



JAPAN HARVEST

ADVANCING GOD'S KINGDOM

Church Planting Institute -Special Edition

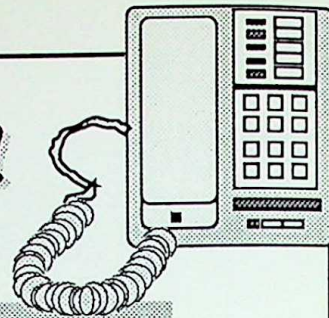
Inside:

*The JEMA CPI Committee Presents a Focus on
the Vision and Ministry of the Church Planter.
Featuring articles by John Piper,
Steven Childers and many more!

*The Importance of Fasting - by Bill Bright

*The Returnee Christian Network

Stay in Touch!

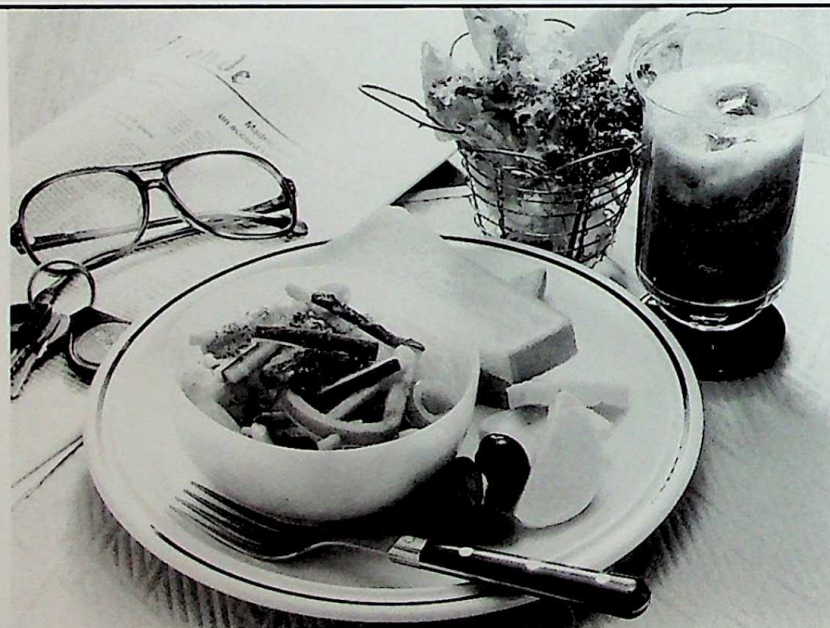


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JAPAN HARVEST

Volume 50, No. 3 / Winter 1999

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In This Harvest...

Advancing GOD'S KINGDOM by MENTORING LEADERS to be a part of a MOVEMENT that is MULTIPLYING CHURCHES that are MULTIPLYING DISCIPLES through the POWER OF THE GOSPEL.

This is the vision statement of the JEMA Church Planting Institute (CPI). What a vision! What a task! Many of us though, coming to Japan, have found the task more difficult than we had anticipated. We begin asking questions. What does God want to do in Japan? What does He want to do in you and me? How can we help and encourage one another in our work for the Lord? We also ask, where are the multipliers, the coaches, the trainers, who can pass on what they have learned the faithful ones who will then be able to teach others, as Paul, the model mentor, exhorted?

In response to these kinds of questions, many are saying it is time to rediscover biblically based strategies for church planting, and to reconsider the Apostolic method and the Apostolic message. In this Japan Harvest, we want to focus on these issues, on opportunities for equipping and mentoring effective church planters, and on the growth of a dynamic church planting movement in Japan. Along with inspiring messages by John Piper and Steve Childers, we offer some thoughts on the meaning of "success" in ministry. You will find articles on the vision and future of CPI, informative reports on the 1998 Church Planting Conference and the on-going mentoring groups. We've also included some articles representative of the content of the working groups and open forums which were offered at this year's Church Planting Conference. Other resources include a helpful article on highly recommended books for church planters, and information on how you can go on-line with CPI.

John and I, and all of us of the Church Planting Institute Planning Committee, offer to you this Harvest as an encouragement. It is with the hope that it will become a useful tool which you will want to return to when you feel the need to "sharpen your axe", reaffirm your calling, or renew your vision, goals and purpose, as you "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus". What a Savior! What a God!

All glory to Him! 



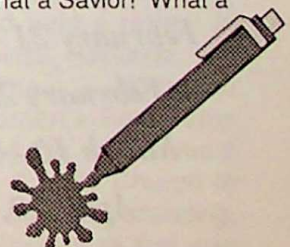
Patrick Hansen

&



John Mehn

-Guest Editors





JEMA Windows

Gerald May, JEMA President

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles..."

I have sung those words from Isaiah 40:31 countless times. I have preached them, and written them down as a memory verse. But, to live them! Therein lies the challenge. To wait.....

In Japan many of us seem to spend a lot of time waiting. At least for me the fruit seems a long time in coming. We labour and strive. We study and prepare. We dream and hope. We wait.....

This issue, at first glance, may present itself as a handbook on the how-tos of ministry in Japan. "Oh, another one of those." But read on! Yes, Patrick and John have put together a lot of material on church-planting--all of

it excellent in my opinion--but there is a very clear emphasis on the person doing ministry and his or her relationship with the Lord. The Lord has called us to wait.....on Him.

In advancing God's Kingdom our most effective posture is on our knees. The tools and skills we strive to develop and make use of must be grounded in a life-style of prayer. I certainly don't speak as one who has 'arrived' in that regard; but, as I have interacted with this material I have been challenged anew to seek a more intimate, dynamic relationship with my Lord Jesus Christ.

But, to be honest, as I draw nearer to Him, I still want to ask, "But, Lord, do I have to wait....so long?"

I am reminded of a small tract on prayer that I read years ago. It equated our labour and most especially our prayers to the work of the farmer who plants his seed. He plants. And waits. He waters the soil. And waits. He pulls the weeds that seek to encroach on the harvest. And waits.

He waits. And sees nothing to indicate that his labour is of any value. Yet, beneath the surface of the soil God is

working a miracle of growth. The hard shell of the seed is softened and crumbles. Roots are laid down. The seed takes in nourishment. A sprout forms and begins to work its way to the surface. And in God's perfect time, when everything beneath the soil is truly ready, the young sprout breaks forth into the sunlight.

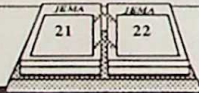
Depending on the crop, the waiting can take weeks or even months. I think, too, of the seeds of many of the largest trees. It may take years before there is any sign of new growth. So, too, in Japan some of the harvest may seem to take mere weeks, but for most of us the waiting is in terms of years.

Take heart! The Lord is, indeed, at work in individual hearts as well as throughout the nation as a whole. The little song from that verse in Isaiah says,

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. Teach me Lord, teach me Lord, to wait."



JEMA



Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Place
January 19 - 22, 1999	Tokyo Men's Prayer Summit	Okutama Bible Chalet
February 21 - 23, 1999	Mission Leaders' Consultation	Fukui no Ie, Okutama
February 23, 1999	JEMA Plenary	Ochanomizu Christian Center
March 10 - 12, 1999	Women's Spring Retreat	Megumi Chalet Karuizawa
April 20, 1999	Kansai Day of Prayer	Bethel House - Kobe
May 24 - 27, 1999	West Japan Prayer Summit	Hiruzen Bible Camp
July 29 - August 1, 1999	JEMA Summer Conference	Karuizawa Union Church
November 8 - 11, 1999	CPI Conference	Megumi Chalet Karuizawa

A Push in the *Right* Direction

Jill Briscoe, with Beth Seversen
Give Fall '98 "WIM" Seminar
a Push in the Right Direction

"PRAYER that WORKS" were the words Jill Briscoe emphasized repeatedly to one hundred seventy women gathered at the Tokyo Baptist Church (Shibuya) on November 2, 1998. It was a special day marked by the quiet working of God's Holy Spirit.

Being the first time JEMA Women in Ministry and JEA Women in Ministry had joined together for such a meeting the day took on great significance. As women from many nations gathered for the all-day seminar they were challenged to prayer and hospitality.

Beth Seversen, a woman thoroughly trained and successful in ministry, presented the standard of the Word for the ministry of hospitality. We are called to be hospitable and to be rich in good deeds, (1 Timothy 5:10;6:17,18, Ephesians 2, Titus 3). Japan is a land of hospitality — let us keep it a spiritual exercise!

Jill Briscoe, well known author and speaker, brought the exercise of prayer right down to where the "rubber meets the road." It takes work! To pray you may have to leave some things UN-DONE. One does not play an instrument without practice. One does not see prayer that works without the constant practice of actual prayer. "It is better to be sleep deficient than to be God deficient", is another key phrase Jill used.

Jill is a woman like any other. Her life has been pelted with problems and deep sorrows. What has all this done to her and for her? They have pushed her to God's heart where she has learned nuggets of truth which she so beautifully shared. Jill turned the women's attention both to the Old and New Testaments, 1 Kings 17 and the Book of James, respectively. James 5:13 and following were made so practical! The women were reminded that God hears all prayers. God answers all prayers. What we fail to remember so often is that God is in the eternal NOW, so prayers prayed forty years ago are "today" with Him. God

is "other conscience" so when all the circumstances are "right" He does it and He does it for His glory!

A challenge to prayer, a call to gifted, creative ministry. The Kansai JEMA Women's retreat in Kobe was all this and more as over 50 women gathered to hear Jill Briscoe and Beth Seversen speak on the subjects, "Prayer that Works" and Spiritual Gifts in Ministry.

Jill looked into the life of Elijah, a man James describes as being "just like us." And yet.... What sets Elijah - and other prayer warriors of the faith - apart from us? Nothing, really, Jill stated, but they knew how to persevere. That is the first thing Jill stressed. She likened prayer to the difficult, skilled labor needed for

boring holes in preparation for positioning and setting off explosives. Anyone can light off the spark.

Jill emphasized the need to persevere even when the answers are not forthcoming, or differ from what had been hoped for. God, she said, "is sometimes a God who hides Himself, but never absents Himself. He is sometimes in the dark, but never at a distance." During those times, we must cling to the knowledge of what we know and believe about God, and affirm those things as we pray.

Jill also stressed that sometimes there are weaknesses in ourselves that have put God at a distance. We must "rebuild the altar" before we can expect God to work - the altar built of those things in our lives that must be surrendered to God: our devotional life, purity of mind, stewardship, and relationship with others to name but a few. Jill summed all of this up by sharing one of her poems:

Ask Him to do it,
but don't tell Him how;
Ask Him to answer,
but don't tell Him now.
Ask Him to give you
the strength for the task,
Then thank Him for giving
much more than you ask.
Ask Him to cleanse you
whenever you pray;
Be honest with God
at the end of the day.
Ask for the power and
strength it will take,
To say to this mountain,
"Go jump in the lake!"

Beth Seversen showed from Scripture how the Lord has equipped each one with unique gifts that make for effective ministry...when they are used, of course. That is the key, for many often have no inkling that they are suited for a particular ministry, or more often, are struggling to succeed at something for which they are not equipped. Beth shared how for many years she had thought she was called to be a counselor, yet all of her attempts at this sort of ministry met with varying degrees of failure. Discovering that she had a gift of mercy was a turning point in her life. The ladies worked through questions that sought to show what spiritual gifts they might possess. For some, it was quite a revelation.



Jill Briscoe



Beth Seversen

THREE LOCATIONS IN LESS THAN A WEEK!

In addition to the Tokyo WIM one day seminar and Kobe retreat, Jill and Beth traveled to and held a retreat in Ebetsu, Hokkaido.

The Hokkaido Women's Fellowship held this year's retreat

at the Koinonia Baptist Church in Ebetsu with thirty-six ladies attending. Only heaven will reveal all that was accomplished in hearts and lives during this and the other special meetings. (Tapes of the seminars are available through the JEMA office)



THERE IS NO GREATER SATISFACTION

God-Centered Motivation for World Missions

-John Piper

(Senior Pastor, Bethlehem Baptist Church Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1991)

Duty is good. But delight is better. Picture me bringing a dozen roses home to my wife on our wedding anniversary. I hold them out to her at the door, she smiles and says, "Oh, Johnny, they're beautiful, why did you?" Suppose I lift my hand in a self-effacing gesture and say, "It's my duty." So what's wrong? Is duty a bad thing? No, it's not a bad thing. But it can only take you so far. If you want romance, duty won't reach. The right answer to my wife's question goes like this: "I couldn't help myself. My happiness just got out of hand. In fact, to make my day, I'd really enjoy taking you out tonight." The amazing thing about this answer is that it does two things that many people think won't fit together. It expresses my happiness and makes her feel honored. A lot of people think that if I do something because it makes me happy, it can't honor another person. But it can! Why? Because delighting in someone is a very high compliment. If you enjoy someone, two amazing things happen: you get joy, they get the glory.

Pleasure is the measure of your treasure. This is a revolutionary insight in relation to God. Here's what it means: God is most glorified in you when you are most satisfied in him. This is a radically life-changing discovery. It means that the pursuit of God's glory and the pursuit of your joy are not at odds. They are in fact one. The chief end of man is to glorify God BY enjoying him for ever. Not by enjoying money and comfort and prestige and power and achievement, but by enjoying HIM, God! And every other good thing for God's sake. As St. Augustine prayed, "He loves you too little who loves anything together with you, which he loves not for your sake."

The Biblical command, "Delight yourself in the Lord," (Psalm 37:4) is another way of saying, "Do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). God is most glorified in you when you are most satisfied in him. And the greatest passion of God's heart is to be glorified. He created us for his glory (Isaiah 43:7); he called Israel

to be his people for his glory (Isaiah 49:3); Jesus lived (John 17:4) and died (John 12:27-28); Romans 3:25-26) and rose (Romans 6:4) and reigns (Philippians 2:11) for the glory of God; he chose us before the foundation of the world for his glory (Ephesians 1:4-6); he forgives us for his glory (Psalm 25:11; Isaiah 43:25); he works through us for his glory (1 Peter 4:11); he calls us to do all things for his glory (1 Corinthians 10:31); and his aim is that the earth will be covered with the knowledge of his glory the way the waters cover the sea (Habakkuk 2:14), and in the age to come that the glory of the Lord alone will be the awesome light of endless days (Revelation 21:23).

If the glory of God is the highest passion of his own heart, then it should be the highest passion of ours. And if God is most glorified in us when we are most

and goodness and beauty. When we see him for who he really is, and turn from all the broken cisterns of the world that cannot satisfy (Jeremiah 2:13), we find "joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8). But this joy, like all joy, wants out. It wants to expand. If it doesn't extend itself and overflow, it begins to stagnate.

There is something about God that cannot be hoarded. And to hoard joy in God is to lose joy in God. But to lose joy in God is to dishonor God—just like my wife would be dishonored if I said, "It's my duty," instead of "It's my delight." God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him. Therefore our joy must get out—for God's sake and for our sake. God wills for his glory to be reflected in the joy of redeemed people from every tribe and tongue and nation (Revelation 7:9). He wills worldwide praise. Therefore world evangelization is the pathway to maximum joy and maximum worship.

*Missions exists
because worship doesn't.*

Missions is the ultimate goal of the church. The glory of God is the ultimate goal of the church—because it's the ultimate goal of

God. The final goal of all things is that God might be worshipped with white hot affection by a redeemed company of countless persons from every tribe and tongue and people and nation (Revelation 5:9; 7:9). Missions exists because worship doesn't. When the kingdom finally comes in glory, missions will cease. Missions is penultimate, worship is ultimate. If we forget this and reverse their roles the passion and the power for both diminish.

J. Campbell White, the secretary of the Laymen's Missionary Movement wrote in 1909, "Most men are not satisfied with the permanent output of their lives. Nothing can wholly satisfy the life of Christ within his followers except the adoption of Christ's purpose toward the world he came to redeem. Fame, pleasure and riches are but husks and ashes in contrast with the boundless and abiding joy of working with God for the fulfillment of his eternal plans. The men who are putting everything into Christ's undertaking are getting out of life its sweetest and most priceless rewards."

This is the testimony of virtually all the great missionaries in the history of the church. Pouring out their lives brought

their lives back to them. They proved again and again the words of the Lord, "He who loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it" (Mark 8:38). In other words, joy in God grows by expanding toward others. Jesus said to Peter, "There is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30). You can't out give God.

On December 4, 1857, David Livingstone, the great pioneer missionary to Africa, made a stirring appeal to the students of Cambridge University, showing what he had learned about these words of Jesus through the years: "For my own part, I have never ceased to rejoice that God has appointed me to such an office. People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Is that a sacrifice which brings its own blest reward in healthful activity the consciousness of doing good, peace of mind, and a bright hope of a glorious destiny hereafter? It is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather

*David Livingstone -
"I never made
a sacrifice"*

it is a privilege. Anxiety, sickness, suffering, or danger, now and then, with a foregoing of the common conveniences and charities of this life, may make us pause, and cause the spirit to waver, and the soul to sink; but let this only be for a moment. All these are nothing when compared with the glory which shall be revealed in and for us. I never made a sacrifice."

And in saying that, Livingstone paid his God the highest tribute possible. It was not mere duty. It was a profound delight—beyond what anything in this world can give. God was glorified in him because he was satisfied in God. And his satisfaction came to consummation not with the comforts of cozy life in England, but with the expansive vision of giving his life and his joy away on the frontiers. That's it. That's the most profound, God-centered motivation. It makes my heart beat faster even as I think about it again. O, may God give us eyes to see where true satisfaction can be found—to the glory of God!

[This article, as well as many other resources, are available from Desiring God Ministries 720 13th Ave. South Minneapolis, MN 55415. Call toll-free for a free resource catalog, 1-888-346-4700. Outside the U.S. please call 612-373-0651.]

JEMA's Focus on Prayer

Tokyo Prayer Summit
January 19-22
Okutama Bible Chalet

Kansai Day of Prayer
April 20
Bethel House, Kobe

West Japan Prayer Summit
May 24-27
Hiruzen Bible Camp

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CHRISTIAN TV SET FOR "NEXT

By David E. Humble
Harvest Time Ministries Staff

In 1939, RCA head David Sarnoff giddily proclaimed that "...television drama of high caliber and produced by first-rate artists will materially raise the level of dramatic taste of the nation." He was only one of a number of media experts to follow who were willing to credit TV with everything from ushering in a new Renaissance to providing the basis for world peace.

Of course, now we know differently. As media analyst Doug Groothuis has aptly observed, dramatic taste 60 years later seems to be frozen at the level of "...any number of noncartoon but cartoon-like sitcoms, 'reality-based' unreal simulations of the violent and the indecent, image-ruled news programs devoid of analysis and historical context...[while] media moguls regale us with promises of five hundred cable channels' worth of the same (or worse)."

Considering what TV has become in modern society, one cannot much blame some Christians for not wanting to have anything to do with it. However, many committed believers sense the weight of Christ's challenge to be "salt and light" in our fallen world - including the world of media entertainment. And now, a new opportunity to do just that has come to Japan.

Though Christian TV programming has been around in Japan for a couple of decades, broadcasters' ability to significantly influence the culture has been severely curtailed. The government's prevailing sentiment has been that since the airwaves are limited, broadcasting should be used only to benefit the general public. Consequently, Christian broadcasters have found it difficult to purchase airtime at reasonable prices and get good time slots. The expense up until now, in fact, has made it virtually impossible for any group to have a nation-wide ministry.

However, the recent introduction of two new competitive digital satellite broadcasting services - *PerfecTV* in 1996 and *DirecTV* in April of this year - has changed the situation for Christian

broadcasters entirely. Since satellite broadcasting falls under the classification of data transmission, the old rules no longer apply. Consequently, several groups of broadcasters in Japan are now in various stages of preparation to provide Christian programming that can cover the entire nation - a first in Japan's history.

Harvest Time Ministries, by an unexpected turn of events, became Japan's first Christian broadcaster to

programming on the satellite feed - free of charge.

In June, TVK's new *DirecTV* entity - Yokohama Bayside TV, ch. 321 - added a Saturday broadcast of "Harvest Time" to their schedule, as well. And, after some further discussions with TVK and *DirecTV*, Harvest Time was asked to provide an hour per day of programming beginning in January of 1999.

With each of the new satellite TV services able to offer viewers 100+

...Christian broadcasters in Japan now have an unprecedented opportunity to proclaim the Gospel to the entire nation by satellite TV.

enter the satellite TV scene. The signal of one of Harvest Time's regular broadcasters - TV Kanagawa (metropolitan Tokyo/Yokohama) - was picked up by *DirecTV* in April. Then, at TVK's invitation, "Harvest Time" (which regularly airs on Sunday mornings) joined their other

channels, programming providers are now seeking the diversity that was once shunned by traditional broadcasters. This means that Christian broadcasters in Japan now have an unprecedented opportunity to proclaim the Gospel to the entire nation by satellite TV.

"HARVEST BIBLE HOUR" SCHEDULE (1/2/99~)

14:00~14:55		First Half-hour		Second Half-hour	
Sat.	The Joy of Music (E)	Organist Diane Bish performs outstanding arrangements of classical and religious favorites	Living Life (J)	Host Kenichi Nakagawa brings Bible messages from the "Living Life" monthly devotional guide	
Sun.	Harvest Time (J)	The latest episodes, featuring fascinating guests and timely Bible messages	The Word For Today (B)	Pastor Chuck Smith leads in worship from Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California	
17:00~17:55		First Half-hour		Second Half-hour	
Mon.	Harvest Time (J)	Sun Repeat	The Word For Today (B)	Sun Repeat	
Tues.	The Joy of Music (E)	Sat Repeat	Living Life (J)	Sat Repeat	
Wed.	Stories From The Bible (J)	Colorful drawings serve to tell children the timeless stories of the Old Testament	Country Crossroads (E)	Host Bill Mack brings out the best in country music and those who perform it.	
Thurs.	The Shalom Workshop (J)	Instructor Takako Tsukui leads her students in creative projects with a spiritual point.	Dino (E)	Talented pianist Dino Kartsonakis presents a command performance of memorable classics.	
Fri.	Harvest Masterpiece Series (J)	A re-broadcast of favorite Harvest Time programs of the past.	Computer Bible (J)	A guide to using the computer for enhancing personal Bible study.	
(J) = Japanese-language only (E) = English only (B) = Bilingual broadcast					

LEVEL" JUMP

Harvest Time's Kenichi Nakagawa has requested that believers in Japan do two things to help get a Christian voice into the media mix of satellite broadcasting.

"First," he said, "we all need to pray. We dare not approach this without the Lord's guidance. This is basic and something everyone can and must do."

will feature original Japanese-language programming, as well as some from U.S. producers (TBN, CBN, FamilyNet, Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa, Calif., etc.).

"Some of it will be for Christians and some of it will be targeted to reach unbelievers," he said. "Altogether, it

"With 5,000 subscribers,...it's most likely that we'll be able to secure an entire channel on the DirecTV satellite for 24-hour-a-day Christian programming..."

"Secondly," he said, "purchase the DirecTV antenna and tuner so that you can get 'Harvest Time' broadcasts where you live."

Nakagawa said that since DirecTV has made Harvest Time an equipment distributor, the ministry is able to offer the tuner/antenna set at a reduced price to those who sign up through Harvest Time Ministries. The ¥36,500 discount price is about 35% off the regular retail amount. Nakagawa emphasized that the number of subscribers that actually sign up through the ministry will be a decisive factor in future negotiations with DirecTV for increased air time and good time slots.

"If we can get 1,000 people to sign up for the service, our broadcasts can go on indefinitely," he said. "If we can sign up 3,000 people, we can surely increase our broadcast time to two or more hours per day."

"With 5,000 subscribers applying through Harvest Time," he added, "it's most likely that we'll be able to secure an entire channel on the DirecTV satellite for 24-hour-a-day Christian programming - something Christian broadcasters in Japan have long prayed about and worked for."

Nakagawa said that the schedule beginning in January would showcase cultural and family-oriented programming beginning at 2 p.m. on weekends and 5 p.m. on weekdays. Billed as the "Harvest Bible Hour," it

will be a variety of programming that honors Christ."

The DirecTV subscription will require viewers to pay an initial fee of ¥3,000 (in addition to purchase and installation of the tuner/antenna set) and then a minimum fee of ¥300 per month. Subscribers may purchase a package of programming (e.g. the "Silver" package includes 39 TV & 35 audio channels for ¥2,600/mo.), or they may buy individual channels separately (e.g. "Yokohama Bayside TV" is available for ¥500/mo.).

While emphasizing that Harvest Time will still continue their regular over-the-air broadcasts, Nakagawa believes that satellite TV is definitely here to stay. This is a great opportunity, he said, for believers to show their faithfulness and work to establish a Christian voice in the media future of Japan.

"It took 20 years for the vision the Lord gave me to begin to materialize," he said. "The Lord has been so faithful. It is always worthwhile to follow Him - even if you can't see the goal ahead of you."

"And clearly," he added, "everything that has been done in Christian broadcasting in Japan up until now has been preparation for this moment, I believe."

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WHAT IS ON GOD'S HEART?

-John Wm. Mehn

What does God want most in the world today? What is in the heart of God for Japan? His greatest desire is to hear His praise from hearts full of their desire for Him. It is people that God most wants. It is His desire that we all praise Him wholeheartedly with hearts aflame for Him. This is the desire, I am sure, of all who read this. As I look over my ministry area, my heart groans as I realize so many people who do not know God and worship Him as I do.

Any vision for a ministry must be a vision that begins with God and His desires. Each vision must honor God. Many believe that God is honoring the vision given to CPI. Since the JEMA Church Planting Institute's start in 1994 there have been hundreds of missionaries who have developed appreciation for and ownership of the CPI vision statement. There are many missionaries who are unsure exactly what this vision is. Everything we do in CPI is based on this vision. What exactly does our vision statement mean?

God's heart is for the nations. It is God's desire that all the nations bend their knee to Jesus and claim Him Lord and Savior. It is our greatest desire to see Jesus lifted up and glorified among all the nations. It is through the planting of churches and each church faithfully proclaiming Christ and His Gospel. This is the same vision that burned in the hearts of the early church and in the modern missionary movement. In many quarters God is raising up people committed to this vision. May we also catch the vision God has for the nations and especially Japan.

How will God do this in our world? It is quite simple. It is outlined in the scriptures and it was followed by the early church. The Apostolic Method was the planting of churches that would reproduce themselves. The Apostolic Message was the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. The CPI vision is simply reclaiming this for the church today. That is a movement of reproducing churches that proclaim the transforming power of the Gospel. This is what God desires for the nations and Japan. Our goal does

not end when Japan is reached with a church planting movement. Our ultimate goal is that Japan would become a sending nation calling other nations to worship the living Christ. When we look around us and see the condition of our ministries we wonder how this vision could happen. That is the wrong focus. We must focus on God and what he desires for the nations. This vision demands faith, risk, new wineskins and a lot of hard work.

**Advancing God's Kingdom
by Mentoring Leaders
to be Part of a Movement
That is Multiplying Churches
That are Multiplying Disciples
Through the Power
of the Gospel.**

Advancing the Kingdom

This vision is beyond our own ministry, agency, or denomination. It is a kingdom vision. As the vision is for God and His Kingdom, we desire to work for inter-dependence between our various agencies. We value the distinctives of each agency working in Japan. Having worked for two agencies myself and interviewed with three others I am aware that those distinctives are valuable. Therefore we will work with anyone who shares our Kingdom vision.

Mentoring Leaders

We need more and better leaders. We need leaders of all types. We need many more Japanese national leaders who catch the vision and cast it to others. They must be developed, coached, equipped and empowered for ministry. This means we must do more than teaching and training. This takes more deliberate effort. We believe that the development of strong, national (Japanese) church leaders is one of the top priorities we must have to fulfill our vision. In CPI we have developed and are expanding a mentoring system network.

A Movement


We desire that not just churches are started but that church planting movements are started. We want to develop this movement mindset among our national workers. We desire to see together God bringing multitudes into His Kingdom through the multiplication of churches and disciples.

The Transforming Gospel

It is only the Gospel that transforms individuals, the family, society and nations. All of our techniques and strategies are in vain if we do not conduct ministry out of a consecrated and changed heart. Many in the CPI family have seen God change them through the Gospel. We desire this for our churches, agencies and national workers.

The Future?

Only God knows what he has in store for the CPI vision. It is my dream that God would raise up, from the missionary community and the national church, men and women who catch God's vision for the world. These in turn develop model ministries that have as their basis to honor God through a multiplying movement of churches. I hope someday we will all stand in awe at people whom God has used through the CPI movement.

To see Japan and the nations transformed by the power of the Gospel and folded into reproducing churches, that is the CPI vision. We believe this vision honors God and shows a love for the Japanese people and the nations. 

CPI STRATEGY Now and the Future

At CPI we have a strategy that includes many systems. Currently operational are the annual church planting conferences, the church planting training network system, the church planting resource network system, the church planting information system, and the church planting mentoring system network. These will continue to grow and improve in the future.



On the immediate horizon are several new systems. We hope to offer a self-discovery assessment process to help missionaries find out about their gifts and passion and how that can help them fit better into ministry situations including church planting. We hope to add an Internet web site to our information system. Also for research and resources we hope to develop resource teams of people with knowledge and experience including both missionaries and Japanese. This along with working study groups will find answers to nagging problems in making a church planting movement work.

The Japanese Page

日本語

-Miriam Davis

If you are like me you will have probably have some kind of system for recording illustrations and quotations from books which you have found particularly helpful. I do this in the form of a personal, spiritual journal, but also by filing stories and quotes under both a biblical reference and by theme. The latter then become a useful source of material for sermons and talks. The problem comes, however, when one wants to use something from a non-Japanese source, of how to express it in Japanese. So, I try to use Japanese sources as much as I can.

Here are just a few I have collected in recent months.

A. In the 'Yo no Hikari' newsletter for August 1998, radio pastor Sakakibara quotes a Japanese proverb and its Biblical equivalent in an article on "The Kindness of God" as follows:

「たたけほこりの出るからだ」という言葉がありますが、聖書には「義人（ぎじん）はいない。ひとりもない。」（ローマ3:10）と書かれています。

My dictionary of proverbs gave me the following explanation of 「たたけばほこりが出る」(nb. the word 'karada' was omitted, so presumably the proverb can be used either with or without this word.)

「どんな人でもこまかく調（しら）べてみれば、やましい点や欠点（けってん）の一つか二つは出てくるものだ、ということ。」

B. From 「愛の便（たよ）り」 a beginners' Bible study book by Jae Chan Byun (Published by Shobokusha press), are two well-known quotes from Pascal and Augustine:

* 「私の心には、本当の神以外にはとても満（み）たすことのできない、真空（しんくう）がある。」
-バスケル

* 「神よ。私の心は、あなたの中で休むときまで揺（ゆ）れ動（うご）いています。」

-アウグスティヌス

C. From 「ほほえみ」 a little book of sayings by Mother Teresa published by 「女子パウロ会」 some thoughts on poverty, love and prayer.

* 「人間のほほえみ、人間のふれあいを忘れた人がいます。これはとても大きな貧困（ひんこん）です。」

* 「祈りは進んだ心を与（あ）たえてくれます。進んだ心は神様を見ることが出来ます。神様を見ることができたら愛が始まります。」

* 「愛は私たちのなしうるわざの量（りょう）では測（はか）れません。愛はわざの中に注（そそ）ぎこまれた愛の量、痛（いた）むまで愛するその愛の量でしか測れないのです。」

* 「一切れのパンではなく、多くの人は愛に、小さなほほえみに、飢（う）えているのです。」

D. And, finally, a thought from Pastor Sakakibara again, this time from the Hokkaido Lifeline programme for October 31, 1998. If you look at the Kanji for 'yasashii' 「優しい」, you will find that it is composed of 'hito' 「人」 (in the form of the ninben radical) and the character for 'ureeru' - to grieve, be distressed 「憂える」.

Suffering can develop that lovely trait of kindness and gentleness in us which we see in Jesus who is 'koko royasashii' 「心優しい」 (Matthew 11:29). (This is my own application of the meaning of the kanji to Scripture references, and you will be able to think of others.)

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"Taste and see that the Lord is good."

-JEMA CPI 1998 CONFERENCE REPORT

-John Mehn

"I wish I had been to this kind of conference 30 years ago, even 4 years ago when it started."

"My husband came last year and desired to be able to talk to me about these issues and so he generously offered to keep our children and sent me. It has changed my life."

"Ten years ago ... I took the course 'Perspective on the World Christian Movement' which gave me God's perspective to what he was doing in the world. This time I attended the CPI conference for the first time which gave me God's perspective to what He is doing in Japan."

New perspectives, changed lives, these are the things what we all experienced at the 1998 JEMA Church Planting Institute (CPI) conference held last October. It was the largest conference of church planting missionaries in the history of Japan. We have grown much in five years, outgrowing two meeting locations already. It started in 1994 when 25 men met at Yamanakako. Last year 119 gathered in Karuizawa--including 28 women. This year there were four visitors from America and two from Korea. Over 24 mission agencies were represented, some of them for the first time. The sense of cooperation, and the spirit of helping each other succeed in our ministries was overwhelming. God is doing something that honors him.

TRAINING AND LEARNING

Each year we offer the core course training in church planting. This is taught by Dr. Steven Childers, director for the US Center for Church Planting. He is also a professor at Reformed Theological Seminary. The core course gives principles of ministry including vision, philosophy and methodology of starting churches. They are very helpful to church planters in Japan as, "Steve's lectures have transformed my thinking like rarely anyone has." (Ron Galpin JCBM)

This past year we added working groups to the program. Those who had the core course training before (some several times) were invited to be involved

in these study groups that tackled difficult areas of Japan-specific church planting ministry. Working groups focused on barriers to reaching Japanese, lay leadership development, cell churches, and a special presentation on how missionaries can cooperate with Japanese in ministry by pastor Kunimi Tamai of KDK.

The program also included 15 electives including those on Bible study methods, Japanese funerals, mentoring, reaching men, and a women's forum. Steve Childers also taught his Church Growth and Renewal course. Manuals and tapes of the conference are available, including materials from each working group and elective. *Contact the JEMA office for more information.*

INCREASED VISION FOR MINISTRY

The theme of the 1998 conference was "Catch the Vision." We pray all participants may catch the vision directly from God for what he wants to do in Japan. We know He wants to renew and change us with the power of the Gospel and we



Participants from America and Korea made this a truly international event

know He wants us to start churches, which is His method for reaching new hearts.

For "alumni" the conference is a rally to again renew and refocus vision and the task. It is a time to covenant together to see the Kingdom grow in Japan. The joint synergy that results from a shared vision is incredible. It is also a time to share resources in our common task. One commented, "I feel like I have more tools I can use to ministry in Japan. It really helped me to realize that importance of having a clear vision and plan for ministry."

NETWORKING

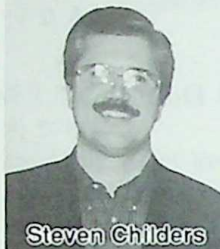
"I really enjoyed networking with other missionaries whom I virtually never see otherwise. This is Really great!" (Ron Galpin JCBM) With so many church planters in one place it is exhilarating to network with them all. Each year the resource table gets larger and larger. There were several helpful books on sale. It was estimated that over 13,000 pages were copied at the conference. That is a lot of material!

There is fellowship and prayer as well. A highlight each year is the concert of prayer. This time it was led by Bill Paris, and as one commented "the concert of prayer was excellent." Another highlight for many is the regional peer mentoring groups. (See article page 26)

PERSONAL RENEWAL

Many missionaries comment that they first came because they thought they would learn techniques and methods. Primarily, however, what they got out of the conference was of a personal nature. God worked on their heart and life. "I was stripped bare before God about my motives, affections and idols. Ouch! But also, I was given tools to change; really change, not just get pumped up only to deflate again a month down the road." (TEAM missionary) Another said he was, "Inspired and renewed and humbled." (BIMI missionary)

One important element is the transforming power of the Gospel (See article, p. 14 and testimonies, p. 17). One missionary commented, "The understanding that the Gospel is for me a believer was the most helpful, and well worth the 12 hour drive spent coming up here from Yamaguchi Ken." Steve Childers teaches on the importance of Christian character in ministry. It is possible to put the Kingdom before the King. One said, "thanks for keeping the emphasis on Christ and the Gospel rather than methodology and strategy." (International Missions) One woman said that she was "challenged to return to the first



Steven Childers

love I had when I first came to Japan."

Steve also shares the hardest lessons that he had to learn in ministry. Many report these lessons as the highlight of the conference. One TEAM missionary commented that he benefited from "the eight mistakes or things I wished someone would have told me." A Free Church missionary said that the largest lesson was, "I need to re-order my priorities [away from] success and product living."

NEXT CONFERENCE

The dates for the next conference are **November 8-11, 1999 at Megumi Chalet Karuizawa**. I encourage you to mark your calendars now. We will have more women's activities, and will again offer special couple's housing. We will also have translation into Japanese during all the major sessions, so we encourage you to invite your Japanese partners and leaders in ministry.

We expect God to do even greater things at this year's conference. For some it gets better the more times they attend. One Southern Baptist missionary said, "I think at this point in my life this has been the best conference ever! And this is the second time through!"

I have been amazed at what God has been doing. I believe that God is pouring His living water on the thirsty land (Is. 44:3). What does God have in store for us and for Japan?



The Gospel Already and Not Yet

**Already saved from sin's
Dominance
(Romans 6)**

**Not yet saved from sin's
Influence
(Romans 7)**

**So don't promise
too little
or too much!**



"Amae" and Japanese Christianity: The Effect of Relationships on Church Growth

-Gary Fujino

It is a understatement but mission work in Japan can be frustrating at times! Grappling with the "group thing." Trying to understand motives. Surmounting obstacles in both doing evangelism and growing a church. Dealing with misunderstandings between expatriate and national leaders. Do you struggle over any of these areas? All of the above? I certainly do. Yet, at the risk of sounding simplistic, much of this can be understood within the framework of what is known in Japanese culture as "amae," or "dependence."

What is "amae"?

In 1971, psychoanalyst Takeo Doi focused on the word, "amae", as the central theme of his famous book, *The Anatomy of Dependence*. The Japanese title is "Amae no Kozo" (lit., the structure/organization of 'amae'). The noun, "amae", is related to the adjective, "amai", which literally means, "sweet", in English. But Doi uses the term figuratively to imply an indulgent softness or leniency in relationships with others. The English term, "co-dependency", is helpful for explaining this idea but falls short of covering the complete Japanese meaning. He describes it this way:- "the feelings that all normal infants at the breast harbor toward the mother — dependence, the desire to be passively loved, the unwillingness to be separated from the warm mother-child circle and cast into a world of objective 'reality'." In other words, "amae", is an almost child-like reliance on "another." It is harder to be "amai" without an object (a person) upon whom one can be dependent (although it is possible to be "amai" on yourself!).

Why is "amae" important?

Three years ago, missionary Peter Lundell wrote about Nihonkyo, or "Japanism" (i.e., the 'doctrine' of being Japanese). If "Nihonkyo" is the structure then "amae" is the glue. Being Japa-

nese results primarily out of being wrapped up in "amae." It is an overt, society-wide dependency or inter-connectedness. "Amae" is important because it manifests itself in virtually every aspect of Japanese life connected to relationships:- dealing with strangers, decision-making, family and work relationships, patterns of speech, the well-known "inner" and "outer" circles of social intercourse, the Emperor system, apologetic, humble behavior, governmental corruption, social customs or obligations, personal freedoms, alcoholism, workaholicism, emotions, the problem of "bullying," etc. In short, everything!

The significance of Doi's work as "the key analysis of Japanese behavior" (as the book's subtitle reads) is that he is able to extend the ramifications of "amae" to the whole of Japanese society. So much of what seems contradictory to the out-sider to Japan may be explained in large part because of "amae", says Doi. And for the Christian, just as diabetes is a bodily disease that affects anything having to do with blood, so "amae" is a Japanese societal epidemic that affects anything having to do with relationships.

The implications for missionary work, I think, are clear. And if the sway of "amae" is as important and far-reaching as Doi proposes (I think it is), then a Christian understanding of it not only will help tremendously in bringing about a more enculturated philosophy of ministry but it will also have significant implications in the practice of our evangelism in the midst of a group-based society.

How does "amae" relate to ministry in Japan?

Which brings us to our next question.

It is highly significant to note that the March 1998 issue of *Hyaku Man Nin no Fukuin* ("Gospel for the Millions"), had a special series focused on "Amae' and Christianity." That the subject of "amae" would be featured so recently (Doi's book was written almost three decades ago) in the flagship Japanese evangelical news magazine says much on the con-

(continued on page 12)

“Amae” (from page 11)

tinuing pervasiveness of this “disease”, even within the church in Japan. In fact, the series went on to highlight that the effects of “amae”, especially as outlined in Doi’s book, are even more apparent and relevant when considered in light of problems in Japan today. Doi himself says in another work that “faith” and “amae” can become mixed in the Japanese mind. And one of the feature articles in the Gospel for the Millions issue notes that believers and non-believers alike will be “amai” with church (i.e., being late, negligent, indecisive, “using” or criticizing people, etc.) like they never would at work or school. Thus, bringing a Christian worldview to inter-personal relationships in Japan and replacing “amae” with organic, symbiotic, biblically-founded relationships is of utmost importance to our evangelism and ministry here.

I have spent the majority of this article laying a groundwork for the practicum below. This is because I am wary of what I call the “Sceva Seven Syndrome” (cf. Acts 19), where we take a little knowledge and try to make a lot out of it, only to run away bleeding and licking our wounds! What I’ve written above is not even 1 cm on the tip of the iceberg that is “amae.” The ubiquity and often unconscious practice of “amae” is complex and deep and far-reaching in Japan. It is not to be taken lightly! Having said that, however, here are some suggestions concerning our dealings with “amae” that the Lord has laid on my heart:

Practical Implications

1) Although many superficial similarities exist between Japan and the West, ministry in the context of an “amae” society needs to be based on a sensitivity to degree rather than commonality. To give an example, when my wife went to the doctor for cold medicine his words to her were, “If you were Japanese I’d prescribe two doses a day. But since you’re American I’ll make it three.” Even if things seem the same to us they aren’t to the Japanese, especially in relationships.

2) For lack of a better English term, relationships in Japan are based upon “co-dependence.” However, the Scriptures teach “INTER-dependence.” There is a world of difference between the meanings of these words and we need to minister with that in mind. The church is the key place for “amae” to be dispelled.

3) We need to understand and deal with relationships as STARTING from the inner/outer circle paradigm (see Doi). If we don’t take the “uchi” and “soto” into consideration when we minister, it will be that much more frustrating.

4) In our evangelism and discipleship training, we need to remember that the Japanese understanding of self, even among the young, is defined more by what group you’re a part of than who you are (as a person). But, as with 2 and 3 above, this does not necessarily make it right just because it is so!

In closing, let me say again that these are only some of the basics on “amae.” But we need to comprehend and be aware of it as we do church planting here in Japan. Without “knowing our audience (and its ‘amae’), our ministry will be much harder. “Amae” is culture. But the Gospel comes both through and despite culture. I believe interacting with the “amae” culture through open eyes and minds will make us that much more effective. And culture or no, God MUST have the glory! May we uphold HIS name in whatever we do!



Gary Fujino

Gary was born in Toronto, CANADA. He and Lynn, his wife of eleven years, have three children, two of them at CAJ. The Fujinos ministered in Japanese-speaking churches in the U.S. for eight years before coming to Japan. They are 3rd year Church Planter Missionaries with the Southern Baptists. Gary says, “I am indebted to the instruction and work of Paul Axton at American Christian College in Nakano, Tokyo, who has helped me with so much of my thinking on this subject.”

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The Couples Club: An Approach to Reach Families and Edify the Church

-Patrick Hansen

Those attending the 1998 Church Planting

Conference were exposed to some creative ideas for church planting and equipping of believers. Here's one example.

Missionary Buddy Brents and his wife, Melanie, church planters with the Southern Baptists, are seeking to grow the church by reaching families and strengthen the church by strengthening marriages.

Their ministry is based on the following premises:

1. The family is our target group for evangelization.
2. Our goal is to reach the whole family, by a reproducible model that can be done by Japanese.
3. The stronger the family/marriage the stronger the church.
4. Next to our relationship with God, our relationship with our spouse is the most important on earth.
5. It is in the home that we live out our true Christian character and display our true moral values.

The goal of the Couples Club is to strengthen marriage and parent/child relationships, and to teach Christian character and values related to those relationships. In this way the church is also strengthened and is able to show to the world the love and relationship that Christ desires to have with us.

Simply put, the goal is to grow Christian families. Here's the plan. Depending on how many couples are participating at a given time, a "term" is determined. For example, 6 couples = 6 date opportunities = 1 term. Each couple takes one turn each term baby-sitting the children. In the Brents' case, there are more children than one couple can safely care for, so an additional baby-sitter (a teen in their church) is paid 2,500 yen each session to help. Each couple contributes 1,500 yen per day/date which covers the baby-sitter and a meal for the children. The baby-sitting couple is responsible for bringing an inexpensive supper for the kids.

The couples meet once or twice a month from 3:00-8:00. For the Brents' people, Saturday seems to be the best day. The first session/date is "date time" only. No Bible study. Before the couples

go out to where ever they want (just as a couple, a semi-strict rule), they are given 5 "Couples Club" questions usually related to the next Bible study discussion. They are asked to discuss their feelings and thoughts openly with each other, and then to conclude their "date" with prayer requests and prayer. The second session/date (3:30 - 5:00 pm) begins with Bible study/discussion on one aspect of Christian marriage. The couple is then given their "Couples Club" questions for discussion during the remaining "date time" (5:00-8:00).

This cycle of date only, and then Bible study + date continues throughout the "term." When the term is over, it is evaluated, and so far, the Brents report that everyone in their couples club has wanted to continue with another term. It has always been important to Melanie and Buddy to have a weekly "date", and they have been able to keep this tradition going for almost 8 years. After two children, it became a challenge, but they have worked hard to continue by paying baby-sitters.

When the Brents first came to their church (Taitomi Baptist Church) they told their people that Friday night was their "date" night. If anyone had very, very important events on Friday they would come, but, unless it was extremely important, then they would be on "our date" every Friday. This became a source of humor within the church. "Oh, we can't do that on Friday, because Buddy and Melanie can't come on that night. That's their date night."

After about 5 months, people in the church wanted to know what the Brents did on dates. Where did they go, what

did they do, did they kiss, did they hold hands?

Some of the wives would ask Buddy to tell their husbands to take them on a date. Others would ask him to ask their husbands to send them flowers and teach them how to be "romantic." While Buddy did not do that directly, from those suggestions was born the idea of the couples club.

Buddy thinks it would be difficult to just start a "Couples Club" because many Japanese have no concept of what it means to have a Christ-centered marriage. But if they can see it modeled, it will foster the desire to experience the same for themselves. Buddy suggests, "Every situation is probably different and there maybe places where starting a Couples Club would work with out much ground work. But I think the key to our success can be attributed to them seeing 5 months or so of us being committed to our 'Friday Date Night', and seeing appropriate love, affection, and respect displayed in marriage. It became something they wanted!" Buddy and Melanie are now praying about trying a more evangelistic approach with a group consisting mainly of non-Christians.

Does this sound like an idea you might like to try in your own church or as an outreach ministry? If you are interested in translated "Couples Club" questions and materials, the Brents would be happy to e-mail, or fax them to you.

You can reach the Brents at the following e-mail address:

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The Transforming Power

-Steven Childers

I am a recovering Pharisee. I love the praise of man more than the praise of God. I naturally substitute a knowledge about God and godliness for truly knowing God. Over the years I have developed several intricate strategies to cover up the lack of spiritual reality in my heart. I can defend the truths of the Gospel, but I often fail to experience its transforming power in my life.

The depth of my Pharisaism was exposed several years ago when I co-taught a Doctor of Ministry class at RTS/Orlando. During one session, my colleague realized how many of the pastors and Christian leaders in our class seemed discouraged and spiritually defeated. I, too, was struggling - just doing a great job of disguising it in front of the class. Observing the pain all around him, he took me aside and suggested I divide the class into groups of three and lead them in sharing the Gospel with each other. I was stunned. "Why?" I wondered. Did he think some of these people weren't really Christians? I could see stopping the class to share needs and pray but not to evangelize each other. As he explained, however, I realized how faulty my reasoning had been. I had assumed that the Gospel was for non-Christians alone and had little or no relevance to the Christian life once someone was converted. I began learning that day that the Gospel is not just a gate I must pass through one time, but a path I should walk each day of my life. It's a painfully common story.

We begin the Christian life well, but gradually find ourselves increasingly experiencing little or no true spiritual transformation. Although we still believe sound doctrine and practice spiritual disciplines, our hearts seem unchanged. Our relationship with God grows cold and distant. We know something is wrong, but we're not sure what it is. No real joy abounds in our lives; we no longer truly sense God's presence or power. Ultimately, we know we are forgiven, but in the midst of our daily lives we have no authentic power over temptation. What is the answer?

GOOD NEWS!

The good news for Christians is that a divine remedy for our cold and hardened hearts is available! And that remedy is found in the transforming power of the Gospel, the goal of which is not just our regeneration but also our transformation into the image of Christ. Its purpose is not merely forgiveness but change into true worshipers of God and authentic lovers of people. However, we often reduce the Gospel to "God's plan of salvation" for lost people to be saved from sin's penalty; not realizing that it is also "God's plan of salvation" for Christians to be saved from sin's power. The same Gospel message that saves sinners also sanctifies the saints.

The Good News for Christians is that the remedy for our cold and hardened hearts is available!

A few years ago, a major leader in the Navigators ministry revealed to a gathering of hundreds of Christians that he had discovered his own view of the Gospel had been truncated for most of his ministry. "Imagine," he said, "drawing a time line of your life. A dot on the extreme left represents your birth; a dot on the extreme right represents your death. Picture a cross in the center, signifying your conversion. What one word would summarize your greatest need from birth to conversion?" Most of the group replied, "The Gospel." "Now," he continued, "give me just one word summarizing your greatest need from your conversion to your death." Some said "growth", others said "sanctification." "For most of my ministry, I would have agreed with you," he confessed. "Being a Navigator, my choice would probably have been 'discipleship.' But today that word would be 'Gospel.'" After decades of active discipleship, he realized that his view of the Gospel had been virtually disconnected from living the Christian life. Now he is convinced that the Gospel is needed just as much after conversion as it is before.

The Bible teaches that our salvation encompasses all three tenses: Past - we have been saved from sin's penalty

(Eph.2:8); Present - we are being saved from sin's power (Phil.2:12); Future - we will be saved from sin's presence (Rom.13:11). In order to understand more fully how the Gospel saves us as believers, and thereby changes our hearts, we must first learn to reject the counterfeit spiritual remedies being freely dispensed today.

The Nominalist response to a lack of spiritual transformation in the heart of a Christian is to say, "Don't worry about it. That's just part of being human. Don't you know we're under grace and not law?" The Nominalist believes that spiritual growth is optional. But the Bible teaches that any long-term friendship with sin should alert us to the deadness of our hearts and, perhaps, to our unsaved state. True Christians don't surrender, they "...press on toward the goal..." (Phil.3:14).

A second prescription we must reject is that of the Passivist, who believes that, as Christians, we make no real contribution to our spiritual transformation except to relinquish control of our lives to God. To solve our spiritual battles we just need to "let go and let God." This view can easily lead us to spend our entire lives chasing one false hope or experience after another in search of "something more" to make our faith more fulfilling. Instead of seeking "something more," we must learn to understand and draw upon all that we already have "in Christ" (Col.2:9,10).

A final false solution is that of the Moralistic, whose motto is "Just try harder!" The view is packaged to look a lot more sophisticated and spiritual than that, but if you listen closely you still hear one core message: try harder to spend more time in the Word and prayer - try harder to be a better witness - try harder not to be angry or worried - try harder to be a more loving spouse or parent. We can hear only so many motivating pep talks before we find ourselves lapsing into either a lifestyle of spiritual denial or despair over the glaring lack of inward reality in our lives. The Apostle Paul wrote, "Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?" (Gal.3:3).

of the Gospel

OUR CORE PROBLEM: HEART IDOLATRY

The reason the above prescriptions inevitable leave people unchanged and in either denial or despair is because they all bypass the heart. Our root problem is not external or behavioral; it is a problem of the heart. True spirituality is not only a matter of the mind and the will; it is also a matter of the heart. In his classic work Religious Affections, Jonathan Edwards writes, "A person who has a knowledge of doctrine and theology only - without religious affection - has never engaged in true religion." One of the primary reasons my heart is not more transformed is because I have allowed what the Puritans called "the affections of my heart" to be captured by idols that grip me and steal my heart affection away from God. We were all created in God's image to be creatures who must worship something. This is why the essential character of our sin should always be seen as "heart idolatry". The First and Second Commandments, "You shall have no other gods before Me" and "You shall not make for yourself an idol", remind us of the very dangerous and natural tendency we all have to be idolaters. The modern idols that capture our hearts' affections today are not the graven images of Baal or Molech, but are things like approval, reputation, possessions, power, pleasure, control, relationships, sex, or money. When we allow the affections of our hearts to be captured and corrupted by these idols, the outcome is always the same - a lack of God's transforming power and presence in our lives.

THE DIVINE REMEDY: REPENT AND BELIEVE IN THE GOSPEL

How, then, does the power of the Gospel transform our idolatrous hearts? Through repentance and faith. Jesus' message was simple but life-changing: "Repent and believe the good news!" (Mk.1:15). The Apostle Paul made clear that repentance and faith were to be ongoing in the life of the believer when he wrote, "...just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, so walk in Him" (Col.2:6). Coming to Jesus Christ in repentance and faith is meant by God to be more than a mere one-time event by which we are saved from sin's penalty. Repen-

tance and faith in Christ is also the God-ordained process by which we are to return continually to Jesus Christ - daily, moment by moment - to be saved from sin's power and have our hearts transformed. Through repentance, we pull our hearts affections away from our idols and, by faith, put them back on Christ.

One of the reasons we don't experience more of God's power and presence in our lives is because we have not sufficiently studied the idolatries of our own hearts and don't realize how subtly idols capture our hearts' affections. We must all learn to ask, "What idol does my heart presently crave?" Once identified, we must be willing to take radical action against our idols, sapping their life-dominating power. In Romans 13:14 Paul wrote "...make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desire." All that is idolatrous must be drained of its vivid appeal. The Puritans called this mortification.

Repentance, however, is only half of our responsibility in transformation - the negative, defensive side of the equation. The other responsibility given to us in Scripture is the positive, offensive strategy called faith, which involves learning how to set the affections of our mind and heart on Christ. God does not want a relationship of impersonal, religious servitude. Instead, He wants us to enjoy Him and desire Him more than all our idols.

THE BLESSINGS OF YOUR INHERITANCE

Faith requires a continual rehearsing of and delighting in the many privileges that are now ours in Christ. When we are united to Christ through faith, we are given a very rich and remarkable spiritual inheritance in Him. Like children born into a royal family, we need time to realize the full extent of the riches of our birthright. We grow in our experience of God's transforming presence, power, and joy only as we learn to fill our minds with, reflect upon, and act in accordance with our many spiritual blessings in Christ. Even though glaring inconsistencies may exist in our Christian walks, if we are in Christ we can still claim certain wonderful truths by faith. Each doctrine related to the Gospel helps us understand the many facets of what we now have in Christ.

YOU ARE FORGIVEN!

No matter how great your fear of punishment or how condemned you may feel, in Christ you are eternally forgiven. Instead of continually punishing yourself for your sins, trying to earn forgiveness, or attempting to measure up to perfectionistic standards, you must learn to claim by faith God's promise of His eternal forgiveness through Christ's blood (Col.2:13). The Good News is that you can do absolutely nothing to make God love you any more or less! Unless you have a secure status as God's child, you will never behave naturally in His presence. Thinking that your behavior causes you to phase in and out of His favor will short circuit your growth in grace.

YOU ARE ACCEPTED

No matter how debilitating your fears of rejection or your feelings of disapproval may be, because Christ's perfect righteousness has now been credited to your account through faith in Him, you are absolutely accepted (2 Cor.5:21). You no longer need to fear rejection. You no longer must win the approval of others or hide your weaknesses. You don't always have to defend or build your reputation. You can stop trying to be who you are not and admit to God and others that you are a sinner. Now you can move toward others with a bold, Christ-like love - without fear of rejection.

YOU ARE ADOPTED!

No matter how deeply you may have been wounded or damaged by the lack of love from others in your past, you are now deeply loved. You have been adopted as a child of God and given all the rights and privileges that were previously granted only to the Father's one natural Son, Jesus (1Jn.3:1-2). You don't need to live or feel like a spiritual orphan anymore. God does not see you as merely a pardoned criminal, but as His very own son or daughter! You now have immediate access into the Father's presence, the promise of His provision for your every need, and the privilege of His discipline for your good.

(continued on page 16)

YOU ARE FREE!

No matter how defeated you may now feel in your battle with sin, you are no longer in bondage to it. Although sin's influence will always be with you, its dominion over your life has now been broken through the cross. Although you were once a slave to sin, the Good News is that you are now free from that old master (Rom.6:5-18). You are now called by God to claim that freedom from sin's domineering power over your life. No matter what your current struggle, true hope exists for lasting change.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

No matter how alone or powerless you may feel in this life, you are not alone. Through faith in Christ you have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit to come alongside you, to comfort you, to encourage you and to empower you to live the life God has called you to live (Jn.16:5-15). As you learn to "live by the Spirit", God's Word says you will not gratify the desires of your sinful nature (Gal.5:16).

CLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS BY FAITH

It has been said that a stone lying in the sun can't help but grow warm. In the same way, as we learn to expose our stony hearts to the warmth and light of the Gospel, we can't help but be transformed. We should preach this Good News to ourselves and others constantly, so that no matter what our struggles and fears may be, we can be encouraged, strengthened, and changed by hearing God's voice repeating these eternal truths to our hearts again and again. As Christians, we are called by God to a lifestyle of radical obedience. But our efforts to obey God perfectly will inevitably lead us into denial and despair if we do not learn how to cultivate a lifestyle of ongoing repentance and faith in the Gospel. The law of God has no power to change us. Only the Gospel transforms lives. We are destined to be powerless if we do not allow it to penetrate deeply enough into our lives to transform our core character- to save us not only from sin's guilt and penalty, but also from sin's corruption and power in our lives.

In the Gospel, we see the multi-colored splendor of our new lives in Jesus Christ and find the divine remedy for hearts wounded by conviction of sin. In the Gospel, we find the streams of living water that well up in the heart of a be-

liever who keeps coming to Christ in faith (Jn.7:37-38). As we learn to drink deeply from the well that is Christ, we will experience the transformation of our hearts and find the living waters of the Holy Spirit flowing through us into other lives. This well never runs dry. Here are the springs of personal, corporate, and national revival! All God asks is that we continue to draw near to Him in repentance and faith through the cross of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul wrote, "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ..." (Gal.6:14).

It has been said that grace, like water, always flows to the lowest place - the foot of the cross. It is here that we humble ourselves, cast away all our pride and self-sufficiency and admit what we really are to God. It is here that we find the supernatural power, courage, and strength to be more like Jesus Christ.

A man once told of taking a walk and coming upon a house across a field. Beside the house, far in the distance, was what looked like another man pumping furiously at a hand pump. As the hiker watched, the man continued to pump at a tremendous rate; he seemed absolutely tireless, pumping on and on, up and down, without ever slowing in the slightest, much less stopping. Truly it was a remarkable sight, so our observer began to walk toward the figure. As he drew closer, he could see that it was not a man at the pump, but a wooden figure painted to look like a man. The arm that was pumping so rapidly was hinged at the elbow, and the hand was wired to the pump handle. The water was pouring forth, but not because the figure was pumping it. You see, it was an artesian well, and the water was pumping the man! What a beautiful picture of the Holy Spirit filling and overflowing the lives of all those who will keep drawing near to Jesus Christ in repentance and faith. All we have to do is "keep our hands on the handle."



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by Susan Young

Upon becoming a Christian I understood that the power of the gospel had brought the forgiveness of my sins and given me a new heart that wanted to live for God. For the first several years I rejoiced in that forgiveness and new life. I had been taught that after salvation a new process began in my life—that of sanctification, meaning that in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, I would “work out my salvation” --I would come to resemble Christ, getting progressively better.

Yet, there came a time when I felt I wasn't making any progress and the Christian life wasn't working for me. I couldn't overcome sin no matter how hard I tried. I couldn't be the wife, mother and missionary I wanted to be.

I misunderstood the role the Gospel is to play in our lives. First of all I didn't understand that my justification didn't just mean that my sins had been forgiven, but also that all of Christ's righteousness had been imputed to me. In addition,

God had adopted me. Not only was I forgiven, but I was loved by God with a love that didn't vary depending on how well I performed. I could disappoint God, even grieve Him, but He would never stop loving me or love me less if I messed up.

Secondly, I thought the Gospel was to bring me to salvation and didn't really play a part in my life after that. No wonder I was a powerless Christian. I was trying to improve myself without the power of God that comes when we continually repent and believe we are forgiven, when we meditate on our unchangeable position in Christ as righteous, when we realize we are not orphans left to ourselves but have a heavenly father who wants to help us.

Since I thought I was supposed to be getting better I was ashamed to take my sins to God to be forgiven. I mistakenly thought He was pleased when I figured it out on my own rather than bothering him. I would fool myself by belittling my sin or lowering God's standard so I didn't feel guilty.

Finally, I came to realize that coop-

eration in my sanctification was a continual confessing of my sin and believing of the gospel no matter how many times this prodigal had to come limping home. I realized the implication of thinking I didn't deserve to be forgiven the 1000th time was that I somehow thought I deserved it the first time. We never deserve forgiveness it's God's free gift to us every time. I was stunned when I realized how my pride and false humility had kept me from going to God.

As I've come to understand more deeply the workings of the gospel in my life everyday, my love for God and gratitude to Him have grown. My motivation for obedience has changed from a self-centered, self-help type of Christianity to a God-centered life of obedience that grows out of wanting to please the one I love most. My small view of my sin had made for a small Christ and a small cross. Understanding and acknowledging the depth of my sin has brought me to the foot of the cross where there is a real savior for a real sinner. What a glorious salvation he has purchased for us all!

✦ TESTIMONIES ✦

by Bruce Young

I would like to testify to God's patience and grace. For most of my life I never asked myself the question, which am I, a Pharisee or a publican because I viewed myself as being in a comfortable spot in-between the two. Now I see how much my life is like that of a Pharisee and I want to share with you how I came to this point.

Being a third generation missionary child I had a head start in learning how to look good and say the right things. Through high school and college I maintained the reputation as a serious, committed Christian. All the while, I looked down on others who did not measure up to my standards. Those with glaring sins in their lives were weak, sickly Christians and I could not identify with them. Like the Pharisees watching with disgust and scorn the prostitute anoint Jesus with her oil and tears I too was looking down in judgment on others because I had kept my external life in order.

I learned from being raised in the missionary community the virtue of com-

mitment, and from the Japanese society how self-worth comes from performance and contributing to the value of the group. I was convinced that to walk with Christ meant the same thing too. Both in high school and in college I was chosen to be the captain of many of the teams because of the motto I accepted for myself: Work hard, press on and expect others to follow your lead.

The way I lead the sports teams was indicative of my leadership style. Forge ahead and expect others to follow. And so, with break neck speed, Susan and I were married, raised our support and in Japan in time to celebrate our first wedding anniversary on the Ginza. The following 20 years in Japan was no different. I pressed on, expecting my wife, family and co-workers to follow my lead in ministry. By this time my heart had developed a hard shell Teflon coating in which I could not hear the questions asked me about my priorities and values. Any questioning on their part was met with suspicion and dismissal. Instead I thought that if they were more committed to the cause, they would work

more diligently and be better followers.

Furthermore, the ministry we were involved in was successful. People were being saved, discipleship was taking place, the church was growing and I took this as validation for what I was doing. There were people who expressed appreciation for my ministry and complemented me. This gratification had such a strong hold on me that I down-played the significance of the friction I was causing both in my home and with other team members. With my mouth I was preaching the Gospel of being saved by grace alone and not of works, yet with my actions my life modeled the opposite. I was working hard to please God, to gain his merit and to look good to Him and others.

I look back now on all the false guilt and sense of inadequacy I brought upon my wife especially, and it is a testimony to God's sovereign grace that she did not leave me. Here she had left her parents and family as a young Christian 23 years old, had learned the Japanese language very well, had three children in Japanese

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TESTIMONIES (from page 17)

hospitals, lived where there were no other foreigners, teaching classes, helping me with evangelism and church planting, and yet I did not make her feel adequate because of my false understanding of the Gospel.

Finally, God got through to my Teflon-coated heart by letting two families on my church planting team leave in frustration, hurt and discouragement. The Spirit opened my eyes to let me see that my charging ahead and expecting others to follow was motivated from a self-centered, prideful heart which lacked love and emotional involvement in their lives. Whereas true faith is evidenced by love, what flowed from my life was a judgmental, self-righteous and detached attitude which had become unbearable to those around me. This is when, for the first time, I saw myself standing with arms crossed, a look of disgust on my face along side Pharisees looking down at the women anointing Jesus' feet. It was a shocking revelation to me! With this sort of pride and self-righteousness, who would like to follow my leadership and no wonder they left the team!

The Lord was not finished with me yet. First he opened my eyes to the fact that I too was a Pharisee, but now it was time for Him to teach me what it meant to live out the Gospel in my life. Together Susan and I began a series of studies focusing on our justification, sanctification and adoption. Soon I became aware that not only had I been motivated out of self-centered pride which I justified in my mind, but that my Christian life was based on my performance. The quality of my walk with the Lord was measured in terms of ministry, witnessing, Bible study, prayer, etc. Since I was busy as a church planter and team leader, there was much to do and this gave me the false sense that my walk with Christ was maturing. As long as I stayed busy this way, it was hard for me to think any differently about my life.

I am convinced that this is why God had

our family go home on an emergency home assignment to take care of personal family needs. It took me totally out of ministry where I had to be quiet and do nothing in terms of ministry. I was literally forced to stop "performing" and take time to think about my life. In this relaxed and relatively pressure-free time

I found something very odd taking place in my heart. I

was losing the joy and enthusiasm I had always had for my missionary life. "What is happening to me? Where is the joy I once knew in the past?" I kept asking myself.

It was not until we returned back to Japan that I discovered the reason for my lack of joy. It hit me right between the eyes when I read the account of Jesus sending out the 70 disciples on a trial run in ministry. They went out and successfully healed the sick and cast out evil spirits in Jesus' name. They were overjoyed and excitedly reported back to Jesus, but he was not impressed nor particularly concerned about their success. Jesus tells them that it was not their performance that he wanted them to be happy about, but rather the fact that their names were written in heaven. He wanted them to know that even before they went out to serve him, apart from anything they had done, simply because of God's grace he made them his children, loved, accepted, forgiven, cherished and delighted in.

I felt then as though I became one of the 70 disciples, because I, too, had gotten all my joy from what I had done in ministering for the Lord. It was fed from hearing people say I was helping them and realizing that my work was making a difference. I was not rejoicing in my salvation and in the unspeakably wonderful privilege of being one of the Father's children, but in what I had ac-

complished. Jesus was saying to me: "So you went out in my power and achieved success. Fine, but this is what I want you to be joyful about, to have your heart full of the awareness of my love for you, that you are declared righteous, I delight in you simply because you are my child. Nothing else."

The reality of this Gospel in my life is changing me. Whereas before I was

driven to press on for selfish, proud reasons, and with a false notion that God is more pleased with me when I work hard and succeed, now He is in the process of refocusing my sight and reorienting my heart so that for the first time in my life, faith is finding its expression in love for God and love for others.

I now understand the severity of my depraved nature which seeks after self-fulfillment and acclaim which comes from success. But as I understand the Gospel in fuller terms, I have begun to recognize "red flags" in my life which alert me to the tendency I have to loose sight of my source of real joy and want to go back to the old ways of the self and pride. To name a few of these red flags they are jealousy, desire for acclaim, recognition, praise, leadership responsibility, tendency to compare ministry, name dropping and counting sheep, critical attitude to other people's views or opinions. I now realize that all of these come from a heart that wants to be fulfilled through wrong things—success rather than rejoicing in the grace of God.

May God grant that there would be such a working of the Spirit to convict us of our sins on a daily basis, that we will not ever loose sight of the Cross and we will be so overwhelmed at the joy of his forgiveness and acceptance that we will be given hearts full of faith which produce love for Him and for others.

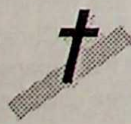


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"Justification"



Deliverance from sin's power (Present)

"Sanctification"



Deliverance from sin's presence (Future)

"Glorification"

RESOURCES for Church Planters in Japan

-Keith E. Webb

Stefan and his wife recently arrived in Japan from Switzerland to plant new churches. They finished two years of language while interning at a Japanese church and prepared to move to their assigned village to begin church planting. They were excited, but admitted to me they had no idea what to do.

They are not alone. Many experienced ministers come to Japan having left vibrant college or pastoral ministries and are faced with the daunting task of beginning a church from nothing. Others come to Japan thinking they know it all, ready to show the rest of us how to do it right. After a discouraging first term they begin asking the same questions. Where do I begin—should I rent a room, build a chapel, meet in our home? How do I meet people—should I teach English? When should I start a worship service—right away or should I wait until someone will come? If you have some church members to start with then, How do I motivate them to do evangelism? How do I convince them that three families in the church is not good enough for a village of 30,000 people?

Church planting in Japan is an extensive task with many varied tasks requiring skills and organization that, frankly, is beyond most individuals. However, skills can be learned and partnerships (with other missionaries, church members or Japanese pastors) can be formed to overcome weaknesses of an individual. Fortunately, there are many who have come before us that we can learn from. The purpose of this article is to highlight some of the better (and accessible) resources in English that can provide insight into the principles, skills, spiritual dynamics and organization required to plant a church in Japan. I assume that church planters read their Bible, so it is not specifically mentioned below.



Principles of Healthy Churches

It is interesting to ask a church planter what is a "church" and what constitutes a healthy church. Many are taken back at first and are insulted at being asked such a simple question, that is until they begin to think about an answer. The fact is, many cannot define what makes a church a "church." Most simply recite their denomination's definition. Answers to what is a healthy church are varied

and largely contradictory. A pastor of a growing church says the reason for their growth is that they "preach the Gospel." A pastor from a church with declining attendance in the same town says the reason is that they "preach the Gospel."

Christian Schwarz, a German, studied more than 1000 churches in 32 countries on all five continents to discover what constitutes a healthy church. His findings might surprise you. He identified eight quality characteristics (for example, empowering leadership, inspiring worship service, loving relationships) that determine the health of a church. This is a one-of-a-kind study that strips away many of the myths about Church Growth. His conclusions are helpful and not based on any one particular model of church or ministry. His book is also available in eleven other languages:

Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches (ChurchSmart Resources, 1996. 1036122011@compuserve.com)

A popular book with a balanced view of church health and evangelistic strategy is Rick Warren's book **The Purpose Driven Church** (Zondervan, 1995. Also available in Japanese), which details his philosophy of ministry. Much has been said about this book in the Christian press recently, so I'll stop here. (Please see Nancy Sorley's review, p. 21 -Ed.)

Skills and Strategies for Church Planting

Some shy away from "how to" books thinking their situation is different. It's true that all communities are different, but many of the skills and strategies (different than "methods") to reach them are the same. The single most readable book from is C. Peter Wagner's **Church Planting For A Greater Harvest** (Regal Books, 1990), though it is from a North American context. It is short, motivational, and full of good ideas.

For a more extensive treatment **The Church Planter's Toolkit** by Robert Logan & Steve Ogne (ChurchSmart Resources, rev.ed.1994. 103612.2011@compuserve.com) is a cassette tape series and notebook that covers all aspects of new church development. It includes dozens of planning worksheets to help the church planter work through each phase of a new church from casting vision to planting a daughter church.

For the cross-cultural context, **Planting Churches Cross-Culturally** by David Hesselgrave (Baker, 1980) is a classic. The author, a former missionary to Japan, outlines a step-by-step approach based on the Pauline Cycle out of the book of Acts.

These days there's a lot of talk about empowering national leaders. But how do you do that in a church planting situation? Tom Steffen tackles this issue in **Passing the Baton: Church Planting that Empowers** (Center for Organizational & Ministry Development, 1993. 76344.1632@compuserve.com). He says the time to think about phasing out of a church plant—passing the baton—is before you begin it.

George Patterson saw more than a hundred daughter and granddaughter churches planted in Honduras where previously missionaries only saw marginal results. He and Richard Scoggins outline their approach to obedience oriented discipleship for church planting in their **Church Multiplication Guide** (William Carey Library, 1993. www.amazon.com). After all, our objective is for many hundreds of new churches in Japan, not just a few.

Spiritual Issues in Japan

Undoubtedly, Japan is one of the most spiritually embattled mission fields in the world. More workers, more money or better methods will not help a situation that is the result of spiritual strongholds. We need spiritual answers. The Bible is full of them.

There are many good books written by Japanese authors on spiritual warfare in Japan. But nothing significant has been translated to English yet. For now, those unable to read Japanese will have to make due with general treatments on "prayer evangelism" such as Ed Silvoso's **That None Should Perish** (Regal Books, 1994) or C. Peter Wagner's **Warfare Prayer** (Regal Books, 1992).

The only book that deals in depth with the spiritual nature of Japanese people from a Christian perspective is David Lewis' **The Unseen Face of Japan** (Monarch, 1993. Order through CLC or www.bookshop.co.uk). The author, an anthropologist, details the private religious practices of Japanese people that go largely unnoticed in other books on

(continued on page 20)



RESOURCES

(from page 19)

Japan. He concludes each chapter with thought provoking ministry ideas. One other resource that deals with spiritual strongholds is my booklet Overcoming Spiritual Barriers in Japan (Keith@nextchurch.org).



Evangelism in Japan

Conversions are essential to planting a church in Japan. One church planter lamented that after three years he has "dozens of contacts, a few seekers in Bible studies, a great building, an encouraging worship service, but no new believers."

Does anyone have some effective methods for winning Japanese people to Christ? Many evangelistic methods that have been used over the years. Some worked well thirty years ago, but don't seem to be effective today. Others are unique to the church context. In introducing methods of evangelism, as the saying goes, "let the buyer beware." Methods must be contextualized, which many of us are not adept at doing. We just copy them as is and expect it to work.

The best source for a wide variety of evangelistic methods in the Japanese

context was published by JEMA. The Harvester's Handbook: Evangelism and Church Planting in Japan (JEMA, 1994) is a compilation of more than seventy articles from the Japan Harvest on how to win Japanese people to Christ. The book also includes a translation of several chapters of Rev. Tokio Satake's book Kono Iwa No Ue Ni (Upon This Rock), which introduces a Japanese perspective on church planting.

A second helpful book by JEMA is Step Inside Japan: Language, Culture, Mission by Henry Ayabe (JEMA, 1992). This is an evangelism manual focusing on Japanese language and cultural barriers. He concludes with several chapters on overcoming pitfalls in church planting.

Successful church planting in Japan is not a matter of simply studying the ten books listed above. Recent history has shown that it is a laborious task with sometimes slow return. Many factors including language, culture, spiritual issues, and methods affect growth. There is no "step-by-step recipe" for planting a church in Japan. But the skills and strategies in these ten books will help any minister to develop better skills and strategies for more effective church planting.



CPI RECOMMENDS

These are books not directly related to church planting that are recommended by Steve Childers or are popular among CPI members.

>Stuart Briscoe, Knute Larson, Larry Osborne, Measuring Up: The Need to Succeed and the Fear of Failure, Multnomah Press, 1993

>Larry Crabb, Inside Out, Navpress, 1988

>Hans Finzel, The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make, Victor Books, 1994

>Kent Hughes & Barbara Hughes, Liberating Ministry from the Success Syndrome, Tyndale House Publishers, 1987.

>Robert E. Logan, Beyond Church Growth: Action Plans for Developing a Dynamic Church, Fleming H. Revell, 1989

>John Miller, Outgrowing the In-grown Church, Zondervan, 1986

>John Piper, Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist, Multnomah Press, 1986

>John Piper, Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions, Baker Book House, 1993

The Japan Church Planter's Network

-Greg Fletcher

The Japan Church Planter's Network is just what its name implies; a free network for church planters in Japan. One of the key tools that ties church planters together in Japan is the japan-churchplanters e-mail discussion group. There are over 130 actively participating in this conference.

The japan-churchplanters e-mail conference is a place for discussion of topics related to church planting in Japan. While e-mail is the main mode of communication for the conference, members (as well as non-members) can use the World Wide Web to view messages to the group as well.

If you are interested in participating in the Japan Church Planters E-mail Discussion Conference, you can join the group via e-mail, or via the Web.



To subscribe via the Web

*Point your browser to

<http://www.missionjapan.com>

and follow the link to the Japan Churchplanters Discussion Group.

*Follow the online directions to join the group.

*When you wish to send a message to the group, send your message to

japan-churchplanters@xc.org

and your message will be approved shortly thereafter.

To subscribe via e-mail

*Send a message to:

subscribe-japan-churchplanters@xc.org,

with the word "Subscription" in the Subject line.

*You may leave the the body of the message blank. When you have been successfully subscribed, you will receive a message explaining your options and settings for the list.

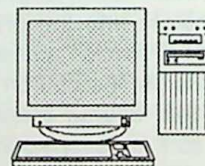
*There are several options for the list. You can decide to receive a combined email of all the submissions for that day. You can also request an email of just the subject headings for all those email for that day.

*Options can be set at the web site address.

*If you have any questions about the list, please feel free to write to the administrator of the list at:

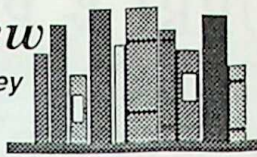
missionjapan@xc.org or gfletcher@usa.net.

We look forward to your participation in the list! See you on the Net!



Book Review

- Nancy Sorley



The Purpose Driven Church by Rick Warren (Zondervan, 1995)

One of the main emphases of the Church Planting Institute is to clarify one's church vision, philosophy, and mission statement and, with these as a foundation, to develop one's ministry and plant a church. In conjunction with the CPI, I recommend the book The Purpose Driven Church.

In his book, Rick Warren tells the story of Saddleback Church that went from one family to over 10,000 in worship in just 15 years. But, Warren's purpose is not to have people go out and imitate his church. He strongly warns against it. And, for those of us in Japan, we know this would be impossible. However, he gives us principles for developing a healthy church.

As he sees it, the question is not what will make a church grow, but what is keeping a church from growing? He is

concerned with the health of the church. In developing a healthy church, he emphasizes the need for laying a foundation: a statement of purpose that clearly defines in everyone's mind why the church exists and what it is supposed to do. Having this statement of purpose, then, the church knows what it should do and what it shouldn't do. A

After attending the Church Planting Institute, this book is like observing a church that is putting the principles we learned into practice.

clear purpose builds morale, reduces frustration, allows concentration, attracts cooperation, and assists evaluation. After defining the purpose, then Warren talks about how to communicate the purpose, organize around the purpose, and apply the purpose.

In part three, Warren talks about defining the target group for each church. Find out about the area and the type of people you want to reach. This will help

in designing a strategy that will best reach these people. In part four, he deals with worship and how to develop a worship service that will aim at the target group. The final section shows how to take people through a process of being part of the crowd to becoming ministers of the gospel.

After attending the Church Planting Institute, this book is like observing a church that is putting the principles we learned into practice. It makes a great case study in how one person did it.

The book raises questions like: Why are we doing things this way? What do the people in our target area really think of the church? What are the needs around, and how is the church relating to these

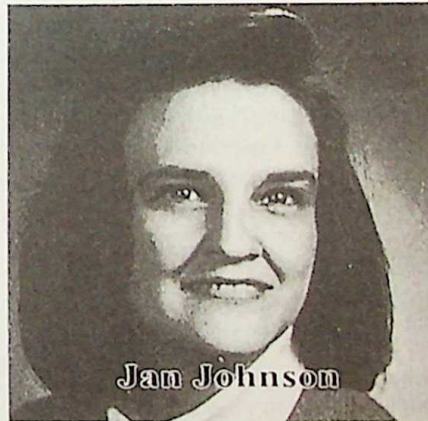
needs? How can we be more effective: It has personally gotten me out into my community to ask people what they think of the church and of Christianity. I have started asking what the needs of people in our community are. My desire is that the church will be able to address these needs and in so doing draw people into God's kingdom.

(This book is also available in Japanese as: 'KenKo na Kyokai e no Kagi')

JEMA WOMEN IN MINISTRY RETREAT "REKINDLING YOUR SPIRITUAL HUNGER"

March 10-12 are the dates to mark on your calendar for another wonderful opportunity to come together for encouragement, learning, and fellowship as women in ministry. The place is beautiful Megumi Chalet in Karuizawa.

We are privileged to welcome as our speaker Mrs. Jan Johnson from Simi, California, a popular retreat and conference speaker who is also an award-winning author of eight books and nearly a thousand magazine articles. A member of the American Society of Journalists and Authors, she has sold articles to both secular and Christian magazines such as Woman's Day, Parenting, Christianity Today, Focus on the Family, World Vision and Weavings. InterVarsity published her book "Enjoying the Presence of God", telling how to discover intimacy with God in the daily rhythms of life. An-



other of her books, "Listening to God" uses Scripture as a path to God's presence (30 Scripture-based meditations). She has also done study on the topic of eating disorders, resulting in the book "When Food is your Best Friend", a spiritual perspective on compulsive eating.

Jan Johnson's desire is to ignite within listeners a burning desire to know God in an authentic way, not minimizing the mystery of God or the human struggle. She presents biblical principles in a down-to-earth manner, making it easier for people to connect with God and become more thirsty for Him. Her degree in Christian education and biblical studies, as well as many years of Bible teaching have equipped her to write numerous published Bible study sessions and to lead discipleship groups, recovery groups and writing classes.

Come and have your spiritual hunger rekindled as you meet with God at this retreat. Reservations can be made through JEMA office.

-JoAnne Wright

March 10 - 12, 1999 † Megumi Chalet Karuizawa

POTPOURRI & PROMISES

by Janice A. Kropp

HOME DECORATING

inside and out...

Part II of a two part series



You know, I heard that another bird cage was sold at the Christian Academy in Japan fall thrift shop! I can hardly imagine anyone cookie cuttered after myself! No, this cage is for the real thing — for a tweeting birdie! Happy caging, dear buyer! I trust you are smiling with me. Now, I can't imagine everyone going out to buy a bird, but you just might consider hunting down another cage or two! Are you still with me?

Here's a smile for your heart. Please enjoy the following taken from the study series, "Neighbors Who Care":

**I, in my world stood alone and unheard, feeling bad that I did not see as you do.
You, in your world, built a bridge and came over to me.
You stood by my side and asked me to show you what I saw.
My sky is purple, said I, a little afraid. You didn't say, NO, it's blue! but,
and do you like purple?
NO ONE EVER ASKED BEFORE!!! You did not judge me, or my sky.
We stood for awhile at the end of the bridge just talking, you and I.
You showed me that you understood my feelings, my experience, my sky...
You accepted me where I was and when I knew that you knew that I knew that
I could trust you,
You invited me over, to cross the bridge, by invitation, not degree.
I came over...to a blue sky and do you know what?
I never felt stupid or bad or wrong for having a purple sky.
I was understood, accepted, unjudged, and a little bit tired of purple.**

(author unknown)

Come! Come on over here to my side of the bridge and let's talk just a bit.

I would suppose that most of you, my readers, are just like me, a woman. I would suppose you keep your house clean and neat most of the time, just like I try to. Home decorating has been on our minds, and today we want to think a little more deeply — on things of the heart. Let's think of it as decorating on the inside.

I would suppose that, just like me, you have searched for and found good strong

friendships. I would guess that you have longed for just a little affirmation from someone you admire. I trust someone has met that important need. I know you wish for someone to love your children in the place of their grands who are too far way to even throw a kiss! I think I know what you, dear reader, need, for like you, I have needed the same. Sometimes I worry, however. I worry about you, missionary single. Have you a good mentor? Is there someone who remembers that you too get lonely sometimes? I tend to worry about you, young missionary mother, so burdened with everything from changing diapers to being all things to all people at home, at church and in your neighborhood. I worry about you, older missionary veteran, who is often viewed as having it all together when

at any time either your life or mine could be blown apart. Who is here for each of us? Oh, yes, I remember. The Word of God tells us — **build bridges of love.** The Apostle Paul puts it straight, live a life worthy of the calling (Ephesians 4).

Come on over. Let me pour you a cup of tea while we sit here in this pleasant dining area to chat for a moment or two. Do you take either cream and sugar in your tea?

Who of us forgets to buy lipstick when the tube is so low only half a lower lip

gets the touch? When my bottle of "Allure" gets down to a fourth, like it is right now, I remember that Chanel is pricey, but after all, my precious sons got me hooked on it—cannot stop now! Besides, I tell myself that it's nice to always give off the same beautiful fragrance!

The outward, the outward — that is so easy to fix! The inward, the inward — this comes a little harder. That's right! Sometimes it comes a lot harder! Having served here for well over twenty years, I have noticed that when the hard times come I can choose to go one of two ways. Oh, I tell myself, I really don't want to become a "prune" embittered by life's experiences. Certainly, life and ministry should get easier the longer —. But, I have found it not necessarily so, and it seems that there are others who would agree. Catherine Marshall, prolific Christian writer of yesteryear, suffered from a sleep disorder with which she struggled until the day Jesus welcomed her HOME. Susan Dyck, our precious C&MA single, was "somewhere" for eleven long years debilitated by Alzheimers disease. Amy Carmichael, renown missionary to India, was bed ridden for the last thirty years of her life. Not to mention, the Apostle Paul under house arrest and in chains during the last years of his journey.

These dear pilgrims could have "thrown in the towel", have given in or given up! Elizabeth Elliot in her biography of Amy Carmichael, **A Chance to Die**, told of a young missionary who went in to visit "Amma", as they called Amy in those days. When the young missionary came out of Amy's room, she exclaimed, I have seen the Lord Jesus!"

Now, there we have it. The Great Designer at work!

And is He not so with you and me? His work is not always to our pleasing, but it IS to His great joy and satisfaction. In Ephesians 4 the Apostle Paul writes —

"As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received."

Then Paul states what it is we ARE to do and he writes...

1. **Be completely humble** — that is have self knowledge. Know how undone and how weak you really are. Compare yourself to the LORD Jesus, not to one another!

2. **and gentle** — that is be under control in passion, in heart, in mind, in desire and with your tongue. Gentleness is a mean between two extremes. Be angry always at the right time, and never angry at the wrong time.

3. **and be patient** — that is never, never give up, for you shall reap your reward. Refuse to retaliate and refuse to be irritated.

4. **bearing with one another in love** — that agape love which seeks the highest good for another.

5. **and make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace...**—*that is the peace which comes through right relationships.**** What a mouth full. An interior design of winning value — for the glory of God!

These five points are essential to life and ministry! I know these commands and I know you do too. The question I must keep asking myself is, Am I doing what I know so well? Let us keep to the task at hand, but, OH, there is one more thing! Not every day is a fair day for building. Dear reader, there will be the CLOUDS. While the Lord makes most things very clear to us, there are areas where no amount of reasoning will give us answers to what we face.


My heart was strengthened again by the July 29th reading of Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, and I quote: *"Behold, He cometh with clouds. In the Bible clouds are always connected with God. Clouds are those sorrows or sufferings or providence's, within or without our personal lives, which seem to dispute the rule of God. It is by those very clouds that the Spirit of God is teaching us how to walk by faith. If there were no clouds, we should have no faith. The clouds are but the dust of our Father's feet. The clouds are a sign that He is there. What a revelation it is to know that sorrow and bereavement and suf-*

fering are the clouds that come along with God! God cannot come near without clouds, He does not come in clear shining. It is not true to say that God wants to teach us something in our trials: through every cloud He brings, He wants us to unlearn something. His purpose in the cloud is to simplify our belief until our relationship to Him is exactly that of a child—God and my own soul, other people are shadows.... There is a connection between the strange providence's of God and what we know of Him, and we have to learn to interpret the mysteries of life in the light of our knowledge of God. Unless we can look at the darkest, blackest fact full in the face without damaging God's character, we do not yet know Him...."

Oh, our tea is almost gone and so is our time. But may I give you just a word of testimony?

Now, well into my fifties, after having raised a large family, after having given tons of energy to the work of the LORD here, after having made it safely through thirty-five years of marriage, I am still in the decorating mode in my heart of hearts. In all the busyness of my life, helping all I could in ministry — on top of all THAT, there have been the trials, numerous difficulties, regretful misunderstandings, hurts of all descriptions and personal failings. Through all these my LORD has been doing needed work in my heart —some interior decorating, if you please. Hurtful, oh, yes. Growing, oh, yes. Still needing to grow? Oh, yes! But with all my heart I can honestly thank the God of my soul for each and every occurrence! I thank the Lord that if you were to ask me about any one of them, I can in victory tell you that He has been enough. I am learning to TRUST my Lord!

I just heard Him knocking at my heart's door. I drop everything to let Him into my busy day. Just before I open the door, however, I glance around the rooms of my heart and question, "Will He be pleased with He finds here today?" Oh, you hear Him knocking too....

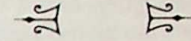
LOOKING FORWARD: In the Spring issue I'll be sharing with you a very special heart room on the theme, **My Mentor, that Woman I Love.** 

***Commentary taken from The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians by William Barclay

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**"Easter is the
NEW YEAR's DAY
of the soul"**

-A.B.. Simpson, Inspiring Quotations.



*The important thing is this,
that at any moment
you be willing to sacrifice
who you are
for what you can become."*

-Charles DuBois



Mason Kropp, age three, when questioned about his naughty behavior--

**"But, Daddy, I didn't mean to be naughty,
it just happened!"**

THIS ISSUE'S PROMISES

Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

Proverbs 31:30



Every word of God is flawless; He is a SHIELD to those who take refuge in HIM.

Proverbs 30:5

When we fast, we turn from the things that daily grab our attention, and we focus solely on God.

Throughout my walk with the Lord these past 50 years, He has blessed me with a marvelous family, a dynamic ministry that keeps growing for His glory, and a staff team that is greater than all the words I could possibly write. He has showered me with so many good things that it is beyond my ability to adequately respond. Certainly among them is the Templeton Prize I received at the hands of Prince Philip and Sir John Templeton in Buckingham Palace in May 1996. All of the proceeds from the Templeton Prize, more than \$1 million, have been designated to encourage and equip millions of Christians around the world to join us in fasting and prayer for world revival. Using those funds to emphasize spiritual renewal through fasting with prayer will do more to help fulfill the Great Commission—to introduce large numbers of people to Christ, and teach them to win and disciple others—than any other investment we could make.

After 45 years of emphasizing evangelism, discipleship and fulfillment of the

Christians who fast say that it sharpens and sensitizes their spiritual faculties to

The Importance of Fasting

by Bill Bright

Great Commission, some may think I have gone off on a tangent with my strong emphasis on fasting and prayer. The fact is that the best way to help individuals become evangelists for Christ is to bring them into a relationship with God in which the Holy Spirit renews them. Only fasting meets the criteria of each aspect of 2 Chronicles 7:14: "If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (New International Version). When you humble yourself and pray and seek God's face and turn from your wicked ways, something happens to you and you get excited about the Lord in a way that you do not through any other means.

How does fasting humble us? First,

become more in tune with what God is doing throughout the world. God is waiting to bless you and use you in unprecedented ways as you respond to His prompting to make fasting and prayer a vital part of your life. Second, fasting results in a greater intimacy with and a deeper enthusiasm for God, which in turn spills over into every other area of life. The joy of the Lord becomes much more visible to others, and the motivation to witness is greater. Fasting and prayer will do more to prepare millions throughout the world for revival than anything else we can do. Third, fasting prepares us for a spiritual harvest.

Today people throughout the world are hungry for the gospel. I have been a believer since 1944, and I can assure you that God is doing a great and powerful work, unprecedented in this century. This is most definitely a remarkable time of harvest. Doors of opportunity are opening all over the world, and God's



The Coming Revival

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Prayer and Fasting*

With Special Guests:

**Dr. Bill Bright,
Dr. Joon Gon Kim,
& Rev. Koji Honda**

January 25 (13:00) - 27 (15:00), 1999

Place: Yodobashi Church, Tokyo

(5 min. from JR Yamanote Line, Shinokubo Stn.)

Registration: ¥3,000 (Also, a special offering will be taken)

Participants: Christian Leaders (Pastors, Missionaries, Leaders of Evangelistic Organizations, etc.)

*Evening sessions are open to all Christians (From 19:00)

Sponsored by: The Tokyo Prayer & Fasting Sacred Gathering Promotion Committee and

Campus Crusade for Christ International Tel: 042-926-0868 Fax: 042-926-0895 Email: TokyoCCC@aol.com

people are responding to the call in great numbers. More people are hearing the gospel and coming to know the Lord today than ever before in the history of the human race. Fasting forces us to depend solely on God. C.S. Lewis wrote in his book *Letters to an American Lady*: "It is a dreadful truth that the state of (as you say) 'having to depend solely on God' is what we all dread most. And of course that just shows how very much, how almost exclusively, we have been depending on things. But trouble goes so far back in our lives and is now so deeply ingrained, we will not turn to Him as long as He leaves us anything else to turn to... Perhaps when those moments come, they will feel happiest who have been forced (however unwittingly) to begin practicing it here on earth. It is good of Him to force us; but dear me, how hard to feel that it is good at the time."

Are you longing for more of God and less of yourself?

When we fast, we turn from the "things" that daily grab our attention and focus deeply on Him. During that time, we come to realize how much food and the things of this world are occupying our thoughts, time, activities and finances. Some may realize, too, that they have been famished for spiritual food. Could it be that you are surviving spiritually on bread and water? Are you willing to boldly turn from human interests and pleasures for a time? Of course, there may be nothing wrong with the television shows we watch, magazines we read, shopping, sports, or even the myriad of church social activities that occupy our time. The point is, are we willing to lay them down for a period of time, perhaps as long as 40 days, and focus on our loving Redeemer, our Protector and Provider, our Lord and King?

As we fast, God will show us the areas in our lives that we keep off limits to Him and the ways we seek to control our lives rather than let Him lead us. Any coldness in our hearts melts during a fast, and we become transformed and empowered to walk in His ways.

While you fast, dedicate as much time as possible to communing with the Lord. It is unwise to fast unless you can arrange your schedule to spend special time with the Lord each day. For some it may be necessary to maintain a busy

schedule during a fast. While this is not ideal, the Lord honors the heart that seeks and serves Him. Whenever possible, clear your daily schedule of any optional activities. Use meal times to worship the Lord and wait on Him. Pray during the night hours if the Lord awakens you. These quiet, undistracted times can open the way for you to hear his voice in a special way.

A person usually has greater clarity during a fast, and sees spiritual needs and comprehends God's Word on a deeper level. As we make extra time for God by meditating on Bible passages, reading other inspiring materials and opening ourselves to more intimate communion with Him throughout the day, a richer experience in prayer will begin to permeate our thoughts.

Are you longing for more of God and less of yourself? Are you willing to open your heart and mind to His call to fast and pray for personal revival that will revolutionize our churches and cities, and result in a revival in our beloved country? Will America once again believe "In God We Trust"? Will the outcry of the church in this nation force the long-standing evils of prejudice and greed to be exposed and eradicated? I fully expect that the Great Commission will be fulfilled in my lifetime. As God's people get right with Him through fasting with prayer and become motivated to seek the lost for Christ—to change their homes, their churches, schools and local governments—I am sure God will honor those efforts. He will hear from heaven, forgive our sin and heal our land as He promised.

Adapted from Bill Bright's latest book, The Transforming Power of Fasting and Prayer. (© Copyrighted 1997, by Bill Bright, NewLife Publications, Campus Crusade for Christ. All rights reserved. Used by permission) Bill Bright, founder and president of Campus Crusade for Christ, did five years graduate work at Princeton and Fuller theological seminaries. He has received six honorary degrees, including doctor of laws, doctor of divinity and doctor of letters; is a 1996 inductee into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame; and has received the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion. He has written more than 50 books and booklets, and hundreds of articles.

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- 16. Chinese Art Calendars - from each October. Cheaper in quantity ¥150

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DEVELOPING CHURCH PLANTING LEADERS THROUGH MENTORING

-John Wm. Mehn

“At first, I went out of curiosity. I wanted to see what all the talk about mentoring groups was really all about. I go, now, to be refreshed in my spirit; to pray with fellow brothers who are fighting the same battles; to be challenged in my spirit concerning my personal walk with the Lord; to share and uncover new insights into reaching the Japanese people with the gospel; to help carry the burdens that others are carrying; to allow others to help me carry my burdens.”

One missionary's experience went from curiosity to total commitment. That is the experience of dozens of JEMA church planters in the Church Planting Institute (CPI) Regional Peer Mentoring Groups. They continue to grow in number and in the numbers of people involved.

Mentoring groups are an outgrowth and a complement to our annual conference (see other article) where regional groups are a special part of the conference experience. Many say that at the conference, "Dividing up into regional peer mentoring groups was great!" (International Missions) David Jahnke (BGC) said, "Regional groups were extremely important and well organized. Definitely the highlight of the conference.... The regional mentoring groups is an important part of the church planting movement." In many ways the ongoing year-round regional mentoring groups are periodic mini CPI conferences.

Many leaders wonder what are these groups and why people attend them. Have they been worth the time and effort for those who have come? It is meeting a need in the lives of dozens of JEMA missionaries. I asked some of them why they went to a mentoring group. A Lutheran missionary said, "Because it is an international and interdenominational group of experts on church planting in Japan. The only ones of their kind! It is essential for me to broaden my horizon and share experiences in ministry. It is

not only that but also a fellowship of brothers (sisters are also warmly welcome) who keep encouraging each other in an atmosphere of openness and trust. That is something you can't get from books on church planting"

Why mentoring? Mentoring is a key to your success as a leader. Mentoring is primarily concerned with the development of the leader. "A mentor is a person committed to two things: helping you grow and keeping you growing, and helping you realize your life goals." The "function is developmental — the growth of an individual." (Hendricks pp. 25, 158.) Mentoring, like coaching, is a hands-on process.

Mentoring is not some new authority structure over you. It is not some kind of guru-ship where you follow some "expert." (We have stopped looking for "experts" on ministry in Japan. If you find one let us know.) It is something that you and I do all the time without thinking. We in CPI have just made mentoring more intentional in these groups.

CPI has a *Regional Peer Mentoring Group Network* that is our system to help develop leaders. We believe the mentoring relationships in these groups is one of the most important things we do in CPI. One of the CPI leaders said to me that we have truly found something that people desperately need. The number of groups and the number of those in our CPI national mentoring network strategy has increased rapidly over the last few years. In 1996, CPI developed four Regional Peer Mentoring Groups throughout Japan. After the 1997 Church Planting Conference two more regional groups were started. In 1998, two groups divided and another was started. There is a possibility of 2-4 more starting during the coming year to add to the nine already meeting.

The main reason we have these mentoring groups is so that the vision of what God wants to do in Japan will not

be forgotten. That the fire that God has put into our hearts for him and His glory will not die or smolder. Also we want to see that vision developed in us and others as well.

What is a regional peer mentoring group? Sometimes things are easier to describe by what they are not. A regional peer mentoring group is not simply a prayer group, though prayer is an important part. It is not merely a fellowship group, though the fellowship is warm and encouraging. It is more than a support group. There is more that goes on besides encouragement.

A regional peer mentoring group is a small group of church planters who meet in their geographic region on a regular basis with the common intent of mentoring and developing each other



A Regional Peer Mentoring Group gathers

while striving towards a church planting movement in Japan.

1) They are regional - This is for the obvious reason that people can get together more easily. But these groups can also help to pray for and impact their region.

2) They are small groups - It is a small group everyone can participate and belong. For many missionaries they feel isolated and alone. Stefan Jaeger told me that, "I feel like the group is like a spiritual family I am privileged to belong to."

3) They meet regularly - Because they meet on a regular basis this establishes continuity and promotes commitment both of which eventually lead to real bonding and genuine community. This is really happening all over Japan. Missionaries from different groups, countries

and backgrounds are modeling what Christ's church should be.

4) They are for mentoring and developing - It is a group that is task-oriented toward the development of each church planter as a leader. "I have gained knowledge in thinking and planning." Harry Landaw (CM&A Field Director)

5) They are peer groups - you become co-mentors of each other. "It helps me to get away from the work and look at it from a different perspective, the perspective of my peers. It helps me to see that others are experiencing some of the same difficulties, as well as some of the same blessings in their ministries, too." Harry Landaw

(CM&A) In our Saitama group alone we benefit from each other's experience. We have over 120 years of experience in our group of nine members.

What are its benefits to me the church planter? What do you gain from going to your regional peer mentoring group? Stefan Jaeger says, "encouragement, valuable hints for ministry, decades of experience, insight in other church planters situations and how they cope with their challenges and so on as we seek

together how we can better serve the Lord."

You could ask yourself, "What do I need to develop as a leader and a church planter?" The purpose of these groups is to support and assist each other by multiplying the CPI vision, increasing accountability, learning church planting principles, developing ministry skills, and growing in Christ-like character.

One Southern Baptist Missionary said, "I need equipping, I need mentoring and help." This is exactly what a mentoring group could do for you year round. In a group you could also acquire more resources for ministry, both material and

people resources. You can have significant conversations about real church planter and ministry issues. You can grow in a group of other church planters who will care about you. You will have opportunities to impact the lives of other church planters and their ministries for the Kingdom of God. And a group can provide a safe and challenging place to grow spiritually and in ministry knowledge and skills.

There are many things that are being

done in mentoring groups. Some of them are preaching the gospel to each other with personal passion and vision. "One time following our devotional we "chucked" the agenda and spent a long time discussing something that came up in the devotional and then spent a long time in prayer for the each other and in response to the issue." Bob Hay (SEND) Groups also spend time sharing about the CPI vision, ministry vision, along with needs and issues. There is also time for training in church planting principles and skills based on CPI Manual and other areas.

It is the ultimate desire of CPI to provide church planting mentoring for anyone who would desire it. If you are in an area with little or few missionaries, we would like to assist you as well. Please contact me, I want you to have these opportunities. Please contact me with any question or if you are interested in a group.

You may be saying, I do not know how to do mentoring. Join a group and learn how. Share and learn. Come be a mentor; be a co-mentor. Let's learn together.



Ministry Checklist: Do You Need a Mentor?

Do you have someone to turn to when you need help? Is that person there for you?

Are you personally accountable to anyone for your spiritual life and ministry?

Does someone challenge you on your vision for your ministry? Does anyone influence you in your ministry?

Do you have anyone with whom you can share your struggles in ministry, honestly and without "evaluation?" Do you have someone who is encouraging you in your ministry who is very aware of all your struggles?

Do you have someone that you can celebrate successes with that really understands how great they are?

Do you have a place where you are learning new skills in ministry?

Do you have someone that you can be really honest with in you personal life, ministry, the Gospel, and you can confess your sins and weaknesses to?

If you cannot give many positive answers to these questions then you need a mentoring relationship. Maybe a CPI regional peer mentoring group can help you.

How to know you can mentor or coach others?

*Do you have any Christian experience or ministry experience?

*Have you learned anything?

*Do you care about other church planters?

*Can you relate to their burdens?

*Would you like other church planters to be successful in their walk with God and their ministry?

For more information on regional peer groups in your area contact John Mehn at 0484-82-1510 or JMehn@compuserve.com

RCNJ WANTS YOU!

THE RETURNEE CHRISTIAN NETWORK IN JAPAN

-David Kennedy

The Returnee Christian Network in Japan desires to serve you by opening a window of opportunity to you of ministry to a fertile segment of Japanese society. Cooperating under JEMA and JEA, RCNJ in its first two years of active ministry has had the privilege of connecting for follow-up over three hundred Japanese who had been encountered with the Gospel while abroad with missionaries and churches throughout Japan.

Thousands of Japanese, as you well know are studying, traveling and working all over the world. Many are befriended by loving Christians in those foreign but seemingly spiritually fertile environments. Then, these Japanese "Re-

turnees" come back to the Land of the Rising Sun with the Risen Son in their hearts! Others return at the very least with some interest in learning more of Jesus Christ.

RCNJ receives information about these returnees from churches, international ministries and individuals primarily from North America but has as well from New Zealand, Australia and the British Isles. Then RCNJ endeavors to link these dear Japanese with missionaries and churches in our network near to where they are returning. As an example, RCNJ has been able to link five returnees with one cooperating church planting ministry in the Tokyo area.

As RCNJ becomes better known abroad among ministries focusing on internationals and specifically on Japanese, the current steady flow of returnee contacts will no doubt become a flood. Critical to handling these numbers of returnees is a network of missionaries and churches who will commit themselves to lovingly reach out, to



Students Exercise Their Talents

befriend, to offer Bible studies, to pray with and for and to generally support these dear people as they adjust back to their homeland. The initial days of their return to Japan can be strategic in their continuing to follow their faith or interest in Jesus Christ.

Won't you join the RCNJ family? Our desire is to place information about missionaries and churches on our website so that those ministering to Japanese abroad can directly connect with you. They will be able to tell you about their beloved Japanese friend, where they are at in the Lord and how you, while they pray, can continue to invest the love of Christ in the returnee's life.



At an RCNJ Reunion



Returnee Christian Network in Japan

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<http://www.asahi-net.op.jp/-uu7d-knnd/RCNJhome.html>

Japanese Website:

<http://www.asahi-net.or.jp/-uu7d-knnd/RCNJhomeJ.html>

MAIN SPEAKERS

Dr. Raymond Brown
 Former Principal of Spurgeon's College, London. Distinguished minister, keen Bible scholar and outstanding expositor. Highly respected and loved regular speaker at Japan Keswick Convention.



Dr. John W.P. Oliver
 Pastor of prestigious First Presbyterian Church in Montgomery, Alabama. Highly respected Bible teacher. Frequent speaker at America's Keswick. Spiritually deep and challenging.



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- Kyoto : February 21 Kyoto Yamaichi Hall
- Tokyo : March 2 - 4 Yodobashi Church
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English Conversation Handbook for Christians

Author: Sawako Tagawa
Editor: Tomotoshi Sugimoto

There are lots of English handbooks in bookstores, but few focus on Christian vocabulary. This book explains expressions which are commonly used by Christians. Highlighted situations; praying in English, giving a testimony in English. Vocabulary lists in Kana/Kanji order are provided.



This book may be used as a text for English classes, or as a gift to someone going overseas.

Occasions when English is needed are ever increasing in Japan. There are many chances to witness to foreigners.

Japanese who are overseas and attending church, may need to introduce themselves, give a testimony, or pray in English.

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You are Special

Author: Max Lucado
Illustrator: Sergio Martinez
Translator: Toyoko Holbird

Everyday the small wooden people called Wemmicks do the same thing: stick either gold stars or gray dots on one another. The pretty ones with smooth wood and fine paint always get stars. The talented ones do, too. Others, like Punchinello, though, who can do little or who have chipped paint, get ugly gray dots. In this heartwarming children's tale, Eli the woodcarver helps Punchinello understand how special he is and it does not matter what other Wemmicks may think. A vital message for children of all ages: that regardless of how the world looks at them, they are cherished by God for who they are.



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Warm heart communication by Aunt Stella

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In the later part of the 18th century, when the German settlers came to Pennsylvania, they brought with them not only their culture but also their old family recipes. One of the German families by the name of Dunkle, whose daughter Stella liked to bake, developed many cookie recipes which we are happy to introduce to you.

