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HAYAMA MISSIONARY SEMINAR

THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST  
AND THE MISSIONARY  
IN JAPANESE SOCIETY

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AND THE MISSIONARY IN JAPANESE SOCIETY"

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## FOREWORD

During the past twenty years I have had the privilege of attending many Hayama Missionary Seminars. Naturally, I have been impressed by several aspects of these annual seminars--the expertise displayed in the papers, evidenced by the depth and high quality of each study; the amount of time each writer invested in his work; and finally, the amount of dialogue and free discussion which ensued regularly after the reading of each paper. Perhaps no other meeting in Japan permits such a difference of views to be presented openly within the context of Christian love and mutual respect.

This year was no exception, as the selected topic, "The Lordship of Christ and the Missionary in Japanese Society," provided much stimulus for fellowship and enrichment through dialogue. Unfortunately, some (not fully understanding the nature and purpose of the seminar), went home disappointed because, in their estimation, the seminar was not "spiritual enough" and did not closely enough resemble a Deeper-Life kind of conference.

Misunderstandings of this sort make it necessary for us to assess once again the purpose of Hayama. Hayama is not a conference, but rather a study-seminar in which men from varying missionary organizations and theological backgrounds assemble together to study, think, have dialogue, share, and to grow together in the love and knowledge of Christ through this common experience of an in-depth study of some pertinent and perhaps even controversial subject.

It should be pointed out that two critique papers were omitted in this publication at the request of the authors. Also in need of explanation is that the final closing worship message could not be given by the person assigned, and consequently the Acting Chairman, Mr. Arthur Eikamp, assumed the role of "pinch-hitter." His message is therefore included in this publication.

Words of thanks for the publication of this booklet go to our capable typist, Mrs. Ruth Koedoot, who did all the typing and much of the editing and proofreading.

A special word of thanks must be given to Carl and Esther Beck who have provided excellent editorship of this book for many years. Since they have asked to be relieved of this duty this year, the mantel fell on me.

John W. Graybill  
Compiling Editor,  
For the Continuation Committee

THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST  
AND THE MISSIONARY IN JAPANESE SOCIETY

by Kenneth E. Heim

SOME PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS

There is something about being officially retired, however active one may continue being, which has the effect of one's being relieved of a great weight, of having certain bothersome constraints removed, so that one has the sense of being free from having to be responsible and careful about every word, every comma, every semicolon. It makes a man less cautious, more free to indulge in flights of fancy, more irresponsible, if you will. In the background, there is, of course, the ultimate accountability, but not those intermediate ones, which sometimes make us assume so proper and sober a stance. Perhaps what I am trying to say is that you do not necessarily grow grimmer as you grow older. And that I intend to be a little bit irresponsible, a little bit controversial, perhaps a little bit mischievous in what I am going to say. So you must indulge me, as one who is not yet--I hope--in second childhood, but perhaps well on the way. And if I am sly enough, I may be able to make you look at some old concepts in a new way.

First, when I typed out the title for the theme of our conference I had to laugh. I had not thought it funny when I first saw it in two lines; but when I typed it out in one line--The Lordship of Christ and the Missionary in Japanese Society--I found it marvellously ironic. Read the wrong way, it might explain what is wrong with the Christian mission in Japan and provide one of the major points for our discussion. To what extent has the lordship of the missionary superseded the Lordship of Christ in the mission of Christ in Japan? I will leave it at that. I may come back to it in another way.

Let me ask this question: Are we Trinitarians? I presume we all are, or at least subscribe to the formula, as it appears in the two creeds. But in practice, are we? And in practice as missionaries especially?

The creeds are pretty explicit, especially the Nicene. "One God, the Father, the Almighty ... maker of all that is, seen and unseen." "One Lord, Jesus Christ... of one Being (ousia) with the Father." "The Holy~Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father," or if you will, "from the Father and the Son." (I don't intend to get involved in the doctrine of the procession.) Or, to get more explicit, one can take a look at the so-called Athanasian Creed, the Quicunque Vult, which tightens it all up, starting with the awesome words, "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary to hold" and then goes on--and I will skip to the statement that is relevant for us today--"so likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord, and yet, not three Lords, but one Lord."

It's a mouthful, and I do not wonder that in its rigidified form, and especially as imposed by a conquering Hellenistic culture, with subscription to it made into a qualification for public office, the Arab peoples found themselves a leader and revolted. The Semitic peoples, who produced the Old Testament with its intensely personal God and its vivid imagery, would not suffer the Godhead to be reduced to Euclidean geometrics. It was too much for them. Something simpler and more dynamic would do.

And I think that is partly our problem. We oversimplify in one way or another. Even as Euclidean geometry, the doctrine of the trinity is no good. Rather, it should be seen as more like an Einsteinian formula, a series of figures or signs, each with a reverberation of its own, pointing beyond our powers of comprehension to a whirling reality in which time and space, history and eternity, immanence and transcendence, ourselves and something wholly other, freedom and order, justice and mercy, are brought together for our wondering contemplation, and for our direction. So no wonder we err. The doctrine of the trinity may be bad Euclid, but it remains the diagram of the largest and most comprehensive view of reality ever set forth.

What do we do with it? In the light of it, the lordship of the missionary is laughable. As to the Lordship of Christ, there we have something. A reverberating historic reality, leading into the very heart and inmost being of the Godhead, conditioning indelibly our apprehension of the Godhead's inmost nature.

But there is a danger in this. I think most Christians tend to be ditheists of one kind or another. It is Christ and God the Father. Sometimes it is overwhelmingly a Christ reduced to comfortable human proportions, with God the Father somewhere in the background, sitting on a throne. The other member, the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, is a problem. We don't even know whether to call him "him" or "it." If he's Lord, then he ought to be "him." But he's so chameleon-like--he comes like the wind or like fire--he doesn't concretize readily, he breaks out in unlikely places, to the scandal of all orderly people and makes them behave strangely. He has no firm outlines which would lead us to identify him as a "him." So we are left with saying "him" with "it" attributes or "it" with "him" attributes. He is not subject to bishops, presbyteries, or congregations, and it is widely suspected that he is active outside the church, even though the charismatic movement has sometimes given the impression of having monopolized him.

But all of this is tritheistic talk. "So likewise the Father is Lord; the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord, and yet not three Lords but one Lord." What I suppose I am talking about is our tendency to limit or appropriate to ourselves some aspect of the one God.

Let me ask you, who was it who spoke to Moses from the burning bush? Or who called to Isaiah when the posts of the door trembled, and the house was filled with smoke?

Was it one-third of the Trinity? Or two-thirds? Does God ever speak to men out of a part of himself? Or would part of himself ever be inconsonant with another part of himself (even if we should concede that a part of God should speak separately while the other parts remained in the background, perhaps disagreeing)? What then of the Lordship of Christ within the Old Testament? And then what of the activities--perhaps I should say strange behavior--of the Holy Spirit outside the church, perhaps to people who have no knowledge of the earthly life of Christ? Was the Lordship of Christ involved? The answers to all these questions would seem simple if we believe in the Trinity. And yet I wonder whether we act in accordance with this belief as missionaries.

Now I want to tell about something that I got involved in that is a little strange. Some of you may have heard that the Omoto Kyo, the original member of the Omoto group among the so-called "New Religions" of Japan, had an exchange of ceremonies, first with the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, and then with Episcopal Grace Cathedral in San Francisco. These events stirred up a good deal of publicity and raised a lot of questions. It started with the Omoto Kyo having an exhibition of pottery at the New York Cathedral and then in a perhaps impulsive gesture of hospitality, being invited by the Dean to celebrate their rites in the Cathedral. In reciprocation, the Dean was in turn invited to come to Japan, where an Episcopal service was held in the Omoto headquarters in Ayabe City. Later in the same year, 1977, a similar exchange took place between the San Francisco Cathedral and the Omoto Kyo. This time the Christian service was held in the Banshoden Sanctuary in Kameoka, near Kyoto. I was present at the latter and was asked to make a speech.

What had happened? I am sure that if our theologians had gotten together and had somehow agreed to go beyond the usual interreligious discussions which pass for dialogue and had decided that the dialogue should rather be on the level of opening oneself to each other's actual practice of religion, I doubt if it ever would have come off in this way or anything would have happened at all. There would have been too many considerations. "What are the implications of all this? What are we letting ourselves in for?"

At any rate, I want to take you past all that to the event in which I found myself in the middle. Here we were, in a setting entirely alien to American and Japanese church culture. Nature was overwhelmingly present. The vast ceremonial hall was open to mountain, woods and garden scenery on three sides. The costumes of the Omoto dignitaries were magnificently Japanese, and even we Episcopalians could not possibly compete. The Omoto people, several thousand of them, mostly extremely humble in dress, had learned to sing our hymns and chants, which they did with spirit. The pattern of the service was that of Morning Prayer in our prayer book. Entitled "Kiss of Peace--A Service of Praise and Thanksgiving," it was adapted from the Book of Common Prayer by one of the Japanese clergy. The first hymn was based on the "Canticle to the Sun" of St. Francis of Assisi;

the Psalm was 95, the first seven verses, followed by the doxology; the Old Testament reading, Isaiah 11:1-9, 9:6-7; the New Testament was Luke 1:69-79; also Acts 10:34-43, beginning with, "And Peter opened his mouth and said: 'Truly I perceive that God shows no impartiality, but in any nation any one who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.'" Then after a passage from Revelation (15:3-4) came the sermon, which was a straight exposition of the Christian faith based on the Apostle's Creed, followed by the Creed itself, followed by the Lord's Prayer, concluding prayers and a blessing. After the blessing came the words of the greeting called "The kiss of peace": "Peace be with you," and the response, "And with your spirit." And with that, we then proceeded--all of us who had officiated--through the congregation of several thousand, clasping hands with the greeting, "Heiwa" or "Peace." Some of the people were weeping. It was disturbing. Something, however momentary, had been exchanged. Was this a trap? Was this a fortuitous accident, brought on by the impulsive good will of two innocent deans, who should have known better, and perhaps consulted their bishops beforehand? Had the Lordship of Christ been impaired?

In any case, you will have to hear what I said on that occasion, and please remember the context.

#### ADDRESS TO OMOTO RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION, November 7, 1977.

I stand before you as a Christian. As a Christian I want to say I am grateful for the opportunity to be here, to mingle with you, to join with you in the worship of the One God who made and loves us all.

And I should like the privilege of saying why, as a Christian, I can feel entirely happy to take part with you in this celebration; to say why, from the very center of my faith as a Christian, I can regard this celebration as not only proper for a Christian, but as a joyous opportunity for all of us.

I speak of the very center of my faith. Sometimes, when we cooperate with others, we do so from the outer edge of our real interests, and more or less as a pleasant gesture which is not to be taken too seriously. But it is not from the outer edge of my faith that I reach across the boundary between you of another religion, and myself, but from the very heart and center of my Christian faith.

There is a center from which each religion derives its understanding of God, the world, and mankind. That center is usually a moment in history, a moment that has been building up for a long time before, just as the forces that create a volcanic eruption have been building up a long time before; and then the moment comes. It comes as the eruption, of some overwhelming truth bursting upon human consciousness, flooding with light what was darkness before, and giving new meaning to all life. Out of this a new religious community is born whose task it is to share that new truth with all others.

Such, I know, was true for you of the Omoto faith. There was such a moment, or succession of moments. And around these you built your faith, and in the joy of the discovery felt compelled to share it, and so became a new community.

So it has been with us who are Christians. And for us the center is found in that moment in history, long prepared for, and deeply longed for, when the events described in the New Testament of our Bible, and centering around the name of Jesus whom we call the Christ, occurred. It is from that center--that moment--that we define who and what God is and what all men are, in relation to him, and what his purpose is for all mankind and for the whole world. That is how we became the Christian Church.

But now I need to tell you why, from the very heart and center of this faith, we Christians can rejoice in such an occasion as this. It is because in the life and death of Jesus we find a declaration of God's never-changing love for the whole world and for every person in it. Anyone who calls himself a Christian and does not believe this is no Christian. He has moved away from his own center. I cannot put this too strongly. There is no human being who is not the object of God's love, and no Christian dare ever separate himself from those of another religion. For if God loves you, how can I separate myself from those whom God loves?

Secondly, from the very heart of my Christian understanding, I have been taught that God--God, who is to be known as Holy Spirit and Giver of all Life, has always and everywhere been active in all the world, seeking those who would be open to him and bursting into their lives and transforming them from men of ill-will and of self-love into men of goodwill, into agents of peace and justice and holiness. These are the marks of God's presence. And what does this mean to us who are Christians? It means surely that a Christian is bound, by the very knowledge of God which he learned through Jesus the Christ, to search out, to respect, and to rejoice in every occasion where the Spirit of God has spoken to men. And surely we should expect that among these occasions were those, in which a new religion came to birth in the living experience of a holy man or woman. And so as a Christian who believes in God's ceaseless availability to all men, I must treat those of another religion with the greatest respect, or else I may be in danger of slighting not only those whom God loved, but God himself. I have no right to limit the God who is illimitable.

Thirdly, there is a characteristic of human beings that we need to be aware of as we exchange the precious things we have to share with one another. God is always speaking to us, and it is not another God, nor does he withhold himself and say one thing to some people and another to others. It is always the language of love, of peace and goodwill. But we do not always hear well. We tend to hear what we want to hear, and what we want to hear may be quite different from what he is saying. All too often what we want to hear is that we are right and others are wrong, that we are pleasing him when we are displeasing him, and even sometimes when we are killing each other in some war, that this is God's will

and not our own. Christians have sinned in this way, as have the members of other religions. This is when they have lost their center and need to return to it. And there is another temptation to which humanity is prone. It is the temptation to propagandize one's religion as the only and indispensable way to experience God's saving love. For one thing, I do not believe that this is the way that one who believes in God's all-encompassing love should approach another who is the object of that love. Such an approach always presents itself as something arrogant. I do believe that there is something special and indeed unique in every revelation made to man. In Christianity, I would say it is the measurement of the depth and seriousness of God's love as declared in the story we have to tell about Jesus the Christ. It may be our special revelation. I simply do not know how to tell anyone--to tell you, for example--how much God loves you, apart from telling the story of Jesus Christ. So I will hold this up, in any exchange between us. And you will hold up what is special and precious to you. And I have no doubt there will be contributions on both sides. We receive light wherever God has been, and God does not contradict God, though he may contradict us when we try to possess him exclusively for ourselves.

It is natural to be passionate about what God has done for us, and this justifies us in presenting with passion that which has given us the meaning of our lives. But let God decide what is indispensable. Let us be true to the center from which came our life and hope; so true, in fact, that we never doubt that he who came to us, and we knew his glory, has not failed to impart something of it wherever men have sought after him.

It is in this spirit that I rejoice in this meeting with you. (End of address)

Thus closes a curious incident in church history. Again I ask the question, "Was Christ's Lordship impaired or denigrated? Personally, I'm inclined to blame the whole thing on the Holy Spirit. (I'm talking like Jonah.) And then, of course, I believe in the Trinity. So Christ had to be involved.

It is like that other experience which some of us had when the Fellowship of Christian Missionaries decided to go to Taiseki-ji and expose themselves to the Soka-Gakkai. It was on that occasion that I heard, in those magnificent headquarters, the personal testimony of a fine-looking young American of Occidental descent. He came from a conventional middle-class American family, revolted against his parents and their way of life, was a school dropout, became a drug addict--in short, went the whole cycle of alienated youth of that period. Some friend told him to recite the words "nam myoho renge kyo" over and over again thousands of times (he had no idea of its meaning). The result: reconciliation with his parents, return to school, freedom from addiction and return to normal life. This was the burden of his witness. He spoke with utter sincerity and conviction. It was impressive.

I was interested in my own reaction. The question I asked myself was whether this was something I should thank God for. Obviously he had been saved from something dreadful, and, since the church was ineffective, maybe the Holy Spirit had to use this peculiar method for the salvation of this boy. But then I began to ask myself, "What was this salvation? To conformity?" Possibly it was unfair to think that. But he had been saved from something pretty bad. He was released to be useful and to be happy. That is a great deal and worthy of thanking God for. But is there something more?

Robert Ellwood, in a book called *The Eagle and the Rising Sun*, whose subtitle is *Americans and the New Religions of Japan*, has characterized their beliefs as follows: The new religions have in common the founding by a charismatic, shamanistic individual, in an unstable social situation. They have a common theme: one God, a New Age; belief in the possibility of communicating with the spirit world, the establishment of a paradisaic center in Japan, healing emphasis, and focus on a single simple action as the key to spiritual transformation and power.

Ask the average sophisticated non-Christian Japanese intellectual what he thinks of these religions, and he will say that they are all religions of health, prosperity, and self-advancement, appropriate to the uneducated peasant and the small shop-keeper class. (He will also say that the older Buddhist and Shinto structures have suffered irremediable collapse, and their essence has been lost to the average Japanese.) Such a person is at best a post-Buddhist, and, in a sense, a post-Christian humanist. The people who fill the universities and move into the business world think like he does, though they may not be so articulate.

My own impression of the new religions (and of the older ones as well) has to be different. Let me try to explain. I find them charming, in every sense of the word. They act like charms and have the power of charms. They use charms and charm their adherents. They are truly charming in their optimism, in the joy they engender, the happiness their members share in their beautiful rituals, their communal gatherings. They bring real deliverance from the vicissitudes of life.

I have even sometimes had moments of regret when a Japanese came to be baptized. He is leaving Eden. He is entering the grownup world of the tragic, where charms do not work. The new religions have little sense of that, as Ellwood has observed. They are so wonderfully confident, and they do so much good. They have left behind the pessimism found in the older Oriental faiths and are sure of the future of man here on this earth. Their great word is "peace," and they are sure they have it and that it will come to all--so easily. They have an authentic sense of the numinous--something all too often lacking in the dessicated and shrivelled structures of the ecclesia Christiana in America or Japan.

What they do not have is to be saddled with horrid old Moses, that escaped murderer, who was burned by a burning bush, led escapees through water and desert, and brought us all the terrible command to be just, the command that drives in a straight line through Amos, Isaiah, and all the prophets, tightening as it goes along, to the Jew Jesus, who gave it its final twist in the words, "He who does it not to one of the least of these"; making it impossible not to know that what we are most in need of is mercy, for we are not just, though we must try to be; so that when we have an encounter with the numinous, he will come to us as an overwhelming Other, a *Mysterium Tremendum*, whose presence will accuse as well as pardon, setting us apart from him, even when we are most drawn, and summoning us along a way in which suffering for and being suffered for are indissolubly bound up with our joy. In short, I do not believe the response to an encounter with the divine in the New Religions would ever be, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell among a people of unclean lips." This for me defines the gulf between us.

And yet, those people I saw at Kameoka have suffered, as men will suffer, and will suffer for others; and they have been suffered for, by one whom we call Christ, our Lord. Who will dare say that he has not been among them, or that they have not felt in some degree his divine presence. But who will make it plain that it was He? There lies, I believe, our service to our Lord the Christ.

I invoke the Holy Trinity upon you, to liberate you from any mental reservations or psychological or doctrinal blocks which may impede you from knowing the full range of the operations of God in this world which he has made, or of our Lord, the Holy Spirit, the giver of life, or of our Lord Jesus, the Christ. For they are one, and the world is theirs and it is our job to discover this to others.

Lastly, I would have you think of a ship wandering around the South Pacific with crying babies and hungry people on board. If we wanted to locate our Lord the Christ, that might be a good place to look, or at least to tell others to look. We are not just, and what we need is mercy. He is the fountain of both--of justice and mercy, and neither one is of any use without the other. They meet in Him, to our discomfort and joy. That's the good news we bear.

## **THE COVENANT GOD CONFRONTS THE CANAANITE BAALS**

by Lloyd Neve

This paper will study the relationship between Israel and her neighbors in terms of their respective religious systems as described in the Old Testament.

### I. A comparison of the covenant faith with the non-Israelite religions

This preliminary section of the paper is intended to serve the purpose of differentiating the two religious worlds mentioned above. It is thus neither a scholarly nor an exhaustive examination.

Three things have been noted as characterizing essential differences between the faith of Israel and other contemporary religions. First of all, Israel's God was a Lord with absolute sovereignty. He is a jealous God, who allows no rivals in the divine realm and no conflicting loyalties for his followers. He is the sole Creator, completely other than, transcendent to, his creation. On the other hand the baals, to use a word meaning lord or owner, which has become somewhat of a proper noun in the O.T., always had only limited sovereignty, whether it be a geographical unit (a country or kingdom) or a realm (the rain, the sea, or the wheat harvest). There were rival baals, and the king of the gods could change according to time, circumstance and country. Attachment to a certain Baal was not an exclusive allegiance.

Secondly, history was the primary realm of activity of the covenant God. He had a plan, a purpose for individuals or nations which was being fulfilled in the course of history. The elements in the natural world, the rain or lack of it, the wind, the sea, could be enlisted as weapons or implements useful in the working out of this plan. The gods of Israel's neighbors, in contrast, were primarily identified with the natural world and seem never to have been viewed in an historical dimension. They were timeless beings in a natural world characterized not by a beginning and an end, but by the eternal repetition of the cycle of the seasons, the succession of day and night, the waning and waxing of the moon. Every New Year Creation Festival celebrated the victory of order over chaos and every spring the overcoming of death by life.

The third difference centers more on the worshipping community, less on the divine realm, and might be expressed in terms of Godcentered vs. ego-centered. A commitment to enter into covenant with Yahweh required of the worshipper or of the worshipping community an allegiance so absolute that it meant the sacrifice of everything which might stand in the way of this unconditional loyalty. The oftquoted mistranslation of Job 13:15 is highly expressive of this unquestioning obedience, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." Habakkuk 3:17-18 even more eloquently gives voice to the same faith. In this sense, then, the covenant faith focused on God's will rather

than on the worshipper's wants or requests. One worshipped God because he was a God to be worshipped and not in order to obtain some favor. The description of the Baal religion as we have it in Hosea 2: 5, 12, however, shows us a people who worship the Baals for what they can get from them in material benefits. The Japanese proverb, "ebi de tai o tsuru," often applied to the goriyaku religions, depicts the same self-centered motivation. Psalm 50:7-15, is critical of a similar attempt to manipulate a God whom the worshippers believe is dependent on them for food and drink. In this sense, then, one can characterize the non-Israelite religions as worshipper-centered or ego-centered rather than God-centered.

## II. A comparison of Old Testament attitudes toward non-Israelite religions

Assuming that the title of this paper, "...confronts the ...Baals," only tells one side of the story and will not stimulate discussion, I tried to become a neutral observer to see if the O.T. presents the other side in any way. These are the results.

### A. Confrontation

By far the loudest voice in the O.T. is the prophetic voice. The prophetic movement was almost unanimous in its defense of the covenant faith and its rejection of any detente with the Baals. The strong anti-Canaanite-religion texts in the historical books show the prophetic influence in their editing (see Gen. 18:16-19, 38, for example, or compare I Sam. 15:22 with Hosea 6:6 or Amos 6:21-24ff). In this way the strong prophetic condemnation of the foreign religions predates the prophetic movement as such and exerts its influence back to the patriarchal stories, if not earlier.

For those who worked with the underlying assumption that the foreign religions were bad and irreconcilable with the covenant faith, three courses of action were suggested in regard to these religions. They could abandon them in favor of following the covenant Lord. This was Abraham's call according to Gen. 12:1. Jacob, following God's guidance, told his household to "put away the foreign gods that are among you... then let us arise and go up to Bethel that I may' make there an altar to the God who answered me in the day of my distress.... Gen 35:1-4. The reference here is perhaps to the household deities that Rachel so carefully brought along from Haran, Gen, 31, so similar in many respects to the honke possession of the family butsudon in contemporary Japan. Joshua urges the people to abandon the gods of Mesopotamia and Canaan and serve the Lord, Joshua 24:14-15. The sending away of foreign wives by both Ezra (10:12) and Nehemiah (13:23-31) are examples, from a later period, of the same thing.

There were also strong voices which urged the people not only to abandon or to bury their foreign gods, as Jacob did "under the oak which is near Shechem," but to destroy them. Moses destroyed Aaron's golden calf image, Ex. 32:20. The Lord ordered Gideon to pull down the Baal altar, cut down the Asherah and build an altar to Yahweh in its place, Judg. 6:25-26. The herem regulation of the holy war called for the devoting to Yahweh of the Canaanite cities and their cult objects, which meant their destruction, Dt. 20:16-18,

Josh. 6:17,21.

Failure to obey this regulation meant rejection for Saul as king over Israel, I Sam. 15. Elijah seized the 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah, led them down to the brook Kishon and killed them, I Kings 18:40. The examples are innumerable but do not seem to extend into the post-exilic period.

A third method of dealing with the unacceptable foreign religions was conversion. This meant for the gentiles, of course, an abandonment of their former religious practices and the embracing of the covenant faith. It is an attitude found primarily in the post-exilic period when the apostasy of the whole covenant people no longer was the pressing problem it had been in earlier, pre-exilic periods. Isaiah 19:22-25 looks forward to the conversion of Egypt and Assyria to the covenant faith. Is. 56:1-8 states the acceptance of foreign proselytes into the post-exilic temple worship, a fulfillment of Yahweh's word in Is. 45:23 that every knee shall bow to the Lord, that the ends of the earth will be saved. The books of Ruth and Jonah carry the message that it was not only possible but a duty to bring foreigners into the covenant faith. Finally, Daniel is a witness to the fact that even foreign kings, Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, can worship and praise the Jewish God.

## B. Synergism

Although admittedly a still, small voice in an O.T. dominated primarily by the prophets, nevertheless, there is a strain which says that there is much in the non-Israelite religions that is good (or at least not bad) which can either be included unchanged in the covenant or can serve as an acceptable alternate approach to the covenant God.

The temple, that magnificent structure in Jerusalem which was the central visible symbol of the Yahwistic faith from its erection in 954 B.C. until its final destruction in 70 A.D., was clearly nonYahwistic in design, in symbolism, and in function. That, of course, was the reason for the heavy prophetic resistance voiced by Nathan, continued in a more violent form by Jeremiah and other prophets down to Stephen. But the temple obviously had its defenders, not only in the priesthood and the monarchy, but also in such prophets as Ezekiel, Haggai and Zechariah. Otherwise it would never have survived.

In almost every respect the basic ideology of the temple was more akin to the religion of the Baals than to the covenant religion. We know from the Ugaritic literature that it was Baal who wanted a dwelling or a palace in which he could be enshrined or localized. Yahweh, on the contrary, was not to be limited to a certain place but could meet with his people at any place or time he chose. We know the temple was designed by a Phoenician architect, Hiram of Tyre, the logical person to design a building basically Baalistic in design and symbolism. There is good reason to believe that the temple faced east to catch the sun's first rays at the time of the New Year's festival in the inner recesses of the Holy of Holies. The bronze altar of burnt offering which stood in front of the temple was a

ziggurat, a small-scale model of the Tower of Babel. The pomegranate and palm tree ornamentation were well-known from the fertility religions. For further documentation concerning the pagan nature of the Jerusalem temple see Arend Th. van Leeuwen, *Christianity in World History*, pp. 79-82, or George E. Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, pp. 136-145.

It has also been argued by Ludwig Koehler in his *Old Testament Theology* that the whole sacrificial system was basically pagan in orientation and foreign to the covenant religion.

Because the temple and the sacrificial system seem to be much more readily identifiable with the Canaanite nature Baals of localized sovereignty than with the absolute Lord of History, it can be argued with some degree of certainty that there were in Israel representatives of the viewpoint that there was much in other religions that could be taken over unchanged without endangering Israel's basic covenant faith.

Finally, there are scattered but persistent voices in the O.T. which seem to be saying that other religions provide an acceptable approach to the covenant God.

What is the message of Proverbs (and Ecclesiastes), that book which finds its echo in the New Testament book of James? There is little of the covenant Lord of history in it, although it must also be said that there is little good that is said for the Canaanite baals. But Proverbs and Ecclesiastes leave the impression of a much more eclectic approach than any other parts of the O.T. and ask to be taken into consideration.

Two other O.T. texts seem to indicate a special saving relationship between Yahweh and the nations which bypasses the covenant with Israel. Is Amos 9:7 saying that the Exodus and the covenant are only a part of Yahweh's general guidance of history, and that he is not limited to the Sinaitic covenant in his saving work with the Philistines and the Syrians? Finally, Mal. 1:11 seems to speak quite unequivocally of a saving relationship between Yahweh and the peoples of the world which is not dependent on the Mosaic covenant.

## A CRITIQUE OF

### The Covenant God Confronts the Canaanite Baals

by Stephen T. Franklin

In his fine paper, Dr. Lloyd Neve has successfully isolated and clarified several significant themes in the relationship between the Hebrew and Canaanite religions. It appears to me--though I am no Old Testament expert--that in the material covered, the paper is generally quite accurate. Moreover, as he states at the beginning of Section II, his purpose in this paper is to stimulate discussion. Therefore, I will not dispute the contents of Lloyd's essay. Rather, I will try to help promote that discussion among us Christian missionaries here in Japan.

In Section I, as I read about the distinctions between the Hebrew and Canaanite religions, I couldn't help but ask how Japanese religions are like Baalism and how they differ. If the Covenant God demands exclusive loyalty, then Japanese religions have traditionally been Baalistic in accepting multiple loyalties. And yet, some of the New Religions (e.g., Soka Gakkai) thrive on the demand for exclusive loyalty. Moreover, is there a sense in which Japan itself--as a nation, as a mystique--demands final loyalty? And what about the *kaisha*--how many other loyalties will it usually allow its employees? What as missionaries are we facing in Japan--an oriental Baalism or rivals whose exclusivism parallels that of the Covenant God?

In the second section, Lloyd considers five different Biblical approaches towards Baalism and the other religions. Number one is abandonment. Abraham is to leave behind the old gods. And we missionaries have long urged the Japanese to imitate Abraham and abandon their god-shelves (*butsudan*). Number two is destruction and holy war. Fortunately, none of us command any armies. So, as a missionary tactic in Japan, holy holocausts are definitely out. And number three is conversion. Not only are the old gods to be left behind, but the Covenant God is to be embraced.

Lloyd's fourth option fascinates me. He points out that much of Baalism did in fact enter the Hebrew religion. One of his examples is the temple in Jerusalem which in "design, symbolism, and function" was inspired by the Canaanite religion. Of course, as Lloyd points out, in the Old Testament this option is mentioned only in "a still small voice." But maybe in this case, we should study not only what the Hebrews said but also what they did.

To conclude, I would like to suggest an experiment of the imagination. Let's go back to that god-shelf. What must the Japanese Christian abandon? Would it be possible to keep the shelf, but give it a new meaning, perhaps a meaning associated with all the saints, living and dead, of the Church of Jesus Christ? Perhaps in Christian homes that shelf could be associated with the "great cloud of witnesses" mentioned in Hebrews. In the end, that shelf

may become as natural to Japanese Christians as the temple did to the Jews. The trick, of course, is to make sure that the old gods don't come back into the shelf, displacing the Christian saints.

This is my experiment of the imagination. I'm not sure that I fully approve of the results. But I invite you also to use Dr. Neve's fine essay to make your own experiments of the imagination in the following discussion.

## THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CONFRONTS GRAECO-ROMAN SOCIETY IN THE FIRST CENTURY

by E. Luther Copeland

In the Graeco-Roman world, peopled by "many 'gods' and many 'lords'" (I Corinthians 8:5), there arose a religious movement which, following Judaism, preached a message of one God, and, in distinction from Judaism, declared that the one Lord was a man from Nazareth named Jesus, whom God had raised from the dead. The time, from our perspective, was the first century A.D., i.e., the first century following the coming into history of that Lord, Jesus of Nazareth, by whose advent our years are numbered.

### THE CONFESSION OF JESUS AS LORD

How did this confession begin, and what did it mean?

It is sometimes asserted, following the thesis of Wilhelm Bousset, set forth in his book *Kyrios Christos* in 1914,<sup>1</sup> that the confession of Jesus as Lord arose not in the earliest Christian churches which were Aramaic speaking but in the Gentile environment and under the influence of Hellenism. Such a thesis seems plausible, in view of the fact that it was common in the Hellenistic world to refer to gods as "lords."

Bousset's thesis, however, was by no means universally accepted, even among liberal scholars. Clarence Tucker Craig, for example, in a book published in 1943, discussed this problem without direct reference to Bousset's thesis, suggesting that the origin of the use of the title "Lord" for Jesus was probably to be found in the Septuagint's references to Yahweh as *kyrios* (translating the Hebrew *adonai* as Lord), rather than in religious usage in the Hellenistic world. Craig notes that although it is unlikely that the application of this title to Jesus began as early as Peter's first sermon--as indicated in Acts 2:36--nevertheless, it was in early usage in the Aramaic-speaking churches.

It is Oscar Cullmann who has given most careful attention to the thesis of Bousset and has refuted it, in my judgment, convincingly.<sup>3</sup> Cullmann notes that Bousset's book "has already been more or less put aside" but that his thesis has become relevant again because it is unreservedly accepted by Rudolph Bultmann.<sup>4</sup> The heart of Cullmann's argument is that the calling upon Jesus as Lord is to be traced back to the early Aramaic-speaking Christian communities, especially through the preservation of the formula: *Maranatha*. In the early Christian church, the lordship of Christ was revealed as the present form of his post-Easter existence. The meaning of public worship in these early communities was the realization of fellowship with the living Lord, and the "appearance meals" helped the early church to experience afresh his living presence. Therefore, the Aramaic liturgical formula, *Maranatha*, preserved in Aramaic in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (I Cor. 16:22) and in the

Didache (10:6), and in Greek translation in Revelation 22:20, is a very ancient formula indeed. This phrase meaning, "Our Lord, come!" expressed not only the imminent eschatology of the early Christians but also their eager sense of the living presence of the risen Christ. It was a call to the Easter Lord to appear again at the table as he had on Easter Sunday and thus to ensure his early final return to establish his kingdom.

Thus, the confession of Jesus as Lord is a very early, if not the earliest Christian confession. To be sure, the frequent uses of this term to refer to Jesus before his death and resurrection, according to the Gospels, probably represented a polite form of address meaning no more than "Sir." The cultic usage of *Kyrios Christos* must have arisen very soon after the resurrection, however. It is even possible that it is older than the confession of Jesus as Messiah (Christ) in the post-Easter cult, since Jesus himself always seems to have avoided that politically-loaded and ambiguous term. In Luke's recording of the first preaching in Acts, the two terms are joined together: God has made the crucified Jesus "both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). Cullmann remarks that "it is probably no accident that in this passage the title *Kyrios* comes before the title Christ; Jesus can be designated Messiah-King only in view of his invisible lordship as *Kyrios*."<sup>6</sup>

Now what is the content of this confession? What did it mean for the early Christians to confess Jesus as Lord? From the first, it must have had a very broad and inclusive reference. This is apparent from the fact that this exalted title is the word used to pronounce the name of God, the Tetragrammaton, YHWH, which was itself too exalted and holy to be uttered.

In an intriguing discussion,<sup>7</sup> Jean Danielou traces the development of the theology or Christology of the "Name of God" in early Jewish Christianity. He shows that in the primitive Jewish Christian church Christ was referred to as the "Name of God" or the "Name" and that this appellation stood alongside others, Son of God, Word, Wisdom, etc., to express the self-manifestation of God in Christ. This usage of the "Name" was soon given up, however, as being "unintelligible and dangerous in a Greek milieu."<sup>8</sup> It was displaced especially by the term *Logos*. Danielou even ventures to hint that the Johannine expression, "The Word... dwelt among us" (John 1:14),<sup>9</sup> is actually based on an earlier form, "The Name ... dwelt among us."

In any case, the understanding of the risen Jesus as the "Name"<sup>10</sup> and the use of the title "Lord" to express that unspeakable name must have arisen in close relation one to the other and at the outset meaning much the same thing. Calling Jesus by the "Name" was practically abandoned when the Gospel entered the Hellenistic milieu, while the use of the title "Lord" persisted and was no doubt accentuated. In either case the import was that because of his obedience unto death, even death on a cross, God has "more than exalted"<sup>11</sup> Jesus by resurrection and ascension and "has given him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and

every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11).<sup>\*</sup> The unutterable name of God, then, the "name ... above every name" has been bestowed upon Jesus to exalt him to lordship over the whole universe.

Whatever the problem thus created for Jewish monotheism, the use of the title Lord for Jesus identified him with God. All that was attributed to Jehovah (Yaweh) in the Jewish Scriptures (Old Testament) is now applied to Jesus. For example, he is creator of all things, the revealer and revelation of God's being, the redeemer and the one who holds the universe together.<sup>12</sup> Theologically, therefore, calling Jesus "Lord" is a confession of his deity.

In a sense, the lordship of Jesus was a way of translating the idea of the kingdom of God in a non-Jewish context. Like the title Messiah or Christ, the concept of the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven was difficult to communicate to non-Jews. Consequently, while "Christ" became for all practical purposes a surname for Jesus, the stress upon the kingdom, so central in the preaching of Jesus himself, became absorbed into the claim and concept of his lordship.<sup>13</sup>

Practically, the confession "Jesus is Lord" indicated his sovereignty over all the hostile forces which beset human life, not only the power of sin and guilt but also false gods, demons, the invisible "principalities and powers," fate, sickness, natural forces, magic and all else which the inhabitants of the GraecoRoman world viewed as the powers which threatened or controlled human life.<sup>14</sup> Jesus was more powerful than any of these hostile forces. In his cross, God had "disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them, triumphing over them" (Col. 2:15). Therefore, healings and exorcisms were a prominent part of early Christian evangelism.<sup>15</sup> As Harnack expressed it:

"The whole world and the circumambient atmosphere were filled with devils; not merely idolatry, but every phase and form of life was ruled by them. They sat on thrones, they hovered around cradles. The earth was literally a hell, though it was and continued to be a creation of God. To encounter this hell and all its devils, Christians had command of weapons that were invincible."<sup>16</sup>

Personally, the confession of Jesus as Lord committed one to an ethical way of life in keeping with the character of Jesus. At baptism in the early church, the new Christian not only confessed with his lips that Jesus is Lord. He also dramatically portrayed his union with Jesus in his death and resurrection. He died to an old life and was raised to a new order over which Jesus was Lord. Therefore, he was expected to "put on" Christ and the new style of ethical behavior which was consonant with Christ. (Cf. Rom. 6:1ff.; Col. 3:1ff., etc.)

<sup>\*</sup>Scripture references are from the RSV.

Finally, we note the exclusive element which this confession involved. Christians were expected to belong, body and soul, to Jesus, who was called their master, despot, and was said to have redeemed them from alien ownership into his own. "Henceforward they were to acknowledge no other 'Lord' be he emperor or pagan deity.<sup>17</sup> This exclusivism was quite foreign to the mentality of the Graeco-Roman world. Even the mystery religions, while excluding the uninitiated, permitted their members to belong to other cults, engage in ancestral worship and do obeisance to the imperial image. The environing cults, including emperor worship, were designed to supplement and not to supplant a person's ancestral religion.<sup>18</sup>

Therefore, theologically, practically, and in terms of the personal and ethical devotion which the lordship of Jesus involved, Christians were headed on a collision course with the Graeco-Roman world.

#### THE GRAECO-ROMAN CULTURAL CONTEXT

In many ways the Graeco-Roman world had developed along lines remarkably favorable for the spread of the new faith centering in Jesus of Nazareth. Kenneth Scott Latourette stated that

"At the time when Christianity began and in the first three centuries of its existence more than at any preceding era conditions in the Mediterranean world prepared the way for the spread of a new religious faith. Nor, indeed... did conditions ever again exist there which quite so favored the entrance and general acceptance of a new faith."<sup>19</sup>

To its parent faith, Judaism, the Christian movement was immeasurably in debt "for a field tilled all over the empire" by propagation of the very monotheism to which Christianity also was committed. Thus the daughter faith inherited not only Scriptures but also a vast body of catechetical, liturgical and apologetical literature as well as an actual synagogue circle of Jews, Gentile proselytes and "God-fearers," all of which were of inestimable significance for her mission. "The amount of this debt is so large," says Harnack, "that one might venture to claim the Christian mission as a continuation of the Jewish propaganda."<sup>20</sup> For a time, also, Christianity benefited from the umbrella of toleration afforded Judaism. Nevertheless, this relation to Judaism was never an unmixed blessing. Non-Christian Jews often looked upon Christians as heretics, for example, and persecuted them even beyond Palestine, whereas they would hardly have thought of persecuting a non-Jewish religious movement.

In addition to the relation to Judaism, there were the many factors of Graeco-Roman civilization which validate claims of a *preparatio evangelica* such as the assertion of Latourette just cited. These are often summarized<sup>21</sup> and need only be mentioned here: the Pax Romana, the remarkable--and remarkably safe--Roman transportation system, the Greek language, the decay of the old cults and the tendency toward monotheism, the breakdown of ethical systems, the wide-spread spiritual hunger, the large measure of religious toleration, etc.

The other side of the coin must also be treated briefly. If the Graeco-Roman world was favorable to the spread of Christian faith, it also presented formidable obstacles. Intellectually, Christians had to endure the popular ridicule directed against Jews as the price for the official toleration which this identification offered. Then when the identification was lost and Christianity stood on its own, it suffered handicaps because of its newness in a world which cherished ancient philosophy, because of its seemingly ridiculous claim that God's wisdom was manifested in the crucifixion of a criminal, and because of the cultural inferiority of its adherents. 22

Ethically, Christianity set forth a standard more rigorous than that of the Stoics in that it made "love for one's neighbor rather than cold duty the norm for behavior." In a society where ethical behavior was in large measure notoriously depraved, Christian conversion represented a formidable moral change indeed.

A further set of problems had to do with the trade guilds which were so popular among the artisans of Graeco-Roman society. The political maneuverings of these guilds brought governmental restrictions against free association which were then used against Christian meetings. In some instances, guilds opposed Christian evangelism because of the economic threat which it represented--as in the riot of the silversmiths at Ephesus (Acts 19:21ff.). Finally, a Christian who was a member of a guild had to confront problems of whether to participate in guild activities which included cult meals in the idol's temple, the services of temple prostitutes, etc.24

However, the basic problem for Christianity in the GraecoRoman context adhered neither in the intellectual, ethical or economic and social spheres but in the religious. The religious toleration of Rome had its limits and Christians overstepped the bounds. Of fundamental importance was the distinction between religio and superstitio. Religio was the term used for the Roman state religion as well as the religions of those nations incorporated within the empire. The Roman religion was considered to have originated with the founding of the city of Rome itself in terms of a contract between Jupiter, the chief god of the pantheon, and Numa, the first priest king of Rome. The neglect of this cult was believed to have resulted in disasters for Rome, with the result that Augustus revived the state religion with himself as its head as pontifex maximus.25

The religions of the nations incorporated within the empire also had the status of religio. Toward them Rome was tolerant. The Romans integrated these foreign gods into their own cult and permitted free exercise to these national faiths, while at the same time expecting their adherents to offer sacrifices at the altar of the imperial cult as well. The Jews were allowed to be an exception and to worship their God alone so long as they would offer prayer for the Roman state. In the temple in Jerusalem, they even offered daily sacrifices for the emperor. In fact, the position of the Jews throughout the empire was remarkably advantageous, as they had the status of religio licita with privileges spelled out by governmental statute

The situation relating to *superstitio* was somewhat different. *Superstitiones* were private religious beliefs. Therefore, the doctrines of cults which were not national faiths, such as the mystery religions, came under this heading. Toward *superstitiones*, too, the Roman attitude was one of tolerance, except in cases of cultic behavior which outraged public decency and order. For example, the Druids were persecuted because they were anti-Roman and were alleged to practice human sacrifice.<sup>27</sup>

Christianity, as soon as it was viewed as separate from Judaism, came under the category of *superstitio*. It could not be termed a *religio* because it was attached to no particular nation but rather was an international and interracial religious community.<sup>28</sup> Even so, it might have expected toleration from the Roman government as a *superstitio*--and indeed, taken as a whole, there was toleration alternating with sporadic but sometimes devastating persecutions during the first three centuries until the time of Constantine. The problem was that Christianity often seemed to the Romans subversive of decency and order. In A.D. 64, Christians were believed to be guilty of arson in Rome and were charged with "hatred of the human race." A large number were put to death by various tortures, including being burned as human torches to light up Nero's gardens.

This charge of "hatred of the human race" may have stemmed from Christians' refusal to participate in public observances associated with idolatry and from their denunciation of the polytheism of the Graeco-Roman world. For this latter they were charged with "atheism." Of this "atheism" the Jews were also guilty and sometimes persecuted, but, after all, they were a *religio licita* and therefore a special case. From the standpoint of the empire Christianity threatened to become a mass movement, and it would not do for large numbers to accept this dangerous and subversive superstition.

Christians were also accused of cannibalism and incest. The first charge no doubt arose from a misunderstanding of the realistic language used of the Eucharist, "eating the flesh and drinking the blood" of the Christ (cf. John 6:52-59). The second charge seems to have been provoked by the Christian practice of calling each other "brother" and "sister" and greeting each other with a kiss. When it was learned that "Brother So and So" had married "Sister So and So," a prejudiced mind could easily leap to the conclusion--incest!

As Michael Green suggests,<sup>30</sup> the early Christians suffered from a bad press. The historian Tacitus (c. 52-c. 117) spoke of Christianity as a "deadly superstition" and of Christians as "Criminals...deserving extreme penalties," though he did not believe them guilty of arson.<sup>31</sup> Plinius, Governor of Bithynia, in a famous letter written to the Emperor Trajan between 111 and 113, calls Christianity a "perverse and excessive superstition" and charges

Christians with "obstinacy and unbending perversity" and "insanity."<sup>32</sup> Suetonius, a contemporary of Plinius and an important literary figure, <sup>33</sup> accused Christians of a "novel and pernicious superstition."<sup>34</sup>

But there was a deeper and more pointed problem. The Roman Emperors, influenced by practice in the Eastern areas they had conquered, had proclaimed their own images in shrines of state religion, especially outside of Rome. Obeisance before the imperial image was a pledge of loyalty to the state which, of course, Christians could not make. To borrow words from Michael Green:

"Caesar should be honoured but not worshipped. They would not bow the knee or sprinkle incense to Caesar. How could they? They belonged to another *divi filius*; they owed allegiance to another imperator; they were securely related to God through another *pontifex maximus*. Both Christ and Caesar claimed world dominion. A Christian could not consistently say "Caesar is Lord" if he professed "Jesus is Lord."<sup>35</sup>

Here then was the crux of the matter: Who is Lord? Already the issue is joined in the Domitianic persecution of A.D. 95, made much of in the book of Revelation. Refusal to recognize the lordship of Domitian subjected the Christians to economic boycott and social ostracism.<sup>36</sup> It is often suggested, also, that I Cor. 12:3

is a very early reference to this same problem. "...no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says 'Jesus be cursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit." Cullmann, for example, believes that this verse refers primarily not to "glossolalia but emperor worship and persecution because of the confession *Kyrios Christos*. There is very probably here a reference to a saying of Jesus in which he promises his disciples the inspiration of the Holy Spirit precisely at the moment when they will stand before their judges in times of persecution and be called upon to confess their faith" (Matthew 10:17).<sup>37</sup>

By the time of the emperor Hadrian, (98-117), it is clear that Christians, when arrested, were expected to prove their loyalty by making offerings to the imperial statue and cursing Christ, as we know from Plinius' letter, referred to above. At the martyrdom of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, about A.D. 155, this aged patriarch was urged by his captors to say, "Caesar is Lord," to make the required sacrifice at the imperial altar, and to abjure and reproach Christ. His answer is a classic in the annals of martyrdom: "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has never done me any injury. How then could I blaspheme my king and my savior?"<sup>38</sup>

But even if Christians were not put to this life-and-death choice of Caesar or Christ before the authorities, they nevertheless faced the problem of how to live out the lordship of Christ in their daily life in Graeco-Roman society. There are allusions to this issue in the New Testament, to which we will give some attention later. In the later apologetic literature, customs and practices of heathen society are described in some detail with indications

of what Christians should and should not do.

Tertullian (c. A.D. 145-220?), especially, goes to considerable length to describe how thoroughly contemporary society was permeated by idolatry and how much of it must be shunned by the Christian. Though he was no doubt much more puritanical than the average Christian, at least his descriptions indicate the acuteness of the problem. According to Tertullian, the usual entertainments, holidays and festivals must be avoided, the reading of pagan literature, and most of the common occupations, it would appear, because of the wholesale association with idolatry.<sup>39</sup> Yet when addressing the non-Christians, Tertullian could claim that Christians did not "exile themselves from ordinary human life" but rather were "living among you, eating the same food, wearing the same attire, having the same habits, under the same necessities of existence."<sup>40</sup>

One infers from Tertullian's chiding of his fellow Christians for their participation in heathen society that there was diversity in practice. Some, like Tertullian, were strict separationists. Others seem to have favored more extensive participation. This ambiguity may be traced to the New Testament, to the testimony of which we now turn.

#### SOME DIRECTIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The problem of confessing Jesus as Lord in Graeco-Roman society, we have suggested, was a twofold one: there was the "crisis" problem of emperor worship, the proposition that one abjure Christ and offer worship at the emperor's altar; and there was the daily problem of participation in a society where one met on every hand intimations of pagan worship.

On the first prong of this problem, the guidance from the New Testament seems fairly clear. Christians are to honor the emperor and other rulers, but to proffer to Christ alone--or to God--their worship.

Jesus himself set the pattern for the Christian attitude to the Roman authorities--and at the same time gave an astute answer to a captious question. When asked, "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?" he replied, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." (Mark 12:13ff. Parallels in Matthew and Luke. By not replying in the negative Jesus avoided identification with the Zealots, who were committed to overthrowing the Romans. By not answering "yes" he refused to be identified with the Herodians, who were collaborationists. Practically, his reply meant: Give to the state what the state may demand in its own sphere, money, taxes. But do not give to the state what only God can demand, your worship, yourself.<sup>41</sup>

There are other indications in the Gospels that while Jesus was critical of the state and did not regard it as in any sense a final, divine institution, nevertheless, he accepted the Roman rule and resisted identification with any attempt to overthrow it. <sup>42</sup>

For all his pains, however, Jesus was executed by the Romans for claiming to be "King of the Jews." "Translated into the legal parlance of the Roman State, this means: Jesus was condemned to death by hanging as a rebel against the Roman State in one of its subject provinces. In other words, he was nailed to the cross as a Zealot."<sup>43</sup>

Paul's exhortation in Romans 13:1ff., is often regarded as the crucial New Testament passage concerning the Christian attitude toward the state. Taken by itself this passage may seem to suggest a subservient attitude, obedience to the state no matter what. Yet, though the passage says nothing about the higher allegiance owed to God, the apostle certainly assumed it; and the statement in verse 7, "pay all of them their dues..." may indicate that Paul had in mind the words of Jesus cited above.

Oscar Cullmann relates this passage to I Corinthians 6:1ff., which enjoins the Corinthian Christians not to use the state's machinery of justice for intra-church grievances, and to I Cor. 2:8 which states, "None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." Noting the eschatological context of the first two of these passages, Cullmann summarizes Paul's doctrine of the state somewhat as follows: the state is in no sense final or divine; but the state deserves respect in that it stands in a temporary order which God still wills. The Christian is to affirm the state and render to it what is necessary for its existence, while maintaining a critical attitude to it. Thus Paul's attitude is consistent with that of Jesus. As to a situation wherein the state demands what only God can require, Paul does not speak. But we know from his life that he would never have permitted Christians to say "Caesar is Lord" and "Let Jesus be accursed" as the state sometimes demanded.<sup>44</sup>

Instructions in the pastoral epistles, attributed to Paul, accord with Romans 13:1ff., without expressly affirming that governments have been "instituted by God." Titus 3:1 reads: "Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for any honest work..." This is a very strong injunction to obedience, no doubt having in view the necessity of toleration from the Roman government. Again, no reference is made to the problem of governmental persecution, the attempt to require the worship of Caesar, though the qualifier "honest" may be a subtle hint that demands may be made which a Christian cannot in conscience fulfill.<sup>45</sup>

I Timothy 2:1ff., introduces a new element, namely, the injunction to pray for those in authority, in order that Christians may enjoy favor with the rulers and "may lead a quiet and peaceable life." It was not to be assumed that the prayers offered for the emperor by the Jews would be continued in the Christian church, especially under the stress of persecution. Perhaps this passage is also an indication, of which there are many in the early church, that Christians were audacious enough to believe that emperors could be converted.

It appears that the hope that all persons, including the governmental officials, may "be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" is one reason for the prayers. "In the emperor cult people prayed to emperors; for Christians to pray for them removed them from the savior class and made them... subjects for Christian salvation."<sup>46</sup>

I Peter 2:13-17, likewise is very similar to Romans 13:1ff. A primary difference, though probably of no great import, is that in the Petrine passage the emperor is specifically designated as the supreme earthly authority to whom honor and obedience are due. To "be subject for the Lord's (Christ's) sake" may be an indication that government is instituted by the Lord, but that particular Pauline assertion is not explicit here. The civil obedience of "free men" who are "servants of God" will give no occasion for criticism on the part of "foolish men." The phrase "Fear God. Honor the emperor," may be reminiscent of Jesus's word about rendering to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.

The perspective of the book of Revelation concerning Rome is unreservedly negative. In chapter 13, the Roman imperial power itself is a "beast risin out of the sea" whose authority was derived from "the dragon" Satan). The beast uttered only blasphemies, made war against the saints, and received universal obeisance. A second beast "which rose out of the earth" represented the imperial cult which demanded worship of the first beast, mimicking the divine by a display of miracles. This blasphemous empire, along with Satan who authorized and empowered it, is finally overthrown and destroyed by the victorious Christ. The attitude toward Rome is one of unrelieved abhorrence and hostility.

Is there contradiction between Revelation and Romans 13 on this question of the attitude to the imperial power? Possibly not.<sup>47</sup> The blasphemous, persecuting imperial power against which Revelation reacts is not the benign, or at least predominantly benign, empire which is in view in Romans 13 (or I Timothy, Titus, and I Peter). Paul certainly would have reacted with abhorrence to the demand to worship Caesar. On the other hand, it is hard to imagine anything good to be said for Rome by the author of Revelation, or prayers for the emperor or for his salvation!

On the larger issue of day-to-day participation in pagan society the problem is too complex and the New Testament literature relating to it too extensive for anything like adequate treatment in this brief paper. The New Testament's teaching on this subject cannot be so much as summarized here. Even a discussion of whether the attitude was predominantly separation or participation would prolong this paper--and the research necessary to it--unduly. Then there is the large question of the influence of an imminentist eschatology upon social responsibility.

Let it suffice us to focus briefly upon the problem of foods offered to idols, a problem which lies close to the heart of the matter. This question is treated in Acts 15, in I Corinthians 8 and 10, and in Revelation 2.

In Acts 15:20, 29, abstaining from "what has been sacrificed to idols" is one of the "necessary things" laid upon the Gentile Christians in order to make it possible for them to enjoy table fellowship with Jewish Christians--in the same congregations, no doubt. Association with idolatry in any fashion would be repulsive and offensive to Jews. So also would the eating of "blood" and "what is strangled."

"Unchastity" may have been included in the list of these "necessary things" because of the sheer prevalence and easy acceptance of sexual immorality in Graeco-Roman society. Or its inclusion may have been due to the frequent association of temple prostitution with idol worship or with the guild meals and entertainment which often occurred in temples. It is even possible that there are two pairs of Hebrew parallelisms here: "pollutions of idols" and "unchastity" along with "what is strangled" and "blood" in verse 20, the order of which then becomes scrambled in verse 29 obscuring the parallelism.

Be that as it may, the decree of the Jerusalem Council enjoins abstinence from eating what has been sacrificed to idols. How authoritative this decision was considered among the Gentile Christians is not clear. It may be significant that its provisions are never mentioned in the extant Pauline literature, although, according to Acts 15, Paul was a principal participant in the Council and one of the bearers of the official letter communicating its decision 48.

References to this problem in Revelation 2:14,20 are in harmony with the recommended prohibition of Acts 15. In fact, the author of Revelation may have had this Jerusalem decision in mind, since the language of Revelation 2:24 is reminiscent of that of Acts 15:28. In the letter to the church at Pergamum, the eating of food sacrificed to idols and the practice of immorality are analagous to the infamous sin of Balaam (2:14), while in the case of the church at Thyatira, the same two practices are being promoted by a prophetess dubbed "Jezebel" (2:20). Because of the reference to the Nicolaitans in 2:15, it is assumed that these aberrations are associated with the group bearing this name, about which, unfortunately, there is no sure knowledge beyond the tantalizing allusions in this-chapter (2:5,15).

The word translated "immorality" in Revelation 2:14,20 is *porneia*, the same we-a rendered "unchastity" in Acts 15:20,29. Whatever may be the (--se in the passage in Acts, it is likely that a Hebrew parallelism is to be recognized here, since the same term, *porneia*, is used several times in Revelation to mean "idolatry" or "apostasy."<sup>49</sup> That is, the eating of food offered to idols is itself that spiritual fornication which is associated with apostasy. Possibly the life-and-death struggle with the imperial cult will allow the author of Revelation nothing short of the harshest condemnation of eating food offered to idols, with the threat of divine punishment (2:22-23). In any case, such is his stance.

The major difference between Acts 15 and Revelation 2 concerning this problem is a

difference in spirit. The intent of the letter cited in Acts 15 is a counsel of prohibition of eating food offered to idols, couched in the most conciliatory and charitable language. The authority cited was the Holy Spirit and the common wisdom of the "brethren" in Jerusalem. Revelation 2 contains a harsh and unqualified denunciation of the practice, attributed to the word of the risen and glorified Lord.

The very fact that this problem is given attention in these two Scriptural passages--and in I Corinthians which we shall discuss next--is an indication that Christians were not in agreement on the prohibition. Eating of food sacrificed to idols was in fact being done among Christians.

The Pauline treatment is much more detailed and complex than the brief references in Acts 15 and Revelation 2. In I Corinthians 8, Paul evidently takes up the matter of "food offered to idols" as a question referred to him by the church at Corinth (8:1). In chapter 10, he approaches the matter from the larger perspective of idol worship. Since the Corinthian correspondence is not a unity, it is thought by some that these two chapters are from different letters, especially since chapter 9 seems to be sandwiched between the two with no apparent relation to either.

At any rate, I am treating the two passages as a unity and am attempting a summary of Paul's teaching on this matter, albeit with considerable uncertainty. Note that the apostle seems to be addressing those who claim a kind of sophisticated "knowledge" about idols which "puffs up" and which is not adequately accompanied by love (I Cor. 8:1-4). Following is what I understand Paul to be saying:

1. In itself, eating food offered to an idol is nothing to be concerned about, because the "gods" which the idols represent are non-existent (8:4-6), and everything, no matter to whom offered, belongs to the one Lord (10:26).
2. However, there are some who do not have this fundamental understanding. To them a sacrifice to an idol is a sacrifice to a real god (8:7).
3. Moreover, though the "gods" and "lords" worshipped by pagans are not real beings, there are demons who stand in their places; and the demons are real (10:20-21).
4. Although Christians have liberty of conscience in this matter, they must be concerned for the "weak" conscience of a brother who believes in the reality of the gods, or who in any event believes that eating food offered to idols is wrong (8:10-13; 10:28-29).
5. Any flirting with idolatry is fraught with danger, as is amply illustrated by the history of Israel (10:1-14).

6. In actual practice, this counsel means: (1) Be vigilant to avoid the temptations to immorality (the verb form of *porneia* is used) and to presumptuousness which pagan associations may encourage (10:6-14). (2) Participation in a pagan cultic meal when a sacrifice is offered is participation in the reality of the demon and contradicts one's participation in the cup and table of the Lord (10:20-22~). (3) Dining in an idol's temple (at the invitation of a friend<sup>5</sup> or in connection with guild membership?) is likely to be misunderstood and should be avoided (8:10-13). (4) What is sold on the market (though it may include left-overs from sacrifices) be eaten without raising questions of conscience (10:25-26). Ordinarily, the same is true of partaking at table in a pagan home (10:27). However, if someone points out to you that the food you are about to eat has been offered to an idol, then politely refuse it--for the sake of this person's conscience (10:28-29). (7) Be guided in this matter and in everything by the eager desire to glorify God, to represent him well in society and to procure the salvation of all persons (10:31-33).

If the question of food offered as sacrifices to the gods was a thorny one, it was but symptomatic of the plethora of problems besetting Christians in Graeco-Roman society, where, among the many gods and lords, the claim to Caesar's divinity and lordship was undergirded by the coercive power of the mighty empire.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Wilhelm Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, Gottingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1965 (First ed., 1913; second ed., 1921) pp. 79ff.
2. Clarence Tucker Craig, *The Beginning of Christianity*, New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945, pp. 209-210.
3. Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*, Translated from the German by Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A.M. Hall, London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1959, Chapter 7.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 205. 5. *Ibid.*, p. 212. 6. *Ibid.*, p. 216.
7. Jean Danielou *The Theology of Jewish Christianity (The Development of Christian Doctrine before the Council of Nicaea)*, Vol. 1, translated by John A. Baker, London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1964, pp. 147-163.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 150, f.n. 15.
10. Cf. Acts 3:16; 4:12; 5:41, etc.

11. Cullmann, *oE. cit.*, pp. 180, 217.
12. Cf. John 1:1-18; Hebrews 1:1-4; Colossians 1:13-17.
13. Cf. Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., pp. 115-117.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 123-235; Craig, *oE. cit.*, pp. 183-185.
15. See Green, *op. cit.*, pp. 188-193; Adolph Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries* Vol. I of the 1908 edition<sup>Y</sup>, translated and edited by James Moffatt, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961, pp. 125-246.
16. Harnack, *op. cit.*, p. 131. 17. Green, *off. cit.*, p. 146. 18. *Ibid.*
19. Kenneth Scott Latourette, *The First Five Centuries (A History of the Expansion of Christianity, vol. I*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1937, p. 8.
20. Harnack, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
21. See *ibid.*, pp. 19ff; Latourette, *U. cit.*, pp. 8ff.; Green, *op. cit.*, pp. 13ff.
22. Green, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-45. 23. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46. 24. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 34; cf. Hans Lietzmann, *The Beginnings of the Christian Church* (Rev. ed., translated by Bertram Woolfj London: Lutterworth Press, 1949, p. 155.
26. Green, *off. cit.*, p. 24; Harnack, *off. cit.*, pp. 13-14; Lietzmann, *op. cit.*, p. 78-79. The primary reference is Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 14, 10.
27. Green, *c. cit.*, p. 36. 28. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-36.
29. Tacitus, *Annales*, XV, 44, in Joseph Cullen Ayer, Jr., *A Source Book for Ancient Church History*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949, pp. 6-7.
30. Green, *op. cit.*, p. 40. 31. Tacitus, *loc. cit.*

32. In Ayer, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-22.

33. Hans Lietzmann, *The Founding of the Church Universal (The Beginnings of the Christian Church, Vol. II, translated by Bertram Lee Woolf, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938,*  
p. 30.

34. Green, *off. cit.*, p. 40.

35. *Ibid.*, pa 43.

36. Green, *op. cit.*, p. 40, citing Revelation 13:16 f. 37. Cullmann, *Christology...*, p. 219.

38. "The Martyrdom of Polycarp," *The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. I (American reprint of the Edinburgh Edition , Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953,*  
pp. 39-44.

39. See especially his "On Idolatry," *Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. III, pp. 61ff.*

40. "Apology," *ibid.*, p. 49. This passage is reminiscent of a passage in the anonymous "Epistle to Diognetus," chap. 5.

41. Oscar Cullmann, *The State in the New Testament, London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1957, pp. 34-3b.*

42. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19. 43. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 55-65. This understanding of Paul's attitude to the State does not stand or fall on Cullmann's controversial interpretation of *exousiai* in Romans 13:1, namely, as the invisible "principalities and powers" manifest in the Roman government. Personally, I find Cullmann's interpretation reasonable, but not entirely convincing.

45. *The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. XI, New York: Abingdon Press, 1955, p. 542.* 46. *Ibid.*, p. 397.

47. Cullmann insists that there is no contradiction. *Church and State...*, pp. 83-84.

48. Ferdinand Hahn believes that there were two conferences, the earlier of which, recounted in Galatians, resulted in a comity agreement: Paul and his associates were to give primary attention to evangelizing the Gentiles; Peter and his associates, the Jews. The two were then merged in the account in Acts 15. *Mission in the New Testament, London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1965, pp. 77-86.*

49. Revelation 14:8; 17:2,4; 18:3; 19:2.

50. Often noted is a second century papyrus invitation to dinner which reads: "Chairemon requests your company at dinner at the table of the Lord Serapis in the Serapeum tomorrow, the 15th, at 9 o'clock." Presumably the host was planning to serve his guests the meat remaining from his sacrifice to the god Serapis. The Broadman Bible Commentary,, Vol. X, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1970, ppa 336-337.

A CRITIQUE OF  
The Lordship of Jesus Confronts Graeco-Roman Society  
In the First Century

by Clifford Horn

In his stimulating presentation of the origins, context and some problems related to the confession of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the early church, Dr. Copeland has given us much food for thought that should be of great help to us as we consider the confession of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the here and now. It is this very problem which, I think, is the cause of much tension and frustration in the Christian Church in Japan today.

In the second part of his paper, where he speaks of problems of Christianity and culture, we read: "One infers from Tertullian's chiding of his fellow Christians for their participation in heathen society that there was diversity in practice.... This ambiguity may be traced to the New Testament." This, for me, is the most important conclusion reached in the paper and one that needs to be discussed among us today. For while there was the strict separationist position of the puritanical Tertullian, cited in the paper, the more "liberal" school which tried to build bridges between Christianity and the pagan culture of the day was also present. Perhaps its most well-known advocate was St. Justin the Martyr. It is interesting to note that the core of his arguments is much like that of the stricter Tertullian:

The Lord said, "Pay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar; to God, what belongs to God." Therefore we render worship to God alone, but in all other things we gladly obey you, acknowledging you as kings and rulers of earth, and praying that in you the royal power may be found combined with wisdom and prudence (Apology I,xvii).

These two fathers of the Church found unity in their confession of Jesus, the Christ, as Lord. But their expressions of that Lordship took quite different forms.

The third section of Dr. Copeland's paper (interestingly entitled "Some Directions in the New Testament") points out that this variety of expression was not unusual, and he illustrates this by the biblical attitudes toward what he considers the crux of the problem of confessing the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the first centuries of the Christian era, the problem of emperor worship and the daily problem of participation in pagan society. The evidence which he has presented related to these two problems confirms the conclusion at the end of the paper's second part which I quoted earlier. At best we can say that the New Testament gives directions for the Christian response to these questions. The New Testament documents witness to a variety of responses. Time, place and circumstances would seem to indicate the response. In other words, the confession of Jesus as Lord is a dynamic process, taking different forms at different times.

The two problems Dr. Copeland has isolated for our consideration are the problems of state and society. The first is related to personal ethics. When we see the issue in this way, we become aware of the problem's contemporary nature--and of the great variety of responses among us. For some the Lordship of Jesus Christ means opposition to the Yasukuni Shrine bill; for others it may primarily be related to problems like the burning of incense at a Japanese funeral. Most of our current divisions (evangelical/ecumenical t conservative/liberal, social emphasis/personal conversion, etc.) are closely related to this question of the Lordship of Jesus.

The New Testament and the early church offer us a variety of responses. And I would hope that we would learn from this "cloud of witnesses" in the Sacred Scriptures. Those witnesses would speak to us too. Are they not telling us that the meaning of the Lordship of Jesus, the Christ, is something that is worked out in the fellowship of the entire Church under the guidance of the Divine Spirit? There is one Spirit, and that Spirit has led us to the confession of the one Lord. This is our common bond. But the gifts are many, and the expression of those gifts and insights will be varied. And this evangelical insight will allow us to dialogue with each other on the meaning of our confession of the Lordship of Jesus and will also enable us to veil with charity our brothers' and sisters' imperfect confession and witness to Jesus Christ, the Lord, through whom to God the Father, with the Holy Spirit, be all might, majesty, and dominion, now and for evermore.

## **THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE MISSIONARY**

by Philip Kinley

### Introduction

To be assigned the topic, "The spiritual Life of the Missionary" and to accept such an assignment should not be construed to mean that the writer is an authority on the subject nor has his own spiritual life been of a superior nature. The only claim to be made is that he is a missionary, called by the grace of God, and that he is striving to develop and maintain an adequate and growing relationship with our Lord. The writer sees himself as a disciple with much more to learn and experience before attempting to speak with an authority of his own. Therefore, this paper will be an attempt to share what others with far greater experience and insight have learned. The writer also shares two confessions revealed by William Barclay in his *A Spiritual Autobiography*. One is that I have an essentially second-class mind and the second is that I have never had an original idea in my life, hence the necessity for explaining and expounding other men's ideas. Obviously, the assigned topic is a vast subject with almost endless volumes of material having been written about the spiritual life. The writer makes no attempt to deal with the subject exhaustively or completely. Rather, I have chosen to limit myself to the following: a definition of the spiritual life; a very brief Biblical basis; elements of the spiritual life; and finally, some special problems and advantages of the missionary. One could just as well have written such a paper, for example, from a historical perspective, noting particularly the monastic movement in the early Church, the mysticism and pietism of later periods, as well as the charismatic movement of today. Or, he could have chosen to do an in-depth Biblical study. Since the spiritual life or spirituality is a common term in Christian circles and since it conveys different meanings to different persons, I have chosen to begin with defining it as follows: "Spirituality has to do with the total life of man under God; man living in the world by God's terms; man living with openness toward God, drawing strength from what happens between them. Spirituality is humanity wedded to holiness. It is not a denial of the world, but a proper handling of the world.<sup>1</sup> It is personally accepting the demands of the greatest commandment and loving God with all of one's being. This loving response to God is the motive and the goal of the spiritual life. Paul's words in Gal. 5:18 are that we are to be "led by the Spirit." It is wanting to know and to follow God's will as well-as the state of "willing no interruption between the self and God. It is to appreciate all that is necessary to cultivate that love-bond, and to resist all that stands opposed to it."<sup>3</sup>

From this perspective, perhaps most of us feel that the greatest challenge facing us is to breathe fresh vitality into our spiritual life, and to re-examine our commitment and loyalty as disciples of Christ.

Let us examine very briefly an exegetical basis for the spiritual life. While any one of dozens of scriptures instruct on this subject, I have chosen II Peter 1:3-11.

#### Biblical Study (II Peter 1:3-11)

Has God provided man everything necessary to live a godly life? The writers of the New Testament, and more particularly Peter, give a resounding "Yes!" "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness." (v.3) These men inspired by God do not despair of life's possibilities nor disparage the resources that are available for the living of the godly, reverent, and truly human life. God has done more than we can "ask or think." (Eph. 3:20) He has called us to live his own glory and excellence, dealing with us in the love that has no limitations and granting to us a portion of His own divine power. "Our God is no stingy deity begrudging anything he may give his children; he is lavish beyond understanding."<sup>4</sup> Barclay comments that, "Jesus Christ is the person who can rid us of the fascination of the world's lust and who can cleanse and purify us by His presence and His power. To walk with Christ is to walk in safety from the world's taint."<sup>5</sup> This is possible because he makes us partakers of his divine nature. (v.4)

One writer states the three great words in this text are promises, escape, and partakers. They are the essential aspects of the Christian faith--God's revelation of himself through promise and fulfillment; man's escape from the power and perversion of sin and its effect; and, third, participation in the very life and purpose of God.

That we can be partakers of the divine nature is a startling and bold pronouncement. Yet the New Testament affirms over and over again that believers do experience a life of communion with God through his spirit. Of all the world's religions, Christianity is unique. It teaches and exalts the creative power, eternity, and majesty of the supreme God; but it also elevates lowly, finite, sinful humanity to the level of union with God himself. This is God's gift of grace to man. This does not mean that man becomes absorbed into deity, as some Eastern religions teach. Rather, he has an intimate relation with God's spirit: his character, his purpose and his saving love. It is important to note we do not take Christ as an external model; we receive him as an internal power.

Even so, the Christian is always "becoming." He has not yet reached his goal. For this reason Peter commands the disciple to make every effort to add to one's faith, goodness, knowledge, selfcontrol, and so on. Barclay translates v.5 as follows: "Bend all your energy to the task of equipping your faith with courage," etc. His point is that the word used for "equip" means to lavishly and willingly pour out everything that is necessary for the spiritual life. Peter's urging to equip means that the provision is not to be only a necessary minimum, but a lavish and generous supplying. We must not be content with less than the very best that God has to offer.<sup>8</sup>

A second implication in adding virtue is that just as an army advances toward its objective, in the Christian there must be steady growth and a maturing of the spiritual life. Moffatt cautions that "the Christian life must not be an initial spasm followed by chronic inertia." Yet this is what often happens. The initial enthusiasm and wonder of one's experience in Christ gradually cools and growth stops also. "Without effort the Christian calling will not be confirmed, nor will that which was begun be perfected and matured.... No one 'oozes' into the Kingdom of God. It is hard to become a Christian, and equally hard to remain one. Diligence may lack glamour, but it is the only way to honor God's high calling."<sup>9</sup>

One more brief observation needs to be made. Surely Peter's meaning is that in the Christian life the supreme effort of everything in the Christian life is of faith, but a faith which does not produce fruit is not faith at all. Faith is also a commitment to the demands of Christ. Workless faith is faith in a vacuum.<sup>10</sup> It is in danger of becoming only an inner relationship with God separated from the demands of Christian discipleship. The Christian life is a growing experience; therefore, faith is not a single act of acceptance, once and for all finished, but a living, growing and working relationship with God which permeates all aspects of the Christian's life. Faith must be added to. When this is conscientiously done, our lives will be effective and fruitful. (v.8)

#### Elements of the Spiritual Life

Next, let us consider what goes into maintaining the spiritual life. The basis of one's relationship to Christ is his daily communion with him. We will therefore begin with examining personal devotions--Bible reading, meditation and prayer. It is no secret that all the giants of the faith have been men and women of prayer, thereby changing themselves and the world for the better. Nels Ferre is correct when he says that, "We all need to learn to pray better; this is life's most important lesson."<sup>11</sup> He goes on to state that only by praying can this lesson be learned. Every skill takes time and patience, but the reality of prayer, being life's chief lesson, is the hardest. Prayer as communion with God can never be easily mastered.<sup>12</sup> The writer is especially indebted to Albert Day and his *An Autobiography of Prayer*. Following is a brief summary of his teaching on prayer. Day stresses consciousness and prayer. He states that "prayer is the thrust of the consciousness of man outward in an effort to establish communion with the consciousness of God."<sup>13</sup> Words may or may not be used as God is conscious of the thought in the mind, the feeling of the heart, the impulse of the will, and the need or desire for love. If words are used, it is not the words that make prayer; rather the decisive question is, "Is my consciousness wholly directed toward and centered on God?" God at every moment is aware of me. Therefore, prayer is not necessary to bring oneself to his attention. Rather, prayer's specific function is to set God at the center of my attention and to open myself to him.<sup>14</sup> This demands more than just thoughts about God or wishing for his presence. It is entering into a living, knowledge communicating, life-transforming relationship with God. This kind of relationship can be had only at a price. Native consciousness isn't enough. We must be prepared by certain conditions. Day lists four.

One is purification. Sin is what Day calls the great distraction in consciousness. As long as the conscience is uneasy, we are unable to concentrate on the quest for God. The sins of the past, present and future must go, at whatever cost. This is not asking for perfection; it is committing ourselves to a vigorous warfare against every impulse which might eventuate in sin. "It is a summons to end all easy tolerance in ourselves ... and carelessness about moral dirt."<sup>15</sup>

The second condition is annihilation of self. Jesus' words are, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself." (Mark 8:34) The self here refers to the habitual preoccupation with one's own desires, passions and ambitions. It is this false self which has the ego as its center, which says "I" and not "God." This is the self that must go, otherwise it so tyrannizes the consciousness that one cannot attend to God. How does one annihilate the ego? There is no shortcut or easy way, but three things are necessary. Ono, the ego must die, and you must "participate in the execution of the death sentence,"<sup>16</sup> says Day. It will die only when you have decisively, firmly, irrevocably made up your mind that it must die. Second, begin with actions that "unself" you. Begin with your thoughts. Normally, most of them have a self-reference. Learn to relate to people and issues in terms of the common good and not how they affect your hopes and ambitions. Third, recall what the egocentricity of others has done to us. It always helps to see our faults as they appear in the lives of others.

Clarification is the third therapy in the preparation of consciousness of God. This means there is a large part of our personality at any one time which is not sensibly functioning. We usually call this the sub-conscious. If consciousness is to do its work, the hindrances in the subconscious must be eliminated. Unconscious motivations hide themselves from us. We are out of fellowship with our real selves which keeps us from having conscious and redemptive fellowship with God. Day sees this as a matter of great importance, although it is often ignored by those who teach about prayer. Selfdiscovery is imperative. This begins by identifying the "shadows and the rainbows" of the false self. This requires honesty and courage to recollect fears and other half-forgotten memories; it also requires facing the skeletons in the closet. Find them, face them and then banish them. When this is done, some of our fears and desires lose their power over us and we are ready to establish contact with the love of God.

Fourth, achievement in prayer demands concentration. Scriptures exhort us "to search with all your heart." Quoting from Day again, "Anyone who realizes that prayer is more than word-saying... soon discovers what a vagabond role his mind can play."<sup>18</sup> A lazy, inattentive consciousness, or distracted consciousness, cannot really know God. Wandering thoughts must be controlled by concentration, but this is a capacity developed through long

hours of discipline. It does little good to try to fight the distractions themselves. It is more important to remember that what we are and what we think about outside of prayer, we will be when we pray. The thoughts tolerated at other times will creep in during prayer. If you wait until prayertime to think of God you will be too little and too late. Effective prayer begins long before we bow our heads.

Day also discusses one pattern of prayer called meditative prayer which has been very helpful to the writer. He defines meditative prayer as centering one's attention on God, keeping the mind open to him, usually by the aid of some portion of God's truth.<sup>20</sup> In Day's words, meditation requires four things. "Take off your hat." Remember you are in the presence of the Holy God. Feel, think and act accordingly. Try to realize the perfect love and holiness of God. "Shut the door." Everyone has memories that shatter any silence one tries to create. They must be banished and forgotten at this time. "Open the window." The mind can't remain empty. Open it to the goodness and love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. "Fold your hands." This means a body at rest, and a relaxed mind.

Now that quiet has been secured, meditation may begin. Content and technique are both important. The content should be the Word of God. Persons who take the Scripture into their meditation find themselves reproved, corrected, instructed and exposed. Conscience becomes alive. Thought is transformed; feelings are purified; and wills are energized. Men begin by thinking about God and end in God-directed thinking.

Technique is also important. If possible, select some passage of scripture that you are familiar enough with to dispense with the printed page. Hold that Scripture lovingly before your mind. Open your soul to it. Let it do its own work on your soul. The Holy Spirit is present to make that Word live for you, to challenge you, to show you your need and to show you God's answer for that need.

Meditative prayer confronts us with God, and it confronts a man with his real self. It is an effort to become aware of God and enter into living communion with him. The developing and disciplining of consciousness prepares us for such an experience.<sup>21</sup>

It has been said that the surest way to mature is to pray, the truest way to gain objectivity is to pray and the fullest way to relate our lives to the world is to pray.<sup>~2</sup> This is true only when the content of our prayers are from God's point of view. From personal experience, the writer has found it is very easy to fall into the rut of praying only selfishly. "Help me today, bless my family, guide in my work" may be a type of legitimate prayer, but a steady diet of this kind of praying is to miss the real purpose of prayer. Of course, we are creatures with needs; but all prayers, however important, are but "postscripts" to real prayer, which is praying from the perspective of God.

To pray from God's point of view is to pray in the mind of Christ. If our prayers become a means to inflate our egos and to bolster our spirits, we fail and even sin in prayer because our prayers revolve around us. To pray in the mind of Christ is to trust that God's way, not ours, is the best. Prayer from God's perspective may even result in silence. In the presence of God we may be stunned into joy or sadness too deep for words. Perhaps all of us would profit in several ways if we left time for silence in prayer.

In the presence of God, silence is never empty nor can it ever bore.<sup>23</sup> Certainly we must pray expectantly. "God answers us according to the kind and intensity of our prayer," says Ferre. God wants us to trust him. If our hopes in him do not extend beyond our natural expectations, we might as well not pray.

Another aspect of the spiritual life is reading. Ferre says that, "far too little reading is done to feed the spiritual life."<sup>24</sup> Naturally, our first concern should be with reading the Bible. Much could be said here, but perhaps one point will suffice. For devotional purposes, it should be read slowly. Much more is learned when two or three verses are pondered upon than when a whole chapter is read quickly. The writer finds it helpful to read the same portion of scripture over and over again on successive days. New meanings and insights are gained at each reading. Ferre makes a plea for spending a few minutes each day with the great saints of the Church. He suggests readings as varied as A Kempis' *Imitation of Christ* and Baillies' *A Daiary of Private Prayer*. His testimony is, "When I fail to seek such nurture I feel a hunger and a weakness which I know are real."<sup>25</sup> Perhaps this is an area which many of us would do well to consider more seriously.

Devotional reading also calls for theological study. It has been said that our theology never rises higher than our devotional life. Theology is religious thinking and it deals with ultimate reality. True theology is always living. It points to God and the meaning and purpose of life. It ultimately shows one how to serve God and man and how to gain the strength to do this. To read theology properly involves the living of it. Study and life go together. God has made such a union of life and thought necessary.<sup>26</sup>

So far we have dealt with private devotions and study as components of the spiritual life. To be sure, the fires of the inner life of devotion fuel the actions of the Christian. The acid test of the vitality of one's life of prayer and devotion is confirmed in his ethics and standard of behavior. All the prayer in the world will never change our lives unless we live so that our "prayers be not hindered." To do justice to the ethical aspects of the spiritual life is impossible; nevertheless, a few observations may be in order.

The first is that the Christian is a disciple of Christ. One cannot help but be overwhelmed by the inclusiveness of the meaning of Christian discipleship, especially after having spent

time with a spiritual giant as Dietrich Bonhoeffer and his *The Cost of Discipleship*. He summarizes discipleship as the response of obedience to Christ. It is not a confession of faith in Jesus. "It is nothing else than bondage to Jesus Christ alone, completely breaking through every programme, every ideal, every set of laws... Besides Jesus nothing has any significance. He alone matters."<sup>27</sup>

Discipleship is adherence to Christ and results in personal obedience. "Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ."<sup>28</sup> Again he writes, "The life of discipleship can only be maintained so long as nothing is allowed to come between Christ and ourselves--neither the law, nor personal piety, nor the world."<sup>29</sup> One further quote from Bonhoeffer, "The source of the disciple's life lies exclusively in his fellowship with Jesus Christ. He possesses his righteousness only within that association, never outside it. That is why his righteousness can never become an objective criterion to be applied at will. He is a disciple not because he possesses such a new standard but only because of Jesus Christ. <sup>30</sup>

Another way of stating the issue is that the Christian must surrender his whole self to God--both his conscious and subconscious. To achieve total surrender takes at least a lifetime. However, it is a growing process. When our present self finds surrender, God leads us to yet other areas needing surrender to Him. Certainly Jesus had to keep surrendering until the very end, through Gethsemane on to the cross. Ferre reminds us that surrender is not negative, but positive; hence it should perhaps better be called a constant acceptance of God's will.<sup>31</sup> Surrender, however, is our job. God waits for our initiative at this point. We surrender the self with its own faults, hurts and prejudices and receive in return the abundant life. "But surrender becomes cheap when it is merely an emotional formula for feeling secure with God," says Ferre.<sup>32</sup> Rather it is seeing oneself as he is, in need of being remade. It is appropriating God's grace to remold that self into God's image. Always the Christian life must be tested by its fruits. Does the person become more God-centered and less self-involved, not in talk alone, but in actual deeds? Does he become more thoughtful of others? Does he become more willing to accept blame and less willing to criticize? Does he become more disciplined and less self-indulgent? Does his horizon grow and do his concrete concerns expand from self and family, to neighbors and community, to the nation and to the world? "Christianity is not worth the breath it takes to say the creed unless it can produce individuals who have found in concrete living a new community commitment in every dimension."<sup>33</sup>

Francis Schaeffer puts it in these words, "It is always doctrine appropriated that counts."<sup>34</sup> It isn't enough to know doctrine by mental assent, without making it ours. Making it bear fruit in our lives is the real test of the spiritual life.

The writer feels a few words should be said about discipline and the spiritual life. Many of us were nurtured in churches that were heavy on discipline--mostly of the ascetic kind. It

was usually administered in long lists of don'ts. Prohibitions included such extremes as the forbidding of the wearing of neckties to proscribing the use of pepper in seasoning food. Fortunately, we've been emancipated from many of these burdens, but have the results been entirely positive? What role does discipline play in the spiritual life? Elton Trueblood espouses that if we are to regain lost ground in the spiritual life we must have the right discipline. In fact, he states that almost any rule is better than none.<sup>35</sup> His thesis is that the one common factor in all faithful, courageous religious minorities is the acceptance of discipline--whether it be the Orthodox Jew and refusal to eat pork, or the Mormon and his renunciation of coffee and tea. Against these, he asks, what is the discipline of the Congregationalist, the Methodist, and the Baptist?<sup>36</sup> He goes on to state, "It is time to use plain language and to admit that our popular cult of freedom is a silly cult."<sup>37</sup> Again he writes, "We ought to be honest enough with ourselves to be as strict, in other and more suitable ways, as is the monk in his particular ways. Similarly, we may not approve the constant reading of the same prayer book... but we are not honest in our criticism if we omit disciplinary reading altogether."<sup>38</sup>

A word of caution comes from Lloyd-Jones at this point. He writes that discipline in the Christian life is good and essential. But if one's main purpose is to conform to the discipline he has set for himself, it may well be a great danger to one's soul. "Fasting and praying are good things: but if you fast twice a week or pray at a particular hour every day in order to carry out your discipline, then you have missed the whole object of fasting and praying."<sup>39</sup> His point is that as a result of one's discipline, if one's poverty of spirit is not greater, one's sense of weakness not deepened, or one's hunger and thirst after God not increased, then one may just as well have omitted the discipline.

Wherein lies the proper attitude toward discipline? C.E. Brown, a scholar of the writer's own Church tradition, makes the following observation after tracing the history of the practice of ascetic discipline in the early days of the Church of God. He states that it has been found necessary to apply a rigid discipline to life to produce the soldier, the scholar, the skillful workman, and the able professional man. Whereas the Christian experience is a gift from God, the Christian life itself is the fruit of discipline exercised throughout a lifetime. "In my opinion the only question is whether in any specific instance the discipline involved contributed to the spiritual development desired, It is important to remember that the denial of many innocent things and even some good things--becomes essential in order to find time and strength for the cultivation of the highest spiritual interests."<sup>40</sup> He concludes by stating, "It is my earnest hope that our movement will ... give prayerful attention to the establishment of a wise Christian discipline which while ruling out pharisaism and mere artificial religion will contribute toward the building of strong, fine and community-minded Christian character."<sup>41</sup>

Perhaps the most helpful way to conclude this section is to be reminded that the spiritual

life must always be a growing and maturing experience. The disciple as learner continually stands in need of further instruction, and as light is given to him, his responsibility is to follow that light into new and broadening paths of service and devotion.

#### Special Problems and Advantages For the Missionary

Much of what has been written thus far applies to all Christians, regardless of their specific calling. In this section I want to deal specifically with some problem areas affecting the missionary's spiritual life. To be perfectly honest, I should state that they are or have been problems in my own life. In stating these, perhaps those with insight will share from their knowledge and experience.

The first problem is having almost no occasions to participate in public worship in one's own first language. While public worship was not discussed above, surely it is necessary for spiritual growth. Many of us find ourselves with continuing Sunday responsibilities in the Japanese church which precludes any opportunity to attend English (or other) language services. This is not to imply that Japanese-language services have not been meaningful or helpful. Worship is more than understanding the words being used, although I confess I still do not understand many words used in the Japanese hymnal or responsive reading sections. Worship also involves the emotions. I think it is at this point I occasionally long to attend public worship in my own native tongue. Fortunately, the longer one serves here in this country, and the better able one is to use the language, the lesser problem this becomes. Although I wonder if it is possible to become so indigenized that one never senses the need to worship in his native tongue.

Second, is related to the above problem. Usually, the missionary finds himself in the position of constantly "giving" things of the spirit. He does the preaching, the teaching of Bible classes and helps others in personal counseling. Of course, this is our purpose for being here, and we rejoice in each opportunity to share God's love. But there is also a need to receive spiritual refreshment and nourishment. When the only public worship services one attends are those in which he is preaching, how does his soul get fed, except through reading and personal devotions? After preparing the sermon, chapel address for students, one or two Bible studies for weekday meetings, plus preparing lessons for students each week, one sometimes feels completely drained--mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

Third, is the problem of constantly being placed on the pedestal. The missionary is expected always to be spiritually mature and to know most of the answers to life's questions. Otherwise, why have we come halfway around the world to share a message alien to this culture? There seems to be no place to share our own spiritual needs and problems.

Fourth, is the dearth of Christian literature in English.

This is not to criticize the fine Christian bookstores all over Japan. However, their primary ministry is in the Japanese language books. Even though they are most helpful in ordering the desired book, somehow the urgency of reading it seems to have dissipated after waiting three to six months to receive it.

The final problem to be mentioned is finding time for personal devotions. Even when we are convinced of their necessity and plan for them every day, how does one cope with the interruptions and other encroachments on this valuable time? Perhaps one solution would be to follow the pattern of Wesley who rose each morning at four A.M. for his quiet time with the Lord. Perhaps this wouldn't be so impossible if we did not have late night meetings, which I doubt Wesley did. Another part of the problem is when does maintaining our quiet time at all costs become an idol and defeats the very purpose we hope to accomplish?

Lest this section sound more negative than it is meant to be, let me consider two special advantages the missionary has. In both cases they are simply the other side of above-mentioned problems. One is the encouragement and fellowship of co-workers. Many times I've been blessed, taught and strengthened by my colleagues. These have been times of genuine spiritual enrichment where I have gained and grown.

A second advantage is that the missionary moves constantly in a "spiritual" atmosphere. Most of his waking hours relate in some way to the proclamation of the gospel. This means there is almost constant stimulus for spiritual growth and very little of the temptations and distraction from the secular environment. It also means that the constant pressure for sermon preparation and Bible teaching demands that one develop a private devotional life that will be a source of strength and inspiration to provide for the teaching and preaching opportunities.

In conclusion, allow me to paraphrase the words of James S. Stewart in his lecture on the preacher's inner life. "Let us inquire what manner of man the (missionary) must be in his inner life. What are the seals and marks of his apostleship?"<sup>42</sup> First, he will be a person utterly dedicated to his work. He remembers Paul's testimony. "This one thing I do." Redemptive work is always costly. There is no hope of ease for the faithful servant of the cross. It is the very nature of his task that it is never completed; therefore he will be resolute and vigilant, lest any secret slackness invalidate the message he proclaims. Second, he will be a man of prayer. The basic reason why a missionary must pray is not because he is a missionary, but because he is a poor, needy creature dependent on God's grace.

Next, he will be a man marked by great humility of heart. Nowhere are pride and self-importance more incongruous and unpardonable than in the servant of the Cross. Fourth, paradoxically, he will be a man of authority. The man of God was meant to be doubtful about himself, but never doubting the truth he proclaims.

He is the bonds slave of Christ and the servant of all; but let him not confuse such apostolic servitude with spiritual servility. The gospel is not servile; it is mighty through God and it is his word, not our own, that we proclaim. Last, he will be a man on fire for Christ. How can one tend the flame on other altars if it is not burning on his own? The whole world was destined to know the impact of the moment when John Wesley felt his heart "strangely warmed" within him.<sup>43</sup> I believe there is nothing which the Holy Spirit might not accomplish through this generation of missionaries in Japan if they, too, are on fire for Christ.

If nothing else ever be remembered of our ministry here in this country, may it be said that we were Spirit-filled men, true disciples of Christ, who knew the Master intimately, and whose daily lives were an uncompromising witness of his power and love.

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## A CRITIQUE OF

### The Spiritual Life of the Missionary

by R. P. Chase

Our speaker defined spirituality by quoting two authors and Galatians 5:18. His definition can be said to include man's loving response to God. It is wanting to know and to follow God's will. In view of this, our greatest challenge is to revitalize our spiritual life, to re-examine our commitment to Christ.

He then presented a brief study of a passage of Scripture, II Peter 1:3-11, as a basis for the spiritual life. First of all, he stated that God has made available to us all that is necessary for us to live a Godly life, v.3. God has done more than we can "ask or think," Ephesians 3:20. Three important words in II Peter 1:3-11 are promises, escape, partakers. Christianity is unique because through it men can experience a life of communion with God. Man experiences a relationship with God. But also the Christian is always "becoming"--that is, he has not yet reached his goal. Therefore, Peter says we must make every effort to add to our faith the Christian virtues. Barkly puts it "bend all your energy to the task of equipping your faith with courage, etc.," v.5.

Secondly, we must advance toward our objective with steady growth. And finally, while faith is essential in the Christian life it must be fruit-bearing faith--otherwise it is worthless.

Our speaker next considered the maintaining of the spiritual life--the "how" of it. Daily communion with Christ is its basis. Personal devotions must be examined. This includes Bible reading, meditation and prayer. He refers to Albert Day's teaching on prayer wherein he stresses consciousness and prayer. Prayer's purpose is to set God at the center of our attention and to open ourselves to Him. The costs to be paid for a relationship with God are given by Day as being four: First, purification--sin must go; second, annihilation of self, Mark 8:34; third, clarification--uncover to ourselves our hidden motives, face the skeletons in our closet; fourth, concentration--prayer demands it, we must avoid laziness, inattention, wandering thoughts.

Our speaker referred to Day's pattern of prayer called meditative prayer. It is "centering one's attention on God, keeping the mind open to Him--usually by the aid of some portion of God's truth." Prayer is the surest way to mature, to gain objectivity, to relate our lives to the world. We easily fall into the rut of selfish prayer. We must pray in the mind of Christ. We must pray expectantly. Another aspect of the spiritual life is reading. This is of the Bible. The speaker suggests as helpful reading the same portion of Scripture over and over again on successive days.

Devotional reading calls for theological study.

Then the speaker moved from a consideration of the inner aspects of the spiritual life to the missionary's ethics and standard of behavior. He then touched on this: The Christian is a disciple of Christ. This is the response of obedience to Christ, according to Bonhoeffer. It is surrender of whole self to God--conscious and subconscious self. This is positive. Knowing doctrine is not enough--it must be made to bear fruit in our lives.

Discipline must be considered. This does not mean just a list of don'ts. We must have the right discipline. We must not just conform to discipline, according to Lloyd-Jones. The right discipline is defined by G.E. Brown as that which produces the Christian life itself throughout a lifetime. Does discipline contribute to the spiritual development desired, is the question.

Then our speaker dealt with certain specifics in relation to the missionary. He shared some personal problems in this area and suggested as helpful our mutual sharing.

One problem is no occasion to participate in worship in one's own first language. Another: The missionary is constantly "giving"-preaching, teaching, etc., resulting in becoming "drained." Next: Constantly being placed on a pedestal--expected to be spiritual, know all the answers. Another: Lack of available Christian literature in English. Finally: The problem of finding time for personal devotions. He suggested following Wesley's habit of getting up every morning at four o'clock.

Two advantages the missionary has: The encouragement of fellow workers. He moves constantly in a "spiritual" atmosphere. He concluded with an apt quote from James S. Stewart and paraphrased it: "A missionary will be: A person utterly dedicated to his work. A man marked by great humility of heart. He will be a man of authority--God's authority. He will be a man on fire for Christ." May it be said of us that we were Spirit-filled men, true disciples of Christ, who knew the Master intimately, whose daily lives were an uncompromising witness of His power and love.

## TENSIONS AND TEMPTATIONS THE MISSIONARY FAMILY FACES IN JAPAN

by D. Endersby

This morning as we consider the Topic "Tensions and Temptations the Missionary Family Faces in Japan," I am aware that the topic is much too broad and complex to deal with in any comprehensive manner. The very nature of the family, made up of individuals with individual temperaments and needs makes the comprehensive approach in our limited time an impossibility. Therefore, rather than spreading too many aspects of our topic over this short time, I have chosen to be rather limited in my approach and attempt to speak to only a few major areas of obvious need.

In preparing for this time together I sent out surveys to seventy people (35 families) asking them to respond. Of those I sent out, thirty-six were returned. Questions on the survey ranged from tensions they most frequently face in various relationships, to tensions and temptations their children frequently face. I also asked where they usually seek help in resolving their frustrations and if this help was readily available.

The questionnaire was very helpful in showing me where people were in their struggles as families. One of the general conclusions I came to about those who responded was that their tensions and temptations were not much different from many non-missionary families living in Japan. For instance, almost everyone mentioned someplace in the questionnaire something about the tensions arising from the high cost of living here. One man wrote that one of his frequent tensions was "my wife enjoys shopping and I don't." A common response to a question regarding children's frustrations was not having enough job opportunities. Still, there were significant problems that seem to be facing our families as missionaries living in Japan. I will consider those which I feel are most urgent in the remainder of our time.

We must realize that today we do live in a world where attacks against the family are not only frequent but well thought out and designed to change if not destroy the traditional family concept. Some attacks are aimed at destroying parents'-authority over their children, some at sowing mistrust between husband and wife, and on and on. Nevertheless, we must keep in mind as Christians and missionaries that we are not a defenseless people. There are solutions; not always easy solutions, to be sure, but there are solutions to our tensions and temptations. God gives us his promise on that and we know we can trust him when he says, "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but will with the temptation also provide the way of escape that you may be able to endure it."

No, we are not a people without hope--we may struggle, but we know that our families can be growing toward being what he would have

them be. With this in mind, let us consider for the remainder of our time a passage of scripture that has some things to say about our families. Let's look through the scriptures to our family tensions and temptations. This passage is Titus 1:5-11.

This passage has a wealth of instruction for us today as missionaries and men with special God-given responsibilities in the body of Christ.

I'd like to call this little passage, "Requirements for Church Leaders and Their Families." In this section Paul lays down for Titus some qualifications for the bishops Titus is to appoint in Crete. We can go on and break this passage down into two major parts. The first is verses 5 and 6, and I'll call that "Being Blameless in Family Leadership." The second breakdown is verses 7-11, and I'll call that "Being Blameless in Personal Character." Here we have Paul's instruction to Titus on what we as servant leaders in the body of Christ are asked by God to be. We are asked to have a blameless family life and a blameless personal life. Those are pretty high standards. The very possibility of even approaching those standards should make all of us sit up and be alive with anticipation.

We will do well to give heed to this passage today. I would like to take this passage in the order that it was written and make some observations first on being blameless in the leadership of our families.

The way these verses are written there is little doubt on who God holds responsible for Godly qualities in a family. Paul asks Titus not to look for families who are good examples in the faith, but to look for men with Godly families. God wants men who have purposed as one of their highest goals in life to order their families as God directs. God is looking for men who first will accept that responsibility.

Judging from the responses I received from my questionnaire, I would say that most of us realize the family is important and we are vitally concerned about it. We see that there are temptations and tensions that our families are faced with every day, and that concerns us. I'm sure that, though probably not as much as it should, it forces us to our knees in prayer seeking God's wisdom and intervention. We are concerned. The question here is, however, do we see ourselves as responsible. This means that it is up to you and me as the head of our homes to initiate the conditions in our homes that will bring about desired results. It means seeing ourselves as responsible to see that proper relationships are maintained in our families and that conditions that facilitate growth are fostered. It means not being a passive bystander but an active leader in our homes.

Gordon MacDonald, in his book *The Effective Father*, likens fatherhood to war in that there are so many negative influences a modern family faces. In writing to fathers about their responsibility as head of the family, he says, "It is a wartime strategy—but it demands a general, someone who sees the real issues of fatherhood. The effective father accepts the mandate."

Sometimes we need to ask ourselves some questions to help us evaluate more objectively whether or not we are accepting the responsibility God intends for us to have in our family. Let me suggest that you ask yourself (maybe with the help of other members of your family) these questions:

1. Am I blaming others or circumstances for the pressures or failures of my family?
2. Do I find that I am not informed about the plans and activities my family is involved in?
3. Are we doing (individually and collectively) the things that we need to do to grow and mature or only those things which our busy schedule demands?
4. Do I frequently discuss with my wife and children values and things that are really important to them and me?

Our first step is to agree with God and accept our responsibility of being accountable for our families. We must understand in doing so that the leadership of our families is not because we deserve it or even because other members of our family desire it (although I think they almost always do) but primarily because God commands it. We, as missionaries, fathers and husbands must humbly but firmly and deliberately accept from God this responsibility.

A terrific application from this conference would be to get alone with God and confess any failures in this area and reconfirm our desire to fulfill God's purpose in taking the active leadership responsibility in our families.

Going on in Titus 1, the church leader is to be the husband of one wife. On being a blameless husband the scriptures have much to say, much which can help the Christian husband successfully contend with the temptations and tensions he faces in being the head of the family.

Ephesians 5:8 exhorts us, "Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies." The fact that it is in this area that many of us are struggling was vividly brought out in the questionnaire I've mentioned. Often I found wives gave the most candid responses in this area. Dr. James Dobson, in his book, "What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women" writes, "Men often feel they have no marital problems--too many men do not understand the emotional needs of women. Either they are unable to put themselves in a woman's place or else they are preoccupied with their own work and simply aren't listening."

Consider this response from a missionary wife of more than twenty years. The question was, "What are the greatest tensions you face in relation to your spouse?" Her answer: "Not

enough time spent together planning, relaxing, praying, loving and discussing." Another wife responded this way: "Business pressures that rob us of time to cultivate closeness."

Recently in my home I had been aware of shallow communication between Linda and myself. I noticed that little things she would do irritated me to no end. As usual, I would retaliate indirectly by not meeting some of her emotional and physical needs. I became quiet and wouldn't communicate. I wouldn't initiate helping her with our children in stress situations. In my mind I began to play the game--you don't meet my needs so I won't meet yours. What a tragedy that turns out to be. It finally ended in explosion, discussion, confession and reconciliation, but it shouldn't have taken so long nor have been so traumatic.

Fully twenty-five percent of the responses from wives suggested they are not satisfied with the quality or the quantity of time they are getting with their husbands. The tone of the responses didn't suggest they were blaming anyone--only the nature of things. Nevertheless, we husbands need to get the message.

We can start by giving our wives priority in our schedules. In the November, 1978, issue of the Christian Leadership Letter there is this exhortation: "Your appointment book is a good place to begin. Most of us put down in our appointment books those engagements which have the highest priority. Are your spouse and your children down in your appointment book?"

I have learned something from the director of our mission in Japan on this point. He reserves a column in his appointment book for family planning and activities. There he records various important family dates and takes those into consideration when planning the remainder of his schedule.

Another way we can love our wives is by continually trying to build them up. According to Dr. Dobson, the lack of self-esteem is the single most serious cause for depression in women. To hear Linda talk, she is always behind and has failed at almost everything she tries, while the truth that she is a very capable person and an excellent wife and mother does not seem to help her. She needs my assurance and help in developing those areas where she needs and wants to grow.

Questions:

1. Am I helping her to improve and learn in areas where she wants to and needs to grow?
2. Do I show love to my wife before others? Do others know I love and respect her?
3. Am I taking time to listen to her--and do I take what she says seriously?
4. Do I seek to communicate to her what is going on in my work so she knows that she is important as a partner in the ministry?

5. Am I more concerned about her having the Biblical attitude of submission or do I spend more time considering how I can obey the Biblical command to love her?

I Peter 3:7 says, "Likewise you husbands, live considerately with your wives, bestowing honor on the woman as the weaker sex, since you are joint heirs of the grace of life."

Let us go on with our text again, realizing we must continue to be selective. We are, as Christian men with responsibility, exhorted not only to be blameless husbands and fathers, but to be blameless in character as well. In fact, there is an important relationship here. I believe it is impossible for us to be better family men than our character allows and no place is our character more truly revealed than in our homes with our families.

I would like to speak to two of the areas Paul speaks of here. I have chosen these two partly from personal conviction and experience and partly because of the responses I received from the questionnaire.

Verse 8 says that a bishop must be upright, holy, and selfcontrolled--upright, holy and self-controlled. Gentlemen, I think the greatest asset we have in being the blameless husbands and the functioning heads of our homes that God asks us to be is our continued commitment to holiness. Matthew 6:33 says, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you."

The lack of holiness in our lives and the resulting guilt and frustration sap our spiritual and emotional strength so that we become incapable of functioning as the heads of our families. I Peter 2:11 puts it this way, "Beloved, I beseech you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh that war against your soul." No man will ever know how much of a man's potential is lost because of emotional leaks resulting from moral impurity. Nevertheless, God knows and he warns us against them.

In dealing with holiness, let me mention two areas. The first is that of a bitter spirit. In a number of questionnaires I received, I began to see a spirit of bitterness toward circumstances or coworkers or towards Japan, its culture or toward the Japanese in general. In many of the responses I was encouraged by the Christian maturity that was reflected, yet in about one-third of the surveys returned there were definite indications that there were hurts and frustrations that were not being dealt with in a constructive way. In some cases, real anger was expressed. One veteran missionary wrote that his mission and fellow missionaries were "self-seeking, proud, unloving, unthoughtful and unkind" and furthermore he would emphatically never seek help from his mission. While this was one of the extreme responses, the same attitudes were revealed to a lesser degree in others.

Men, I don't mean to be picking on any one individual. I don't know whose response this was and I don't need to know. I do know that the same potential to harbor hurts and

disappointments until they fester into a bitter and resentful spirit exists in me and it's a very scary thing. My heart is fully capable of anger and resentment and I must be constantly asking the Lord for his mercy and protection from this. Heb. 12:15 says, "See to it that no one fail to obtain the grace of God, that no root of bitterness spring up and cause trouble and by it many become defiled." I'm afraid some of those first people to become defiled when we fail to apply God's grace and allow bitterness to creep into our lives are our wives and children.

There are several things the scriptures teach us that help to guard against a bitter spirit. First, we need to make Psalms 139: 23, 24 a regular prayer. "Search me O God and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting." Secondly, we can develop a loving, forgiving spirit. I Peter 4:8 says, "Love covers a multitude of sins." Then we can follow the Matthew 5:23 and 18:15-17 pattern in confronting those whom we have wronged or who have wronged us. Let's not let bitterness rob us and our families of the holiness God desires and deserves.

The second area of holiness that I find needs special attention for myself and others is in the area of sexual purity in thought and action. Four men mentioned this on their questionnaires and perhaps others would have had they been more candid.

Not long after I arrived in Japan I experienced in the midst of other cultural adjustments a severe and prolonged attack on my thought life. It seemed like every time I turned around another filthy thought was racing through my head. Finally, only after a painful experience of confession and asking for help from my spiritual leader and my wife was I able to experience victory. But victory is never final on this earth and periodically I have recurring battles in this area.

I'm not alone in this. I understand that one of the biggest reasons that experienced missionaries are taken off the field is because of sexual misconduct. I have observed men who have been involved with this thing and seen it destroy their ministries and leave giant scars on their families. Surely we do well to heed the scriptures on this subject and "flee youthful lusts." Psalms 119:9,11 says we can hide his word in our hearts so that we won't sin against him. James 5:16 tells us to confess our sins to each other and pray for one another. Proverbs 5:18,19 exhorts us to let the affection of our wife fill us at all times with delight. We are to rejoice in her and be infatuated always with her love.

Gentlemen, let's not play games in this area. Let's continue our quest for holiness. If we have failed, let's get it confessed and take positive steps toward spiritual recovery. Few things could contribute more to the stability and well-being of our families, to say nothing of our own heart and soul.

The last aspect from Titus, Chapter 1 which I want to touch on is found in verses 9 through 11. Paul says concerning the spiritual leader, "He must hold firm to the sure word as taught so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also confute those who contradict it. For there are many insubordinate men, empty talkers and deceivers--they must be silenced since they are upsetting whole families-by teaching for base gain what they have no right to teach."

The foundation for every Christian family and every Christian person is the Word of God. Dr. Howard Hendricks, professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, Bible teacher and conference speaker, says on the basis of I Peter 2:2 that if we are not growing in the Word, we are not growing spiritually. As full-time Christian workers it's very easy for us to slip into the habit of preparing for sermons but missing the personal lessons. A friend of mine says we must always guard against just getting by on the minimum. This is certainly true in our intake of the scriptures. Colossians 3:16 says, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly "

Several years ago I was riding in a car with two seasoned missionaries. The subject of Bible study came up and after some sharing one of the men said that since he didn't have a church responsibility any longer he didn't have a regular Bible study program. Why do we study the scriptures? Do we realize regular intake of the scriptures as an indispensable minimum in the Christian life?

Paul gives two reasons for holding the Word firmly: to teach and to confute. Isn't this what we must do in dealing with tensions and temptations wherever we find them. We must know what is right to do and what is wrong. Heb. 5:14 notes that the ability to discern right from wrong is a good measure of spiritual maturity.

In our families today it is not good enough to know what the Bible generally says on a topic; we need to know specifically what it says and have it tested in our lives to give us confidence and stability. Jesus told the Sadducees in Mark 12:24, "Is not this why you are wrong, because you know not the scriptures, neither the power of God."

How can we hold more firmly to the sure word as taught? Have you thought recently of setting some new goals for yourself in the area of Bible study, Bible reading, scripture memory and Bible meditation? Surely growth in the Word of God would be reflected in a fresh and new ability to help your family deal with its tensions and temptations. It would lead to a solid foundation.

I have considered the necessity of accepting our responsibility as head of our families and our need to love our wives. I have touched on the area of personal holiness in guarding against bitterness and sexual impurity and finally on our need to continue to grow in knowledge and application of the scriptures. I believe that these are foundational and pray that before God they will lead to practical application resulting in families which more nearly meet God's standard of being blameless.

A CRITIQUE OF  
Tensions and Temptations the Missionary  
Family Faces in Japan

by Tor Jorgensen

First of all I would like to thank Mr. Endersby for the way he has worked with the presentation we just have heard. Particularly, I feel the questionnaire he has made is of great importance, and I would hope that the results of this questionnaire will be published along with the article itself in this year's report from the Hayama Conference.

To most of the concrete pleas of advice and the points Mr. Endersby is making, I feel I can say "yes." However, the role of a critique is not to repeat the points where there is agreement, but rather to point out where there are differences in viewpoints or questions to be raised.

I would like to draw attention to two problems I encountered when I heard your paper read. The first is a practical one, the other of a more principal character.

1. I feel Mr. Endersby's paper lacks something concerning the particular situation we as foreigners meet in Japan, and the problems that this situation creates for the missionary family.

It should in this context be sufficient to point to all the problems which the change of culture, language and social situation creates. In addition, most missionaries perhaps also feel that they see little or no results coming out of their daily struggle. These sources of frustration will, among many other things, create, for instance, aggression, and can easily be a burden in the relationship between wife and husband.

In our discussion afterwards I feel that we should try to deal with such concrete problems as we all are, more or less, facing here in Japan.

2. My second point is of a more principal character. It seems to me that Mr. Endersby presupposes that the New Testament teaches us one model for the relationship between husband and wife-in which the husband is the leader and the wife and children are those who shall be lead. I will, of course, not challenge that Paul in his letters is thinking according to such a model, but I do feel a certain doubt as to how such statements ought to be used in our time.

Personally, I feel the Christian church should be happy for the emancipation of women which has taken place during, let us say, the last one hundred years. This new situation concerning the role of women in our culture and society will in many ways also influence the husband-wife relationship.

In the New Testament, for example, there are many words written to and about slaves. However, none of these words speak in favor of abolition of the slave system nor says anything dubious about owning slaves. Even if such statements are lacking, the struggle for the liberation of slaves in the last century had a profound Christian ethical basis--a fact few would question today.

Thanks to this same influence (that of Christian ethics) we think about women in a different way than was normative 2000 years ago. Therefore, we ought to be free to think about the wife-husband relationship in a different way than that which is directly prescribed in the New Testament.

I feel that rather than talking about who is the leader and who has the ultimate responsibility, we should talk about the fellowship both in leading the family and in having the responsibility.

Well, much more should have been said about this. However, it is not my job to make a new paper, but only to point to problems which I felt when I heard Mr. Endersby's presentation. This last question, I feel, is of great importance for us, and I hope we can discuss this further.

THE MISSIONARY AS PROPHET:  
CONFRONTATION vs. ACCOMODATION vs. INFILTRATION

by Paul Broman

(Transcribed and slightly condensed by Robert E. Cunningham from cassette tapes made by David Loewen)

Relax--you're going to be up-tight before I'm done! This is only the third missionary conference I have been to since I came to Japan in 1950. I have never been to seminary or Bible School. In fact, I quit school in 11th grade and went to work in a steel plant driving a tractor. But the Lord got hold of my heart some way when I was in the army and I wanted to do something for the Lord. My father was a Christian and Missionary Alliance pastor. He told me, "If you ever go to school, don't go to a religious school. Go to a secular school." I was brought up to really respect missionaries. I was a little afraid of them, afraid of these men of God.

I came to Japan in 1950 wearing my blue jeans and blue work shirt and army clothes. There was a conference in the area I was in. They said they were going to discuss matters of comity. In those days I thought "comity" was something that Jack Benny did on the radio! (Laughter) Anyway, I went, and as soon as I got in I felt that my presence made an awkward situation. We were hosted by a senior missionary, who is a good man--I expect to meet him at the marriage supper of the Lamb. I drifted from group to group and tried to join the conversation, but I didn't know what they were talking about. One was talking about "dialecting" and I didn't know what that meant. I drifted to another group and they were talking about Russian-type stones under the floor, and I didn't know--I was renting a six-mat room, and I didn't have much interest in it. I went to another group--I felt like I didn't fit. I was thinking about how I could get out of there when all of a sudden the host called me over and he said, "Say, we have an interesting missionary here." He said, "Paul, tell us a little about yourself. What did you come to Japan to do?" I said, "Well, I want to teach people about God," or something like that. And he said, "Tell us how you start, what do you tell them?" I said, "Well, I tell them that Jesus is God, and that if we see Jesus we're looking at God." "Oh, yes, we all know that," he said, "but I mean, be a little more specific. What are the attributes of God?" "Well, He's omni-present and He's, He's..." I couldn't say the next one! It's "omniscient"--I had read it so I knew what it meant but I couldn't say it. And so I stumbled and I tell you it brought down the house! And this fellow was angry. I had committed a breach of missionary etiquette. But anyway, I had baptized somebody in the bath house that I didn't know belonged to him. He was a little worked up and he scolded me pretty hard. He said, "The best thing you could do for Jesus is to go back to America and get yourself a good theological education and come back." I left and got out on the street and really cried. That was my first missionary conference.

The second was a sort of stag party up in Tohoku. I was urged to attend, and at that conference, I don't know what sin I committed, but on the way back the conference speaker said, "Your pride stinks to high heaven." I was hurt by that, too. But I decided not to go to any more missionary conferences.

This is the third one. (Laughter)

I know there are two things that are really boring. One is when a fellow talks about himself, and the other is when he is talking with a fellow that has convictions that don't agree with yours. Men, I have convictions, really strong convictions, and I think that some people won't like it. I'm doing my own thing. As long as people let me alone I'm going to continue doing my own thing. I don't want to be antagonistic--that's not my angle.

Doctrinally, I'm a Pharisee of the Pharisees, if you know what I mean. I'm not a Sadducee--in other words, I believe in the resurrection, and in the inerrancy of the Scriptures. I have 21 children, 12 adopted. My wife is Japanese. I haven't been back to the States since 1950. I'm a Japanese citizen now. I'm 51. I took some courses by correspondence from a Japanese university and got a teaching certificate when I ran out of money, so I could support myself. I worked for ASIJ two years and taught some of your kids. I know two or three of you.

The reason I didn't go to Bible School was that after being in the Army here in Japan 1946-1948, I felt the missionary effort was a failure, sort of. I saw a lot of things that I just thought, "I don't want to be like that." Or, "Is this the Christian religion?" It made me examine my own life. I read the Bible through six or seven times and I really didn't understand the Gospel myself. I didn't know if I could be a Christian or not. But I got hold of Martin Luther's Commentary on Galatians--that was in the providence of God. I read Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress and Amazing Grace and some other books and gradually I began to understand about Jesus. I went back to America not really sure what I was going to do, but I decided not to go to Bible School. Paul Flemming challenged me to think that God is going to reach the world with the Gospel in this last generation, and He only needs a man that will obey, do what He says. Lance Lathan taught me the Gospel from the Book of Romans, and it was a revolution in my life. I worked on the ore docks in Duluth and scraped together \$1,000--I was punching ore--do you know what that is? My brother was a journeyman carpenter, and I persuaded him to come along with me to Japan.

We reached Japan, and each of us had only \$300. My dad sent us \$25 a month.

At first I thought the thing to do was to start Bible classes. We went up to Fukushima and we started 10 or twelve Bible classes here and there. Somehow people didn't feel the same as I did. I taught them and I baptized some people, but somehow they didn't want to go out and preach the Gospel. They didn't feel any need to obey Jesus. So I moved to Hokkaido

and tried again. After about two years I felt discouraged. I prayed and cried many times and one day I was walking out to a Bible class about five miles out in the country, praying as I walked, and the Lord spoke to me real clear. This was a great turning point in my life. He said to me, "Don't try to be a 'sensei' just be a Christian. Be what you think a Christian ought to be, do what you think a Christian ought to do, be an example." It was like a voice from heaven. From that time on I never looked back. I never thought about going back to the States.

I started almost immediately with some friends of mine to go house to house and just sit down in the *eg nkan* (entry) and tell them about Jesus. Right away we met fellows--three (we baptized them)--willing to come with us. It wasn't very long until we found others--American missionaries--who wanted to do the same thing. So the group grew, and I lived on their missionary money for a while, let's put it that way! I sort of ran into a lot of contradictions, especially with the Japanese who had no income, so we made a sort of commune set-up. This went on quite a few years, and finally we hit the wall financially. I'd always told the Japanese that when you meet problems just ask Jesus what to do. I thought I had the choice of going back to the States and what do they call it, "raising money," or just simply trusting the Lord, just expecting it to fall out of heaven, or going to work. I had to make a choice from those three, and we prayed about it. There was not unity in our group, so I decided myself I'd go to work and try to help support the rest. During the course of this time I worked for a while at the American School in Japan. Then the Lord helped us start a little kindergarten up in Sendai. Japanese kindergartens are a gold mine if you want to find a gold mine, but we decided to do it with a *gakko hojin*, if you know what I mean. It's a non-profit organization. We bought some land when land was cheap--well, it was my brother's wife's money. Her mother died and left her \$30,000. We bought some land and built some buildings and got started. The idea was to provide work for ourselves.

Well, it grew--the Lord blessed it--it's pretty big now. We have 900 kids in the kindergarten. We built ourselves another building in another place, so it's divided into two, and then we have an English *juku* (prep school)--you know what I mean, one of these money-printing machines! (Laughter) There're about 1,000 kids in that, and it provides work for about twenty of us. These salaries go a long way toward meeting our needs. It's all honest work, I think. We have other sources of income, not from the States, all from Japan. We have a pretty big budget now, the expenses have grown. We have 7-8 workers in Taiwan--these are our own kids. And down in Bangladesh there are about 14 Japanese and 5-6 Bangalese, and in Thailand there are about 16 Japanese. That's not counting the children--there are a lot of children, so there's a big community. Then last year we spent about \$200,000 on literature, about \$30,000 on gasoline. Our way of working is that we just want to talk to people.

I think that the Christian Church has made a lot of mistakes in the course of 2,000 years. That doesn't mean that I doubt anything that Jesus said or did or anything that God wrote in His Word or that I doubt the leading of the Holy Spirit in the church during these 2,000 years. But I doubt that the Holy Spirit has led the church, that is, the church as a whole. I don't think that we can get away from the main stream, that is, from the leading of the Holy Spirit or from the Word, but I think there have been a lot of mistakes, and I think as we get closer to the time when the whole world is going to be Christian, that is, with the anti-Christ, the Church is going to be more and more conformed to the world. It isn't a doctrinal thing that I'm trying to express, but it's that we become bound by our traditions. We can't break loose. I think that one person who is not bound by tradition is God and I think that He likes to break tradition, because God wants men to obey him without knowing the answers. He wants us to walk in faith and obedience, simple child-like obedience.

Maybe I can give you an illustration from the Bible. You know, God said Elijah was going to come before Jesus came. The Pharisees had it all down there--they knew what Elijah was--Elijah was the outstanding miracle-worker in the Old Testament. But when Elijah came, the testimony concerning him was, "This man did no miracles." This is the testimony concerning John, and all the Pharisees were fooled. When I say Pharisees, I mean people like me, the doctrinaire fundamentalists or religionists or whatever you want to call them--the people that just know what God is going to do--were all fooled! Of course, it was a miracle that John said, "Behold the Lamb of God" long before Paul ever thought of it, or "I saw and I bear witness that this is the Son of God" long before the Pharisees ever dreamed of it. And when Jesus asked, "Whose Son do you think I am?" the Pharisees couldn't answer. But John knew, and that was a miracle. John said, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit"--boy, that was really before his time! So these were miracles, but he didn't pick axe-heads off the top of the water and raise people from the dead and things like that. So nobody accepted John.

Well, I think this is the way God works. One time He told Joshua, "Walk around the city seven times." That sure looks asinine, you know! That's no way to fight a war, but it's a way to test Joshua's faith. Another time He says, "Take your empty sling-shot and run. out and face this giant." And then He has to whisper to him on the way, "You haven't got any ammunition yet," and he picks up five stones and does the job. But He didn't always do it that way. Next time, God said, "You'll hear the sound in the top of the trees," and then He said, "Go around behind them," and He used all kinds of different ways. God, when He starts to work, doesn't pick out a method but He picks out a man, or men, or anybody. I don't think just some super-man, but I mean, He picks out somebody who wants to obey Him, in whose heart He has put it to obey Him, and He tells him what to do. I'm not interested in methodology but I really am interested in obeying what God says to me. I really am convinced that God is going to reach Asia with the Gospel in this generation.

Otherwise, how could everybody hate us for Christ's name's sake? And I'm convinced there's going to be a lot of people that aren't going to listen. Let me read a verse, OK? "This is another way to know whether a message is really from God, for if it is, the world won't listen to it." "The world won't listen to it." That's I John 4:6 in the Living Bible.

Well, that's pretty' good--a lot of people aren't going to listen to us. But God's message is going to be heard. God's going to talk to people and the world is going to get worse and worse, there's going to be persecution, there's going to be hatred, but the world is going to hear about Jesus. Everyone's going to hear. God is going to use what the Pharisees, we Pharisees, least expect--barley-cake, maybe, or something. And oh, would I ever covet to be in a position where God uses my life. I really covet to be in a place where God uses my life to do His job.

The last four days I've been working in front of Meiji Shrine and Asakusa Shrine (both in Tokyo)--when I wasn't in the police station, that is! Yes, I spent many hours in the police station--they took me there in a squad car a couple times. Anyway, I asked a fellow working with me, "Why do people go to the shrine?" and he said, "Oh, that looks foolish. I went into the shrine and took a look at it, and they were just throwing money into this box, and there's nothing in it." And I said, "Well, why do people go to the shrine?" but he couldn't answer. Then he said it's the same reason you go to church--it gives you a kind of holy feeling and you feel like you are doing God a favor--not all people--I mean the heathen, forgive me--I go to church, too, but not for that reason. But I mean you get a holy feeling and you feel self-righteous.

It's the job of the religionists to make people feel self-righteous. You know, Kennedy's Cardinal, Cardinal Cushing--boy, he could make old Joe Kennedy really feel holy, and he got rich. Kennedy got his money from bootlegging--I imagine it bothered his conscience, but somebody has to make a man like that feel like he's OK, safe, holy without being obedient. This is the job of a religionist. He'll get rich--that commodity has really got a good, high sale value.

But there's another thing, and that's a prophet. A prophet's job is to make people feel convicted of sin. a prophet's job is to make people feel uneasy, make them feel like they're hateful in God's sight. A girl up there in the shrine said, "I hate the church and I hate the Bible." But we said, "God loves you!" She started crying and she said, "I'm a wicked person." I didn't say it, but the girl that was standing there waiting said, "Well, you're not far from the Kingdom of God." She said, "That's the first thing, to know you're a wicked person." She softened up and she wanted to read the Bible and we talked awhile.

A prophet's job, I think, is to make people feel that they are wicked--the exact opposite of a religionist. These men are just downright opposed. But they look the same. They use the same word. And they both have the same tags on them, Reverend, or whatever you want to call them. Boy, I don't know--"Reverend" wouldn't fit John the Baptist! (Laughter)

Anyway, a prophet is really hated, really hated--just as much as a religionist is loved. Really hated, really hated. Remember that verse I just read: "By this we will know if the message is really from God, because the world isn't going to listen to us." Boy, they hate the prophets. Look at all the prophets! Jesus said, "Which of the prophets haven't they persecuted?" We can go on from Jesus' time--look at Martin Luther, 'and look at John Bunyan sitting in jail writing Pilgrim's Progress for twelve years without a trial. You know what the jury did at his trial at Vanity Fair? He gave the names, you know, of the jury that tried Faithful and Christian when they came up to Vanity Fair--you've read that. Mr. Self-righteous and Mr. Hategood--boy, I read them and I couldn't stop laughing. John Bunyan was a real prophet and he faced a lot of these religionists. He was in the jail, of course, for preaching the Gospel and it was the religionists that put him on trial. Martin Luther was hated by religionists and all the prophets have always been killed by the religionists, right?

Now, I feel in preaching the Gospel we're not trying to present a philosophy. The Christian philosophy, boy, this is what's going to take over the world in the end. Communism, that's doomed--I mean, it's too anti-human. The Christian philosophy really meets men's needs, but the Christian philosophy without obedience is anti-Christ--without surrender to Jesus, without obedience, just in our head. The Pharisees whipped the Son of God 39 times so they wouldn't break God's law. This sort of thing.

Well, when we preach we're aiming for conviction--not for comprehension but for conviction. Listen! Comprehension vs. conviction. When the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" Jesus answered, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. But to them it has not been granted, for whoever has, to him shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance, but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. I speak to them in parables for this reason, because while seeing they do not see." They are looking but they don't see. "And while hearing they do not hear nor understand. To them it has not been granted to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven." If we believe that God has sent us to evangelize, then we must surely learn how God wants us to tell His message, right? What, really what, does God want us to say? We see many hints, even open statements in the Word of God that teach us that God's way of telling the Gospel is much, much different from the so-called evangelism practiced by present-day Christianity. God doesn't aim for comprehension of the message, but rather for conviction. The prooelyters went about trying to find one proselyte. Then they tried to catechise him, that is, to educate him into Christianity. And this takes a host of Bible study lessons and correspondence courses and devotional books and helps and so forth. This is, and always has been, the way of the religionists. They force, they persuade, they force with the sword, you know, like in Europe. They persuade, they convince, and they entice men into the Christian religion. Then they begin to educate them into Christian philosophy, Christian apologetics, church history, and

and their traditions, damning, soul-maiming traditions, lots of them. Their whole approach is based on intellectual comprehension. These people will criticize us because, they say, people don't understand, or worse, they misunderstand.

But wasn't Jesus' approach different? He spoke in parables lest they should understand. Why should Jesus be afraid they would understand? There is nothing so logical and so deeply philosophical and so true and so appealing to men's nature as the message of God's love. Nothing in the world comes near it for pure beauty. But God doesn't want to present it to sinful, selfish men in these terms. "He comes with no beauty, that we should desire Him." It pleases Him to say this by the foolishness of the things preached. He veils His face when He talks to us.

First, He wants us to repent. That's where true evangelism begins. It is not an explanation of anything. It is not fitted to appeal to the intellect. It aims at the heart. Thank God, He has put these short, pithy sentences that we use in our mouths. We take them from the Scripture. The speakers, the signs, the placards we use--they are God's message. They are a stone of stumbling and an offence. They make men angry and hurt. They bring conviction--rather, the Holy Spirit uses them to convince of sin and of righteousness and of judgment to come. When they say people don't understand, my way to answer is, "Of course not. To them it has not been granted. Understanding is granted to those who repent in faith."

Then you say, "How do you tie this in with the church?" I love God's church. But I don't know, Christians have so many cat fights that our tendency is to run away. But really, God loves His church, and whenever anybody gets saved I tell them, "Look at our example--get your teaching from God's Word. There has never been such an abundance of materials for Christians to read as there is right now. But fellowship with Christians--find Christians--you find the Christians you want to fellowship with." Of course, I warn against all these heresies of Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses and all this sort of thing. But I feel the Holy Spirit does a better job of that than I do. We have seen people really saved. Sometimes they're in fellowship with other Christians and sometimes not. It seems that God is able to keep them in both situations. Especially when they find other Christians to fellowship with, God keeps them even then! (Laughter) Lots of people that have heard the Gospel from us have gone to a variety of churches. Some of the people who manage these churches, the oyabu, are aware that some of these people have heard the Gospel from us. Some of them even speak against us, strongly against us, to people we have led to the Lord. I think I can say I have never been jealous--I care about the souls of the people, the spiritual welfare of the people we have led to the Lord, but I'm not jealous about who they fellowship with. Of course, it's kind of hard when you have been criticized by a missionary down the street, and then somebody comes to the Lord and then says, "I want to go down and fellowship with

that brother." It's a little bit hard to be that "straight," although I don't think I've discouraged anybody from fellowshiping with anybody, as long as they are real Christians.

"How successful have you been?" Well, boy, that's what I don't know. Yesterday when the cops wiped us off the street there in Asakusa, I could have cried, I felt so bad. As I was walking back I said, "Oh Lord, is this right? Lord Jesus, show us what to do!"

Here's something I wrote at one time: "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." How hard it is to walk by faith. You never have that proud, fleshly confidence of success, and intellectual assurance that two plus two equals four. If you do this, then you know this will be the result--you never have that. Faith doesn't follow a method or a dogma, but simply obeys God's command. How often we go by ourselves and pray, "O God, is this really right? Is this what You've told me to do? It seems so foolish and fruitless."

Faith can never boast--it will never be praised or acclaimed--never. It has nothing to show except God's Word and God's promise, and it seems so irrelevant to the situation. But in the Spirit we know we have no options. We must obey God, our heart finds no peace in any other place. We know, listen, we know, with a knowledge that is past human comprehension or emotion, that we will succeed! We know God will keep His promises. For the mind of the flesh wars against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh and they tell us to do opposite things. Following Jesus you can't go by the books, or by the logic of men, or the direction of a committee. You can't even explain to the disobedient, the fleshly minded, what you're doing, because you're walking in faith. Without faith it is impossible to please God.

I don't know if we've been successful. I believe God is going to do His job. When we stand in front of Jesus with all His glory, one thing I'd hate to have said of me is that I sat around and wasted my time, and that I didn't believe at all--I couldn't stand it. I want it to be said that I tried. Jesus is going to do it all right when we see Him, I'm sure! He'll straighten it all out. So whether we've accomplished anything, really, I can't tell. Only God can tell.

## A REACTION TO

### The Missionary as Prophet: Confrontation vs. Accommodation vs. Infiltration

by Clark B. Offner

Instruction letter: "The idea of 'reactor' is to present something original, not a critique of the speaker--but something in addition to what the speaker has said, coming out of your different thinking and experience." "We hope each of you will 'come on strong' with pointed, controversial, stimulating remarks that come out of your sense of call to Japan, your experience and your thinking."

I would like to begin with my personal reaction to the wording of the assigned topic. I take the term "prophet" to refer to a proclaimer of God's Word, without necessarily limiting its deliniation to the classical prophets of the Old Testament, for they are not the most suitable models for the missionary to a foreign land and an alien culture. With the sole exception of the book of Jonah (which, needless to say, relates a story that is exceptional in many ways), the Old Testament prophets were men called of God to speak his word to his people, among whom he had revealed himself and his will, with whom he had a covenant relationship. Even on the occasions when the prophets proclaimed messages to or about surrounding nations, they evidently did so from within the context of the chosen people. Thus, the missionary as a minister of God's Word to a foreign people in a completely alien context does not find the prophetic pattern of the Old Testament as a fitting example for his ministry. I prefer the New Testament term "witness" to the Old Testament term "prophet" and find in the examples of Paul's ministry to both Jews and non-Jews more appropriate guidelines for my ministry than in the methods and messages of Amos, Hosea, et al. (I think there have been unfortunate instances--both in the past and the present--when missionaries who sought to carry on the Old Testament prophetic tradition without recognizing the quite different contexts in which they and the Old Testament prophets functioned, have hindered rather than helped the "furtherance of the gospel.")

Reacting to the terms "confrontation vs. accommodation vs. infiltration": these need not necessarily be linked together with a contrasting connective like "versus." Certainly the existential situation may well call for a variety of approaches, depending upon the particular circumstances. Following the example of the Apostle Paul, who modified his message and method, becoming "all things to all men," the sensitive missionary will employ different methods, as he is led by the Holy Spirit, in the light of the actual conditions in which he finds himself. My personal preference, influenced by my own personality and theological outlook (both of which, hopefully, are continuing to mature), is neither the defiant, antagonistic, challenging attitude suggested by "confrontation" nor the subterfuge intimated by "infiltration" (which, in military usage, refers to passing through weak places in the enemy's lines in order to attack from the rear, but, what I consider to be the more Pauline or Christian attitude of "accommodation" - with emphasis on adjustment, adaptation

and reconciliation rather than on the more militant terms which seem to aim at a one-sided, obliterating conquest. However, I would prefer the term "incarnation" as a more accurate description of the ideal tactic for the missionary to employ.

My own research relating to Japanese religions and culture, my personal contact with clergy and lay believers of other faiths and my individual Bible study in the light of such experiences has led me to the following position. At the heart of the Christian faith (as I understand and experience it) there is a certain spirit that is the sine qua non, the essential prerequisite, for genuine identification with Christ. Without this spirit, mental assent or verbal confession of the most orthodox creed (whether of the Nicene, Augustana, Westminster, 39 Article or Free Church variety) and scrupulous performance of the traditional rituals will not generate the new birth into that new quality of life which the New Testament writers refer to as "eternal." On the other hand, if this essential spirit or quality of life is present, theological formulations and ceremonial rites, while not despised nor ignored, become of secondary importance--admitting the possibility of much and rich variety.

Paul writes that "if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," but "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." (Rom. 8:9,14) Jesus is quoted in the Gospel According to John as saying that the sign by which his disciples are to be identified is their love for one another. (Jn. 13:35) All four Gospels agree that Jesus taught both by word and example that the basic requirement to be kept is that of love--sacrificial love for God which is expressed in self-denying love for one's fellow human beings. John writes that "love is of God and everyone that loveth is begotten of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God." (I Jn. 4:7-8) And Paul makes clear that "the whole law is fulfilled in one word: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Gal. 5:14) and that, notwithstanding the ability to speak in tongues, to prophesy, to know deep mysteries and have extensive knowledge, to have great faith and even to go through the seemingly self-denying motions of giving up our goods to feed the poor and giving up our bodies to be burned, without this essential spirit, the spirit that informed the life of Jesus and characterized his ministry the spirit of selfless love, all such virtues amount to nothing! (I Cor. 13:1-3) I conclude that it is this spirit, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of Christ-like love, that is essential to be identified with Christ, that is, to be a Christian, a child of God, in the deepest sense.

If this is so, then the basic task of the ambassador of Christ in a foreign land among people of an alien culture is to give an effective witness to this spirit of Christ, to be a kind of reincarnation of that spirit in the foreign milieu, and to seek to be a channel of that spirit into the alien society. The missionary, therefore, should be primarily the communicator of a certain spirit rather than the teacher of certain doctrines or the performer of certain rites. While all religions have their particular, traditional tenets and ceremonies, which many

consider indispensable for "salvation" (whatever content is given to that term), the unique and essential character of the Christian faith, as I see it, is not in its doctrine nor ritual, but in its spirit. This should be the basic element communicated, witnessed to, or incarnated.

Therefore, in the actual encounter of the Christian missionary with traditional customs and practices, alien etiquette forms, value systems, life styles, ideologies, etc., that are lacking in Christian nomenclature, concepts and forms and that may even be viewed as contradictory to or incompatible with orthodox Christian doctrine or practice, his basic response should not be from the standpoint of his own foreign theological presuppositions but from the more essential Christian spirit of love. Before engaging in criticism or confrontation it is necessary to understand--not only the outward forms which are so obvious, but the more important meanings they serve to express. The sensitive missionary will not insist upon imposing his thought system or his extraneous interpretation of formal observances upon the national traditions. The crucial question is not whether or not certain traditional thought forms or ceremonies contravene Christian traditions, but whether or not they violate the spirit of Christ and his revelation of self-emptying love. Whether or not heads bowed before the butsudan or kamidana, the burning of incense, clapping one's hands and other types of participation in traditional Japanese expressions of respect and communal harmony are forms of worship that violate the spiritual intent of the biblical commandment is a delicate problem that is difficult for foreigners and overly-westernized Japanese to determine, but if they are genuine expressions of a loving heart, the missionary witness of Christ's love will show sympathy rather than condemnation.

I feel that there are numerous elements in Japanese social, cultural, religious tradition that can be effectively utilized and even built upon to encourage the appropriation and diffusion of the spirit of Christ. Coming to a deeper understanding of what to us is a different way of thinking cannot help but broaden and deepen our own faith, probably requiring some compensatory changes as we also develop a more wholesome perspective. Thus, as I see it, the basic missionary task is not "to pluck up and to break down and to destroy and to overthrow" but "to build and to plant." (Jer. 1:10) In Japan, this involves making use of Japanese thought forms, traditions and customs rooted in Japanese soil--whip-k ^-ly from a certain foreign perspective is viewed as a "swamp." To me, the biblical teaching on creation and providence implies that the fruit of the Spirit can be produced from a tree rooted in Japanese soil, and I will continue to try to assist in that production--whether as a catalyst or an active stimulator, recognizing that it is God who gives the increase. (I Cor. 3:6)

## **RIVALS FOR LORDSHIP: JAPANESE RELIGIONS TODAY**

by Aasulv Lande

I thank you for the privilege of presenting this paper. I have been working most of my missionary life in Japan in the field of religious dialogue and this theme is very dear to me in many ways. My approach today would be a kind of sharing of my experiences in this work and a sharing of my reflections, rather than statistical and sociological analysis. The latter is very much needed and perhaps what you would have preferred. I, nevertheless, hope that you will think together with me for these few minutes about how we can reveal the Lordship of Christ in the complex realm of Japanese religions. And I hope that some of the problems I have left untouched in this paper will be a part of the conversation which I hope we can have after my finishing the paper.

Generally, my feeling is that we as missionaries still have much to learn from the different religions, and my main question would be whether or not we have misunderstood the biblical concept of idol worship. We have not critically reflected on what an "idol" is in our situation and we easily forget what is good in strange cultures, mostly condemning evil. A Christmas tree is beautifully displayed in Christian homes in Europe or the U.S.A., but the Tanabata-matsuri tree is viewed, in some cases at least, as a kind of paganism. But we do not apply the same principles when we evaluate good and evil in our own western culture. There are exceptions to this trend. But I strongly feel the weight of our shortcomings as a missionary community. Are we perhaps viewing religion in a state of "culture shock?"

Theologically, I want to view religion from a creation-oriented viewpoint. I see salvation as fulfillment of creation and am convinced that there is a logos of the universe with whom Christ can be identified. Bonhoeffer, Pannenberg and F.I. Teilhard de Jardin seem to me to be working with this presupposition.

This is just as an explanation of my attitude and my state of mind. I will raise four questions in my talk. They will not be systematically repelled. The whole aim is that we continue to reflect together on this issue in openness and freedom. Because where the spirit of God is, freedom prevails.

1. Is the slow growth of the Christian Church in Japan a divine blessing for which we should be thankful?
2. Is there salvation outside the Church?
3. Is it right for a Christian to take part in Buddhist or Shinto rites under certain circumstances?
4. Is there then a rivalry between Christianity and other religions?

To all these questions the answer would be "yes."

1. Is the slow growth of the Christian Church in Japan a divine blessing for which we should be grateful?

I met a fellow missionary some time ago. He was just an ordinary missionary. Not particularly outstanding in any way, but a representative sample of his breed. What would happen, he said with a frightened look in his face, if all our mission really succeeded? Japan would be a sad country if all temples and festivals disappeared. What a sad country and what boring missionary life if the jizosan along the roads were not there any longer and if no Buddhist monks any longer would meditate on the tatami mats of traditional Zen temples in the chilly dawn before sunshine peeps through the paper of the sliding doors. He did not elaborate more on the problem but talked then about his successful Sunday School and the favorable response to his English Bible class.

I followed him in his concern, and I think most of us will do so. We do not really want all temples and shrines replaced by sharp-roofed preaching places, organs and translated sanbikas. We feel that there are many possibilities in reality. Many attitudes are possible and we do not want to limit the richness of interpretation and the variety in religious traditions. What a dreadful environment we would end up with!

I will point to some valuable aspects of this apparent lack of success of Christian crusades in Japan, thus trying to illustrate how the Lordship of Christ works in spite of apparent failure.

- a. I doubt that the Church in Japan as a whole is theologically or ecclesiastically capable of wisely administering the rich contributions and the divine as well as human traditions from their religio-cultural heritage. Where is the Japanese Augustine? Where is the Japanese Saint Francis? They may not be here yet. Still, missionaries and missionary organizations--in spite of numerous exceptions--are culturally and religiously quenching the indigenous flames and breaking the tender straws of original and genuine approach to the Kingdom of God. I am confident that God trains his Church to the measure of ripeness needed in order that the Church may fulfill, not destroy creation.
- b. Christianity is still a foreign faith to most Japanese. It has been shown that the number of baptisms in the Japanese Church as a whole reflects the popularity of the Western civilization, particularly the popularity of the United States. When people resist America, they also resist baptism; when they listen to the American voice they open their hearts to the Christian voice as well.

We know this is not as it should be. Christianity is not a foreign faith. The parable of the loving father tells us that Christianity brings you in harmony with your origins. Christianity, in a real sense, takes you home, not overseas. The God of Christianity is still in the minds of most Japanese a foreign god, not the God of their home, not their uji-gami not the Lord of their

country. Until this understanding is reached, it is not advisable that Christianity should grow too large. I am confident that God also here trains his Church to be capable of fulfilling, not destroying, the particular rich creation it is supposed to administer in Japan.

- c. Among several insights to be gained in the state of low growth is the insight of representativeness. I wonder whether or not the disappearance of this theological structure is one of the greatest weaknesses of Western Christianity in its modern form. We have a kind of understanding that the growth of God's Kingdom is a kind of statistical registration of individual believers. Statistical Christianity has meant a lot to missionary organizations. Through the number of recorded conversions, participants, baptisms, and meetings, the success of God's case is reflected, or so we think. This is not without a certain right, but nevertheless, here seems to be a great distance from the Biblical visions where one person represents more than himself. Salvation is not addition of individuals, but is a universal creation of a new people where peoples shall be going in. Nature is saved. Stones are saved. Heaven and earth is reborn and nature yearns for the new freedom of existence where the People of God shall reign. Through the existence of a smaller group the whole reality is saved. We find this thought of representative salvation in the Old Testament in the tale of Noah's Ark--where the Ark represented the whole of humanity and the animal kingdom as well--and in the story of Abraham's prayer for Sodom presupposing that ten righteous people would bring salvation to the whole city. In the New Testament we only need to think of the universal perspectives Paul draws up in Romans 5: "For if by the wrongdoing of that one man death established its reign, through a single sinner, much more shall those who receive in far greater measure God's grace, and his gift of righteousness, live and reign through the one man, Jesus Christ. It follows, then, that as the issue of one misdeed was condemnation for all men, so the issue of one just act is acquittal and life for all men."

My whole point is that through the process of slow growth God teaches us valuable lessons. Through regulating the growth he shows deep care and concern for the Church and her task. He trains his Church to maturity in order that she might fulfill, not destroy, creation.

Do we have faith enough to see God's greatness in our evangelistic shortcomings--his Lordship in the resistance to our faith from other religious traditions? As St. Paul says: "Let's even exult in the present stagnation in Japan, because we know that suffering trains us to endure and endurance brings proof that we have stood the test, and this proof is the ground of hope."

## 2. Is there a salvation outside the Church?

I went several years ago with a friend of mine to the funeral of Tenko Nishida. As you know, he was the founder of the religion of Ittoen, which exerted a rather strong influence particularly in the 1920's and '30's. It is a religion where the basic attitude is practical

service to each other. Through selfless service and through the nourishment of the spirit of selfless service, the process leading to world peace is promoted. Tenko Nishida was strongly influenced by the Sermon on the Mount, trying to find indigenous expressions of this spirit in the Japanese environment.

After the service was over, this friend of mine--who by the way was a man strongly rooted in the Scandinavian stream of puritanism--said: "I think he is happy where he now is."

We may accept many concepts of salvation. I do not think this is a real problem to us as Christians. The Eskimo will think of salvation in terms of heat, whereas the Negro under the burning sun of Africa will consider salvation as a state of coolness. The individualist Scandinavian dreams of being alone with Christ, whereas our Japanese friends prefer going to their ancestors enjoying their fellowship. Americans would probably imagine Paradise as a place where they can have huge savings accounts, etc. Salvation is fulfillment of humanity--therefore, none of these images are completely invalid. But is there any possibility of salvation outside baptism, conversion, or some statement of faith or at least some Christian or ecclesiastical act? Was the utterance of this puritan Scandinavian just an expression of sympathy, or is there any firm basis for that kind of statement? Is there really a salvation outside the Church?

Let me just shortly point to some of the Biblical evidence before we go to the actual religions in Japan in order to exemplify this:

- a. The most striking Biblical material is found in the first chapters of the book of Genesis. There were people in the world who walked with God. Noah is one of the persons about whom this testimony is given. Enoch is another one. Whatever this expression might mean, it includes a capacity of salvation in the world outside the particular history of salvation starting with Abraham. Job is another example. Outside the realm of Israel there was a righteous man, a man who experienced salvation.
- b. The extra-ecclesiastical salvation is also strongly pointed at in the parable of Matthew 25:31-46. The people who will inherit the glory of eternal salvation were not aware of the Christ relationship: "When did we see you hungry and fed you, or thirsty and give you drink, a stranger and took you home...." The persons who thought they had given the Lord sufficient favor, however, were not accepted. The more dogmatically inclined goats believing in their proper worship of Christ were not accepted. It is serious to consider that there might be more salvation outside the Church than inside.

Perhaps I could summarize these biblical passages in a statement like this: The central idea is that salvation, wherever it occurs, is a work of Christ based on his atonement.

There is an openness to atonement working in the darkness outside the Church. Here as well, the Almighty works to fulfill his loving will. We cannot declare his inability to find ways for rays of salvation and truth and justice in any circumstances. The Lordship of Christ is therefore evident even outside the Church as an all-permeating possibility of salvation.

This should give the messengers or witnesses of the fulfillment of this 'possibility' a relaxed mood and joyful spirit of encounter in the communication with Japanese religions.

I remember my own fear in my first communication with Zen Buddhism. Was it syncretism to take part in sitting in meditation, sweeping the floor, participating in their ceremonies? Was it syncretism to enjoy the fellowship with Omoto friends in their fellowship of study and excursions, cultural activities, hymns and morning meditations? In spite of the difference there exists between the different religions, I think we are right in stressing that fear has no place in the Christian encounter with whatever religion or ideology it might be.

I have seen the same fear in other people. Christians who presumably are overflowing with salvation get so timid when they have to meet a non-Christian religion that they lose all ability to think and conduct themselves properly. They sometimes see demons and despair behind every black robe and every curved roof.

And particularly when some of the religions claim healings and restoration of human relationships or personal inner growth, they shut their eyes and block their ears. Some Christians react like this, but on the basis of the possibility of salvation which I mentioned, the proper attitude should rather be that of curiosity and fantasy: Where is the place in the pattern of my opponent/partner where I in a meaningful way could plant Christ, the Savior who fulfills humanity?

We do not need to worry about the great insights in the nature of being, provided by Zen. Rather, we should rejoice in the extent we are given the opportunity of sharing in these insights. I think that one of the most fascinating tasks for a Japanese theologian these days must be to seriously grapple with the whole question of reality as expressed by the concept of mu, non-existence, and the concept of interdependent relationships. I am completely sincere in my expecting a refreshing, new metaphysics to be created during this encounter, where a new age with an Oriental Origenes or St. Thomas, may dawn. The Eastern world needs this in order to make Christianity their own. I even think that Western Christendom needs it in order not to stagnate.

The possibility of salvation outside the Church provides the Church of today with a universal dimension of Christ's Lordship. We should encounter this possibility with awe and humility and without fear. Compare the position of a state of culture shock, mentioned above.

3. Is it proper for a Christian to take part in Buddhist or Shinto rites under certain circumstances?

One classical Christian answer has been to take the stand to this question on the basis of the second commandment: "You shall not make any graven image for yourself nor the likeness of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God."

This leads us to shortly consider what pagan worship in its very essence is. My general understanding will then be that pagan worship is a pattern. This pattern claims totality; that is, you accept the total way of life being determined by some of the powers of creation. In modern times, even in Japan, the "graven images" are mostly outdated. The powers of the "Creation" to which we bow are only to a very limited extent found under the temple roofs--even in the country of Japan, so rich in temples and "graven images" as it might seem.

Another element will have to be added: The pattern in which I interpret an act might be different from the pattern in which other people interpret it. These patterns may again be different from what we might call the Divine Pattern or "God's Context."

The divine context is, of course, hidden from us. This is a divine secret revealed in the final, complete act of truth-revelation. We do not have the capacity to know whether an act ultimately is pagan worship or not. This knowledge or statement transcends the limitations of man. We have to concentrate on the subjective and objective side of the question. The subjective side is, of course, a question of conscience. Generally the following can be stated: If you take part in an act or rite with good conscience over against the supreme Lord--this is not an act of pagan worship. Subsequently you define your own context or pattern in the light of Christian freedom, and no power in the world or in the universe has any right to deny you this right.

The objective view might be, for example, that he is taking part in a Buddhist rite of ancestor worship. That is what people see, that is how a large number of them might think. That is the "objective" view, perhaps. Nevertheless: The basic emphasis in these acts of symbolic character should be on the subjective side. You have the right and freedom to define the context in which you act. This is Christian liberty.

Let me tell about a friend of mine. He had a Christian mother. As a child he learned by heart the Gospel According to Matthew in bungotai and had great joy in reciting passages once in a while. His wife was baptized but had drifted away from the church, as most people in Japan actually sooner or later do. One day I went to a burial ceremony. It was conducted according to the Buddhist rites. I followed the traditional pattern of standing a

moment in silence in front of the picture of the deceased one, burning a stick of incense. This was to me the only relevant act of love in this situation. Being a missionary, this act was well noticed, of course. Given some other factors, it opened the environment to Christian understanding, I believe. I think that it was in the given situation a substantial factor in turning the minds of the husband and wife I mentioned above back to church-centered Christian life. My point here is not to show the positive reaction, but only to illustrate a freedom of action with which the believer is endowed. In other words: We have our Christian freedom and the Christian right to take part in non-Christian rites, or in other words, we have the right to interpret these rites in new ways, not necessarily accepting uncritically and superficially prevalent opinions on where the borderline between Christianity and paganism goes. Symbolism has a great amount of openness in interpretation. Any rite shares in this openness. Thus, as you are not necessarily a Christian even if you share in, the most sophisticated Episcopal acts of worship--with incense, bowing, standing and kneeling in the most elevated rhythm--you are not necessarily a pagan worshipper if you go to a worship service in a Buddhist pattern, following its outer forms.

However, we should also know that as there is an openness in interpretation of these acts, there are moments when we should refuse participation. If we feel that a symbolic act gives a bad witness of the universality of God and his total and complete salvation, if it is misused by political forces to suppress other people, or if it is in any way strengthening the demonic forces at work in the world, we should refuse. Maybe we need to consider deeply how we in the best and most mature way can strengthen the precious gift of Christian liberty in a world where different powers struggle to win us, subdue us, and tie us to slavery and dehumanization. We are not slaves of conformity to non-Christian or any religious traditions of conduct.

Creation is striving for fulfillment. As human beings, we are called forth to take part in this process of fulfillment. We shall fulfill creation as God's co-workers. In all our relationships with other religious groups and in careful use of their symbolic language, we shall work to fulfill whatever exists of truth, humanity and beauty in their heritage. And where dehumanizing forces are misusing or subduing the truth and justice in these bodies, we are supposed to oppose this and work for liberation of the religions and their realms. From this point of view are we supposed to or are called to take part in whatever act we find appropriate.

4. Is there then a rivalry between Christianity and other religions? Yes; and let's look at its character.

Particularly, I feel that this rivalry is a tension between closedness and openness. Shinto has been Shinto. The cult is nothing but beautiful. I have had ecstatic experiences of beauty in connection with Shinto ceremonies. But it is a cult of pure repetition. There is no newness apart from the eternal repetition given in ceremonial purification, again, again, again. This

New Year is the classical season for this renewal. Shinto is closed. There is cyclical change, but no real capacity for a new totality. Here is the rivalry with Christianity.

But let us not as Christians be finished with Shinto there. Robert Bellah uses the concept of a civic religion. This means popular attitude, religious feelings, communal ethos without a claim of being absolute. This ethos can find its fulfillment in any religion or ideology with total claims. But the ethos in itself is incomplete. Pater Joseph Spae feels that if Shinto would define its role in this way it would fulfill its proper function in a way acceptable to Christianity. I agree with him. The rivalry is not there--the rivalry occurs when the claims to totality occur.

May I illustrate how Kanzo Uchimura, in spite of his clear Christian commitment to monotheism admits an openness in what he calls heathenism: ..."A pathos there is in 'heathenism' as noble as hers. She is too sacred to be touched with the hand of inexperience whatever theologies and philosophies it can handle. Let the Spirit of God alone mould her, and no ill shall come to her well-trained soul..." He sees an openness and a capacity for salvation in the Shinto/Buddhist faith of his mother.

The same concepts can and should be applied to Buddhism. There should in Buddhism be made the distinction between buddhity and Buddhism. Buddhity is Buddhism from the point of view of openness, it is the pilgrim aspect of Buddhism--the Buddhism which is open to change and to fulfillment. It is its humbleness, its justification by faith, its psychological insights, its selflessness. And so on. And in its baskets are riches innumerable. Lives of marvel can be spent in contemplating them.

Tucker N. Callaway brings out a contrast between Christianity and Buddhism as he expresses it in "Zen Way - Jesus Way." "For the Zen-man, the Zen Way and the Jesus Way are Not-Two. For the Jesus-man, the Zen-Way and the Jesus-Way are absolutely and irreconcilably Two."

There is, of course, ample evidence in the New Testament for an exclusive contrasting of Zen and Christianity; nevertheless, I feel a richer understanding is given, for instance, by the Christian Minister Kamegai who is a converted Buddhist: "...I have come to fulfill, not to destroy (Mt. 5:17). This is the attitude of Jesus over against the Old Testament. But the same can be said over against Buddhism. Jesus is the true and complete revealer of the truth in Buddhism. Therefore, even if Buddhism disappears, the real truth of Buddhism exists as long as Christianity exists. Here is the true revival of Buddhism. The true revival of Buddhism for which I pray is to be attained exactly in this way..." (Bukkyo kara Kirisuto e, p. 117-118). He finds, in other words, a fascinating openness in the very essence of Buddhism. It is interesting to note that even the "conservative" apologist Tatsumi Hashimoto in his book Ancestor Worship uses true Buddhism as the standard in his Christian attacks against Japanese superstitions, thus admitting indirectly the capability of

Buddhism to open up for a Christian understanding and paving the way for Christian interpretations of religion.

We could just parenthetically mention that this distinction within the religions between their openness and closedness is what we find in the terminology of secular theologians when they distinguish between "secularity's and "secularism"--"secularity" meaning the secular in its open and unfulfilled status. "Secularism" has the meaning of the distortion of creation occurring when the secular dimension assumes totality.

The same aspect must also be applied to Christianity. Christianity must not become Christianism. "It is a necessity, based on the Christian Revelation, to recognize the direct relationships different religions have to the Divine secret. It corresponds to the way in which Jesus himself pointed away from himself at the God whom he proclaimed." In this statement from Pannenberg's *Grundfragen der Theologie*, p. 294, we see as well an attempt to apply the concept of openness to Christianity itself.

The attitude of owning God as a privilege and keeping him in one's vest pocket is not Christian no matter how popular it ever might become. God has not gone asleep in formulas nor in any religious act or tradition. He is still ahead of the Church as the one with the miraculous possibilities in his hands. Christ will one time hand the whole creation over to him and fulfillment will occur. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord. That is total fulfillment not yet achieved. We still have to live in openness and expectation as pilgrims.

Rivalry is therefore the fight with all powers which aim at limiting God's possibilities. It is a struggle in which we find friends inside and outside Christendom. It is a struggle to maintain the joy of the Lord who is coming to finish what he is creating. It is a struggle to go where Christ leads--until He one time will submit the Kingdom to the Father who shall reign in eternity. Christ is the incarnation, or concrete manifestation of God's unlimitedness. In Him we are awaiting the yet unrevealed fulfillment.

**A CRITIQUE OF**  
**Rivals for Lordship: Japanese Religions Today**

by W. DeWitt Lyon

The gracious and cooperative spirit of our speaker, Aasulv Lande, is something for which I wish to express my thanks. He informed me both by telephone and with full access to his paper, and he has been open with all of us as to his position and presuppositions. I appreciate this. I marvel at the facility with which he handles the English language and the Japanese learned through English.

Mr. Lande is to be commended for addressing himself to basic issues in the bid for lordship as Christian faith confronts religions in Japan. Whether or not we concur in opinions or conclusions, crucial issues have been singled out for our attention.

In his first point, slow church growth in Japan and the accompanying position of Christians as a very small minority in society is presented as possibly being a blessing. Even granted that the church and the individual Christian can learn much about presentation of the Gospel and about boldness and clarity of stand by contemplating this fact in the light of Scripture dealing with the early church, I see only sorrow in this slow growth. Scripture gives joyful attention to the fact that "...the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47), and "the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem..." (Acts 6:7), etc. True faith will enrich and not destroy that which should not be destroyed and purified out of a heathen society. Vast numbers without Christ, facing judgment without forgiveness of sin, inveighs heavily against any passive acceptance of slow church growth.

The second point presented is properly labeled as crucial in any discussion of rivalry for the lordship of Christ. Is there salvation outside of faith in Christ? I find no warrant in Scripture for assuming that there is. "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12--Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit (4:8), said this.) If we are able to resolve this question otherwise--that is, such that we provide for the salvation of men apart from faith in Christ--then concern for our topic, the lordship of Christ, becomes largely an academic and peripheral matter, and concern for Christ's commissioning men to the missionary enterprise is thereby reduced in importance to a level much below that which he gave it and on which the disciples pursued it. I would highlight this issue as a major point for our discussion period.

The third point had to do with the propriety of Christians participating in practices closely tied to Buddhism and Shintoism, for example. Because God the Creator is the only God, exclusively entitled to our allegiance, and because of his commands against spiritual

adultery with other Gods and because of the inherent denigration of the lordship of our Lord Jesus Christ involved, I would insist that active participation in, and in many cases even attendance by Christians at these ceremonies is to be avoided. Our speaker has aptly emphasized personal conscience in these matters, as does Scripture. Recognition of possible demonic influence or action in certain ceremonies or practices would certainly lead the Christian to absent himself, as would the probable loss of testimony due to assumed assent in non-Christian worship or ritual. But in addition, "take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumblingblock to the weak... if someone sees you...." (I Cor. 8:9). In this we must note that my conscience is not uncoupled with that of other Christians. The statement was made that "You have the right and freedom to define the context in which you act. This is Christian liberty." I would urge the recognition that this liberty never extends to areas contrary to Scripture.

In Mr. Lande's fourth point we are led to consider factors which do or do not mean an inherent rivalry between Christian faith and religions of Japan. Does "Buddhism" or Buddhism in its "openness," or not claiming "totality" (by which I would understand his meaning its not claiming absolute truth or exclusiveness), thus avoid rivalry with Christianity? Conversely, to the extent that Christianity does not claim "totality" or "exclusiveness" the sense of rivalry for lordship is markedly lessened. My own understanding of Scripture, such as Christ's statement that "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me," is that it leads to a situation of total confrontation with any religion or philosophy which falls short of recognizing the absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ. If we see Christ in any way as less than totally God, we are on the brink of the errors of Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormonism as to the Person of Christ. Mr. Lande answers "yes" to the question, "Is there rivalry between Christianity and other religions?" But I feel the full implication of that rivalry is very much blunted by the concept of "openness," as it may detract from the adequacy or demands of Biblical revelation.

As perhaps an omission in Aasulv Lande's presentation I would mention the need for more specifics as to the ways in which Japanese religions are rivals for lordship, for the Japanese in particular.

Again I commend our speaker for addressing himself to fundamental issues. I suggest that our discussion zero in on two points particularly: (1) Is there salvation outside of Christian faith (faith in Christ)? and (2) How is rivalry for lordship related to claims of "totality," as Mr. Lande has used the term, by exclusiveness in Christianity and/or Japanese religions?

## THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST AS IT RELATES TO JAPANESE SOCIETY AND THE CHURCH IN JAPAN

by Ian MacLeod

### THE NATURE OF CHRIST'S' LORDSHIP

When we speak of the Lordship of Christ, we cannot take for granted that we are all talking about the same thing. The declaration: "Jesus is Lord" is the Kerygma of the Christian Church from its earliest days, but the way in which the church has envisaged and expressed the meaning of this statement has varied considerably throughout the ages, and continues to vary.

Various images are called up for people when they seek to envisage and express the truth that Jesus is Lord. There is the image of a monarch, crowned and seated upon his throne in all his robed glory, exercising absolute sway over his subjects. His reign is one of righteousness, backed by the physical power to enforce obedience and to punish disobedience. It is the image of an ideal human ruler, and expresses the longing of human beings for a world in which justice and peace shall reign.

This was clearly the image which the Jewish people held and one to which Jesus refused to conform. It is very clear that the description of the third temptation in the wilderness in Matthew 4 represents the temptation to exercise this kind of power-backed authority, and Jesus rejected it.

The fact is, however, that the Church has continued through out most of its history to envisage Jesus' authority in terms of that of an absolute potentate, with power of life and death as the ultimate sanction. On the basis of that image, the church has often resorted to physical power to enforce obedience and conformity to its teachings. Not only has the church given its blessing to wars of invasion, as in the Crusades, but has pursued, imprisoned, tortured and executed in the cruelest fashion those she judged to be heretical. All this was done in the name of Christ and of his authority to demand obedience, with the church as his authorized agent.

This whole concept and practice is merely an extension of the ancient Jewish model, based on the concept of Yaweh, Lord of Hosts, or armies, triumphing over his enemies.

While the Church for the most part has given up this kind of role as appropriate in establishing Christ's authority over mankind, it still retains for the most part the concept of God governing the world through his almighty power, and in the end destroying the wicked. We often use the title "Almighty God" when offering prayer. This model of God leads very easily to the use of power by those who claim to be acting in his name.

By and large, the church has given up the use of physical power as a legitimate method of enforcing obedience in belief or practice, and has substituted for it a more subtle form of

coercion, the threat of spiritual damnation, envisaged as a quasi-physical or metaphysical experience in the world beyond death of the physical body.

There are many scriptural passages that can be quoted to support this concept of the authority of God, vested in Christ, and its operation as the application of the power to destroy. In his seething denunciation of the scribes and pharisees, Jesus says, "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?" (Matt. 23:33, RSV). Elsewhere he warned people of being cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Surely, it will be said, these are threats of punishment, uttered in the name of a God who has the right and the power to carry them into effect.

For the moment let us leave this image of divine authority, and churchly and other claims to authority resting on it, and recognize a different image of Jesus than that of an enthroned, crowned monarch. It is the image of the suffering servant, the Son of Man who gives his life for his fellow men, the lamb of God slain as the sin-bearer. Jesus described himself as "meek and lowly in heart."

Are we to say that in this role Jesus did not express authority, but simple obedience? Must we not say rather that, in his role as spokesman of the truth of God, as the incarnation of God's loving nature, he was invested with an authority vastly different than that inhering in a position of irresistible power but in fact more congruent with the total mission which he proclaimed was his as the savior of mankind?

What is meant when it is reported in the Gospel of Matthew that "the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes"? What is the nature of the authority which people recognized in Jesus? Was it the authority of one who could back what he said with miraculous signs and wonders? Jesus refused to perform miracles when the scribes demanded them as proof of his authority. "Teacher we would see a sign from you," but he refused. (Matt. 12:38) Miraculous signs are not proof of authenticity. Strange wonders have been performed through the ages by both prophets and workers of magic. These of themselves are no proof of a man's claims to represent God.

What then are the authentications of the truth of Jesus' claims to speak the truth of God? Are they not the self-authenticating power of truth itself to those whose hearts are open, those who have ears to hear? Jesus knew that, for those whose hearts were steeled against the truth, no external proofs would serve to convince them of his trustworthiness. And for those who had childlike hearts of simple trust in the truth and goodness that met them in their daily lives, proofs were unnecessary. To state an axiomatic truth met a glad, spontaneous response. There were people who heard him gladly, because he proclaimed a living truth that met the needs of their hearts, without the necessity of elaborate arguments or of miraculous external proofs.

Undoubtedly large crowds followed him, drawn by curiosity at his healing powers and by need of healing, but these soon left him and went their way. It was not this kind of power that kept his disciples eagerly devouring his teaching and his presence month after month, or that sent them out to proclaim the gospel of salvation after his death and resurrection.

In the centuries since, there have been many whose chief interest in Jesus is in his miraculous power to heal and perform other saving acts, or in the power which they ascribe to him to bring all nations under his feet, and in their hope to share this kind of glory with him in his kingdom.

But there have also been those who are not greatly interested in Jesus' superhuman power, but who have been drawn to him by his love, and who feel called to express this love to their fellow men.

On what grounds did Jesus appeal to his hearers to believe his teachings? Was it not by citing principles and attitudes and feelings which people accepted as axiomatically true and right, and then going on to point out that if they as sinful human beings were capable of good and loving thoughts and actions, much more did their Heavenly Father relate to all his human children with loving, saving concern. It was not that he claimed a certain divine position from which he could enunciate arbitrarily what was true and false. He appealed to what people, at their best, already believed and practiced to reveal more fully the nature of the God who claimed their worship.

It is clear that, for most of his ministry Jesus did not make supernatural claims for himself, but referred to himself as the Son of Man. He did claim to be God's messenger, but it is the standpoint of this paper that he depended for authentication of his message on the fruits which it bore. In other words, authentication was not to be accomplished by a simple, easy, obvious act, but was a slower process of discovering the kinds of fruit that truth as love, mercy, and righteousness bore.

There was a time when Jesus' disciples tried to coerce him into assuming the kind of worldly power that they envisaged as the role of the Messiah, and he refused, saying his kingdom was not of this world.

How does this picture of Jesus as the humble carpenter of Nazareth who taught men to love their enemies and to turn the other cheek when attacked, and who prayed for God's forgiveness for the evil persons who were putting him to death, tie in with the image painted in apocalyptic passages of the Son of Man, coming in the clouds with his angels to judge the earth and to divide the sheep from the goats? Are we to argue that the suffering servant picture is a temporary one, appropriate to his task while still a human being, and his overpowering, conquering, punitive picture is the one appropriate to his eternal nature as the ruler of the universe, who seals his authority by his right and power to destroy his

enemies? Did Jesus, as Son of Man, say something about the eternal nature of God, and of his status as the Son of God, that in the final analysis and outcome would have to be replaced by a wholly different statement about the nature of God and his way of relating to mankind. Does God, as the waiting Father, who sent his Son to call all men to him finally change into God the judge, who will destroy a large section of the human race? What are we to do with these two pictures, for they are certainly to be found in Scripture? Are we to dismiss the warnings as the product of pre-Christian, more primitive ways of thinking?

If we are to be faithful to the utterly unique nature of Jesus' message about the being and character of God, I would propose that there is an aspect of the apocalyptic images of Jesus that is in essential congruence with his teachings about the loving goodness of God, and an aspect that is a carry-over from more Jewish, and in fact more universal human concepts of the nature of God and his relationship to mankind. This latter aspect I would identify as the pictorial imagery, the symbolism, which depicts God as the author of destruction, after the fashion of an absolute human despot. The aspect which I accept as congruent with Jesus' message of love is the warning of destructive consequences that will follow men's refusal to heed and to live by his message.

In other words, I am making a clear distinction between threats and warnings. Jesus' words about the dire consequences of rejecting his message, that is, of rejecting the truth which he declared was the only way to live, were of the nature of warnings, not threats. A good man will warn people of the danger of certain attitudes and actions, but he will not then proceed to implement his warning by performing destructive actions. A doctor, for example, will warn his patient of the dangers of not following his instructions, but he will not threaten to kill his patient if he disobeys his instructions. The harmful results lie at the door of the patient, but are not the deeds of the doctor.

If we see Jesus' words as threats, we make him out to be both the author of life and the author of death. But he said that God was the God of the living, not of the dead.

Many good fathers of prodigal sons have warned their sons of the dangerous consequences of sinful living, but they have not then proceeded to carry out the destructive consequences, any more than did the father in Jesus' parable. It is evil itself that brings its fruits of self-destruction. No man who has destroyed himself . can accuse God of destroying him.

The forms of apocalyptic imagery in which the warnings are cinched are products of the limited concepts of the days in which they were written and reflect the primitive thought forms of Jesus' contemporaries who did not possess the entire New Testament by which they could gain the kind of overall understanding of Jesus' life and message that was possible to those who could read more comprehensively the witness of many of his disciples. Strict adherence to the symbolism as being itself the infallible word emanating

straight from God, has led to two opposing concepts of the nature of God and his way of working. Thus, the church has presented to the world a very confusing message, depicting God on the one hand as the loving, redeeming Father, and on the other hand as the destroying avenger. From this message many have recoiled, and in rejecting the latter image of God, have also rejected the concept of God as the all-wise, all-loving Person in whose hands the destiny of the universe is held. They have settled for agnosticism or pantheism as being far more humane and self-consistent than such a double message. They have refused to accept the kind of ethical ambivalence that has characterized so much of the teaching and practice of Christians throughout history.

Is it possible to reconcile the image of God as the almighty sovereign who exercises justice and punishes the wicked and that of God the merciful Father, who, in his Son renounced arbitrary power and accepted the role of suffering servant as his way of relating to mankind?

It is not possible, in the view of this writer, if punishment is equated with destruction, as some of the symbolism seems to suggest it is. The two concepts are quite compatible, however, if divine punishment is recognized as the expression both of the divine anger and of the divine compassion.

In men, anger and compassion are at variance, and are exercised discretely, unless persons are in touch with the God who holds them together. One example of a human attempt to hold both together is the imposition on a traffic violator of a sentence involving working as an orderly in a hospital emergency ward and being exposed to the admission of seriously injured accident victims. Such a form of punishment is not retributive and destructive, but enlightening and rehabilitative.

May we not conceive of the punishment meted out by God as including the painful awareness of the evil, destructive effects of the sins committed and the opportunity to repent and experience forgiveness? Final destruction would come when every appeal, including punishment, had been exhausted and the sinner remained impervious. That is to say, he had reduced himself by his own implacable choice, to the condition of being non-human or inhuman. The destruction was his own inveterate act, not the act of the God of Life and Love.

Such a concept of divine punishment does not run contrary to the nature of God as redeeming love, revealed in Jesus Christ. It retains recognition of God's righteous, sovereign power, but holds to the truth that divine power is exercised for man's discipline and salvation, not for his destruction. It is when men hold to concepts of divine power being exercised arbitrarily and purely retributively that they arrogate to themselves the right and duty to a similar exercise of purely retributive punishment that is a mere expression of vengeful anger, without any element of rehabilitation or opportunity for change of heart.

It is vital, therefore, that concepts of divine authority based on God's position as Creator and Lord of Heaven and Earth are not held discretely from the way in which we see his authority as it was mediated through Jesus Christ.

As followers of Jesus Christ, therefore, do we present ourselves as representatives of God in all his sovereign power and majesty, and proceed to, symbolize that power and majesty by displays of churchly pomp and grandeur? Or do we offer ourselves as humble representatives of the Son of Man, whose sonship took the form of servanthood and loving service and unflinching proclamation of the truth for every level of human life? To what do we appeal as the source and nature of our authority? What picture of God do we paint for others to see? With what expression of God's nature do we identify? What is the heart of the message that we present to the world as individuals and as church bodies?

Those who maintain a close link between Christ's authority and his irresistible power will be tempted to use his exercise of power as a threat to pressurize people into obedience, appealing to people's fear of punishment more than to their recognition of truth. Those who see Jesus' authority as being vested in and exercised through his championship of the truth as it relates to human beings will make their appeal to such limited appreciation of the truth as people already have, distorted though it may be. That will be the base on which they will try to build the structure of relationship with God. Threats appeal only to the self-preservative instinct of men. Appeals to such truth as they already recognize is directed to that level of their nature that is closest to the divine image in which they are created.

#### THE NATURE OF AUTHORITY IN JAPANESE SOCIETY

How is authority conceived and expressed in Japanese society, and how has the Christian Church confronted this conception and practice with the Lordship of Jesus Christ?

It is not necessary to dwell at length on the fact that Japanese society has, and for that matter most societies have, held concepts of authority that have based it on purely arbitrary grounds. This was true also of England, when the Divine Right of Kings was accepted as axiomatic.

Until the end of World War II, Japan was essentially a feudalistic country, with a society structured vertically, and absolute authority being vested in the Emperor, and exercised downwards through all the levels of society. With divine grounds being claimed for the Emperor's authority, and the whole social system being seen as a structure taking its shape and order from this basis, which could not be questioned, morals simply took the form of delineating the lines of authority and obedience.

The grounds of authority were in fact the status quo, not universal principles of what was true of human nature and of what was incumbent if all men were to experience the full meaning of what it means to be truly human.

The Confucian system, which was used to justify and strengthen the exercise of arbitrary authority on the part of those who held the actual power, simply perpetuated a system of authoritarianism that had no basis in universal principles of truth and justice. The sanctions invoked were mythological, not ethical. True ethics do not derive from mythological sources, which cannot be tested or verified, but arise out of the deepest experience of the human race of what it means to be free and responsible human beings, relating in love for, and honor of, one's fellow human beings.

A social order like Japan's that is grounded on a moral system of obligation arising out of the establishment of arbitrary authorities, whose ability to maintain their authority rests on the physical power of their armies, and the skill by which they can convince the populace that they have some kind of absolute divine right to their authority, cannot but create the suppression of human rights on a vast scale. The very term "human rights" was unheard and unthought of in pre-wax Japan, except in the voices and writings of a few liberal thinkers, who were suppressed.

It is not necessary to enumerate examples of the tyranny exercised by certain sections of the populace over others. The subjugation of women by men is only one example, and the war of aggression on Asia and later on the U.S.A. is another example of the arbitrary claim to divine authority.

Authoritarianism is the national ethos and expresses itself in every facet of life. It is not surprising, therefore, that it has been characteristic of the Christian Church in Japan.

#### AUTHORITARIANISM AND THE CHURCH

The Church in Japan rests on a number of different foundation stones. One is the Gospel of Salvation in Christ, the gospel that frees people to the sonship and servanthood of God. Another is the political ideal of democracy that grew in western countries as the fruit of Christianity and of the eighteenth century enlightenment. Another is the legalistic puritan ethic that combined both a genuine insight into ethical values and a pharisaical judgmentalism that was very harsh with moral breaches.

Another foundation stone was the indigenous vertically authoritarian social system and ways of thinking. It was very natural to fit the fundamental moral value, filial piety (oya-koko) into the authoritarianism that the Christian Church has believed in and practiced, and is exemplified in the commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother." There is no word in the Ten Commandments to those who have the primary responsibility. "Fathers and mothers, love and take care of your children." Even Paul, enlightened though he was, starts with the obligation of the children and then moves to the obligation of the parents. Where does moral obligation begin, with the weak and inferior to obey the strong and superior, or with the strong to be responsible for the welfare of the weak and helpless?

It is interesting to note in this context that our Lord had much more to say to adults about their responsibility to protect and cherish the children, than he had to say to children about their duty to obey their parents. In a truly ethical ordering of society, which comes first? In both the Jewish and the Japanese ordering of society, duty started with the child, the underling, so that it was very natural for the Japanese church to graft certain authoritarian concepts and practices that came along with the gospel on to those which they already learned from their own Confucian system, and thereby to strengthen attitudes already held of parental rights that ranked close to absolute.

The authoritarian position of husband towards wife, already almost absolute in Japanese society, found some support in certain ways of the Christians' interpretation and practice of the male's prerogative in the household. The authoritarian structure of Jewish society, which produced a system of pharisaical legalism that Jesus attacked resolutely, and which is expressed in some of the scriptural writers, including Paul, provides a readily usable support for an authoritarian church, and for authoritarian morals.

This is more true in the case of the Roman Catholic Church than the Protestant because of the very nature of its claims to authority, but even in the Protestant church the pastor has demanded a kind of obedience and personal loyalty that strikes western Christians as savoring more of feudalistic relations than of democratic brotherhood. The traditional authoritarian stance of Japanese pastors has been modified considerably since World War II with the advent of political democracy and democratic ideas, but missionaries still note attitudes and actions of Japanese pastors that impress them as arbitrary from their point of view.

To mention one concrete example that has had fateful consequences for the United Church of Christ (Kyodan) ever since: a bill pledging the support of the Kyodan for the Christian Pavilion project at Expo '70 was introduced to the 15th General Assembly in 1958 and defeated. The Moderator had the Vice-Moderator draft a similar bill, with slight alterations in wording, presented it to a later session that day, and succeeded in having it passed after making a vigorous plea for its adoption. This action resulted in the alienation of a section of the church and lay the ground for a polarization that has never been bridged to this very day.

That moderator was an outstanding and outspoken Christian, but the arbitrariness of his actions on that occasion set in motion a train of events that have done irreparable damage to the church. This is but a glaring example of what has gone on at a number of levels all the way from the local congregation to the General Assembly.

The responses of those who reacted strongly to this action, and who later came to be called the "problem posers" (mondai tei,gisha), present another kind of example of resorting to authoritativeness that rings much more of worldly power tactics than of Christian love. Disruptive tactics were used to seize control of and dominate official meetings of church bodies, and at times exits were even physically barred to prevent people from leaving the meetings. This was all done in the name of truth and righteousness and of the will of Christ. An arrogance was displayed that in turn alienated many in the church and caused them to start a reform movement known as the "Fukuin Rengo."

This group takes its stand also on the authority of Christ and insists on the Kyodan Confession of Faith as the visible criterion for judging the fitness of persons for ordination. It is seeking to reestablish a church order that rests on the authority of doctrinal statements. It should also be said that the Fukuin Rengo is seeking to reestablish proper democratic procedures in church government, which it believes have been overturned by the power tactics of the Mondai Teigisha.

From the standpoint of this missionary, each side is so preoccupied with justifying its own stand and attacking that of the other that there seems to be little self-reflection or attempt to establish real dialogue, though there are a few who are trying to do so.

Actually, each side represents certain principles. The Problem Posers proclaim the duty of the church to deal with certain great social issues such as racial discrimination, economic exploitation and the resurgence of the Emperor System. The conservatives emphasize the need of proper procedures in church government and adherence to the traditional faith that the church has guarded through the centuries. Each side seems to be characterized by partiality in its interpretation of the Christian message.

Are the troubles of the Kyodan a tempest in a teapot which most other denominations have escaped? Do they indicate the emergence of a heretical movement which other churches can be thankful they have avoided thus far? Can it be that many churches have avoided these controversies because they have adhered to a traditional message that has ignored the church's duty to make a prophetic witness against injustice and exploitation and violence by rulers? Is their peace bought at the price of sacrificing certain vital elements of the gospel?

May we say that the Kyodan is alive to certain important aspects of many-faceted gospel, but that the attempt by the contending parties to identify the nature of the gospel too narrowly has produced absolutizations of limited aspects, and these limited expressions have ended in contending with one 'another.

Actually the polarization of a single denomination, the Kyodan, can be seen as mirroring the polarization of the church throughout the world between the sector that presents the

gospel as a call to individual conversion and salvation and the sector that emphasizes the social and ethical implications of the gospel. It is the confrontation between the evangelicals and the social activists.

This polarization drives us back to reexamination of our basic presuppositions, not so that we can prove the exclusive truth of those which we hold, but so that we may see if there are blind spots and limitations in our own particular version of the gospel and of the Lordship of Christ that prevent us from engaging with the claims of the gospel throughout its total spectrum, or at least through as much of it as it is possible for us to understand at this stage of history.

Is it possible that, depending on the very limited purview that most people have, Jesus has been divided up into segments, with people picking and choosing the segments that happened to be congenial to their own limited interests or needs, or even proclivities? People who are burdened with a sense of personal guilt want a savior who will obtain forgiveness for them and a guarantee of eternal life. Those who are exploited and downtrodden want someone to save them from their suffering and deprivation. Some there are who grasp at power, and these like to stress the righteous wrath of Jesus to justify their own exercise of political power. There are some who are not the direct recipients of exploitation, but whose concern and consciences are aroused on behalf of those who are, and who see the gospel as the proclamation of freedom for the captives.

The problems facing the church in Japan, and throughout the world, drive us to wrestle with the problem, "Who is Jesus? What kind of person was he when he lived on earth? What has he commissioned us to do?"

#### Jesus as Priest, Prophet and King

Jesus is given in scripture the three titles of Prophet, Priest and King. Each of these denotes roles which are distinct but not conflicting.

As priest, he stands on our side, pleading for us in the face of the righteous judgment of God. He is our representative, our advocate.

As prophet, he stands on the side of God, his righteousness and his truth, and demands our obedience. He is God's representative, his spokesman.

As King, he stands identified with God the Creator and Sovereign of the universe, who has the absolute right to our total obedience, but it is my contention that he rests his claim to that obedience, not simply on his sovereign position and his power to enforce it, but on his nature as love to inspire it in the form of glad and grateful allegiance. His kingship is not despotic but ethical, drawing our allegiance as an act of our free decision, not as an unavoidable capitulation to his power.

The very terms prophet, priest and king have their background in Jewish history, and each represents a different facet of the relationship between the Jewish people and their God.

The prophet was the champion of justice, the spokesman for the downtrodden, the enunciator of ethics.

The priest was the guardian of the cultus, the protector of the religious institution and its ceremonies.

The king was the ruler and protector of the people, the administrator of law and justice and mercy.

While each has a vital part of the maintenance of the order of society in the case of the Jewish theocratic state, and while each has its counterpart in the life of the church, people tend to see one or the other as being of the essence of the religious life of the people. When this happens they come into conflict. When the priests see religion as consisting of the proper performance of the ceremonies and lose sight of the issues of social justice, prophets like Amos and Micah and their successors arise and castigate the priesthood for their narrow concern for ceremonies and institution.

The present-day prophets of social justice for their part may be guilty of ignoring the individual spiritual needs of people in their concern for meeting their physical and social needs. The preoccupation of the institution with so-called spiritual needs of people impels them to shout, "Man may not live by bread alone, but he does need bread," and to be unconcerned with this need, and the responsibility of society to meet it for everyone is to make a farce of the church's claim to be concerned with mankind's most essential needs, the spiritual.

In most modern countries, the kingly functions of the monarch have been replaced by governments of elected representatives, or by dictatorial totalitarian regimes, and in the church by democratically chosen governing bodies, or hierarchical governments wielding somewhat oligarchical powers, and even despotic powers to determine what people are permitted to believe and do.

If Jesus' kingship is exercised, not by the wielding of despotic power but by the appeal to the conscience and the call to willing allegiance to himself and to the whole truth which he reveals, it is surely the function of the church, acting in Christ's kingly function, to exercise its authority in a manner wholly consistent with that in which Jesus exercises his.

Worldly kings and governments rely on force and the fear of punishment to enforce their authority. Jesus, as it has been pointed out, relies on the power of truth to inspire, not on the power of force to frighten. Worldly governments which are responsible to protect people's

physical safety and health, must rely on the use of limited force to limit the freedom of evil doers to commit crimes or to exploit others, but such is not the responsibility of religion, but it is rather to be the voice of God in calling on people, as individuals and as societies organized under their civil governments, to carry out the will of God at every level of life.

To cite one notable example of the church's tendency at different points in its history to present a very one-sided picture of Jesus Christ, the Apostles' Creed, which has been used almost universally by the church as one of its chief statements of faith, has nothing to say about the kind of life Jesus lived among men, or the kind of person he was. It jumps from his birth to his death, and presents him totally in the passive position of being acted upon from without. He was conceived, born and put to death. There is no mention of anything he actually did. The creed is totally preoccupied with metaphysical matters and indicates no awareness of the ethical dimension of Jesus' life and ministry. Two questions arise: does the metaphysical aspect of Jesus have any meaning if the ethical dimension is ignored? And is this concentration of the early creeds on the metaphysical relationship of Jesus to God and their ignoring of Jesus' prophetic, ethical message an important reason for the unethical practices the church has been guilty of through the centuries? Jesus as priest and as divine king is proclaimed as Lord, and his prophetic role is seemingly forgotten throughout most of the church's history, with tragic consequences for the human race.

The only way in which the church can bear a true witness in the world and become a truly effective instrument in God's hands is for it to stop fragmenting the Christian Gospel and to examine and reexamine the full-orbed nature of the gospel that has been committed to it. The Lordship of Christ is still beyond our understanding, and any easy claims to possess "the full gospel" is a declaration of arrogance that can only help to continue the process of fragmentation of God's truth and his work in the world.

Each time a fragment of the truth is isolated, absolutized and presented as though it is the whole truth, an idol is created. Idols are not necessarily utter falsities, but often are fragments of truth that are worshipped as though they were the whole. Heathen forms of idol worship are but some of many idolatries, and it is easy to attack these while remaining oblivious to the idolatries being held within the bounds of Christendom.

Japan, like our own western countries, is filled with many forms of idolatry, from the former deification of the Emperor to the many forms of polytheism. But these are only some of the more obvious, and it is easy for us to focus attention on these and forget our own absolutizations of partial truths to the ignoring or outright rejection of other equally important aspects of truth.

The Christian Church has much study, self-examining and searching for the truth that meets us in Jesus Christ yet to do before it can make great claims fully to understand him or his will for the church and the world, and it is to this task that we dedicate ourselves afresh.

Writer's note: The foregoing article is neither the manuscript prepared for delivery at the Hayama Conference nor the lecture delivered extemporaneously, but represents an effort to draw both of these together in a more coherent fashion. (IGM)

Discussion leader's note: As the author notes, the article appearing in this publication is neither the manuscript prepared for the Hayama Conference nor the lecture extemporaneously given at the meeting. My assignment as a critic/discussion leader to followup the lecture was carried out based entirely on the material given to me by the author; namely, the original manuscript.

The critique I submitted to the editor fit the original manuscript but does not relate to the present article which is significantly different. Indeed, most of the present paper came about in answer to the critic and the discussion at the meeting. Because the critique I submitted does not fit the new paper I have asked the editor to exclude it from publication.

Further, since my role at the meetings was to promote discussion it hardly seems fitting to submit a new critique which cannot fit those purposes. It is my understanding that this publication is intended to reflect what happened at the meetings and I do not feel that a new critique nor a new paper submitted by the author would be an accurate representation of that which took place at the Hayama Conference. For those reasons I have not submitted another critique addressed to the new paper.

Russell C. Lunak

## **PAUL: MISSIONARY TO CORINTH**

by Arthur R. Eikamp

This has been a great conference. We have shared the things of the Spirit. We have studied together, prayed together, eaten together, slept together, shed tears together. We have pondered together the Lordship of Christ and several important questions have been raised. Do religions other than Christianity provide any real basis for salvation? What are the boundaries, so to speak, of this "Lordship"?

The men who gave their papers have shared the results of their study and their experience with us. We have discussed their findings at some length. In this last service I'm not going to summarize or re-plow ground that has already been plowed. I would like rather to look together with you at one great missionary and one great missionary church and see if that missionary and that church have anything to say to us as missionaries in Japan. That missionary is Paul and that church is the church in Corinth.

In about the year A.D. 55 Paul was in Ephesus preaching the gospel when someone from the church in Corinth arrived with news of some disturbing events in that church. Paul felt like a father to the people there. It had been his preaching that had given birth to that church.

In the year 50 Paul had stopped in Corinth after leaving Athens. He wanted to share the good news of the resurrection with these people. In his usual way, Paul went first to the synagogue. Being himself a Jew, that was the natural place for him to go. Also, the Jews were the logical people to share the good news with. They had been prepared through the law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets to know something of God and to wait expectantly for his messiah. Paul always felt that they should be the first to hear the good news of what God had done in sending Jesus. Paul eagerly pointed out to them how Jesus was the Messiah in accord with the Old Testament scriptures.

The synagogue authorities listened attentively to Paul, but as they listened they became increasingly alarmed. They had regularly urged the people to wait for the coming of the Messiah, but this man Paul did not urge them to wait, he insisted that the Messiah had already come. If people believed that then everything was threatened: their position, their familiar message, their prayer forms--everything. Everything would have to change. So they began to oppose Paul and revile him. Paul moved his base of operations next door to the house of Justis--a gentile who had been converted to belief in Jesus as the Christ. Now, partly because they were no longer in the synagogue, many gentiles were added along with the Jewish converts and the group grew rapidly.

On July 1, A.D. 51, Lucius Gallio arrived in Corinth as proconsul of Achaia. Soon after his arrival some leaders of the Jewish

colony in Corinth tried to prosecute Paul before this Roman official on the charge of propagating an illegal religion. Gallic, however, refused to prosecute on the grounds that this was an internal problem of the Jewish community and did not therefore concern Rome. This was the same as ruling that Christianity was a variety of Judaism and was therefore entitled to the protection under Roman law that Judaism enjoyed--providing always, of course, that public order was maintained. This ruling left Paul free to evangelize, not only in Corinth but in all the Roman world, for the next ten years.

Even before Paul came, Corinth was not without religion, of course. The temple of Aphrodite stood on the hill of the Acropolis. There were one thousand female slaves attached to the temple. They were in reality sacred prostitutes who came down to the streets of the city in the evening to ply their trade. "Living like a Corinthian" was a phrase used to describe any particularly dissolute man.

So the people in this Corinthian church came from a variety of backgrounds. Many of them had not grown up with the moral restraints and the ethical training which their Jewish brothers had had. Thus, this was a church made up of the Jews on one hand, with their long heritage of the Law and the Prophets, and Greeks, Romans, Levantines with their Hellenistic pre-dispositions on the other.

This vital, growing, dynamic church had captured the interest of the Christian communities in other places. Even the brothers in Jerusalem had heard about it, some with growing concern. Various Christian leaders had visited the church. Besides Paul, of course, who had founded the church, these people had also sat under the eloquent preaching of Apollos. Apollos was fervent, eloquent, and well-versed in the Old Testament scriptures. His knowledge of Jesus and the Christian faith was a bit limited until two good friends of Paul's, Priscilla and Aquila, took him in hand and straightened him out on certain points of doctrine. Then too, visitors had come from the Jerusalem church. Possibly even Peter, the chief Disciple, had visited them and preached to them.

Had any church ever been more blessed with inspired leadership than this church in Corinth? Yet, as Paul so poignantly points out, this very eloquence, this very talent, can become a stumbling block when the result is to draw attention to the preacher rather than to bring men weeping, penitent and broken-hearted to the feet of Christ.

"Christ sent me," Paul says, "to preach the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power." (1:17) "Who is Paul, who is Apollos, who is Peter?" Paul asks. They are "servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each." (3:5)

Brothers, it seems to me that nothing is or can be a greater hindrance to the spread of the gospel than this thing--an over-riding desire for personal recognition. Oh, we all have the desire. We're all born with it, but that doesn't mean that it is sanctified. That doesn't mean that we don't have to drag old Agog out and hew him in pieces every day.

That church in Corinth had had brilliant leaders, and many of its problems were exactly the problems of its leaders. "Paul is the one whose leadership we should follow! Apollos is my man! I like Peter! A plague on all of you; I belong to Christ!"

When Chloe's servant came and told Paul what was happening in Corinth, Paul wept inside for them. He couldn't go to them right then, so he begins a letter to them: "Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ." (1:1)

Paul never forgot that experience outside the gate of Damascus when the Eternal God laid his hand on his life and the resurrected Christ confronted him. He knew he had been chosen by God. Ever after that, when his apostleship was called into question or when he was discouraged he could look back to that spot and that experience and say, "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court." (4:3) He had been chosen by God, and forever after all human choosings by men would be of less moment to him.

Paul does not, however, make the method by which he had been called the norm for others. God calls each man in his own way. We cannot forget Amos, who brooded long over the social injustices of his day, nor can we forget Isaiah, who in the midst of national catastrophe saw that God wanted another man, and who prayed about it until he had to say, "Lord, here am I. Send me." We remember Jeremiah, who felt within himself the growing pressure that seemed a culmination of an age-old purpose: "Before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified and ordained thee a prophet." We remember James and John and Peter and Andrew who stepped out of their boats and left their nets because of something inexplicable in the young man from Nazareth as he offered to make them fishers of men, and they never could go back because the love they had seen displayed on the dusty roads of Palestine haunted them and set them apart for the gospel of God.

I well remember when the Lord God laid his hand on me in the Wisconsin woods where I was working as a lumber-jack and said, "I want you to be a preacher of the gospel." The wonder of it has never left me--that the Lord God should lay his hand on a former farm boy from South Dakota and say, "I want you." Whenever I've been discouraged, whenever I've been tempted to ask "Lord, is this all a mistake?" then my mind goes back to the Wisconsin woods where I knelt behind a brush pile in the snow and prayed, and then new courage comes to me. I wouldn't be here today if it hadn't been for God's choosing. Paul wouldn't be writing this letter to Corinth at all if he hadn't been chosen by God.

There are many choosings, of course, some by God and some by men. When the disciples got together after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus they felt they had to choose someone to take Judas' place. There had to be twelve disciples. Who ever heard of the "Eleven Disciples"? So they had people suggest names of men who had known Jesus from the first. They sifted those names and got down to two. They couldn't decide between those two so they drew lots and the lot fell to Matthias and he was numbered with the Twelve, and you never hear another word about him. Meanwhile, God was making his choice.

He reached across to the other end of the country and laid his hand on Saul of Tarsus. The disciples chose Matthias; God chose Paul.

Still today there are choosings by God and choosings by men. Have you ever felt hurt because the church hasn't chosen you for some post? What does the choosing of the church amount to unless it is also the choosing of Almighty God? What does prestige mean if one cannot also say with Paul, "Called by the will of God"?

I visited our annual church conference one year and someone on the grounds called to me, "Brother Eikamp." A lady standing near-by said to me, "Oh, so you're Brother Eikamp. I'm so glad to meet you. I'm one of your prayer partners. Let's see now, you're in India aren't you?" Well, so much for fame. Everybody knew where E. Stanley Jones worked. We wake up one day and realize that our name isn't going to be up there with the greatest missionaries of all time: Carey, Morrison, Judson, Livingstone, E. Stanley Jones. That realization could be terribly disturbing. But we have to ask, "What are we here for?" Are we here for the fame? Surely there are better roads to fame than this. Be an evangelist with a knowledge of mass media manipulation; get yourself a big church to pastor. Is fame what we are here for. Or are we here to tell the brain surgeon and his wife and family about the Great Physician who can heal hearts as well? Are we here to tell the ship captain and his family about the One who can pilot us over life's tempestuous seas? Are we here to tell the school teacher of the Master Teacher who turned men from darkness to light? Just what are we here for?

The real judgment on a man's life comes from God Himself. Listen to Paul: "This is how one should regard us as servants of Christ's and stewards of the mysteries of God." (4:15 A steward cannot afford to forget his master's wishes, but as long as he remembers his Master's wishes he doesn't need to worry unduly about other people. Happy is the man who can say as Paul did--not defensively or defiantly, but with quiet confidence: "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. I do not even judge myself. I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me." (4:3-4)

Learning to be a missionary is not easy. Some of you may remember Mr. Hessel, a German missionary in Osaka. He said one day, "A lot of eager young people come out. They work a few years and haven't won anybody to Jesus, so they go back home and teach comparative religion in some seminary." That may sound a little cynical but it is not without point.

Kosuke Koyama says, "Christianity suffers from a teacher complex." I'm afraid he's right. Too many of us see our role as that of teaching the Orientals about Christ. The Japanese compound the confusion. They call us sensei. They call our religion Kirisutokyo--the teachings of Christ. They enroll in our Bible classes and English classes and cooking classes. Soon, unless we are very careful, we are teachers with a teacher complex. But the true missionary always lives in the drama of dead-alive, lost-found.

Paul says, "I have become all things to all men, that by all means I might save some." (9:22) That attitude disturbs some people. It seems to be inconsistent--to be one thing to one man and something else to another. Yes, it does show a lack of consistency--a lack of that consistency which is "the hobgoblin of little minds."

But there is a higher consistency in Paul. It's there in these words: "That I might by all means save some." To that aim and purpose Paul was always consistent.

I'm not yet a missionary but I think I'm beginning to learn. I've watched missionaries come and get all shaken up by the ethical and cultural problems they had to face in their new country. Sometimes they have set out to "teach these people Christian ethics." After all, there is a Christian way to conduct funerals. There is a Christian way to run a church. There is a Christian way to do business. Soon he is teaching ethics with a vengeance. He may not be bringing people to Jesus, but he is sure getting people straightened out. I know. I've gone through that. How do you suppose I know so much about it? But I think I've begun to see that the missionary is not the repository of Christian knowledge which he has come to dispense to the pagan world around him.

Paul said, "To the Jews, I became as a Jew... to those outside the law I became as one outside the law... to the weak, I became weak." As missionaries we must ask ourselves, "Can I become a Japanese businessman faced with complicated ethical problems?" "Can I become a housewife worried about where her husband is when he says he had to stay at the office overnight?" "Can I become a Buddhist father worried about his eldest son attending a Christian church?" Should we become that? How about our loyalty to Christ? Just at this point we run into the mystery of the gospel. The amazing thing, the utterly amazing thing, is that it is only in giving up himself that Christ came to us.

When Paul wrote to the Galatians he said, "I bear on my body the marks of Jesus." (6:17) Our preaching is not in lofty words of wisdom, but with our body, with our life.

Missionary work for me has become simpler with the years. I don't mean easier, but simpler. We all carry the freight of our past .with us. Thirty years ago I came out as an American. With that „vast resource of wisdom I sought to define God for the Japanese. It took me awhile to understand Paul's meaning: "In the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom." (1:21)

On furlough I studied pastoral counselling and far-eastern studies. I studied the philosophy of Buddhism and the Chinese philosophers. I studied the ways of thinking of Eastern people. I studied cultural anthropology. I don't regret it. There are worse ways of spending one's furloughs. But I have learned one thing: it is not by studying the thought of Buddha or Confucius that you learn how to bring people to Jesus. "The Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to

Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1:22-24)

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." (15:58)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Extra copies of the Hayama Seminar books for the years 1970 to 1979 are still available and may be ordered from:

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The theme of the 1980 Seminar will be: "The Christian Gospel and Its Ethical Implications for Japanese Society."

The Seminar will meet again at Amagi Sanso on January 7-9, 1980

Those wishing to have their names placed on the announcement mailing list should write or call the new committee chairman:

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HAYAMA SEMINAR is a voluntary gathering of protestant missionary men, representing many perspectives, for an exchange of insights, for deepening fellowship in Christ, and for improving the understanding of our faith.

There is no official sponsorship: the seminar is maintained each year by those participating. Because the seminar met in Hayama, Kanagawa Prefecture, for the first several years, that name has been retained even though the location has changed.