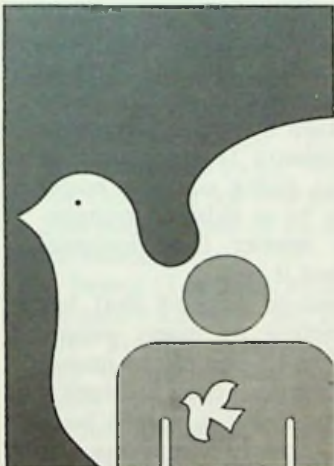
- A. Justification by faith alone.
- B. Forgiveness only through the cross.
- C. Necessity of new birth by the Holy Spirit.



2. I must be sure of my call.

3. I must be sure I am cleansed.

4. I must be sure that I communicate.

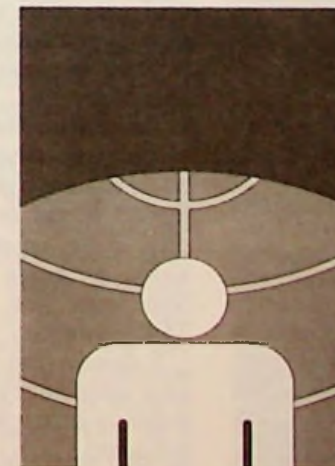
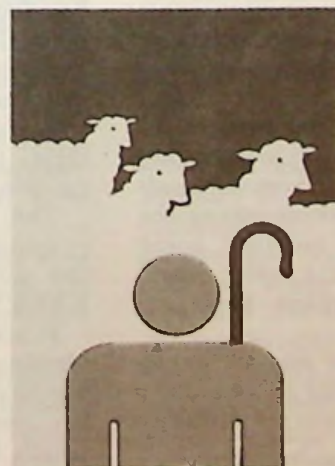
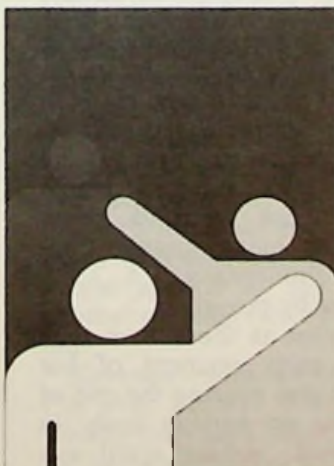


5. I must be filled with the Holy Spirit.

6. I must be a servant of the church.

7. I must be a person of prayer.

8. I must call for decisions.



9. I must train others to share their faith.

10. I must nurture new believers.

11. I must go to the world.

12. I must be faithful to my family.

SENSEI

Remembered

By Her Friends and Co-Workers



OSCC in 1950



OSCC today

The dedication of the new Ochanomizu Student Christian Center Building on July 1, 1983, was cause to remember the founder of OSCC, the late IRENE WEBSTER-SMITH. Her memory lives on in the lives of untold Japanese as well as among her fellow missionaries. Japan has had only one Sensei Smith. Several close personal friends and co-workers share glimpses of her exuberant life.

The SENSEI I Knew Edna Johnson

The blind men describing the elephant from where each stood is an accurate picture of any composite expression of "The Sensei I Knew." Irene Webster-Smith had the miraculous gift of being whatever the person whose life she touched was needing.

It is a rare gift. I surmise that it is more developed than received as an endowment. It requires a willingness to be totally absorbed in that need, to the point of discounting the convenience or preference of the one reaching out to touch. And that describes "Sensei".

Take a 12-year-old child playing in the ocean at Takayama, for instance. Sensei observed that she needed to learn to swim. Never mind that the teacher is 70-some years old, and generally walking with a cane. A need is a need. And our Lorelei attests to the success of the lessons to this day.

Blindness that would have glued almost any other person to a rocking chair did not deter her from responding to a call to minister across the city, even when it involved going alone by train in her latter years. She kept her guardian angel on 24-hour duty.

I doubt that there was a child in any missionary home in our early years in Japan who was not officially inducted into the "Clean Plates Club" if that child ever sat at table with Sensei. She saw to that.

Will I ever forget a particular night I chose to wear a lesser thing as a hostess gown when Sensei was coming to dinner? If I ever thought her eyesight would keep her from noticing, I was wrong. She did everything to inspect it but get out a spyglass, determining the exact color, the material and the style in the first five seconds in the front door. I mention that to say that she had a compulsion to be a part of whatever was going on. She could not stand to be a sideline nonparticipating, no matter how inconsequential a deal it was.

And I used to suspect that her habit of greeting so many people with a kiss was to be able to immediately determine their identity. Somehow she knew it would be a "kissee", but exactly which one was a secondary matter.

Those of us privileged to be called her friends had occasions to weep when the infirmities of old age made her sometimes confused. But as far as I know, to her final day, if a soul was seeking God, she was crystal-clear in thought and speech in pointing the way of salvation.

The same can be said about praying. How many, many times she quoted Philippians 4:6, "... EVERYthing by prayer ..."

It was almost as though we were viewing an early segment of her eternity. She was nearing the end of her need for an earthly body in which to dwell, but her spirit was alive and well.

And she lives on.

SENSEI
Personal Glimpses into the Amazing
Life of Irene Webster-Smith
Joe Gooden

HER ZEST FOR LIFE

How can we describe this captivating British lady who was totally in love with Jesus and Japan for over half a century? Vim, vigor, vitality. Alive, wide-awake, indefatigable. Inspirational, creative, challenging. Loving, thoughtful, kind. Helpful, practical, gracious. Prayerful, patient, optimistic.

Ever since that day in England when she said goodbye to Albert – breaking off their engagement because he was not interested in Japan, giving up her plans as an attorney in Britain for which she had been trained, setting her face like a flint towards this mission field – her faith never wavered, her vision never dimmed, her courage never failed. Even though she held in her lap the head of the woman dying with cholera she had come to Japan to help, she continued on. God's call to her meant Japan, so Alfred had had to go. Her prestigious family in Britain had to go. Her own plans at the bar had to go. She was all-out for God and for His work in Japan and became one of its most creative missionaries.

Sensei (Teacher), as she was affectionately known by all, had a zest for life! Totally alive, deeply spiritual, full of fun, never bored. Full of faith, with thrilling answers to prayer all her life. Able to meet royalty or maids, missionaries or business people, statesmen or the military, professors or students – each became someone special to her. She made time for them all and they beat a path to her door. Early or late, rain or shine, rich or poor, high or low. They all came! I know. I was there. I learned from this amazing woman. She led hundreds to Christ right there in her own room. "Do you know who was just here?" Her eyes would sparkle as she related yet another spiritual victory in someone's life.

She was the most all-around person I've ever known. Totally fulfilled. Totally dedicated. Never any regrets for having followed Jesus to Japan! No bitterness over her own experience. Limitless hours were spent

Associated closely with Sensei for 28 years in Japan, Missionary Joe Gooden in his own unique style provides glimpses into the amazing life of this indefatigable woman, Irene Webster-Smith, affectionally known as "Sensei."



helping young girls find just that "right" man for themselves, for she was a real matchmaker. Contentment in Jesus, in following God's plan for *her* life. And rejoicing, too. She felt it was no testimony for Christian workers to look like funeral directors, so she was radiant, bubbly, running over.

MESMERIZED

Loved by young and old alike, who could ever forget the way even beautiful, young, modern American officers' wives were completely entranced as Sensei related what Christ had done for her and her experiences with the war prisoners in Japan. One day some of them came in a big bus from a Tokyo U.S. Air Base just to visit her. After showing them around her apartment and through the Student Center she founded, sharing with them her dreams for its future, she led them to their bus, guided them to the Japanese Diet and led their tour.

At the end of that long day, Fredda, my wife, was about to collapse. She had helped Sensei prepare for them since early that morning. When they finally boarded their bus and headed back for the airbase, Fredda wondered how she was ever going to make it to her own car! Exhausted! But Sensei with a sparkle in her eyes said, "Oh, let's go out for dinner! Just the two of us!" So off to the Palace Hotel and their famous Smorgasbord that Sen-

sei so thoroughly enjoyed, living up every minute of it. Wow! She could wear out the two of us! Refreshing! Stimulating! Fully alive! "Just the two of us!" Fredda still hears those words over the years. How often – "Just the two of us!"

OLD TENNIS SHOES

At the U.S. Naval Officers' Club in Yokosuka she was scheduled to speak at a special dinner meeting, but had stopped off to see some friends in Yokohama on the way. It was right after the war and shoes were scarce in Japan, as there was no leather with which to make them. When Sensei descended the stairs she discovered her shoes had been stolen, and left in their place was a pair of dirty, old tennis shoes! Time was running out. Her meeting would soon begin. Anyway there were no good shoes even in the stores, so flying aboard the train, she went walking into that officers' Club dressed fit-to-kill but with those old tennis shoes on! What a sight! But she made the best of it, and used it as part of her story that evening. They will not forget it either.

PRAYER

Sensei would always be found at those early morning prayer meetings for missionaries back in 1953 even though they started at 6:00 a.m. This was followed by breakfast together and a challenge from the

Word. She never missed. And when some spiritual giant would pass through Tokyo, she would often have a group over to her home in the evenings, introduce them, and then wait while they shared out of a lifelong walk with Christ. My life is different today because of those meetings. Fun, laughter, deep heart-searching, and the recharging of one's spiritual batteries. Sensei made it all possible.

LOVE FOR CHILDREN

Like Jesus, she had time for them. She loved to tell how years ago she moved into a Japanese city and had a desperate time trying to find a house. Finally she went to see the mayor and asked his help. "I simply must find a place for these children!" "How many do you have?" he asked. "Twelve." "Twelve!!" he repeated in astonishment. "And your husband?" "I have none." Shock! What kind of a woman was this? "Your honor, these are Japanese children that other people did not want, so I took them in. I have never been married myself, but these are 'my' and I must care for them. Please help me ..." And he did. Within two days she had found exactly the right place for her "family."

And she was sensitive to children's needs. One day while riding in our car and on hearing the beginning of a serious discussion about some weighty mission problems she said, "We don't talk about such things with children in the car. When Janis is present we talk about things Janis is interested in." But I was insistent. I needed her advice badly. I couldn't wait, so I tried again, only to be stopped by her firmness. Only after Jan had gone off to bed could I discuss it with Sensei. She was a jewel.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

I never saw so much plain common sense wrapped up in one individual. She came to our house for dinner one evening, but did not see me in the living room, so asked Fredda, "Where's Joe?" She told her I was back in the bedroom, sitting at my desk, with my nose in a language book. "Where else these days?" Sensei promptly marched right into the room and commanded, "Come on out here and be with us. You can't

learn Japanese at night anyway." I protested. I said I had to ... She replied, "Working like that you probably are not fit to live with. Never open a language book after dinner. Remember? You have a family!" Wow! The General had spoken. Guess what I did? I marched right out into the living room.

"And don't sit at your desk all the time, bent over those books. Take your vocabulary cards and spend at least two hours each afternoon out walking and memorizing those cards out there. Get some fresh air into your lungs. Walk! Walk! Walk!" I did. I've walked hundreds of miles memorizing Japanese words, then sentences, then paragraphs, then sermons, until God gave me freedom in the language. She was my greatest booster. "You'll get it! You'll get it! But it won't all come at once. Just keep plugging away."

I had come from ten years in the pastorate and full-time evangelism and a daily radio ministry in the States. I averaged preaching over 500 times a year. I was busy. Then I ran into the grind of language school. What a contrast. I was to be in that grind for three years, but God used Sensei to keep me in tune, to be fun to live with, and rejoicing in the Lord. Life can get too serious if you let it. Sensei knew that delicate and wonderful balance. Work hard, play hard, rejoice in the Lord, enjoy Japan, get out and around. See things. Get acquainted with people.

I can still hear her, "You're going to enjoy Japan and you'll have a wonderful ministry here. I'll help you." And every week she was at our home, enjoying herself, relaxing with us, and becoming part of our family. Her zest for living was contagious. Walk! Did I say, "Walk?" You had never better try it with Sensei. She ran! I, a man in good health, could hardly keep up with her. She strode while she walked. "Come along," she would say. "Get some air in those lungs." Must have been the British in her.

PRACTICAL HELP

Arriving in Japan not long after the war, we saw debris everywhere. Block after block, nothing but chunks of concrete from the bombings and fires. I'll never forget that first week. Sensei had found a little house for us near downtown Tokyo in Roppongi.

One day out in the car, noticing again the ugliness and devastation left by the war on every hand, we commented on it to Sensei, but again with her characteristic sparkle she said, "Oh, but you must realize that behind many of those walls still standing are some beautiful Japanese gardens. Especially in the areas not touched by the bombs. There are greenery and flowers and small dwarfed bonsai trees and shrubs and ..." Just then we passed such an area and Sensei made us stop and go have a look. It was just as she had said. Oh, the calmness, the tranquility, the beauty of a Japanese garden! She enjoyed them all so much and used to take long walks herself in those islands of green still left.

Did I say she had found us a house? Well, part of a house, but it had no bath and no kitchen. "How can we live here with no bath and no kitchen?" She laughed, "Oh, we'll get Mr. Yonenago the carpenter to come and make a little room for the kitchen and another one for the bath." And can you believe it? This busy, busy woman took time to contact the carpenter, the mason, the bath maker, interpret for each one and oversee it all until it was finished! Often she left her own place, work, and affairs, came across town and got involved just helping a young missionary family get off on the right foot in Japan. She "took over" our family and became a grandmother to our children. How they loved her! What a lesson in humility, in service, in honor preferring one another! That was Sensei!

But when the small wooden Japanese ofuro (bath) arrived, I asked, "How in the world do you use this?" With a glint in her eye she promptly stepped right into the tub and sat down, pulling her knees up under her chin. "The water comes to right here," she said, with a finger crossing her throat. "The whole floor drains, so you wash off outside the tub, rinse off, then climb into this tub of hot water and soak for a while. You'll sleep like a log. What a way to end a day!" Then as she started to climb out over the side of that tub, I thought we would die. We all got the giggles, including Sensei, laughing so hard I was afraid she'd fall over. We laughed and laughed until we were silly. This wonderful, wonderful woman, friend of Diet members and

statesmen, having fun like a little girl in our house. Nothing was ever dull around her!

THE TAKAYAMA STORY

One day she said, "I need your help!" I had been in Japan only a few weeks at the time, but how could I refuse her? "Charge it up to your education in things Japanese." She related how during the war the Japanese had confiscated 50 summer houses located near the beach at Takayama, near Sendai, and this was a special place for missionaries to have a time of vacation and relaxation. Because it had been taken under "duress" from the missionaries, it was now necessary to begin the long and drawn-out procedure to get it returned by the Bureau of Reparations of the Japanese Government. The houses had been stripped and their contents were sold as enemy property at auction in Sendai. But Sensei never seemed to mind. They could be refurnished. Glass could be replaced. Fences along the cliffs restored. Wells cleaned. We would have to make a trip there, inspect it, talk to others, and begin the process.

So off we went to Sendai and out to the beach. All I saw were some old black (creosoted) shuttered houses all closed up, each one in a sad state of repair. We sat on a tree that had fallen over, and from the cliff looked out to sea while eating our sack lunch. "Isn't it beautiful?" she said. "Missionaries have to have a vacation!"

"Sensei, I've hardly ever had a vacation even in the States!" But her sharp and instant reply: "But you're not in the States. This is Japan. If you're only here a couple of years, forget it. But if you intend to stay and make it a life work, you'll need a vacation. Otherwise you'll not survive. It's not a luxury, it's a necessity. Now you must help us get it back. I'm asking you to!" She was right.

"You've got to see it like it is in the summer! Dream a little! Visualize all these houses open, cool air blowing through them, flowers blooming, children running and playing on the beach, adults lounging, reading a good book, tea parties in the afternoon, games in the evenings, boat rides among the islands, swimming, hiking, long walks into the villages. Dream. Joe, dream! It's vacation. It

will help you make it over the long pull!! It was taken away by force." I knew then it could mean much to God's work in this land. In a summer over 400 missionaries and their families could enjoy it, so I went to work. It took the help of a lot of people and two and one-half years, but it was done.

Oh, that first summer! Only six houses were opened, and we stayed in Sensei's place. All her nice things gathered over a lifetime before the war were gone. But no regrets - she was rejoicing, as it was hers again. Nothing, absolutely nothing left in the house, but it was her palace! She threw the windows open looking out over the sea, brushed away the cobwebs, grabbed a broom and



made the dust fly, tore a door off its hinges to make a table, fired up the charcoal outside, boiled the tea, swirled it around, brought out the sweets - and Sensei was at home again! That night we played games she had brought from Tokyo. And each night. Up again the next morning saying, "Let's go! Let's go!" So off to the beach. You should have seen her old swim suit. I always wanted it to be hung in a glass case for memories! She didn't know they made new ones. We laughed and laughed. But she could swim like a fish and taught all our children how to swim. When no one else could teach Jan, she did it in only thirty minutes. She had a knack with the children and taught dozens of them to enjoy the water and swim. It was family fun and there was Sensei right in the middle of it all. She had a zest for living.

A WHING-DING

Through the years our phone would often ring with Sensei at the other end saying, "I've been on the razzle-dazzle. Let's go have a whing-ding." The razzle-dazzle meant she had been going like crazy in the

work or meetings or listening from early to late talking with people about their problems until there was nothing left. Utter exhaustion, but she knew when to call it quits. A "whing-ding" meant to go out for dinner, take a drive, get away to the mountains or the sea, play games, laugh and have fun! So off we would go. She knew how to work and laugh and play and weep and pray and love God and love people and love children and become everything to everybody until there was nothing left. What a saint!

SCRABBLE

It was her favorite game and she loved to match wits with anybody, and especially with Fredda. During her latter years she spent the night at our house two or three times a month. In the evening always there would be Scrabble and a keen competition between her and Fredda. Scores were kept for months. Old rivals over the board! They played so far into the night I would finally give up and go on to bed. But the next morning I knew what would happen. After breakfast, with that same twinkle in her eye she would say to Fredda, "How about a quickie?" And they would go at it again until just time for Sensei to fly out the door to grab a train for her next appointment somewhere! Our house still rings with her laughter!

AT THE END

During her many years in Japan, spanning over half a century, Sensei wrote extensively to her close friend in England, Adelaide, and told her everything. When Adelaide died, something inside Sensei died too, and I felt very keenly that loss for her. "Joe, Adelaide's gone!" She told me all about it. I felt the ache, the emptiness, the loneliness. So I determined right then and there I would give an hour a week to God and to Sensei, just to drink tea and listen. I listened, and listened, and listened. Week after week she poured out her heart about the work, about people, about finances, about contacts, about converts, about her dreams for the future of the Student Center. How she would rejoice over the new shining 10-story building to be dedicated in the summer of 1983! Sensei would get excited, her eyes

would shine, her face glisten, and I realized God had given me the privilege of repaying her in some small way for the tremendous contribution she had made to my life and to Fredda and the girls. It became the highlight of my week. I drank more and more tea. I wept. I prayed. I rejoiced. And His presence made that little room all the sweeter. What wonderful hours together! She talked on and on and on! I guess at the end I had replaced Adelaide in some small way. Truly "the joy of the Lord was her strength."

THE FINAL TRIP

She had left Japan many times and we told her goodbye many times, but somehow she always came back! One day she didn't.

It happened in England on her way to a meeting. She collapsed in the car and they hurried her into the house. They called a doctor, but before he arrived, Sensei had gone home to heaven while sitting there in that chair. She would have wanted it that way! The angels rejoiced and welcomed her home. Eighty-five and still going strong! But that day it was all over. I'm sure by now she's on a "whing-ding" in glory!

Joe Gooden

The SENSEI I Remember Bob Boardman

1. In 1956 Jean and I moved from Okinawa to Tokyo with our two baby daughters, Holly and Laurel. In the early 1960's several times I remember visiting Sensei with the girls when she was still living in the old original house in Ochanomizu. Although she had no children of her own, she always seemed genuinely delighted to have the girls in her home and always took special care to talk to them and make them feel at home.

She was a woman with a big heart, not only for the Japanese and for fellow missionaries, but also for little children. Holly and Laurel loved her also and were always eager to visit Sensei.

2. Sensei was a woman of the Word of God. The Scriptures were her constant delight. I recall this from times of both private and public fellowship with her. After her death, I was commissioned by the Takayama missionary committee to carve into a large slab of wood her favorite verse and the verse that gave her so much guidance in her mighty exploits of faith:

As thou goest step by step, I will open up the way before thee.

Proverbs 4:12
Syriac version

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Here's a Way to
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and Purpose with
Those Who are
Hurting and Asking
WHY!

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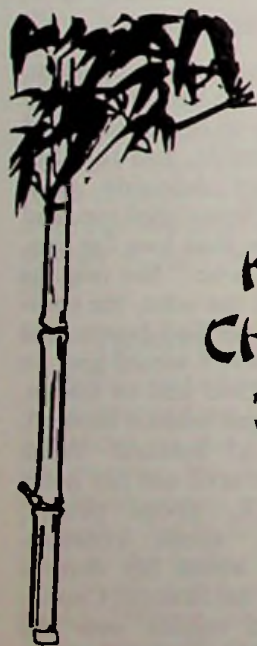
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**A CHAT WITH JOHN AND
ELDORA SCHWAB
Concerning "Sensei"
Edna Johnson**

EJ: When did you first meet Sensei?

John: The Lord works through circumstances. We came on a converted troop ship. Quite a few missionaries were on it: Jake DeShazer, Marion Moorhead, Jean McCormick, of the Japan Evangelistic Band, Bessie Dodds, Yokohama Women's Mission. Bessie and Jean were to live with Sensei in Azabu. They had brought a kerosene stove for her, but needed a man to hook it up for them. That was my first contact with Sensei - hooking up the stove. From then on we worked together for many years. On Saturdays student evangelistic meetings were held on the street. I had brought an amplification system and microphone, which we put to good use.

EJ: What comes to your mind first that makes you feel richer for having known Sensei?

John: She was a woman of faith. She trusted God for all things. In the area of adventure and pioneering, she had faith. The property was acquired in 1950 for something like \$18,000, which is nothing compared to today.

Eldora: Just getting the property was no small miracle. The lady who owned it later told Sensei, "You said you had no money, but you have a God who answers prayer and God has provided. Our Buddhist prayers are never answered."

John: After the property had been acquired, she was talking about the possibility of a new student center. She had a tatami floor and students came in off the street and had to take off their shoes. They didn't have to do that at the university. So she said, "We need to have a new center. We could move the house to the

back and put up a concrete building." In 1953 she was "raring to go." So I said, "I have to be clear in my mind and heart before the Lord. Fifty-four thousand dollars required for that is a lot of money." I kept her waiting nearly a year. The Lord gave clear guidance through Scriptures, prayer and faith. We took the leap of faith.

EJ: It surely must have done something to your own faith to be teamed up with such a dynamo of faith.

John: Faith is a basic ingredient that grows. It takes time to grow. It takes a good climate. And of course there are growing pains in any operation. In 1954 the contract for the building was signed. Normally a large sum of money was needed for a down payment. But the Christian contractor said, "Okay, we'll work out the payments." We were in Texas on furlough trying to raise money. There was a large payment coming up and we were looking to the Lord. There was no money in the bank and no wealthy friends. The only alternative was to spend the morning in prayer and praising the Lord for clear guidance and looking to Him. Then the mail came. There was a letter from a sailor in Oakland, California, who had visited us in Ochanomizu. He was saving money to go to college. He said the Lord said to him, "Between now and then that money is going to be unused. Give it to Japan and give the money NOW." He sent a check for \$1000, and that was two days before the deadline. Along the way there was another morning in prayer and praising and there was mail again the next day with a check for \$10,000. It was from a Japanese who lives in California. He had a chicken and turkey business, which meant six months of work a year. This time he was not

working. He knew of the urgent need in Tokyo, so he went to the bank and mortgaged his property until that fall. We could see faith growing. It all went back to the day I told Sensei it was a good idea, but \$54,000 was a lot of money. But before making a decision, we needed to know the will of the Lord, and she had waited for my decision almost a year.

EJ: You lived in the same house with Sensei in those early days, didn't you? I'm sure she was someone very special to your children.

Eldora: You're right! We moved into the Center on April 1, 1950 - Sensei had come a couple of weeks earlier - LoAnne was born on April 29. Sensei could sometimes be a little hard on our two boys, but never on LoAnne. LoAnne was special. She spent time talking with them often and shared many things from her own childhood.

EJ: What can you tell me about the part Sensei had in some of the missionary prayer meetings in those early days?

Eldora: In the 1953 revival among missionaries, there were sometimes all-night prayer meetings in the large eight-mat room. Sensei was a great woman of prayer. She was always happy to pray with everyone who came to see her, whether it was a Japanese or missionary. She would welcome service personnel too. She often had them to her room and always was ready to serve a cup of tea and all the special things that someone had sent her.

EJ: John, coming back to the first thing we discussed, would you want to share any principles of faith that you may have seen at work in Sensei? If a person is lacking in faith, how do you think she would have encouraged him to have faith if he didn't have very much to begin with?

- John: Well, her basis was of course to get some clear guidance through the Word and step out on the promises. She often quoted Psa. 60:12. "Through God we shall do valiantly; for He it is that shall tread down our enemies." Then I remember one of the verses the Lord gave her in the early days when we were seeking the Lord's will and praying about the first construction, Psa. 20:5, "In the name of our God we will set up our banners." And so all of her faith was based on very clear guidance through the Word. And then I think another very important thing was that even though she should have qualified to retire by reason of her being over 65 years of age, yet she seemed to have an abundant amount of physical strength, of health and energy. She would be working at letters and correspondence late at night, maybe eleven o'clock - and of course her eyesight was a problem - but she would be up the next morning at five o'clock or so praying, seeking the mind of the Lord. The busy days didn't seem to run her dry in her physical energy. So I think these factors of prayer tied in with very clear guidance through the Word and the promises that the Lord gave in the face of challenges that were there in those early days with the openness of the university students and the tremendous needs. I would say these would be basic principles that would tie into this life of faith.
- Eldora: You wrote a song, didn't you. Edna, about that verse from Prov. 4:12? That was something that I remember from her so much, "As thou goest step by step, I will open up the way before thee." That was one of the things that we learned with her.
- EJ: And yet I would judge from what you say when she had the assurance in prayer her-
- self and the assurance from the Word, she was still willing to wait for your word on that.
- John: Right. And of course by her waiting, we would have to add another principle, that of patience. She didn't go ahead. So she used three things, then as guidelines. You could be a general and go out into battle by yourself or you could take some troops with you. She chose not to go alone.
- EJ: Going back to your mentioning physical strength, do you know any secrets for her keeping up her strength? I am asking you that because I remember that she used to mention that when new missionaries would come, often the enemy would attack them physically immediately. She felt that they should stand up against the enemy and defy him. Was that the secret of her own strength?
- Eldora: It could not have depended on her eating. It had to be the Lord. Because if she had good food on the table, that was fine, but if she didn't, she would just pick up what she could get a hold of. It was the Lord that strengthened her day by day.
- John: I think it was just the grace of the Lord that sustained her. I think another thing that might tie in with that is that she had a very large correspondence with friends overseas. People prayed. And they would be updated on what was happening, and they would pray. So I think that people overseas were really holding up her hands, so to speak.
- Eldora: She always carried post cards with her wherever she went. If she was waiting for a bus or waiting for friends, she had post cards to be writing. Even though her eyes were bad, she would be writing and keeping up her correspondence.
- EJ: So even though she was one lone woman, she was never here alone. She had all these people working with her on it.
- John: Right.
- EJ: That's something for us to remember, isn't it.
- John: And I think of the verse over in Philippians, the first chapter, where Paul thanks the Philippian Christians for their prayers for him. The other morning we were reading that again. This ties in with the fact that people were holding up her hands.
- EJ: Did you feel with her that she had a strong sense of mission, and was not just looking for the feeling of fulfillment that we hear so much about today? "Missionaries must feel fulfilled," they say, "and have particular joy in what they are doing;" and if they don't, they are ready to abandon it. Would you say that she had a sense of mission that buoyed her up?
- John: Very definitely that is true. When the first construction was going on, we were on furlough. But she later mentioned one day that she felt that just putting up two stories was really not enough. So she said, "You see the rods sticking up from the second floor; this is for the third floor." She was able to get that in, and even the stairs for what is now the third floor, which was then the roof. She had the vision. I think another important thing was that she was a people-person. Some people are paper-people, terrific administrators, but not particularly people-oriented. Sensei loved people. Especially in her contacts with the Japanese, there was the burning desire to share Christ with them constantly. I think as you get along in years, this could diminish, but with her, the Lord kept pouring in the oil of the Holy Spirit so that she continued to lead students and others to the Lord right through the years. This has been a tremendous challenge.
- EJ: Yes, she concentrated on

people. The person in front of her was the most important person in the world right then. She could shut out everything and everyone else and think only on that one and his needs.

Eldora: She would often spend hours. Someone would come in the afternoon and they would have tea and then she would just go right on with one person.

John: I think of that verse that meant so much to her in her latter years, Zeph. 3:17, "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing."

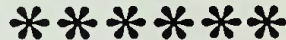
EJ: As you mention these verses, I can just hear her saying them.

Eldora: Yes, with that lovely Irish

accent, can't you though! When the Lord called her home, it was almost like Elijah. She was sitting there in the car, and all of a sudden she was gone. She was on her way to a meeting.

John: One word that certainly could be said of Sensei was what Amy Carmichael wrote: DIE CLIMBING.

Interviewed by Edna Johnson



SENSEI SMITH REMEMBERED

Fifty years or more have passed, but I still remember Sensei speaking to our group of young people meeting in a businessman's home west of London. How could I forget, for it was then God called me to serve in Japan. Young people filled the room, overflowed into the hall and up the stairs. God was at work there as Sensei spoke of the JEB Forward Movement in Japan and of the need of young men. Newly converted I wondered would I be of any use. I mentioned my feelings to the leader of the meeting, she to Sensei, Sensei to the mission office – and I was on my way. Not quite, for it was six years later that I arrived in Japan, and in the meantime a local prayer meeting for Japan fostered interest and kept the vision alive.

What do I remember of Sensei? I think of her breath of love for and interest in people. After language study and introduction to the work in Japan, she felt God was calling her to help save little girls being sold into the licensed vice system of those days. Dr Saiki, a Christian doctor in Kyoto and a life-long friend, encouraged her in this and a start was made in that city. Soon the growing family was moved to Maizuru and then to Akashi at the east entrance to the Inland Sea. A former hospital lent itself to the work among the girls and the Sunrise Home was established. What love and care was poured upon them as Sensei cared for their physical and spiritual needs! But her concern overflowed into Akashi City itself. An English Bible Class brought her

into touch with Kayue the oldest girl of the Miki family. She found Christ, witnessed to her family and the lovely Miki home was opened for meetings God moved and today, though all members of the Miki family have passed, the Akashi Church (Japan Church of Jesus Christ) stands as a permanent memorial to Sensei's love and concern for people. Kazue died in victory leaving behind a valuable testimony published in "A Grain of Wheat."

What do I remember of Sensei? I remember her utter disregard for herself or for her own comfort; I see her in that single upstairs room of the old Japanese house that stood behind the Student Christian Center building. That was where she lived, moved and had her being. – or did she? No, it was her headquarters, her base of operation; but it was bedroom, dining-room, parlor all in one. From there she reached out all over Tokyo after needy men and women.

How did she get there? World War II had come on and the Sunrise Home family had been scattered, and the newly-built home sold to an orphanage. The war years found Sensei criss-crossing the U.S.A. working as a staff worker for IVF and bringing her many friends – people blessed and helped by her ministry. The war over she did not feel she could start work again among children in middle years, so she made the unbelievable switch to student work. And til she passed into God's presence this was her ministry. The latch-string was always out, – anyone, anytime was welcome to bring their needs to Sensei, and she would lead them in turn to the Saviour.

What do I remember of Sensei?

I remember her simple, daring faith. For years she had a black something that swung before her eyes. She prayed much about it and in time God answered and removed it. Her eyesight was bad, she always seemed to be peering at things. But there was nothing wrong with her eye of faith. It was she who encouraged the Sunrise House girls to pray that God would remove the knoll that blocked their view of the sea. Was He not the God who could remove mountains? Then one day council trucks and workmen appeared and removed the knoll; they needed the soil to fill in elsewhere. But faith was rewarded! Later in Tokyo she looked from the Meiji University building where a student meeting was being held, into the garden of a lovely, old Japanese house. Perhaps God would give her that for her student work. When she went to inquire she found a sorrowing mother bereaved of two sons in the war. Sensei was able to pour comfort into her heart and minister to her spiritual needs. Then when the matter of the property was raised, it was found the property was to be sold, and Sensei was able to buy it at a lower price than others had offered. Even that amount was not available but Sensei stepped out once again in faith and the present OSCC site was bought. Surely she would rejoice to see the new nine-story building rising on the very lot her faith saw and appropriated those many years back.

She "being dead yet speaketh," and challenges us to the same love and concern for others, daring faith and utter disregard for oneself that characterized her life.

Eric Gosden

同じ思いで未来を拓く

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CAJ

Commencement Address

SIDNEY NORMAN

The 1983 CAJ commencement speaker was Sidney Norman, presently serving in Guam. Mr. Norman previously taught at CAJ and served several years as headmaster. His son, Victor, was this year's salutatorian.

Greetings to all of you, and especially to you graduates. I know from my reading of several former speeches that I should begin by addressing the various dignitaries like the steamed Faculty and extinguished guests. Those of you who know me know I have some problems with formality. I would like to be so bold, if I may, and break some traditions. I came to Japan with a speech prepared especially for you graduates and I plan to speak to you directly. The rest of you may listen if you like. Having worked with students for a good part of my life, I feel most comfortable that way. I have tried to prepare a worthwhile speech and one which will stay in your memory. I would appreciate your careful attention. I know that is asking for a great deal. Most of you are more concerned about your party than about a speech. You are in good company. I have polled several graduates, recent and not, and I found that some of them remember who spoke at their graduation, some even remember bits of what that person said, most have forgotten every word, and some, like me, cannot even remember when they graduated or where. That doesn't say much for graduation speakers or speeches – but I know I can do better than that. I am going to try to help you remember what I say. What I have to say can save your life and so I have a memory device for you. Those of you who remember me as a teacher know my love for memory devices. Anybody remember Roy G. Biv? Good, the seven colors in the visible spectrum. This afternoon I'm going to talk about eight words; the first five begin with the letter "C", the next two with "A", and the last one with "J".

That should help you remember, "CAJ".

As you know, our family now resides on Guam, Japan's Florida. One afternoon, several months ago, our family and some friends walked along the beach. We were enjoying the tropical waters on our left and a scenic cliff on our right. We noticed how violently the waves were beating on the coral reef. We didn't give it a second thought because the reef is some quarter mile out. When we reached our favorite spot we prepared our snorkling equipment and entered the water. As we ventured out a little it became apparent that snorkling would not be easy – there seemed to be such strong but hidden currents tugging at our feet and legs. It was impossible to float in one place. About that time a friend named Steve walked over and suggested strongly that we not snorkle that day. He practically chased us out of the water and then he moved off. Some time later we noticed some commotion down the beach and curiosity compelled us to go and see. We observed several strong young men administering CPR silently on a middle-aged gentleman. Perhaps fifteen minutes later the man's wife was dragged from the water, badly bruised and beyond hope. Two lives were lost that afternoon. Three teenage children left without parents. These two victims of the waves were, I found out later, no daredevils. They were excellent swimmers with fine equipment. They had, however, made two very serious mistakes. One, they had underestimated the forces of the ocean. Two, they had overestimated their own abilities and strength. They thought they could handle it all – and they were wrong. They didn't have a "Steve" to wade

over and warn them. Graduates . . . you are just like those unfortunate swimmers and I want to be your "Steve".

Graduates – there are forces in the world today, forces of evil, forces so strong, sometimes visible, sometimes not, but so strong that not one of you will be able to stand and survive – in your own strength. I do not consider myself a prophet of gloom and doom but I am so grateful to Steve who waded over to tell us to get out of the water and I want to do the same for you, even at the risk of offending some of you. You think you are ready for that ocean out there? Don't kid yourselves! You are just highschool graduates. You have lived your entire lives in a sheltered environment. You've been swimming in the "Kiddie Pool".

I'm not sure you're ready. (Fellow parents, Faculty, Administration, Board – it's partly our fault. We have tried too hard, I think, to protect these kids from the world. Our intentions were good, perhaps, but I'm not so sure about our methodology. We write a rule for every situation, real or imagined; we make every major decision for them and many minor ones too; we try so hard to protect them, keep them in the "Kiddie Pool", make sure the water isn't too cold, certainly not too hot, not too deep, no waves, please – no waves! And now what? In many cases we throw them into the ocean! Shame on us! They face the ocean with its tremendous forces and we sit smugly back and say, "We did the best we could, Christian education and all that, you know!" I'm afraid these kiddies may not even know how to swim.)

Well graduates, "OUT OF THE

POOL!" What I want to say to you is this, "If you think you can make it on your own, you're wrong, dead wrong!" You'll end up being another statistic - "Another one bites the dust!" My friends, the forces of evil in this world are too much for you. Look at your world: it's filled with devilish ideas and activities. Humanism is on the rampage. Government is weak and has little respect. Justice is rare, graft and corruption are prevalent. Abortion is legalized and highly practiced, pornography is condoned, advertising is misleading, education is, in large part, a farce. Greed is epidemic, revolution is in style, warheads bristle, cheating is common. Big business eats the little man. Satan is alive and well. My friends, it looks so beautiful but that ocean out there is treacherous and if you plan on trying it alone I'd like to wade over and warn you - don't do it! Not on your own - get back in the "Kiddie Pool".

"But", you say, "I can't stay in the pool forever, can I?" You're right. You can't. Your parents, teachers, pastors, counsellors can't make your decisions anymore. You must get out of here. The question is, "Can you survive?" I say, "No, not on your own." But I have eight

CAJ, which can help you. I don't think they are the only words, except one: I'm not even sure they are the best eight words, except one. But they are good words. Are you ready?

C... Christ, of course. He is the answer, the only sure answer to life's problems. Of that I am certain. The Lord Jesus Christ, present and active at Creation, hanging on the cross, raised from the dead, ascended to His Father and our Father, ruling at God's right hand. Jesus Himself has said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Believe in Him, trust Him, obey Him. You can, you will, survive with Christ. God's Word is sure, a shelter in the time of storm. When you tire of the struggle and feel you are about to drown, remember His words, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." My friends, it will be a struggle, hard work, and Jesus offers rest, security. Christ is the one and only sure answer to your survival.

Believe that!

C... Confession. What do you believe? What do you stand for? What will you live for? What would you die for? Someone wiser than me has said, "If you don't stand for something you'll fall for anything." I believe that's true. The point is - you need a confession. You must know for yourself what you believe about God, about His Word, about yourself, about the world. You plan to survive? You need a confession. The modern cults are filled with young people who didn't know what they believed. I believe that CAJ has given you excellent opportunities to formulate that confession, if you've been paying attention. Another "C" word.

C... Commitment! Not a very popular word these days, but a word at the very foundation of Christianity. A word, a way of life, required for survival. Listen to the world: "Do your own thing - I got to be me - How will it meet my needs - It doesn't feel good - I don't feel led". What this world needs is people well acquainted with words like, "Yes, No, I will, I won't, or I Do!" This world needs people who understand the concept of commitment. First let it be commitment to Christ and to His Word, to Truth, God's Truth and commitment to each other and all humanity. Within four years many of you will marry. In some areas of the United States almost half of the marriages are doomed. Why? Not many people understand the concept of commitment. You plan to survive in marriage? I suggest you consider the idea of commitment.

C... Conscience. There is one thing the world and Satan would love to take from you - your Spirit directed conscience - that voice within that tells us what is right and wrong. If you're not careful, you'll lose it. Not all at once, but piece by piece. Do you know what's right and wrong? Good!

Hang on, this world needs people like you... but beware, the currents are subtle and strong.

Where are we? "C" words, Christ, Confession, Commitment, Conscience... and now...

C... Church. Church, you say? Yes... Church. Christ died for the Church. It is His bride, the body of believers. The Church is people living in obedience to Christ and people caring about each other. And you need that if you plan to survive. Too many CAJ graduates, in my estimation, are cool about the idea of Church. I think I know why. You just haven't experienced real church. In my seven years at CAJ with countless Chapel speakers, I don't remember even one pro-church speaker. Everybody met Christ at camp, or in Sunday school, or in a bar, or a coffee shop, or on a park bench. Why didn't anybody meet Him in Church? Maybe they went to the wrong church or maybe they didn't expect to meet Him there. What a shame! Christ's body - take it or leave it. Graduates, are you leaving Japan? Off on your own? May I suggest for your survival you seek out a good church, first thing... even before you buy a car! What should you look for? Try this for a definition: "A body of believers living in obedience to Christ and caring for each other." You need that kind of support if you are planning on surviving. Don't try it on your own. That's enough "C" words. Can you still name them? Christ, Confession, Commitment, Conscience, and Church. That brings us to two "A" words. Two ideas, concepts that will help guarantee your survival.

A... Authority... God's Word demands it. You don't like that word, do You? In that case you're farther gone than I thought. One of the major causes of this world's sad state is the inability of modern man to accept authority. Just listen to the speech. "Sez

who?", "My ole man", "Dirty cop". My friends, God established patterns of authority; in government, in churches, in families, in schools. It is our role to learn submission. God establishes authorities, we learn to submit. "Submit" is really the word I wanted to talk about but it doesn't begin with a "C", "A", or "J". Submission - I believe every lasting relationship is built upon that concept. Remember we are talking about surviving. Mutual submission is the foundation of a lasting relationship. God establishes the authority and we learn to submit: students submit to teachers and parents, teachers to administration, administration to Board, Board to parents, parents to children, husbands to wives, wives to husbands, and on and on. Are you planning to survive? Are you looking for relationships that will survive? Respect authority and learn to submit. It's God's way. One more "A" word.

A . . . Absolutes: almost a forgotten word. There are some things that absolutely do not change. You know what some of them are: God's Word, His love, His truth, His commandments. (Did you notice that all of these have to do with

God?) But you see, the world does not accept these as absolutes. Satan has another Gospel: "How can it be wrong if it feels so right?", or "Everything is relative", or "The situation demands it", or "It's OK, just don't get caught". Satan sneaks up on you. Pretty soon you're not sure what's right or wrong. This world needs people who are willing to live with and fight for absolutes. I'm rather certain that the only absolutes you will find these days are in the Scripture. Don't bother to look in the legislatures; forget the courtrooms; never-mind the institutes of psychology; and you should even pick your seminary wisely.

I must wrap this up. There is so much I would like to tell you. Things you already know, I trust, but things that bear repeating. I have just one "J" word. I took out my dictionary and as my eye jumped from one "J" word to another, I jubilantly decided that out of all the jumble of "J" words, one jutted out jauntily above the rest: JOY. (Sounds like Sesame Street) JOY? . . . JOY? Is it possible? How can I possibly recommend JOY? Isn't that a big, bad world out there? Isn't Satan on the rampage? Aren't the currents of humanism and materialism too strong? Yes, YES, YES! But you don't have to face it alone. That's what I'm trying to tell you. We serve a risen Savior. He's

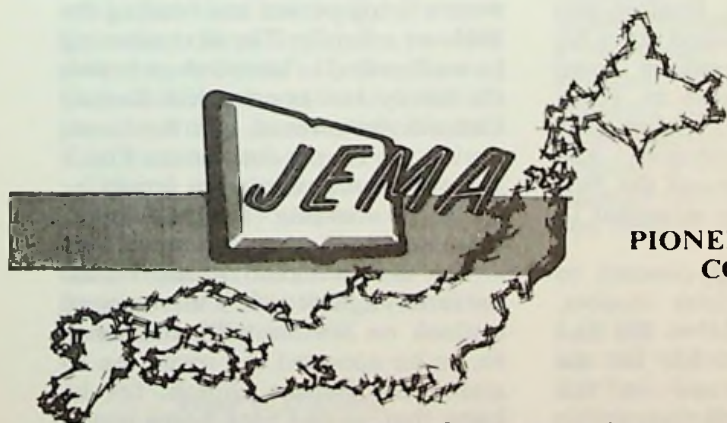
in the world today. To those of you (all of you I hope) who face the future with Christ, you are on the winning side. Cheer up, you cannot fail. SMILE! This world is full of pessimists and sour-pusses, some of them Christians. I'm not talking about whistling in the graveyard. I'm talking about Joy! That inside stuff that doesn't depend upon outside circumstances.

We need to declare, "The Joy of the Lord is my strength." Did you notice, "is my *strength*"? The Psalmist put it well, "This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it." Many of you are scared to death. I know you are. So many boogymans out there. Well, don't go alone. "This is the day", today, now! We WILL rejoice . . . a commitment to JOY. That's what it takes. Joy is a gift from God. The harder you work to gain it, the more elusive it becomes. Receive it as one of God's best gifts. JOY!

Well, parents, teachers, youth leaders, counsellors, pastors - our days are about over, guard duty nearly finished. I hope we have provided deep enough water and proper instructions for these people to learn to swim. We'll soon find out.

And to you, Graduates of 1983, there's an ocean out there with tremendous forces and subtle currents - Go in the Lord. Try to remember the formula, CAJ. Graduates of 1983*, "OUT OF THE POOL!"

*Speaker blows whistle

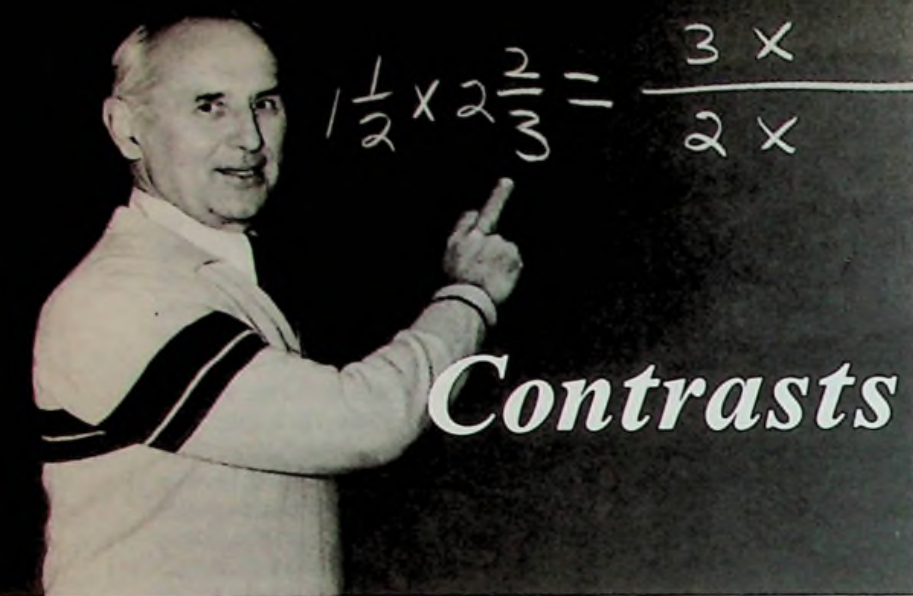


Please put November 25 on your calendars, and share it with your colleagues. That is the next Pioneer Evangelism Seminar.

It's Happening in Japan now - Can the Missionary get in on it?

This is the theme that we will be looking at, and Dr. Lavern Snider, author and veteran Missionary with Japan Free Methodist Mission, will be speaking. The topic comes from Dr. Snider's book, *It's Happening in Japan Today, The Story of 8 Growing Churches*, and he will be sharing insights gained from further visits to churches around Japan.

We will be meeting at Ochanomizu Student Christian Center on the 9th floor from 9:30AM to 3:00PM. (Registration Fee - ¥1,000 for JEMA Members/¥1,500 for Non-Members)



Contrasts + Conflicts = Coherence

ELOISE MERRILL

Missionary Frank Placzek has been serving the Lord in Japan since 1953. God is blessing his ministry at CAJ and his involvement at a local Japanese church. CAJ Music Department Chairman, Eloise Merrill, took time out of her busy schedule to share with Japan Harvest the remarkable story of God's leading in Frank's life.

If you were to see Frank Placzek in action you would never guess what his background and former goals were. Educated in Polish in America through his high school years, Frank now serves in English in Japan, where the students are both missionary children and Asians. Once he took education courses only because he thought they would be a "snap", but now he is a dedicated and much-respected administrator and former math and Asian Studies teacher at the Christian Academy in Japan. At one time he was headed for the Roman Catholic priesthood, but now he serves as an evangelical missionary.

What brought about these unexpected contrasts in Frank Placzek's life? Simply stated, God had a design for him, much different from his parents' plan for him, but it took the trauma of World War II, some Christ-like Christians, and a remarkable conversion experience to bring this plan into high relief.

Early Days

Frank Placzek (pronounced plä'-zek) was brought up in the small, isolated Polish-speaking section of Westfield, Massachusetts. Community life centered around the Roman Catholic Church, and English was never spoken - only

studied as a second language in parochial school. Frank's parents were Polish immigrants. His mother never learned to speak English in all her fifty years in America, but his father acquired enough for his job. Frank comes from a family of ten children, of whom he is seventh. He has seven brothers and two sisters.

World War II

World War II brought drastic changes in Frank's life. Drafted into the Army, he was whisked from his wholesome, Polish-speaking town into life in the barracks in Texas where only English was spoken. The adjustments were immense, and Frank often found himself the butt of others' jokes as he struggled to speak English.

But of even greater concern to him were his religious doubts, which he tried to resolve. He had been groomed all his life for the priesthood, but he saw in this training many contradictions in his religion. Moreover, he well knew that in his natural self he could never attain the perfection God expected of him.

Because of his father's example as an alcoholic who drank to forget his troubles, Frank decided also to drown his doubts in drink. But that was not to be, for the selling of

liquor in this predominantly Baptist town in Texas where Frank was stationed was illegal!

A Godly Home

About that time the USO placed Frank in an "open house" for a weekend where he would be taken in like a family member. He arrived on a Saturday evening right at family altar time. Frank was amazed to see these otherwise ordinary people talking about Christ as if He were a living person and reading the Bible as a family. The next morning he was invited to attend church with the family, but as an ardent Roman Catholic he refused. All the same, during the twenty-four hours Frank spent with that Christian family he sensed something he had never before seen.

The next weekend Frank visited the family again to see if this unusual outlook on life "lasted". It seemed to, so he accepted the invitation to attend the Baptist church, for he knew that no one back home would ever know. At church he was startled by the people's joy and freedom in worship. In fact, at first he felt it was inappropriate behavior for church, for he had been taught one should conduct himself very solemnly and unsmilingly there. Yet he was intrigued and joined the family every weekend at church.

Frank learned that Christ was not just a name but a living person. He thought, however, that he could take this Jesus Christ into his own framework of religious understanding. On his ten-day leave he returned to his home in Westfield and spent much time every day in his church re-examining his beliefs. But God was not there. On the final day of his leave he got down on his knees and spoke to God as he would to any other person and said, "I don't know how to talk with You, but if You're there please help me". This was Frank's first impression that God was actually listening to him.

Upon returning to camp in Texas Frank realized that the only way to peace would be on God's terms. Nor could he incorporate his past beliefs in this new way of thinking. He needed a personal encounter with God, not a mere religious experience.

His Sunday school teacher went out of his way to give him *time* by taking him fishing or going on little trips with him. In this way he became like a father to Frank, whose own alcoholic father never gave him companionship or love. Frank was impressed by his teacher's Christ-like life, which played a great part in influencing him to consider Christ as his personal Saviour.

Frank attended the morning service at the Baptist church, fully intending to come to a decision about Christ. Yet his mind was still in a quandary. This new way about which he was learning seemed right to him on the one hand but totally wrong on the other. How could he possibly make a decision? If the Roman Catholic Church was the true church, then he would be damning his soul if he went against it.

During the remainder of the day Frank purposely stayed away from his Christian friends. He didn't want their influence as he came to his decision. Yet he was lonely and miserable all by himself.

Hour of Decision

He returned to church that evening, desperate for peace in his heart. During the service he thumbed through the hymnal and found "I Surrender All" and meditated on it. The words "Let me feel the Holy Spirit - Truly know that Thou art mine" arrested him, for they expressed his deep desire to be *sure* of

what he was doing. At the end of the service the Holy Spirit prompted the songleader to choose that very hymn for the congregation to sing - which Frank interpreted as God's direct invitation to trust Him for his salvation.

With great relief that the struggle with his doubts was over, he received the Lord into his life. That morning he had gone to church willing for God to strike him dead if He didn't grant him peace. That evening he became a born-again Christian and experienced that wonderful peace!



Strong Reaction

Frank's family was outraged at his decision to leave the Roman Catholic Church. Ultimately, his parents didn't want to see him again and cut off all financial help. Yet Frank's conversion to Christ was genuine, and God strengthened him to remain faithful to Him. At the risk of further disappointing his parents, Frank was baptized just before he was shipped out of the country.

Again God was a step ahead of him in planning his ultimate career, for Frank was sent into the Pacific conflict of World War II, where he would eventually serve the Lord as a missionary. After the war he attended Moody Bible Institute in Chicago for two years, his first experience in formal education in English. A beautiful blonde student named Esther attracted his attention, and in 1949 they were married.

Moody Days

While at Moody Frank received his call to missionary service in the Far East. Since he had been stationed one year in Korea and also received experience in G.I. Gospel Hour work where he had individual contacts with Koreans, he concluded that God wanted him back in Korea. But as a person who was basically lonely and in need of love, Frank wasn't enthusiastic about returning to the forlorn land of Korea or anywhere else in the Far East.

On to Baylor

In the meantime Frank enrolled at Baylor University in Texas, the area where he had become a Christian, and finished the four years of work in three, graduating in 1951. It was there he became interested in teaching because of the dedicated life of one of his instructors. The professor was student-oriented and lived frugally so that she could provide the means to help students who couldn't afford a college education. Again a Christ-like image in a living individual made a great impression on Frank, and he proceeded to get his degree in education.

Asia Calling

By this time he was corresponding with the Far Eastern Gospel Crusade (now SEND Int.), which advised him to consider Japan as his field of service in view of the war in Korea at that time. His wife, Esther, had been interested in the Orient as a mission field ever since she was twelve years old, so there was mutual interest regarding their place of service for the Lord.

At last after many years of preparation, Frank Placzek was ready for another big step in fulfilling God's design for him. In 1953 he and his family left for Japan, where he began serving as a church planter. Then in 1958 he joined the faculty at the Christian Academy in Japan, a school for the missionaries' children in Tokyo. His schedule is extra busy, for he also co-pastors a Japanese church on the weekends.

God's Perfect Plan

So in this way the unexpected happened, and now the Polish-speaking American boy who was being groomed for the priesthood was redirected to become an evangelical missionary to the Japanese and educator of MKs and Asians in the English language. In the process his Polish-speaking mother and youngest brother came to the Lord.

Only God could have made a coherent design out of Frank's abilities in Polish, English, and Japanese along with his intense desire to please Him and as a result bring many people in America and Asia to Himself. But after all, isn't God the Master Designer?

HELEN MORKEN WITH CHRIST

Helen Morken went to be with Christ May 27th at her home in Golden, Colorado, after a long 2½ year bout with cancer. At the end her family were all gathered around her bed singing, and while Helen was singing along with them, she went home to heaven from their midst.

David Morken, who has been serving as Missionary Pastor at Rev. Charles Blair's Calvary Temple in Denver, had just the week before returned from the hospital himself after a case of pneumonia.

The Morkens served for several years in Japan as the Director of Youth For Christ from 1949, using the large flat bed of a semi-trailer truck for huge outdoor meetings in front of Ikebukuro and Shibuya Stations. An electric organ was used, lots of instruments, youth choirs, and soloists as several thousand Japanese would gather for the meetings. Large Saturday night youth rallies were conducted in auditoriums with average attendance around 1500 or more.

Formerly the Morkens had served in Indonesia, then in Mainland China where they were under house arrest by the communists for many months until released. Then they came to Japan and began the YFC ministry here. Helen's father, "Daddy Mitchell," as he was affectionally known, also served with them in Japan. At one time Daddy Mitchell had 22 children and grandchildren on the mission field in Africa, India, Indonesia, and Japan.

In all her illness David said he never once heard Helen pray for herself, but she spent hours praying for missionaries, her family, and friends around the world. When we visited them in Denver over two years ago, Helen had pasted to the ceiling above her bed large texts on 1 x 1½ ft. cards which had been painted for her by her grandchildren. She was radiant!

Joe Gooden
Japan Harvest
Contributing Editor

FORMER JAPAN MISSIONARY DIES AFTER LONG ILLNESS

Joseph Meeko died December 12, 1982 of an apparent stroke in Maui, Hawaii, at the age of 64.

Meeko was among CBFMS' first missionaries, arriving in Japan with his wife, Margaret and their family in 1947. He pioneered Conservative Baptist church planting efforts in a northern prefecture of Japan, Yamagata.

When family health problems forced the Meekos to return to the States in 1959, the Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society appointed them to work among Japanese people in California.

The Meekos returned to Japan in 1972 and became involved in church planting and English classes in the Tokyo area.

A medical retirement in October 1980 began a long battle with strokes, a heart attack and other serious health problems.

Meeko is survived by his wife, Margaret and four children: Lt. Col. Joseph Meeko IV, Paul Meeko, Elizabeth Meeko Mattox, and Andrew Meeko.

Joe and Margaret built their home in a little town named "Pukalani." In Hawaiian, the name means "gateway to heaven."

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sometime when you are in Tokyo! For further enquiries, contact Pastor Frank Bickerton. Tel 0424-75-8929.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF MISSIONARY APPOINTMENT

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea has appointed Dr. Young Chang Park as a missionary to Japan. Dr. Park has served for the last ten years as Pastor of the Korean Church of Southern California, Los Angeles. He was born in 1915 in Korea and comes with recommendations from the OMS International and the Japan Evangelical Missionary Society (JEMS). He speaks Japanese and desires to minister through testimony and message in Japanese churches. Dr. Park can be contacted at: Nitto Building No. 2 Mansion, Room 703, 11-11, 1 Chome, Akabane, Kita Ku, Tokyo 115.

JEMA Office Notice

KBF OUTREACH

The Kurume Bible Fellowship's 1983 special project was TV evangelism. Over ¥600,000 were raised. The funds went to PBA and the Rex Humbard Ministry. The 1982 missionary project was "Bibles to China". Over ¥700,000 were raised.

KBF also has an active interest in six Japanese missionaries serving overseas.

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Increasingly churches and mission agencies in Asia, Africa and South America send their leaders and missionary candidates to FUNCTIONAL ENGLISH, 5 Chubb Hill, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO21 1JU, England. The school is recognized by the British Council and is also a member of the Association of Recognized English Language Schools. The JEMA Office has a school catalogue.

I REMEMBER JOE MEEKO

HIS VISION

How can I ever forget that day when we stood on the top of a mountain in northern Japan overlooking the Yamagata valley with thirty-two towns, villages, and hamlets below us that had no church. When I heard a slight quiver in his voice, I looked at him and saw tears in his eyes as he said, "I want to see a church or a Bible class or something in each of those places!"

AN INVITATION

"Joe," he said to me, "We could work together. You and I are different - our gifts are different. I need you. You could help our work to grow and develop. Please come and work with us." I did.

HIS HOSPITALITY

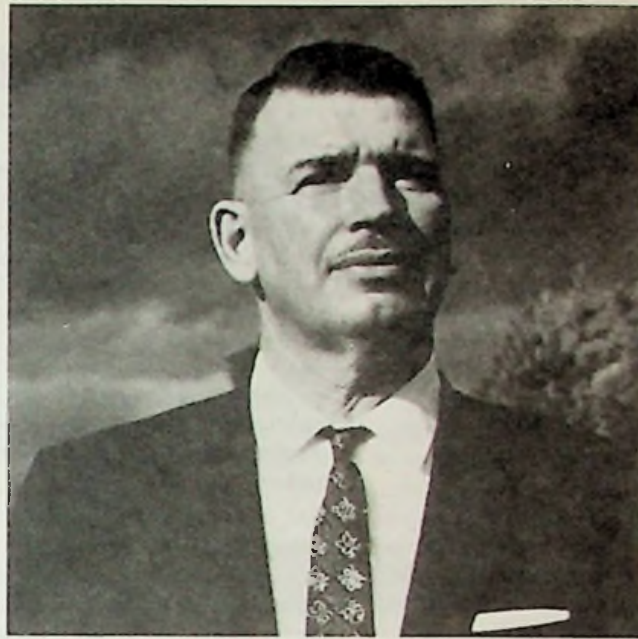
On my monthly trips to Yamagata I always stayed with the Meekos and their busy house located on the edge of the river on the edge of town. My months of renewed language study in Tokyo rolled on, followed by long months of searching for property on which to build a mission house but no one wanted to sell land to a foreigner in those days, so each month I was at the Meekos, eating at their table, bathing in their ofuro, sleeping in their beds, so I got to know the whole family quite well. No train of mine ever seemed to be too early or too late for them.

HIS LOVE

He really seemed to care about just one person, as if that person was the most important one in the whole world at just that moment. His funny little smile seemed to win them over and it warmed his whole personality. Joe had time for people. They were important to him.

HIS "STICKTUITIVENESS"

He was persistent. He "hung in there." He wouldn't let go. So what if the snow was three feet on the level outside the meeting room in Shinjo with no heat on the inside. As we sat there huddled in our overcoats, he didn't seem to notice the cold. He just kept on teaching, and the Japanese kept on coming! Trekking through the fields to little meeting



places here and there through the winter in those early days of thirty years ago, I remember his sitting on a short little stool or part of a chair he carried, as he could not sit cross-legged on the tatami floor like the Japanese. His legs just hurt too much. But it never interfered with his teaching. Night after night, day after day, in the cold and in the heat, Joe carried on. Eventually it would break his health, but the people came. He could "grin and bear it."

His Catching Young Men

Joe had a peculiar ability to "latch onto" young men, and build them into a team, putting them all to work doing something. In the end this is what built the work in Yamagata.

His Casualness

Seldom did I see him ruffled about anything. He was "heiki" which means sort of nonchalant about time. What a riot!! He would never get me to my train until 60 seconds before it was due to pull out of the station. A signal light could turn red at the wrong time and I thought I would miss the train, but he said, "Don't worry!" Then he would drive like Jehu the ten miles to Kami No Yama Station and beat the train there. There were few cars in those days and the roads were open. It was w-i-l-d. And he would stand there laughing as I boarded the train. He had made it!

His Burden

To the very end he carried a burden for the unreached areas of Japan. Even when in the most intense pain at the end, he still wanted to return to Japan from Hawaii where he had retired. Just "once again" to confer with his young preacher-boys. And he did!! Each time we thought it would be his last. One day it was! He had returned for the last time. He had left his last instructions. He had turned over his last responsibility. With a great sigh he boarded the plane at Narita. It was his last trip. After only a few days he entered into higher service.

The other day I waited for his wife, Margaret, at the Christian Womens Club in Tokyo. She had returned to Japan to attend Joe's memorial service at the Yamagata Church. When she failed to show up. I asked her daughter-in-law, Carmen, "Where's Margaret?" Carmen said, "Joe, at the last minute she just couldn't make it. Her strength was gone. "Carmen, I just want to stay home and cry!" I understood that, because we all often cry when we realize Joe's life in Japan is over. But what a trail he left! I am short one more friend these days who has gone on ahead. I dry my own tears now as I sit at this typewriter. Yes - I remember Joe Meeko! And so do hundreds of Japanese!

Joe Gooden
Japan Harvest
Contributing Editor

"Why Do The Japanese Say Everything Backwards?"

SHELTON ALLEN

Shelton Allen needs no introduction. The last issue of Japan Harvest carried his stimulating article, "Language Schools, Who Needs Them?" Today Mr. Allen examines the role our attitude plays in language acquisition.

I chose this title hoping it would catch the reader's eye. I put it in quotation marks to emphasize that it doesn't express my own sentiments. Although there is a sense in which it may be true, the way it is phrased can indicate an attitude that is at the root of the failure of many to "get this language".

When I came to Japan over thirty years ago and began language study, someone told me "Japanese isn't hard once you learn to think backwards and upside down". Suppose, for example, that you were to try to put the following rather unlikely English sentence into Japanese: "I see a bird in a nest on a branch of a tree on top of that mountain". You'd most likely find yourself starting your Japanese sentence with the mountain, proceeding in reverse and ending with the statement that you see a bird.

Think about it awhile, and you can come up with a lot of illustrations of this point. At a Christmas party at an English school, the teacher wanted each student to learn the other students' names by introducing himself by saying in English "I am (name #6) sitting next to (name #5) who is sitting next to (name #4) who is sitting next to (name #3) on down the line to the first one to give her name. At least, that's the way I had to tell them to do it after the initial total confusion. The teacher had explained everything in Japanese, illustrating in Japanese what she wanted them to do. Try it yourself and you'll see that it just doesn't work the same way in the two

languages. In Japanese you have to say "*Watakushi wa* (name #1) *no tonari no* (name #2) *no tonari no . . . desu*", starting from the beginning of the line and continuing up, giving your own name last instead of first.

"JAPANESE IS HARD"

In many respects Japanese is almost a mirror image of the sentence structure of most Western languages. But there is absolutely no valid reason to assume that one is right and the other is wrong, or that one is inherently more reasonable than the other. They are different, nothing more.

Being different, Japanese presents some difficulties that are not found in languages that are similar to our own. This is not to say that Japanese is intrinsically harder than any other language. No language is any harder than any other in itself (writing systems excepted). Japanese children learn to speak Japanese at the same age as our children learn our languages. But Japanese *is* harder for adults from Western countries to learn. I'd like to examine some proposed reasons for this, zeroing in on one that I feel is a big obstacle in the path of many people.

ARE KIDS SMARTER THAN GROWNUPS?

It is a fact that children experience little difficulty in acquiring additional languages. Whatever happens at puberty seems to drastically alter the picture. Adults especially cannot acquire a second language as easily

as children can, and rarely if ever become as fluent as they are in their mother tongue.

The language of a five-year-old would defy complete linguistic description. It exhibits abstraction, formalization, synthesis, generalization and a host of things that the child simply cannot do in other areas of problem solving. Linguists aren't agreed as to why adults, who have these abilities in the other areas, seem to have lost them when they try to learn new languages. Most linguists think that the capacity to learn languages has degenerated. Others think that it is overlaid by something else. If so, what? What gets in the way?

BIG THUMBS AND SMART BRAINS

What about I.Q.? Are poor language learners just dumber than good ones? Would anyone ever seriously consider that there could be a connection between the size of a person's thumb and the level of his intellect? Obviously not. But many people make a similar mistake in judgment about I.Q. and language learning ability. How about I.Q. and athletic ability? Or I.Q. and musical talent or anything else except what I.Q. tests are designed to measure (whatever that may be). The fact is, there are much more accurate ways to assess these other things. Some athletes are highly intelligent, and some are not. Some geniuses at mathematics or science are good musicians and some are

tone deaf. Some people with high I.Q.'s have big thumbs and some don't (some people with big thumbs have *low* I.Q.'s!) So it shouldn't surprise us to hear that there are some very highly intelligent and educated people who have a perfectly miserable experience in language acquisition.

I've known Ph.D.s whose attempts to learn Japanese ended in miserable failure. I've also known people who give the impression that they couldn't count past ten if they kept their socks on, who can talk circles around a lot of the smart ones. I know of one man who did very well in Greek and Hebrew, a man who had also studied Latin and Sanscrit and whose "language aptitude" (what is that, anyway?) was off the top of the scale. But he never made it with Japanese. He was one of those that the "dummies" could talk circles around (even with their socks on!).

LANGUAGE APTITUDE

I.Q. isn't a good indicator of probable success in language acquisition. Language aptitude tests are somewhat better, but they don't evaluate everything. Many of the tests evaluate probable success in a language classroom. Those who score *very* low on these tests have difficulty acquiring language in other contexts also. I'm not sure why. Often these people display gaps in primary (native) language acquisition as well (e.g. poor vocabularies, bad reading habits, etc.) But except for those with especially low scores, we are often surprised by the performance of the other 80%. Sometimes pleasantly surprised, sometimes not so pleasantly. Some who score high have an awful time of it. Others who score low do exceptionally well. Obviously these tests don't tell the whole story, either.

ATTITUDE AND MOTIVATION

Age, I.Q., language aptitude, . . . anything else? What other factors need to be considered? One important one is attitude, and this is the one that I want to zero in on, as it so often is the one that overrides everything else.

Maybe you've sensed the attitude of the Westerner while in a church in your home country when you describe something about Japan. I remember telling a group of young

people once in America about the Japanese language being read from top to bottom instead of from left to right. The response was typical. They thought that was a "dumb" way to read. So I told them that it was really the right way, especially when reading the Bible, because it made our eyes, and maybe also our heads, go up and down as if saying "yes, yes" instead of from side to side as if saying "no, no". I don't think for a minute that I convinced any of them that the Japanese way was the right way, or even that it made sense to do it that way, but the attitude that they expressed just has to be left behind when a person accepts the call to be a missionary to a people speaking another language. Too often it isn't. Let's look at an extreme example first.



Some people talk as though they think their own language should be the norm after which all others ought to be patterned. I often detect a somewhat supercilious attitude in such remarks as "whoever heard of such a crazy thing as past tense endings on adjectives?" I've heard numerous remarks such as this over the years, and have made a corresponding observation. Without exception, those of whom I have direct knowledge who have expressed, either directly or obliquely, an attitude of linguistic superiority regarding their mother tongue never became good speakers of Japanese. I am convinced that without a positive attitude toward the sound of the Japanese language, toward the way that the Japanese people think, and toward the way that they feel, much of the effort put into trying to "get the language" is like trying to drive nails into a pile of sawdust. Make no mistake — the problem isn't with the nails or the hammer.

A LITTLE CLOSER TO HOME?

A less-than-positive attitude can manifest itself in more subtle ways, though. Some people are irritated by the sound of the Japanese language.

The staccato rhythm and pitch accent system are annoying or unpleasant to them. Some find the levels of politeness, indicating a status consciousness, offensive to their sense of equality. Some people complain that they think the Japanese are insincere or untruthful. Some say they are arrogant. Some complain that *nattō* stinks or that it is uncivilized to eat fish raw. Some people think that *koto* music sounds weird or that the singing to a *samisen* accompaniment sounds like someone with a whopper of a stomach-ache. Some think that using registered seals is a ridiculous way to sign your name. Others are disgusted by the grossly obese semi-nude bodies of sumo wrestlers.

I'm not suggesting that we have to like all of these things in order to acquire Japanese. Not every Japanese likes all of them. Tastes, likes and dislikes vary. But let us beware lest our personal preferences, and especially our Western prejudices, become the seed of a negative attitude that can, and in all likelihood will, inhibit acculturation and language acquisition.

IDENTIFICATION

I'm sure that Christ didn't like much of what He saw when He walked among us, but He humbled Himself, identified Himself as the Son of Man, got His feet dirty as He walked the dusty roads. I see a parallel between the incarnation and language acquisition in this matter of identification.

The successful language acquirer is one who is able to identify with the Japanese people and their language. It isn't an easy matter. Many have faced a real identity crisis in the process. To be a fluent speaker of Japanese, a person must be able to formulate his thoughts in accordance with the rules of Japanese syntax and semantics. That means that he has had to allow the Japanese language, and to a great extent the Japanese culture as well, permeate down to the core of his being. Some people just can't bring themselves to do that.

In my last article I referred in one place to language acquisition as a spiritual experience. I said that language comes from the heart, from the very depths of our being. We use expressions like "tell me what's on

your heart" that express our intuitive appreciation of this fact. Your language is very much an expression of yourself, how you think and feel. Your choice of words and turns of phrase tend to identify you. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh", Matt. 12:34.

Let me give an illustration of what I mean. I once took a small snatch of a recording of a classical number to a musician and asked him to identify it for me. I hadn't been able to get the tape recorder set up soon enough when the piece was performed on the television, so I only got part of it. All I knew was that I liked it and wanted to find out more about it so that I could get a record of it. But the musician had never heard that composition before, and I was very disappointed thinking that he wouldn't be able to help me. While he was listening to that small snatch of the piece, though, he closed his eyes and began to wave his hand as though he were holding a baton, and in a few seconds he was able to identify the composer and help me find the name of the composition. He could do that even though he had never heard that particular composition before, because he was

familiar with many other works by the same composer.

I'm willing to bet that anyone who knows you really well could similarly pick a theme or essay written by you from out of a stack of essays written by others. Your language is that much a part of you. A close friend reading a letter from you can almost hear your voice speaking from the printed page. That written word is an expression of you, of your very personality, of the living you.

Does that have a kind of familiar ring? As a linguist, maybe I tend to see passages like John 1:1 from a different perspective; I don't know. I believe that we are agreed that the Word of God is God Himself, but that fact is highly significant to me not only from a theological, but also from a linguistic point of view. The Word of God is "the express image of His Person", Heb. 1:3. And your word (language) is the express image of your person in a related sense.

NEEDED: A PERMEABLE EGO BOUNDARY

Do you see why it is so hard for us to allow another language and

culture to influence us very deeply? We resist it. We resent the intrusion into the sanctuary of our thought processes. Identification with another language is viewed as a threat to our personality.

We've looked at several things that affect language acquisition. In my opinion, the biggest factor is attitude. A psychologist who has made a study of language acquisition in adult learners has found a close relationship between what he calls ego permeability and the acquisition of a second language. The attitude that permits the language to penetrate, to be absorbed into the warp and woof, to be *internalized* and become part of us, this is what is most essential.

What language provides the satisfaction of our basic needs? What language do we really love? In what language does God speak to us? What language satisfies our spiritual, intellectual, and social needs? Our mother tongue, of course. Is she jealous, perhaps, of an intruder?

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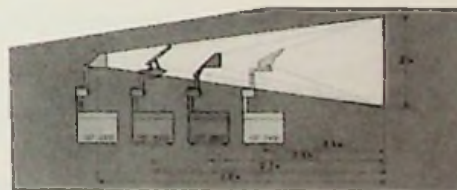
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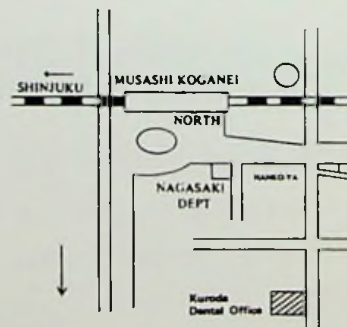


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