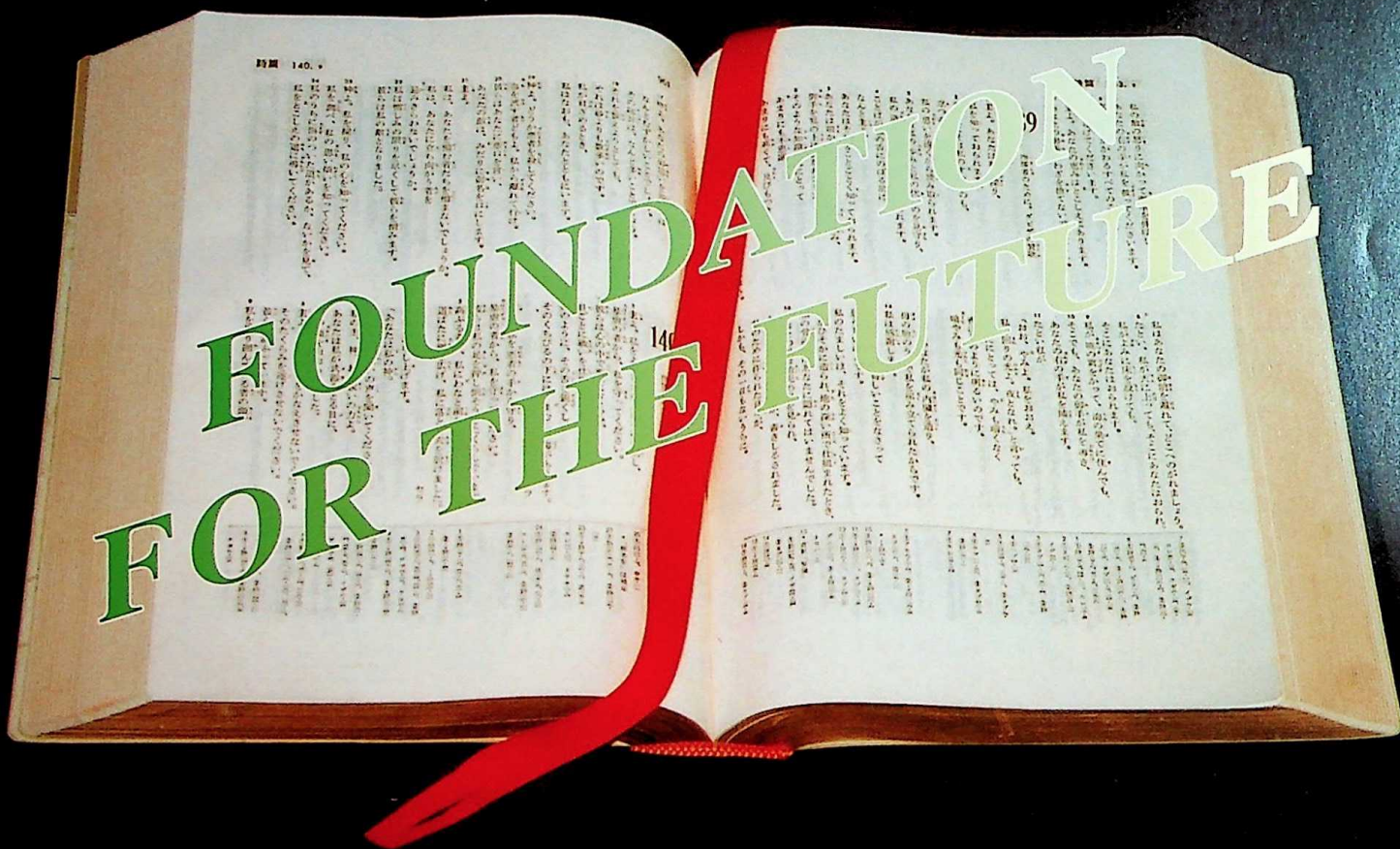


JAPAN HARVEST



INSIDE:

- *CPI CONFERENCE PREVIEWS
- *PERSPECTIVES ON WEDDING EVANGELISM
- *GETTING AHEAD BY GETTING ALONG
- **and our regular columns to challenge and inform*



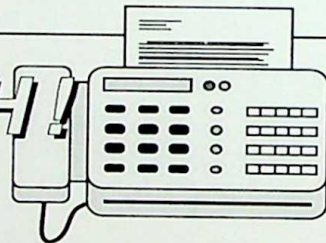
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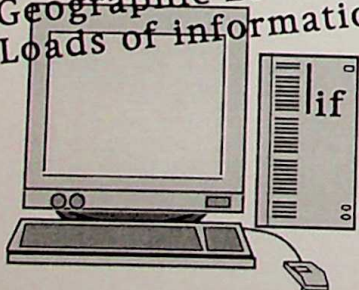
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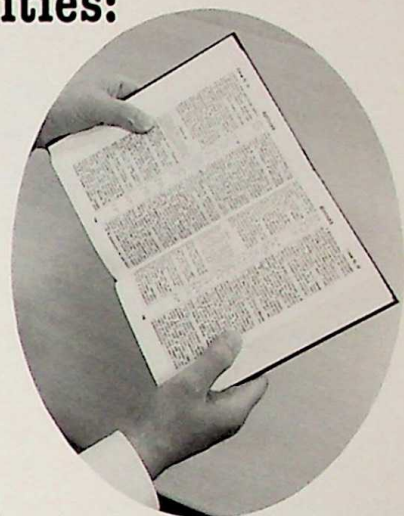
2000

As the new millenium rapidly approaches we have to face the following harsh realities:

- ♦ There is a tremendous shortage of God's Word in many nations.
- ♦ The gap is getting wider.
- ♦ China alone has tens of millions of Christians without a Bible.
- ♦ In Africa an estimated 50 million believers are without access to Scriptures, and at the present rate it will take 70 years to deliver a Bible to every Christian of today.

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JAPAN HARVEST

Volume 51. No. 2 / Fall 1999

Foundation for the Future

6	CPI Conference-Don't Miss It!	John Mehn
8	"But you're NOT A CHURCH PLANTER!"	John Mehn
9	News From the Front	Pat Hansen
10	Japanese Reading of II Corinthians	C. Sadowitz
12	Want to Get Ahead? Then Get Along!	J.C. Maxwell
13	Don't Argue-Discuss!	J.C. Maxwell
14	Fileable Quotes on Building Relationships	
17	I've Been Thinking	Warren Okerman
18	Our JEMA Family	
20	Perspectives-Wedding Evangelism #2	Doyle Book
22	Perspectives-Bridal Ministries Bane or Blessing?	Tim Cole
26	Y2K and You	Janice Kropp
27	Book Review	Nancy Sorely

Departments

2	JEMA Windows	Gerald May
3	JEMA Highlights	
4	Harvest Tim	David Humble
24	Potpourri & Promises	Janice Kropp

Cover Photo: Japanese Bible (Psalm 139)

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In This Harvest...

Whether you count it from 2000 or 2001 we are all aware of the coming of the new millennium. Of course the "Y2K" scare has us concerned to one degree or another, but the positive side to the whole situation is that the "newness" of the change has inspired many of us to take a look at our ministries. As missions and as individuals we are re-evaluating just what it is we have accomplished, and what we hope to see our Lord do in the coming years.

In this issue several of our writers examine just what it is they or others are have been doing to reach Japan with the Gospel, and how we might better serve the spiritual needs of the Japanese. Some are very personal perspectives, and we welcome your own view of these or any other approach to ministry you deem worth of your fellow missionaries' consideration.

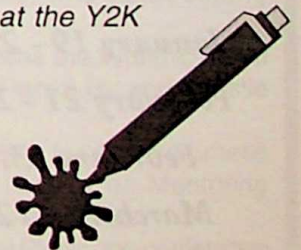
David Humble shares the story of how the Japanese recession drove one man, and eventually his family into the arms of Christ. The Church Planting Institute committee gives us some informative articles as a preliminary to the upcoming annual conference.

Chris Sadowitz considers II Corinthians 5:17 in a Japanese cultural context, while Warren Okerman delves into the history of Christianity in Japan, looking for something to apply to future ministry. Doyle Book and Tim Cole present their views on "Wedding Evangelism."

And of course you'll find our usual fine line-up of regular columns, such as Janice Kropp having a unique look at the Y2K issue.

See you in the new millennium!

Gerald May - Editor





Facing Tomorrow

JEMA Windows

Gerald May, JEMA President

As we consider what the next century might hold it also behooves us to look at where we are today. Only in considering where we have come from and where we are now can we set a true course for the future.

Of course, Scripture is the foundation for any such evaluation. What does God have to say about who we are and where He would have us? More than focusing on the technological and social issues of our age we need even more to consider where we are from God's perspective. In spite of all of mankind's technological advances, our supposedly "progressive" social awareness, and our renewed sense

of environmental responsibility, we have yet to make one tiny step forward in drawing closer to God of our own accord. Indeed, if the mass media is any gauge, as a whole, man is seeking to draw ever farther from God, denying His Lordship and His very existence.

The Church, too, has it's struggles. Divisions and infighting are as evident now as they were in Paul's day, when the Holy Spirit inspired him to write the letters to the Corinthians. No less true, however, are the evident workings of the Spirit throughout the world, bringing millions to Himself. The potential within the Body of Christ for working mighty things in His name is as true now as it was two millennia ago. One great difference today to the situation Paul addressed is rather than a fledging church just beginning to feel it's way in the Roman world, we have a globe-spanning body of believers in the hundreds of millions.

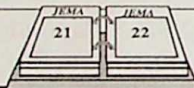
However, the challenge and the call

remain. Men and women are born lost and condemned to a hellish eternity unless they turn to Christ. Christ's Commission and, indeed, the entire Gospel, is as applicable today as it ever was.

The new millennium will be no different in that regard. The only difference will be, should Christ indeed tarry until then, that we will be that much closer to His imminent return. And, perhaps, *that* should be our message. While sharing the significance of the number 2000 as Christ's birthday, it also falls to us to remind our neighbours that His return may very well be tomorrow. They need to know that what is to be feared is not so much the Y2K bug, as it is the deadly disease of sin in their hearts that separates them from our loving God. They need to understand that this particular disease is not a mere inconvenience but is fatal in all cases. In knowing and believing in Christ they can truly face tomorrow.



JEMA



Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Place
November 8 - 11, 1999	CPI Conference	Megumi Chalet Karuizawa
January 19 - 22, 2000	Tokyo Men's Prayer Summit	Okutama Bible Chalet
February 21 - 23, 2000	Mission Leaders' Consultation	Fukuin no Ie, Okutama
February 23, 2000	JEMA Plenary	Ochanomizu Christian Center
March 10 - 12, 2000	Women's Spring Retreat	Megumi Chalet Karuizawa
April 20, 2000	Kansai Day of Prayer	Bethel House - Kobe
May 24 - 27, 2000	West Japan Prayer Summit	Hiruzen Bible Camp
August 3-6, 2000	JEMA Summer Conference	Karuizawa Union Church

JEMA HIGHLIGHTS

Women In Ministry WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON?

Spring 99 Retreat News: Each year God sends His special servant to minister to us. This year's special Spring Retreat speaker was **Jan Johnson**. Jan is both a prolific writer and convincing speaker. What refreshing messages she brought to the hearts of the 86 women who attended! If you are in a "rut" and the formulas you thought were Christian don't seem to work for you, get Jan's taped messages from our JEMA office. You will be strengthened, refreshed and happy to know that some things you believed to be true about making the Christian life work are myths, and not God's truth for life and service at all.

PRAYER DAY FOR EFFECTIVE MINISTRY was held on September 27 at SEND Center in Higashi Tokorozawa. Twenty of us gathered for a special day of worship and prayer. Worship was led by Sylvia Ramquist with Beth Kanda at the piano. The morning prayer session, led by Marg Scott, was spent praying solely for our beloved country of Japan! After a delicious salad lunch, we gathered again for worship and we brought personal burdens before the Lord. Baby-sitting was provided. There was a real sense of our Lord's presence!

Women In Ministry SPRING RETREAT 2000

with Dr. Jean Barsness

March 8-10, Wed. to Fri.
at Fukuin No Ie, Okutama.

Post cards will be sent out in December as well as a reminder in the Winter Harvest issue. Save these dates now and be sure to register early!

Jan Johnson (left) at the WIM Spring Retreat



JEMA Summer Conference a Heart-Stirring Success

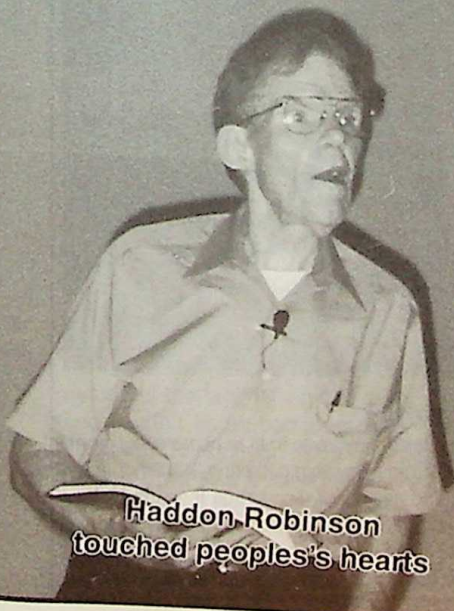
Over 100 missionaries and friends gathered at the Karuizawa Union Church from July 29 to August 1 to hear Dr. Haddon Robinson of Gordon Theological Seminary. Dr. Robinson presented his own unique, and heart-stirring perspective on several of Christ's parables.

Setting a warm, worshipful tone for the conference was the Worship Team made up of Tim & Jeannie Johnson, Mark and Sylvia Ramquist, and Christie Chase.

Highly informative seminars, lead by Dave Kennedy for the Returnees Christian Network, and John Mehn and Laurence Hiebert on Mentoring Relationships provided new ministry tools to those who attended.

In addition to the delightful Ladies Tea and International Picnic, the conference also presented Japan's premiere showing of "Candle in the Dark", the story of the life and ministry of William Carey.

Audio Tapes of Dr. Robinson's messages and the seminars are available through the JEMA office



Haddon Robinson
touched peoples's hearts

FINDING LIFE AFTER THE

By David E. Humble
Harvest Time Ministries Staff

Locked out of my own house!" As Kazuo Kanamori began to walk, he finally realized just how bad things had become in his own home. His wife of 17 years had bolted and chained their front door, with seeming no concern as to whether he would ever return or not. As a new Christian, he had been excited about the changes he knew the Lord would be making in his family life, but this shocking development took him completely by surprise.

He didn't realize it at the time, but this event, in fact, became the turning point that completely changed his family forever.

Kazuo Kanamori, 50, current chief of one of Fuji Bank's Global Investigations sections, and wife, Ryoko, were guests on Harvest Time in August. They told the incredible story of how a typical workaholic businessman husband and a lonely, frustrated wife finally found deliverance and peace in their marriage through Jesus Christ.

"I never used the word 'love' in regard to my family," Kanamori said. "Like so many men of my generation, I completely believed that if I worked for a prestigious company and made a good salary — had a high standing as a member of society — my family would automatically be happy."

The reality of things, however, was noticeable to Ryoko as being considerably different.

"My husband was never home," she said. "He was busy at work, of course, but even on off-days or weekends, there was volleyball, golf, and hanging out with friends from junior high, high school, and college days. There was no time for us."

Even with the birth of daughter, Masaha, nothing significantly changed in their lives and Ryoko became more and more frustrated with this "always-waiting-for-my-husband" life. After 15 years of marriage, Ryoko knew that if things didn't change for the better soon she wanted out of the relationship. "It was like a bad TV drama," she said. "All I really wanted was for my husband to just come home and the three of us have a pleasant dinner around the table!"

Then the unexpected happened — the "bubble" burst.

When Japan's "Bubble Economy" collapsed in the early 1990's, the banking industry was one of the hardest hit. Virtually everything that Kanamori had experienced and knew about banking and

finance no longer worked. Every day unsolvable problems assailed him.

"I kept thinking to myself, 'No matter how well you plan and execute, human ability has definite limits,'" he said. "I wondered if there wasn't some kind of logical or even religious necessity — some 'something' — that was missing in our way of operating."

Then he remembered the Bible that one of his Australian staff members had given him as a challenge to read. Not having spent much time in it before, he now reached for it again and began to find some amazing things.

see if I could get some help there."

Kanamori visited a church near their home and soon started going to a newcomer's class to study. He began to enjoy the fellowship, that is, until the Sunday that he collapsed with a high fever and barely got himself home.

"For the next three days and nights, I was in bed with the worst case of shingles you ever saw," he said. "But I began to read the Bible eagerly. I was like a man lost and sitting in the middle of the desert who suddenly finds a gushing fountain of water."

Jesus' words in Mark 2:17, he said,

"Like so many men of my generation, I completely believed that if I worked for a prestigious company and made a good salary...my family would automatically be happy." — Kazuo

He remembers his encounter with Jesus' words in John 14:6 — "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (NIV).

"This really surprised me," he said. "I was looking for some Truth to use as a foundation for rebuilding. I thought something might be here, but I couldn't visualize how to get it into my life. I thought I should try to go to church and

hooked him: "It is not the healthy that need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (NIV). "I finally realized that my real problem was my spiritual sickness rather than just my case of shingles," he said.

Kanamori says that as he read and thought, he began to slowly discern the difference between the "way that leads to death" (Prov. 14:12) and the "way that leads to life". It finally dawned on him that



New Life at Home

Kazuo and Ryoko Kanamori (standing left) share time with guests they invite to their home every month as a part of their "Budopan no Kai" meetings. This Bible study and fellowship gathering, Kanamori says, gives them a chance to share Christ with business friends and neighbors, encourage them, help them deal with hurts and struggles, and exchange business information. In addition, Kazuo is also involved with the International VIP Club, an evangelistic outreach to people in the business community. The Kanamoris are members of the Kuki Gospel Freedom Church near their home in Shiraoka-cho, Saitama.

"BUBBLE" BURSTS

believing on Jesus' death and resurrection was the only way to be saved.

"At age 45," he said, "I became a captive of Jesus Christ."

With the workaholic husband finally "seeing the light," one might think that things changed at home for the better over-night. But such was not the case.

"My daughter and I thought we were living with a stranger," Ryoko said. "Almost everything that came out of his mouth was scripture. He'd say things like, 'The Bible is first, the hymnbook is second. The television is an evil influence, so no TV!' I wanted my old husband back and I couldn't stand getting constantly drenched with this 'gospel shower' that wouldn't shut off!"

"I wanted my old husband back and I couldn't stand getting constantly drenched with this 'gospel shower' that wouldn't shut off!" - Ryoko

Unfortunately, Kanamori merely switched his allegiance from company to church, with little thought about his family's needs.

"My cry for attention increased after he became a Christian," Ryoko said. "I was incredulous as to how he could switch his focus so easily from work to church and still not give any time to his family. When he started leaving home at 6:30 on Sunday morning and not coming home until 7:30 in the evening, I felt as if our married life was close to being over."

And that's when the "lock-out" got Kazuo Kanamori's attention.

After walking and praying for about two hours, Kanamori returned to the house and got his daughter to let him in. The seriousness of the incident prompted a "family meeting" where some honest and not-so-pleasant matters finally came out into the open. It was a "crossroad" crisis for this family, for sure, but unknown to Kanamori, some behind-the-scenes work to prepare the outcome had already been going on inside of Ryoko's heart.

"You know, I had always looked at myself as the victim," Ryoko said. "But a God I didn't know had begun to work in my heart. This crisis made me realize for the first time that I had never even once inquired about the heavy burdens that my husband had been carrying around from work. I began to see the depth of my own

selfishness and that what was missing in me was the 'forgiving heart' that Jesus demonstrated even on the cross. I think the 'gospel shower' that I had so desperately been trying to get away from had actually begun to help me grow after all."

A short time after this, Kanamori asked his wife if she would help him host a Christian meeting in their home once a month. The testimonies she heard from various guests that her husband invited to the meetings, the scriptures she read - all these things began to keep her awake at night. Jesus was knocking on the door of Ryoko's heart and she was realizing for the first time, she said, that all that He had done was for HER.

She started attending the church near

their home and within six months she asked to be baptized. Though their daughter, Masaha, is still not a believer, life at the Kanamori home is worlds apart from what it once was. Kazuo says that not only is home life different, but that his difficult work situation is now a place of blessing.

"I spend most of my time helping various financial institutions re-structure and revive their situation," he said. "I'm kind of like a surgeon performing delicate operations. Sometimes the 'patient' is not so cooperative."

"Where I once would just give up when I had to deal with a particularly thorny situation," he said, "I now take it to the Lord in prayer. And I've seen the Lord give me the answer to intractable problems time after time - huge mountains moved by the Holy Spirit's power. I'm so thankful to God."

Ryoko, as well, can testify to the mountains moved in her own situation.

"I feel like my journey with the Lord up until now has been very much like that of Jesus' disciple, Thomas, who wouldn't believe in Jesus' resurrection unless he could see it with his own eyes (John 20:24).

"Jesus has been saying to me, like He said to Thomas, 'Stop doubting and believe!'" Kanamori added, "We're just so awed by how great God is!" ❖

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The Word For Today (B)	Pastor Chuck Smith leads in worship from Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California. <i>Su 5:28p & M 5:23p</i>
The Joy of Music (j)	Organist Diane Bish performs outstanding arrangements of classical and religious favorites. <i>Sa 5p</i>
Devotion Time "Clay" (J)	Host Kenichi Nakagawa brings Bible messages from the "Clay" monthly devotional guide. <i>Tu 5:25p & Sa 5:30p</i>
Stories From the Bible (J)	Colorful drawings serve to tell children the timeless stories of the Old Testament. <i>W 4:55p</i>
Country Cross-roads (E)	Host Bill Mack brings out the best in country music and those who perform it. <i>W 5:21p</i>
The Shalom Workshop	Instructor Takako Tsukui leads her students in creative projects with a spiritual point. <i>Th 4:55p</i>
NEW Seisho no Chie (J)	Pastor and dentist Yoshitaka Satoh and wife, Noriko, share lessons in wisdom from the Bible. <i>Tu 4:55p</i>
Computer Bible (J)	A guide to using the computer for enhancing personal Bible study. <i>F 5:24p</i>

(J) = Japanese-language only

(j) = English w/ Japanese sub-titles

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(B) = Bilingual broadcast

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CPI

-John Mehn

1999 National Conference

You Don't Want to Miss It!

The Church Planting Institute's National Annual Conference is the largest one-time activity of the Institute. It is really a microcosm of what we are trying to do year-round. It is a rally, a family reunion, a return to the basics, and a networking time for all involved in CPI. It is a blessing both for those who have attended before, and for those participating for the first time.

Our CPI mission statement is: "We exist to serve those involved in church planting in Japan by equipping and supporting them in the establishment of healthy, growing churches that are a vital part of a national, indigenous church planting movement."

This is exemplified at the conference. This is the one place where our "9 strategic systems" operate through the four "key environments" we are trying to encourage in the Institute. The CPI conference is really where we can grasp first-hand what we want to see happening throughout Japan. What happens **November 8-11 at Megumi Chalet Karuizawa** will add fuel to the movement and momentum to these environment, which we want to encourage among the Japanese as well as the missionary community.

An Envisioning Environment

Leaders, missionaries and Japanese, need to clearly see again God's vision for Japan, and the world and our role in it. We want

everyone to go home with a greater Vision of God and His Kingdom. That is the theme of this year's conference.

A Renewal Environment

Seeing God in new ways and ourselves in our weakness and fallenness are the seeds of renewal in our own hearts, and in the hearts of people in our ministries, and, indeed, the whole nation. You will spend many moments in heart searching, repenting and taking new steps in faith at the conference through sharing, worship, prayer and introspection.

A Mentoring Environment

All leaders must have mentors who will guide them and challenge them in their development. At the conference we hope you will meet many who you can mentor and who can mentor you. The networking at the conference is very contagious, along with our meetings of the Regional Peer-mentoring Groups.

A Learning Environment

At the conference the learning opportunities are highly concentrated. There is too much for *anyone* to absorb. There will be joint sessions with Steve Childers where we will all explore together God's vision for the world. Steve and others will also be sharing about the Transforming Power of the Gospel, and how Christ can give us power in our lives. We will also have time to explore what God is doing in the CPI movement in furthering Church

Planting in Japan.

The Foundations in Church Planting track, taught by Steve Childers, is the basis of all our training. A new track this year, Perspectives in Cross Cultural Church Planting in Japan, will include the topics "What should a church planting movement look like?" "Building trust in Japanese relationships" and "The significance of Amae for Evangelism and Church Life." There will also be at least two other topics offered.

We are very excited to have Tom Nebel joining us to speak on mentoring and coaching. He will give a presentation to the whole conference, as well as teaching two electives on coaching. We are also expanding our elective options (see next page) from about 15 last year to nearly double that number (each person can attend up to 4). We will also consider assessment of church planter's effectiveness in two electives. There will be an improved and expanded resource center where you can display what you have learned with others.

What if you miss the conference? The Institute will still be supporting and fostering learning, mentoring, envisioning and renewal environments. Resources from the conference such as audio tapes, manuals and other materials will be available. And **be watching for the National Conference again in early November of 2000!**



CPI

1999 CPI Conference Electives

This year we have nearly doubled the number of electives from 1998. Below are the electives that have been confirmed for the conference so far. Others will be added to the final program as they are confirmed.

There will be four elective periods during the conference. Each participant will be able to pick from what is offered each session. All electives will be audio-taped and handouts will be available in the CPI resource system network after the conference..

*Titles listed here represent the general content of the session.
(Actual titles may vary in the final program)*

- *Church Growth & Renewal, Part 1&2 - Steve Childers
- *Coaching for Church Planters Intro - Tom Nebel (offered twice)
- *Multiplying churches (In Japanese) - Pastor Akae
- *Lessons in Church Planting in Japan (In Japanese) - Pastor Satake
- *Preaching to Japanese - Warren Payne
- *Developing Vision for Ministry- John Mehn
- *Assessing Church Planters - John Mehn, Dan Iverson
- *Discovering Your Divine Design for Ministry - John Mehn
- *Ministry in Teams - Dan Iverson
- *Multiplying churches (In Japanese) - Pastor Kawasaki
- *Issue Forum: Gospel-centered Churches in Japan - Bruce Young and others
- *Personal renewal/ Sonship - Bruce and Sue Young
- *Mentoring and Coaching - Laurence Hiebert, Janet Kunnecke
- *Vital Signs: Fellowship - Cell church models - Pat Hansen
- *Vital Signs: Worship - Gary Bauman, Ken Taylor and others
- *Bible Study Materials and Methods - Janet Kunnecke
- *Personal and Ministry Lessons I have learned - John Graybill
- *Vital Signs: Prayer as a ministry & way of life - Kevin Grip
- *Alpha Outreach Strategy - Andy Game English
- *Teaching Ministry - Linda Karner
- *Missionary - Japanese cooperation - Pastor Kunimi Tamai (in Japanese)
- *Vital Signs: Evangelism and church planting - Ralph Cox
- *Recruiting / Use of short-termers in Church Planting - Ralph Cox

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"But you're NOT A CHURCH PLANTER ...!"

...was shouted by one person who could not understand why Chris was very involved in the JEMA Church Planting Institute. You see Chris is not a church planter. He has another assignment in his mission. In reality, his mission is not particularly noted for being a church planting mission. His friend was very shocked to see Chris very involved in the CPI conference even leading a workshop. Chris is also very active on the CPI-Net and attends a regional peer mentoring group regularly in his area.

You are not required to be a church planter to be wrapped up in the JEMA Church Planting Institute. There are literally dozens of people who are finding CPI helpful to them in developing their ministry skills, give focus to their reason for ministering and renewing their personal spiritual lives. I would like to introduce four people who are very involved in CPI but are not church planters.

Case 1 - Mary is not a church planter. Even more so, her husband, who shares a different ministry assignment, is not a church planter either. Mary has been working in an established church teaching Bible studies and also training women teachers. She is also heavily involved in the

women's ministry of her church. She is involved in CPI because she gains help from others who are also in teaching ministry. She also appreciates the emphasis on the character of the Christian leader and is stimulated to follow Christ through her involvement in a regional peer mentoring group.

Case 2 - Paul is a head of his mission. Except for a period of time, he has never been directly involved in church planting. The

JEMA Church Planting Institute has given these missionaries... a new focus on their ministry and their lives.

CPI movement excites him as it emphasizes the need to mentor and develop Japanese leadership. He also endorses the conference and other activities for all his missionaries. He knows that his own mission could not provide the training and resources that CPI does. Paul is on the CPI leadership team because he is concerned for the direction of his mission and the vision for a church planting movement in Japan.

Case 3 - Peter is not a church planter by the strict definition. However, he was involved in helping a church start a new church. It has not been easy work being more on the sidelines but he has helped the church develop their own leadership for this new church.

He is committed to CPI because of its commitment to healthy churches multiplying themselves.

Case 4 - Chris is involved in what we commonly call a support ministry. He works in churches and is mentoring several church leaders in ministry skills. He has been able to enjoy the broad spectrum of the dozens of mission agencies in CPI. Probably the reason he is so involved is that his mentoring group gives him the support he needs along with accountability.

Why are these people involved in CPI? As you can see there are many reasons. Some are involved because they see the value of building Christ's kingdom together. Others are committed to developing national leaders, some are excited about the possibilities of a church planting movement, some want to see churches multiply. Others are simply involved as they want to learn more about how the Gospel can transform their lives. JEMA Church Planting Institute has given these missionaries and hundreds of others a new focus on their ministry and their lives.

The names used in this column are all fictitious. Maybe someone you know is one of these people. Maybe they can tell you why they are involved in CPI even though they may not be a church planter. Ask them why they are involved. Become more involved yourself. God is doing some amazing things.





-by Pat Hansen

URGENT, RESPONSE REQUIRED...!

This was the opening line of one message to the CPI-Net (an e-mail discussion forum for those in church planting and related ministries). Someone was asking questions about the effectiveness of English teaching in Japan. The inquirer's project was "aimed at helping me determine if God wants me in Japan, teaching English!"

The value of teaching English in Japan as an evangelistic strategy has for years been, and evidently still is, an ardently debated topic. The issue has come up in varying degrees at the CPI Church Planter's Conference as well as in peer mentoring groups. For some missionaries in Japan, English is their main mode of ministry. On the other hand, some missionaries not only refuse to teach English but even refuse to speak it when talking to Japanese people!

Some questions such as: How does such an approach to evangelism and church planting relate to the need of a truly indigenous church? Do missionaries come to Japan as English teachers or in an apostolic role? Are some missionaries being deceptive when they "pose" as qualified English teachers? Does English teaching contribute to the growth of the church? Does it bring people into the kingdom of God, or keep them comfortably isolated on the fringes?

The CPI-Net discussion forum

often offers up some interesting food for thought. This particular topic generated quite a few letters, and, interestingly enough, most were generally positive towards teaching English. Following are some excerpts from those discussions:

***We use English as an initial contact and it has been very helpful. It shouldn't be the only way you do outreach, but, ...two adult students made commitments to Christ...in addition four children made commitments through our classes last summer... Chapel and tea time as a part of the class, class parties including Christian themes,*

Is English Teaching a Valid Approach to Ministry in Japan?

testimonies, prayer, additional English Bible classes, and including Japanese church members to link them to the church, can improve your ability to reach people. We have taught 6 of our 10 years and have personally seen 33 people come to Christ out of our English classes. ...who are you trying to reach? Are you trying to reach those who already have the seeds sown in their hearts or are you trying to reach everyone in the community? We feel it is just as important to try to give people who don't have interest in the gospel a good taste of it.

***...there can be a balance of both English and Japanese witness. We have seen many Japanese come to Christ through English. Most often, this has been supplemented by Japanese. One young woman told us, after becoming a Christian, "you lived out what I was hearing in English and Japanese." We truly believe there is a place for English language work in Japan.... There is, however, a great need for the matters of the heart to be explained in one's heart language. We see the role of English language as a door opener, or an introduction.*

***We have used English almost from the outset, and originally it was totally for making contacts. Then we realized it was a good money maker. Then we realized we could use it for training*

Japanese believers in evangelism. So, those have become our three purposes for our English outreach. The 'result' we want to see is people coming to faith. And we have. ...I'll guess and say half of our baptisms have come from the English program.

***The only drawback I see to English is that it gives the impression in the community among some people that we are an 'English' church. But on the whole I would say the benefits far outweigh this one drawback... We are taking the long view, that Japanese are 200*

(cont. on p. 11)

A Japanese Reading OF II CORINTHIANS 5:17 As It Relates To EVANGELISM

-by Chris Sadowitz

"If any man be in Christ he is a new creation, old things are passed away, and behold, all things have become new."

As a relatively new American missionary in Japan I wondered why Japanese Christians didn't really believe the truth of these words as it related to their responsibility to evangelism. It is no secret that the Japanese have a vertically structured society and spend their entire lives within specific "nakamas." In doing evangelism either within one's own nakama (i.e. friendship evangelism) or without (i.e. door to door evangelism) one often runs the risk of being ostracized from one's group, or losing face in front of society at large for being peculiar. From a Western perspective, this dependence on the group and the need to belong seem to stymie the growth of the church. In light of the words "old things are passed away, behold all things are new," one would think that the Japanese believers should do away with the rigid, inflexible nature of their groupings and simply stop being afraid of what others might think. I have heard missionaries (particularly myself) say these same things to young believers.

Is there a way to reconcile the great truth of the freedom we have in Christ with the seemingly inescapable Japanese dependence on the group. To answer this question it might be helpful to consider Acts 1:8. Here

we find the world view of our Lord Jesus. His purpose for us is to be His witnesses. His power for us to accomplish the task is the Holy Spirit. His desired audience being Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the utter most parts of the world. If we match this world view with the way the Japanese see themselves in their society we see a close match.

For Japanese the innermost circle of relationships is called the "nakama." A person's family would be the closest of nakama, and is titled "miuchi". This would correspond well to Jerusalem as Jesus' disciples naturally went to their family and friends to tell them of the resurrection. But, Japanese also have other nakama to which they can belong. One's job might provide a nakama or in which the Japanese believer feels free to operate in. Special clubs or interest groups also provide the person with additional nakama-type relationship opportunities. These groups coincide with the Judea of Jesus' day, similar in that they were Jews and yet not family.

The next group of people with whom the average Japanese person has contact is his "Shirai" or "people he knows". The Jews of Jesus day knew about the Samaritans but had no close relationship to them. It was the goal, then, of moving to the Samaritans to give them the gospel as well. So also in present day Japan it is the goal of moving people from one's shirai to one's nakama.

Lastly, the Japanese view themselves in relation to the world in general. They view the world as "tanin" or "outside person" or "stranger" or "other". Basically, one has no responsibility to a tanin unless the tanin were to become a shirai or a nakama. In which case a relationship would be formed and various aspects of "giri" (obligation) would kick in. In fact, many people (not just the Japanese) unconsciously avoid "tanin" in order to keep from incurring more responsibilities. From not stopping to help a stranded motorist to avoiding eye contact in an elevator, all of us practice the exclusion of tanin.

(cont. next page)



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(cont. from previous page)

But Jesus' world view included the tanin, i.e. the "uttermost parts of the earth", (or the furthest people from me relationship-wise). It is the Christian's responsibility to go to the tanin and move them into shiriai- and nakama-type relationships until they come to the nakama of "kirisuto no uchini aru," (being in Christ).

How can we help Japanese believers carry out the great commission? Certainly it is not to force culturally-insensitive ways of doing evangelism upon them. Perhaps an understanding of how they themselves see their relationships will enlighten them and us to more effectiveness in spreading the Gospel.



News from the Front

(cont. from p. 9)

miles from God and we hope through our Bible times to move them towards a concept of the One, true creator God and a concept of their own sin. Every Bible time has the adults handling a copy of God's word and interacting with it.

***About the training of Japanese believers, we try to have one in each class. They can help with the Bible time if the students can't follow in English, and this gives them a real natural way to start talking to fellow Japanese about the wonderful news of the Saviour.English works, Japanese do come to the Lord through it. It is as if God has given us English as a world language at this time and we can use it in this way, like making friends with unrighteous mammon. We might not always have this opportunity and I try always to encourage the teachers in our program to be good stewards of this wonderful opportunity!*

*** Yes, some people come to Christ through English but many are content to nibble the worm of English off the hook of the gospel forever. Some solutions to this problem: 1. Use a mix of methods; do not depend exclusively on English. 2. Have each class for a stated period; three months, or one year. Throw out the ore and keep the gold. 3. Use English only to make money and incidentally for contacts or converts. Or for good will in the community. If you do find those really interested they will come to meetings with zero English. 4. We were advised not to teach English in our first term but get to preaching and teaching in Japanese. I still think this is good advice.*



We might ask, in your case, what other ways of evangelism have proven more effective than teaching English?



CPI-Net Discussion Forum

We invite you express your views and ideas on any subject related to Church Planting on the *CPI-Net Discussion Forum*.

To sign up for CPI-Net send a message to subscribe-Japan-churchplanters@xc.org with the word "subscription" in the subject line of an email message

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WANT TO GET AHEAD?



THEN GET ALONG!

-by Dr. John C. Maxwell

Although the following articles are not necessarily from a Christian perspective, and are intended for a business environment, I feel they do offer some Biblically valid insights into leadership and interpersonal relationships that can be applied in the church and mission context.

-Editor

For a business study a few years ago, more than 2,000 employers were asked, "For the last three persons dismissed from your business, why did you let them go?" The pollsters were surprised by the results. Two out of every three fired employees — regardless of the type of business or region of the country — were dismissed for the same reason: **THEY COULDN'T GET ALONG WITH OTHER PEOPLE.**

Relationships make or break us. From the quality of our family time to our interactions at work, our relationships are largely responsible for our career success or failure. To be a success in life, you must learn to get along with people.

The ability to develop relationships isn't based on some magical talent, although some people ARE born with strong instincts. For most of us, these abilities are learned.

Here Are Some Guidelines to Help You Develop Positive People Skills:

TAKE THE FOCUS OFF YOURSELF

People who focus on themselves when interacting with others rarely

build positive lasting relationships. All they do is create frustration for themselves and boredom for the other person.

Instead, become a good listener. Encourage others to talk about themselves. And be perceptive — when in another's home or office, observe your surroundings. You can discover quite a bit about someone's hobbies and interests by looking at pictures on the walls, trophies, books or mementos. Ask questions about what you see, and pay attention to the answers.

CARE AND KNOW A LOT ABOUT OTHERS

I often say that people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. And it's true; all the skills and education in the world will never impress anyone as much as genuine, heartfelt care for them. Plus, few things have a more positive effect on others than finding out and remembering things about them. Knowing a lot about people is a real display of your care for them, and it creates a lasting bond.

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE ANYONE'S VALUE

In spite of our human desire for large-scale influence, we really make an impact on people ONE AT A TIME. And we can miss some important opportunities to connect if we dismiss or overlook people we meet every day.

Meet others with anticipation, and expect EVERY encounter to yield positive results. It costs little to make another person feel

important and respected, but it does wonderful things for him or her. Value everyone, and you will never be guilty of underestimating anyone.

ALWAYS BRING SOMETHING TO THE TABLE

In the best relationships, both parties give and receive. To give to your relationships, bring something positive "to the table" when you meet, such as ideas, opportunities, and resources.

But besides giving, be willing to receive from the other person. In fact, one of the best ways to start a relationship is to ask for advice or a favor. While this may surprise you, it really works. Everyone loves to show his expertise and authority on a subject, because it makes him feel honored and respected. And we all enjoy the feeling that comes from helping someone else.

USE CONFLICT AS A TOOL, NOT A WEAPON

The presence of conflict in a relationship is natural and healthy. Damage only occurs when we react inappropriately to it. Try to use conflict as a tool — to learn more about the other person and find a solution that serves both of you. Relationships that endure conflict become stronger and deeper.

BE CREDIBLE AND CONSISTENT

Few things damage a friendship more severely than breaking a trust. And that happens when a person is inconsistent — when his words

(cont. on next page)

(cont. from previous page)

and actions don't match or when he stops fulfilling his obligations. Relationships dissolve quickly when others can't count on you, so say what you mean and stick to your word.

The growing person knows the value of good relationships. They bring both personal satisfaction and professional success. As Teddy Roosevelt said, "The most important single ingredient to the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people."

If you aren't naturally gifted in this area, don't worry. People skills can be learned, so work at improving them. If you already have a talent for working with others, keep fine-tuning your abilities. Either way, with improved people skills, your potential for success is nearly limitless.



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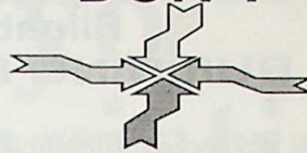
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DON'T ARGUE —



DISCUSS!

-by John C. Maxwell

Discussions can be healthy, since they have the potential to build relationships and result in a "win" for everyone. On the other hand, arguments are rarely good. Why? They are forceful attempts to change another person's point of view, and thus result in a "winner" and a "loser."

Arguments always cause some damage, even if you "win." The next time you find yourself involved in a conflict of opinion, use these guidelines to make it a DISCUSSION — resolving the issue while building the relationship.

1. WELCOME THE DISAGREEMENT. The other person may have a perspective you haven't considered, so be thankful for it. Maybe this is your chance to be corrected before making a mistake.

2. DISTRUST YOUR FIRST INCLINATION TO DEFEND YOURSELF. Defensiveness is often a natural reaction. But be careful — when you justify yourself, it's hard to change your position later. Plus, you'll miss the benefit of the other person's ideas.

3. CONTROL YOUR TEMPER. Getting angry always makes communication harder, not easier. So simmer down before you blow your top.

4. LISTEN FIRST. Give your "opponent" a chance to talk. Don't defend or debate. Build bridges of understanding, not barriers of misunderstanding.

5. LOOK FOR AREAS OF AGREEMENT. Dwell on areas where you agree. This establishes common ground, helping you find a solution good for both of you.

6. BE HONEST. Look for areas where you can admit error, then do it. This disarms others and reduces their defensiveness.

7. PROMISE TO THINK OVER THEIR IDEAS. Tell the person that you will consider his point of view, and actually do it. He may be right, after all.

8. THANK THEM SINCERELY FOR THEIR DESIRE TO HELP. Most people who take time to disagree with you are interested in positive results, the same as you are. Welcome that.

9. POSTPONE ACTION SO YOU BOTH CAN THINK THROUGH THE PROBLEM. If need be, suggest another meeting. To prepare, ask yourself some hard questions about your "side," and focus on a mutually beneficial solution.

10. BE WILLING TO AGREE TO DISAGREE. Sometimes you may need to accept your difference of opinion and move on. Be flexible whenever possible. Follow Thomas Jefferson's advice: "In matters of principle, stand like a rock; in matters of taste, swim with the current."

(cont. on p.14)



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(cont. from p.13)

Fileable Quotes on BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS...

"I will pay more for the ability to deal with people than any other ability under the sun."

— **John D. Rockefeller**

"You can't be any closer to God than you are to the person you love the least."

— **Unknown**

"Do to others as you would have them do to you."

— **Jesus (Luke 6:31)**

"Natural talent, intelligence, a wonderful none of these guarantees success. Something else is needed: The sensitivity to understand what other people want and the willingness to give it to them."

— **John Luther**

"The only way to have a friend is to be one."

— **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

"You can't make the other fellow feel important in your presence if you secretly feel that he is a nobody."

— **Les Giblin**

"When I'm getting ready to reason with a man, I spend about one third of my time thinking about myself and what I am going to say — and two thirds thinking about him and what he is going to say."

— **Abraham Lincoln**

"A gossip is one who talks to you about others; a bore is one who talks to you about himself; and a brilliant conversationalist is one who talks to you about yourself."

— **Lisa Kirk**

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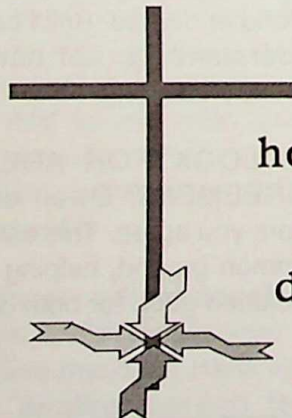
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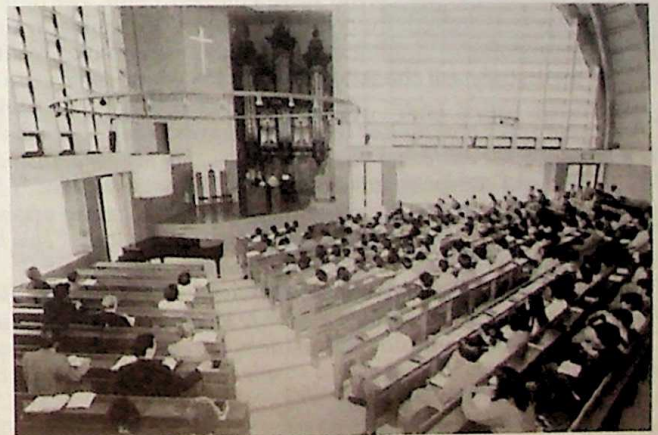
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Women in Ministry Seeing God's Glory in Kobe

The last two days of September found ladies from five prefectures joining together in Kobe for a time of fellowship and uplifting. A year ago the ladies of the Tokyo Women in Ministry retreat with Jill Briscoe came to Kobe to share with the ladies that are ministering in western Japan. At the close of the retreat they asked if we had enjoyed it and were assured it had been wonderful. Then, they challenged us to, "go and do likewise"!

After much prayer and quite a few telephone conversations the idea of a retreat at the German Lutheran Deaconess center, "Bethel House" was launched. It seemed a good idea to keep it short, so the same 24 hour format used last year was repeated.

The theme was The Glory of God: See His Glory a bit more, soak up His Glory and go out ready to share his Glory! Our times in the Word were in the book of John using the inductive Bible study tool written by Kay Arthur, God Are You There? Do You Care? Do You Know About Me? There were three times of group study, the first introducing the Book of John and the method presented by Precepts Ministries. There were two sessions for time alone in the Word in preparation for our group studies and one each for the first two lessons in God Are You There?

Penny Bailey led exceptional times of Praise and Worship. Karen Harless led in three valuable times of prayer. Kelly Buhn did

an excellent job with our book table, and we were delighted to sell most of the valuable Precepts materials.

The facilities at Bethel House were top rate. We thank LouAnne Copeland for all of her work in finding such a fine place for us, and taking care of all the little details that made things run smoothly! We heartily recommend the center for day or overnight gatherings, the facilities are brand new and the ladies that run things have true servants hearts!

Those that attended agreed early fall was a good time to have the retreat and we hope more ladies will join us next year! How about putting it on your calendar now?



You Are Special by Max Lucado with art by Sergio Martinez

translated by Toyoko Holbird

"You are precious in my sight" Isaiah 43:4

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- ☞ A 28 year old company employee from Kanagawa ken: "I bought it for myself and I decided to give it to some of my friends, too. I will give it as a present to a friend who is having a baby this year."
- ☞ A 23 year old company employee from Ibaraki ken: "This has become my favorite book in the entire world. For me, this book is "Someone special." It makes me cry every time I read it."
- ☞ A 34 year old church layman: from Gifu ken: "This book is filled with a wonderful message which touches your heart. I would send it to my non-Christian friend."
- ☞ A 42 year old self employed business person: "This book describes the relationship between God and us in a simple way with beautiful pictures. I would like to read others by the same author."

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I've Been Thinking....

-by Warren Okerman

I'VE BEEN THINKING about the Christian history of Japan: more specifically, the two periods of time where Japanese nationals were converting to Christianity by the thousands. Numerous names have been recorded in Japanese history that are worthy of being listed among the heroes of the faith.

These two periods are: the end of the sixteenth century, now called the **Momoyama period**, and the end of the nineteenth century, which is well known as the **Meiji period** in Japanese history. Both periods have several things in common. Foreigners had come to Japan after years of isolation. Among the foreigners were ambitious, aggressive foreign missionaries who had a purpose and a plan to get things done. In both periods the government was being completely and dangerously transformed. Old leaders were being thrown down while new leaders were forcefully rising up. And the leadership in both periods, old and new, was coming out of the samurai class.

There was one more important similarity. With the turnover in the national political arena, there was, in both periods, a group of would-be leaders who had no chance of getting into the national power struggle. These were young ambitious men of samurai birth who were capable and willing, but for whatever reason the gods had not seen to it that they be located in the right place at the right time when the chance of the ages to make a name for oneself and move up in power was available. The feudal system locked them into their own clan and group. They

could not move ahead of their elders. And their elders were not moving at all. It was primarily from this group of samurai leadership that the church in Japan found its strength.

While the old established government leadership was being driven out and a new group of young warriors were forcing their way in, this third group was on the sidelines watching. They realized that once the revolution was finished and the action had died down, their position would not have improved. They had dreams of being heroes. They were committed to loyalty and the love of honor, and the way of the sword, Bushido, was apart of their daily heart-beat.

These men saw no real future in the present political revolt, and they were drawn to a hope of another kingdom. The idea of serving and dying for a perfect king, rather than the arrogant men in this world, was an image that stole their imaginations and eventually cost them their lives. There were few who turned back with regret. The majority marched on to live a new life for an eternal unseen king and kingdom at a price unimaginable to us in our age.

These two periods of explosive Christian growth were not without problems. Church doctrine was often confused and sometimes left out altogether. Things happened too fast. Some men used physical force to convert whole villages to the Christian faith, or at least add members to the church. Many young leaders made their stand and refused to bend on issues that now we see as rather unimportant,

hardly worthy of a sacrifice of one's life. Yet, I have a feeling God, with His generous heart toward all who have a simple faith, though hopelessly lacking real understanding, was not ashamed. Considering my own children, I think God would rather see simple faith and people of action, than all the reasonable arguments to stay calm and not get out of line with the everyday norm - in spite of its wicked corruption.

The main theme that continues to fascinate me about these men and women who led Japan toward a new faith and religion, is their concept and understanding of "Lordship". They were men like the centurion who said to Jesus, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes." (Luke. 7:6)

As I watch the young men and women of Japan hang out at the video game shops and sport the latest styles that were approved by the media for this month's wearing, I wonder, "Are there any samurai left today?" Where is the call to loyalty, honor and laying down of life and property? Perhaps they have all perished. Perhaps they are around us waiting to be awakened.



I want to return the youth of Japan to the heartbeat of Bushido, and the Way of the Samurai, but one redeemed in the blood and the love of Christ. But perhaps my hope is simply a dream.





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Dr. Clyde B. McDowell, fifth president of Denver Seminary, on Monday, June 7, 1999.

God used him in extraordinary ways in his time with the school. A new vision for equipping leaders in areas of content, character, and competency was introduced and moved forward during his tenure.

The seminary community will miss his leadership, his warm, loving spirit, and, most of all, his heart for God.

Dr. McDowell also ministered to our JEMA community some years ago, through his messages at the Annual Summer Conference.

IN LOVING MEMORY

Gary Lee Jones, precious son of Lee and Sandra Jones, entered into the presence of our Lord on July 7th.

Gary, who was thirty-one years old, was killed in a car accident in Hogansville, Georgia. He is survived by his wife, Yuko and a son. Gary's parents, Lee and Sandra, celebrate 25 years of ministry this year.

We, of the missionary community, extend our love and prayer for comfort to Lee, Sandra and siblings, Jennifer, Peter and Sarah.

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Spring Summer Christmas

A note from the directors, Darryl and Kathy Webb

Mission West is an international homestay program, providing safe, quality homestays around the world. Our goal is to build friendships that will last a lifetime. Our host families are carefully screened, loving, Christian families who truly enjoy having people from other cultures in their homes.



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Darryl Webb
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CLST Japan

Perpectives

Wedding Evangelism in Japan - (Part 2)

-by Doyle Book

Strange as it may seem, evangelism is taking place through weddings in Japan! Weddings are channels for a witness to the Gospel. As I stated in my previous article, there is first an orientation session with the couple. At this time, to explain the origin and the meaning of the church wedding which so strongly attracts them, the concept of the Living God is presented to the couple. Second, the ceremony itself, including a brief gospel message, expresses to the audience the fact that God is not merely one among many gods but is the Only One. Third, through a service of beauty and meaning, people who have had no previous interest at all in Christianity are finding the church attractive and, hopefully, will be open to another opportunity to attend a Christian service.

This is truly a unique and exciting witness opportunity! The orientation time, which takes place from several days to several weeks before the ceremony, gives validity to a missionary's involvement in this ministry. Although the opportunity to present a brief gospel message during the ceremony is a delight, it is in the informal orientation time that the greatest potential for witness is found. For there the young people are open and ready to listen to anything that will prepare them for their wedding.

In the orientation I use the order of service as a springboard, explain-

ing the meaning of each part of the program. We practice the hymns with a tape recorder. At the place of the Bible reading, I explain what the Bible is. Of course, one can do this only by explaining who God is. He is the Creator, the only god, alive right now. We do not exist by chance but are the objects of His creation and His love. He wants to have fellowship with us, to walk with us in our lives. I develop this message over about 20 minutes, pointing out to the couple that here is the true significance of the ceremony they have chosen. I take about 15 minutes to explain the meaning of the vows.

I feel that God has given me an approach that creates in the minds of the couple a sense of the seriousness of marriage, the beauty of the Christian ceremony, and a desire for a true, faithful marriage relationship. Often, I feel excited as I am going through this part with two young people who might have come primarily because chapel weddings are considered the "in" thing or "cute."

The first section of the orientation takes one hour. After a short break, we go to the chapel for a brief rehearsal. This second part takes 30 minutes. We return to the meeting room for the final 30 minutes. At this time the theme is, "Guarantee for a Happy Marriage!" After sharing a great deal of practical advice, using an orientation booklet that John Graybill cre-

ated, I return in the final few minutes to the discussion of the Living God. It is in relationship with Him that our lives can be truly happy and our marriage can find fulfillment. We can know Him through Jesus Christ. I share with the couple materials that will help them see who He is. Then I autograph a Bible, give it to the couple and pray for them. I also assure them that, although there might be other ceremonies on the day of their wedding, when I stand before them, to me their wedding is the only one, and I will put my whole heart into it to make it beautiful and meaningful.

In my earlier article, I raised the question of follow-up. This is not at all an easy matter. Since a wedding chapel is owned by a business organization, what we normally think of as church services are not available. My primary concern is to establish a relationship with the couple and maintain contact with them. I ask them to send me one snapshot of themselves from their wedding day or honeymoon. When they do, I write them a personal letter and include a picture of Thelma and myself with our grandchildren. I invite them to come by the chapel for a "cup of coffee" when they can. Not many return to the chapel in person. Many do send letters along with their snapshots, and often these letters include warm expressions of having felt deeply moved by their ceremony. Some

couples do come for a visit, sharing their joy and appreciation for making their wedding so special. At least in one case we were privileged to share in the couple's concerns about the impending birth of their child, and were able to pray for the mother and baby.

"Churches are being built with the world's money!" I said in the first article. "But, do they do 'churchy' things in them?" someone might wonder with genuine concern. In John and Lucille Graybill's case, permission to conduct church services in the chapel had been granted. The Graybills invite their couples to these services. A few have come.

Recently, I conducted a dedication service for a new chapel where the owner gave permission to use the chapel freely for services. The local missionaries who have taken the responsibility for the weddings will be holding Bible studies for the hotel personnel and will be bringing their church members for support in evangelistic outreach from the chapel into the community. Such examples of what we usually think of a "church" are quite rare in wedding chapels.


In my case, I have conducted Christmas worship services at year's end. One was for a company which brought its 200 employees to experience a Christmas candlelight service! I am currently asking our manager for his cooperation in beginning an informal Sunday evening service

that will feature hymns and scriptural meditation. We are also discussing the possibility of inviting the couples to return upon the birth of a child for a service of blessing for their babies. Such attempts at follow-up require a great deal of effort and time. We solicit your prayers that doors will be open for us to be able to establish God's kingdom in the hearts of the couples we contact.

Finally, since weddings fall on most Sunday mornings, I am seldom able to attend the traditional church service. How will Christians who think of 11:00 am Sunday as "The Sacred Hour" evaluate such a situation? There is room for concern here, and I do not take the fact of my absences lightly. However, as a student of missiology, I am convinced that, to win the world, we must go where the world is. We must meet them on their "turf" to be able to relate to them.

For many Christians it seems that the Sunday morning worship is merely a cozy nest that results in very few attempts to reach out to a lost world during the following week. I go to that lost world Sunday mornings to conduct "evangelistic services" where up to 300 non-Christians gather. Japanese unbelievers see no reason to come to the traditional church. In addition, most Japanese Christians seem to have little or no strategy for reaching their society for Christ. In fact, it seems that most of them do not even believe it is possible to win their families and friends for


Jesus. God has opened the door to help make the church attractive again to unbelievers. He has placed on me the urgency of walking through that door.

The church must meet people "out there," at the point of their felt needs--where marriages take place. I am called to leave the place which is, for many Christians, coffee times and soothing sermons, and where little takes place to compel believers to establish the Kingdom of God in their society during the week. I am attempting, in my small way, to declare that Kingdom into the lives of people who have no awareness of the Living God. For the present, this is my mission. 

Questions or Comments?
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Perpectives

Bridal Ministries - Bane or Blessing?

-by Tim Cole

As one who is frequently requested to do "Christian" weddings, I read the most recent Japan Harvest article on bridal ministries with considerable initial interest, followed by ambivalence, because of some essential questions which the author left untouched.

On the surface, bridal ministries do appear to be a wonderful way to proclaim the Gospel in Japan. After all, what could be more exciting than the opportunity to preach Christ to a chapel full of people, who might never hear the message otherwise; to be available as a minister of Christ at a festive family occasion; and to be generously paid for one's labors besides? As exciting as it sounds, I have turned down about a dozen hotels and scores of individuals wanting me to perform weddings because of a clash of principles which bridal ministries, in general, have yet to reconcile.

Christian counsellor and author Norm Wright recently stated on a Focus On The Family broadcast, "The task of the Church is nurturing marriages not performing weddings". I believe his assertion is biblical. Yet, at the same time weddings in Japan do present opportunities to proclaim the Gospel, which is also an important task of the church. Herein is the conflict.

Two summers ago a young Christian woman in our church came to me for counselling. Over the course of two or three sessions

I learned that she had become pregnant by an unbelieving man she had met at work, and that she was intending to marry him. Although she already knew what the Bible said about premarital sex and marriage to an unbeliever, I discussed those matters again with her. I also asked her (since she was determined to marry this man) to wait for a period of time so we could try to lead him to Christ. I also made it clear that I would not perform the marriage ceremony of a believer to an unbeliever. Within two weeks, without our knowledge, she was married by another missionary at a wedding chapel in a neighboring city.

Theirs has been a stormy marriage, aggravated by child abuse and an affair. Last month, her husband brought home paperwork to ask for a divorce. Thankfully, the story is not all sad. A month after the wedding, she came before the church with genuine repentance, went through a time of spiritual restoration, and, despite her husband's opposition, has been one of the church's most faithful believers ever since.

However, this incident highlights some of the weaknesses of typical bridal ministries, and we are facing the same situation with yet another Christian woman at this very time. First, and most obvious, the missionary joined an unequally yoked believer and unbeliever in matrimony. He was no doubt unaware of the situation, but even if he had been aware of it, his contract with the hotel may not

have let him refuse to perform that wedding. He was not aware of it because he had not carried out adequate premarital counselling. Nor has any "follow-up" counselling been done to find out how the newly wed couple was doing. In other words, the missionary unknowingly was party to a violation of God's will, and also failed to provide the kind of nurture the marriage needed. Now, with divorce on the table, does he bear any responsibility to hold them accountable to their marriage vows which he witnessed? And even if he wanted to do any of the above, does the sheer volume of weddings he performs make it humanly possible to do so, along with his other missionary work?

As one who spends significant time counselling those struggling with collapsing marriages, both in the context of church planting, and in my work with Family Focus Japan, I am uncomfortable cooperating with assembly line wedding industries which pump out thousands of couples who are clueless as to what marriage is all about. Taking the time to counsel couples regarding compatibility, family factors, and realistic expectations, and sharing with them personally the way of salvation and the need to make God central in their marriage, is a matter of accountability and responsibility. Without having done my best to help these marriages get off to the right start, I could not answer to the Lord for all the failed marriages, which vows I had witnessed.

The first question we need to ask is, what kind of testimony do we present to the world through the value we place on the weddings we perform? If we are willing to join anyone and everyone who is willing to pay the chapel's price, how can we honestly affirm Paul's teaching in Eph. 5:32 that marriage is sacred because it bears witness to Christ's relationship with His Church?

Another essential question is, how many chaplains would still consider weddings worthwhile ministry opportunities if they were not paid? A number of Japanese have expressed their disappointment to me over pastors and missionaries performing hotel or chapel weddings for pay. The recurring comment is "Bozu to kawarinai..." (They're no different than the Buddhist monks...). Are we ministers of God, committed to nurturing God-honoring marriages or are we merchants "peddling the word of God" (II Cor. 2:17)? Paul went to great lengths to stay above reproach in areas where finances mingled with ministry (II Cor. 2:17, 4:2, 6:3-13, 7:2, 8:20-21). Do bridal ministries demonstrate that same integrity? In other words, is there more concern for nurturing marriages than netting money?

I have heard more than once the statement, "These people are going to get married anyway. Better that the wedding be done by a genuine Bible believing minister or missionary, than by Liberals or phonies". I generally agree, *IF* it is done in a manner that truly honors the name of Christ. If for instance, a missionary accepts ¥20,000 for a wedding that a Shinto Kannushi

San would perform for ¥5,000, in crass economic terms, is the missionary truly providing four times the service of the Shinto priest?

But we must also ask ourselves what is the most effective means for us to invest our precious time and energies on behalf of the Gospel? In contrast to, for instance, English classes, which can provide recurring contact with people, ongoing connection with a church, and weekly doses of Bible teaching, a wedding is essentially a one time affair. There is little relationship built, little trust earned, virtually no living testimony demonstrated between the chaplain and his audience. While no doubt "God's word will never return void", to many in the audience the chaplain may be no more than an accessory, like the organ, the candles, or the flowers.

I have never lacked for "opportunities" to proclaim the Gospel. But I am becoming increasingly selective regarding which of those opportunities are worth my time. In order for bridal ministries to make the grade, there must be relationship, accountability, integrity, and a degree of proven effectiveness. It must be far more than showing up in a robe with a little black book, reading the rites, presenting a New Testament, and accepting the cash.

For these reasons, I would challenge those involved in bridal ministries to apply far more rigorous standards to their work, than what is commonly seen at present: insist on several sessions of counselling before and after the

wedding, focus on marrying couples who are local and have the potential of connecting to a local church, make sure they ARE introduced to a local church, and insist on the right to refuse to marry any couple who, after counselling, are considered incompatible, whether for spiritual, emotional, or other reasons. If those conditions can't be met, than perhaps the Lord has a better quality ministry in store.

I have married some non-Christian couples, but only ones whom I had previously known to a greater or lesser degree, and only in situations that met the criteria above. The result has been ongoing evangelistic contacts with the couples and family members who were at those weddings.

I have yet to hear anyone share a testimony of how they came to Christ through a "Christian" wedding. But if anyone does, it will most likely only happen when we clearly demonstrate how serious we are about both faith and marriage, by our commitment to nurture marriages, rather than only performing weddings. Without that commitment, the most eloquent wedding sermon may not amount to much more than the proverbial "noisy gong or clanging cymbal" of I Cor. 13. With that commitment, we will discover that a conscientious bridal ministry demands much hard work for little immediate or tangible reward. But surely the ultimate harvest will be far more plentiful.



POTPOURRI & PROMISES

by Janice A. Kropp

-Y2K-



FEAR of the UNKNOWN, doomsday forecasts, survival necessities, etc. are all Y2K related phenomenon. These have given rise to questions of who does one believe, and how does one prepare for the event this world and all of us in it face at the dawn of 2000?

However, this issue's P&P takes a different look at Y2K.

~~~~ Y ~~~~

**YOU...**How do you DO?

It is always so exciting to meet God's special people! Here in Japan is a great host working for the Kingdom! I love the mix of denomination, talent, age, and form of ministry. God bless you each and every one. Whether we are "professionals" or not, we ALL count in this great land! I thank our God, the God of all the universe and all created things, for each and every Christian living here.

Again the question: How do you DO?

Every healthy Christian carries the SURVIVAL KIT! The KIT holds DO's and these are: 1. Commit your life daily to the purpose of glorifying Jesus Christ. 2. Spend some time each day meditating on God's Word and apply it to your life. 3. Get rid of all grudges daily. 4. Spend a little time daily getting more intimate with your family—your mate, your children, and when feasible extended family members. Do all you can to resolve family conflicts. 5. Spend some time each week having fellowship and fun with at least one or two committed Christian friends of the same sex. 6. Have a daily routine. 7. Do something nice for one special person each week.

(Taken from the book, Happiness is a Choice, by Frank Minirth and Paul Meier)

*No matter what else you are doing  
From cradle days through to the end,  
You are writing you life's secret story;  
Each day sees another page penned.*

Each month ends a thirty-page chapter;  
Each year means the end of a part--  
And never an act is misstated,  
or even one wish of the heart.

*Each day when you wake the book opens  
Revealing a page clean and white:  
What thoughts and what words and what doings  
Will cover it page by night?*

God leaves that to you; you're the writer,  
And never a word shall grow dim,  
Till the day you write the word "Finis,"  
And give back your life's book to Him.

-Author Unknown

~~~~ 2 ~~~~

TO, TOO, TWO What of 2?

When she was growing up, Judy attended a church with her family. Questions about God were never answered by mother or pastor, so Judy kept wondering!

Judy married a Roman Catholic and she along with her husband, Jerry, and seven children occasionally attended mass. One summer their next door neighbor, Helen, invited all the kids to a Five Day Club. All the children but one went. Early in the week, their teacher Barbara, gave the plan of salvation and asked who would like to receive Jesus. All the kids responded. It was Sara, the sickly one of the family, and Gary, though, who showed dramatic changes in their young lives. Because of her long illness, Sara had become very self-centered and selfish. Five Day Club, however, brought a change in Sara's life and Judy wondered, "How could this be?" Previously, giving Sara her daily medication had been "battle time", but now Sara's words of, "Mom, when it's time for me to take my medication, call me and I'll come right away," baffled Judy! Not only that, but Sara started to share her toys and even invited her siblings to "come & share"!

Then, Gary broke a window, not so

unusual, but what Gary did upon breaking the window puzzled Judy even more. Here came the little guy with a statement and a question. "I broke the window. What do I do for punishment?"

Judy, blown away by curiosity, asked, "Sara, what has happened that you are so different?" Without hesitation Sara answered, "I have Jesus in my heart and I want to be good now!" Judy found an unused Bible in the house and started to read. Then the day came when Five Day Club teacher, Barbara, called with a question and an invitation. "Judy, what do you think about the change in the lives of Sara and Gary?" When Judy confessed that she didn't understand, Barbara gave the gospel right over the phone. Then she asked, "Can the whole family come to the Five Day Club closing rally?" Judy was sure that husband, Jerry, would be against any such thing, but Barbara, taking it in stride, promised with, "We'll pray about his agreeing. I'll call you back later."

Judy fell to her knees in deep conviction, and cried out to the God she had previously not been able to find. When she got up, the burden of sin, regrets, and failures had been taken from her shoulders. Why had she waited so long to experience the mar-

vellous grace of Jesus? "Who knew and didn't tell me?" she pondered. Judy thought of all the people in the neighborhood. "Who seemed to be the most likely to be a Christian?" she thought. JOAN came to mind. "I'll give her a call." When the call went through, Judy blurted, "Joan, why didn't you tell me when you knew?" To which Joan replied, "Knew what?" "You didn't tell me that I could have all my sins forgiven!" Judy answered. Joan, completely taken aback, didn't have a clue to the whole matter. Judy promised, "I'll be right over!"

After hearing Judy's marvellous conversion experience, Joan asked, "Can I do that, too?" As the tears flowed, they prayed together. Then the two of them thought, "Who knew and didn't tell us?" Off to MARY's house they hurried. She must have known about the truth of salvation. That afternoon Mary accepted Christ. Now the three of them thought, "Who knew and didn't tell us?" BARB sure seemed like a believer. When the three met in Barb's home that afternoon they found that, yes, Barb knew, but she had just heard from Barbara, teacher of the Five Day Club. All this took place on the 7th of September 1972!

Jerry, Judy's husband, noticed a drastic change in his wife! Judy encouraged him to start reading the Bible for himself. The verses from Jer-

emiah about the children of those who followed God, deeply impressed him and he accepted the Lord Jesus. His life was new! So new that when at work he was asked to cover for wrong-doings in the company, he refused. That refusal got him "fired" from the job he had held for years. He was given three month severance pay, unheard of at that time, which held the large family together until he secured a new job, where he eventually became its vice-president!

Why do I tell you this dynamic testimony? Ever since Judy gave me her story, the words, "Who knew and didn't tell me?" have rung in my heart. Judy had been searching for years and no one knew it. If only a witnessing Christian had approached her and given her answers to her questions!

My friends, there are people just like Judy living beside, behind and in front of us. There are precious teens, like Judy, who wonder and yet know not where to go for answers. There are the special ones God puts into our pathway — they wonder — & they wander.

The 2 in Y2K I am using for DOUBLING, doubling the Kingdom for our Lord and of His Christ. May 2000 be the year each one wins one! The Kingdom population in Japan will double — $1+1=2$.

THIS ISSUE'S PROMISE

*Go into all the world
and preach the Gospel...
and lo I AM with you
always."*

Matthew 28:18

~~~~ K ~~~~

**It ALL adds up to KING-  
DOM!**

In Forest Lawn, a spacious, beautiful cemetery in Glendale, California there stands a special building where two gigantic paintings hang — the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus! If I remember correctly, the crucifixion's length is as long as a six story building is high. It is breath-taking. The Resurrection is not quite so large, but just as marvellous. The artist paints the empty tomb on the lower left hand side, but the main focus is — the HEAVENLY scene. Above the clouds, for as far as the eye can see, there stand the countless millions of saints from every tribe and nation — facing the great and awesome throne of God!

We are Kingdom builders. Jesus, in Matthew chapter 10, had called his twelve. and "sent them out" with these words, "...As you go, preach this message: 'THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS NEAR', heal..., raise..., cleanse..., drive out..., do not worry about what you will say, do not be afraid,...and if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

History's last day, when will it be? God's Word tells us that ONLY the FATHER knows! There is one thing of which I feel very sure, my friends, it is HARVEST TIME here in Japan today! Look, the fields are white! The Year 2000 presents limitless opportunities and great challenges. I want to be a harvest partner for the building of the KINGDOM, don't you?



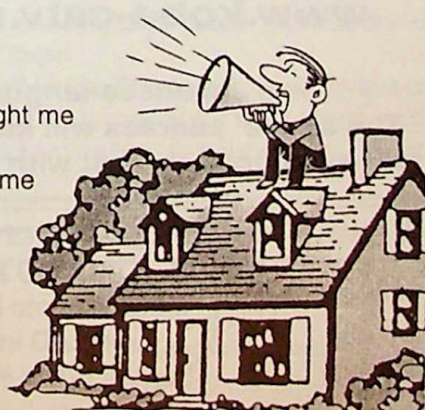
## Shouting It From the Husetops

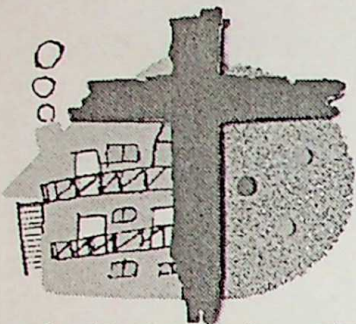
*By Marilyn Nelson*

I'm so glad  
The Love of God has caught me,  
But first His Spirit sought me  
In order to tell me  
The blood of Christ has bought me  
and I believed!

And next the Lord has brought me  
Through a wilderness where He taught me  
His treasures and His truths.  
New life and peace He's wrought in me  
So I say, "Believe and you will see!"

*"What I tell you in the dark, utter  
in the light; and what you  
hear whispered,  
proclaim upon the husetops.  
(Matthew 10:27)*





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# Y2K And You

-Janice Kropp

**T**here is a wide range of opinion on what will happen when the new millennium arrives. On one hand, in the circle of those "in the know," is the opinion that nothing is going to happen, but on the other hand, there are those who state that most certainly something will take place.

Now, someone is going to be correct. So, where do we go from here? On August 27, 1999 at Ochanomizu Christian Center about fifty Japanese believers gathered to listen to Akinori Taniguchi Sensei, pastor of the Youth Harvest Church of Kobe, lecture on the problem of Y2K. Most Japanese know the problem as "2000 nen mondai," but the average person in our churches and on the street fails to understand that life could, and most probably will be, affected in some way.

The microchip is everywhere! Since many electrical systems make use of these, if just one area malfunctions, other areas will be affected. Picture yourself in the middle of a spider-like web, with all

areas of life intersecting at certain points...mass transit—water—electricity—payment of salaries—banking—shipping by land or by sea—ordering supplies and equipment. Nearly everything in our lives depends on the smooth functioning of something else. In practical terms, then, how should we help our believers ready themselves for any eventuality?

Taniguchi Sensei gave three areas for our attention and readiness. 1. "Reiteki no sonae" (spiritual readiness) — We, as Christians, must prepare our hearts. 2. "Bushitsuteki no sonae" (readiness of provisions) — We should have food and water on hand. The suggestion for up to three months supply was clearly given. 3. "Keizaiteki no sonae" (financial readiness)—We should have a month's supply of cash on hand. There is no need for fear, Sensei said, but we must prepare, not only for ourselves, but take our communities into consideration too. Inform and make ready, thus meeting personal and community needs, was the challenge of the day.



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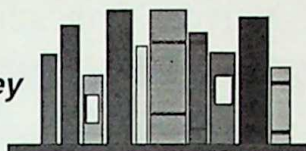
is a Japanese-language Y2K WEB sight.  
The above address will keep your Japanese friends  
and neighbors abreast with the latest Y2K information.

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## Book Review

- by Nancy Sorley



A 1991 survey of pastors by Fuller Institute of Church Growth, shows that 80% of practising pastors thought that ministry negatively affects their family.

Tim Sanford, himself an MK (missionary kid), is a Licensed Professional Counsellor who counsels many PKs (preacher's kid) and MKs. Drawing from his own experience and those of his counselees he has set out to pinpoint the dangers in the way PKs and MKs tend to see themselves, the world, and God. He has written his book not about PKs/MKs, but for them.

The subtitle is *The Preachers Kid manual of the Holy Heresies You May Have Grown Up With and How to Find Your Way Back to the Truth*. Because of their unique experiences PKs and MKs can develop faulty thinking that haunts them all of their lives.

Tim writes in a very easy-to-read, conversational style, with clear examples and references for his statements. He lists the faulty thinking under these categories: Holy Heresies about the way we think about ourselves; Holy Heresies about the way we think about the world; a Holy Heresy about God.

One of the main problems is the thinking that "I have to be perfect." This heresy which leads to perfectionism, can also lead to depression, a common problem among PKs/MKs. Tim, however, goes beyond just analyzing the problems. He helps the reader come to terms with his experiences, and start to take steps to correct this thinking.

A great number of PKs/MKs, like my husband and I, go on to full time ministry themselves. So, there is probably a high percentage of mis-

sionaries in Japan who fall into this category, and need to hear what Tim is saying. We may not realize the faulty thought-patterns that influence our behavior, attitudes and emotions. Some of us may have greater damage than others. This book encourages us to see the pluses and minuses of our experiences, to face reality, to re-focus our experiences, and to adjust our thinking.

I believe that many of us can benefit from this book, and when our MKs become adults, we can pass it on to them.



*I Have to be Perfect* can be ordered for \$9.95 plus postage, from Timothy L. Sanford, M.A., 5526 M. Academy Blvd., Suite 206, Colorado Springs, CL, USA.



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***The Fourth Japan Congress on Evangelism (June 27 - 30, 2000 in Okinawa)***

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\*We apologize to women interested in receiving this training. Conference format necessitates single-gender attendance.

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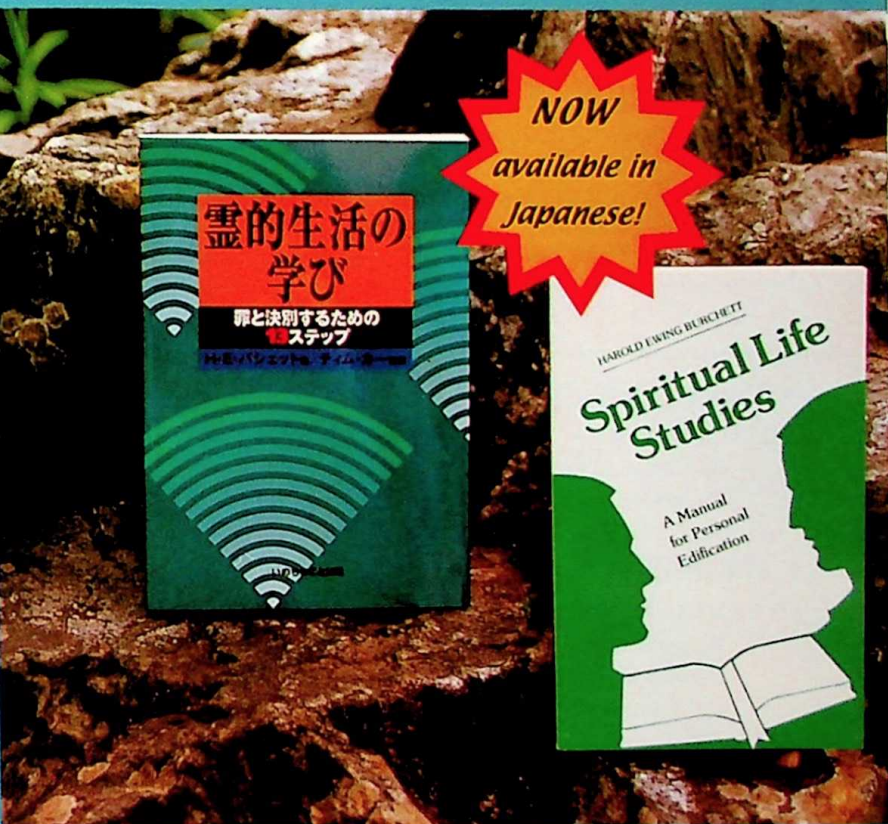
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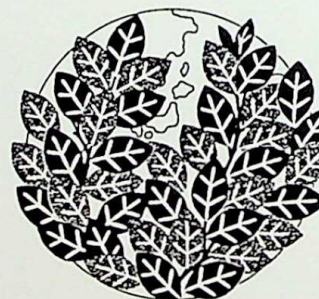
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