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HAYAMA MISSIONARY SEMINAR

**“THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY
IN
JAPAN”**

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MISSIONARY SEMINAR

“THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY IN JAPAN”

Amagi Sanso, Japan

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Beryl, Lovelace and Marion Moorhead, Editors

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FORWARD

The 1981 Hayama Seminar papers are commended to your careful reading since they deal with one of the most important subjects in Christian missionary work: THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY IN JAPAN. These papers deal with practical matters, especially from the Christian standpoint. After the critique was presented, there was a lively discussion. Some might find it profitable to use these papers as the basis for discussion groups.

A first was experienced in this seminar in that a woman, Thelma Moorhead, was invited to read a paper. Thus far in the seminar no women had taken part. This paper, "The Missionary Family", is the last one in the book.

In the business session in this seminar it was decided to change the name to "Hayama Men's Missionary Seminar." It was further decided that the Continuation Committee could feel free to invite women speakers as it saw fit. This delineates the seminar as specifically for men missionaries, but leaves open the possibility of having women to present papers if the committee feels that a woman could best deal with a given subject.

Attendance at this seminar was smaller than in past years but the participation was enthusiastic. Our thanks go to the 1981 Continuation Committee composed of: Gordon Johnson, Chairman; Ron Wallace, Secretary; Marlin Zook, Treasurer; Paul Benedict, Arrangements; Hugh Trevor, Member-at-large.

Marion Moorhead

Compiling Editor

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

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“In all that you do put God first and He will crown your efforts with success.” Proverbs 3:6

It is good to be in another Hayama Missionary Seminar. I have enjoyed this community for many years and I know that I am going to miss this opportunity for fellowship with its mental and spiritual stimulation. This year the Continuation Committee has prepared for us a program which deals with a theme that is of utmost importance in our day. It is important not only to the Christian population of Japan in general but in particular it is important to those of us who are expatriate missionaries living and serving in a country and a culture far from our native countries.

In this seminar on “The Christian Family in Japan”, we will be studying and learning a great deal which will be helpful to us in our understanding of the family in a modern age and especially here in Japan. I look forward eagerly to the papers which are to be presented.

In the few minutes we have allotted for this devotional I would like to direct our thinking to the family in which we ourselves are a part right now. It is altogether possible to become an expert on the family and family problems and fail to see ourselves as a key person in a flesh and blood family relationship.

I have been a husband for over forty years and a father for almost thirty-eight years. I wish I had known at the outset of my family experience what I know now. However, it is very likely that it is best that we do not know all that lies ahead or we might not assume the responsibilities of matrimony and/or family.

Thelma and I have three children, all of whom are over thirty years old, all of whom have completed graduate studies, all of whom have joined “the establishment”, and all of whom are engaged in counseling or therapy in three widely scattered parts of the United States. This means that all five of us are doing a lot of the same type of work—more or less. I have remarked on occasion that for all our children to be pursuing psychiatric, psychological or counseling careers certainly gives an indication that they must have had an unhappy childhood.

The facts are that we had our family together as a group for only ten years. The youngest was only ten when the oldest went away to college in the United States. I mention this fact only as a reminder that the time to enjoy as a family, the time to properly rear children, the time to do the job of parenting is very short lived. Therefore, for those who have the privilege of having your children with you, especially those whose children are still young, my word to you is that you take advantage of the time and give a great deal of yourself to this very awesome responsibility.

Families today face many more problems than did the families of my father’s generation. I am sure that he could have said the same thing about his own father’s day and time. But, even if we go all the way back to the first family in the Garden of Eden, we would not find a problem-free situation. Sin in its many ugly manifestations made its grand appearance there, and has continued its program of devastation down through the ages.

There are many problems facing Christian families of Japan in our day. I am sure we will be thinking about some of them this week. I see several which are hazards to the Christian home: permissive sex, S.A. (Special Arrangement), abortion, divorce, alcohol, inter-cultural marriage, interfaith and no-faith marriage, homosexuality, inflation, and affluence. These are not all new problems but it seems that in our day they have become very visible.

You and I, however, are not personally faced with all the above glaring and often publicized enemies of the home. Ours may be more subtle, nevertheless real and potentially destructive.

If I had to name what I think is the one most important factor in a successful and happy family, it would be communication. This applies to all areas of our lives: psychological, physical, financial, geographical, and spiritual. I mean by communication the matter of communicating feelings rather than opinions or thoughts. Most arguments are based on opinions. Most solutions are based on feelings. Feelings are neither good nor bad. To express our deep feelings is to reveal our real selves, where we are and what it is that is hurting.

Dr. David Mace, Co-founder with his wife, Vera, of the Marriage Encounter Movement, in a paper on "Marital Intimacy and the Deadly Love-Anger Cycle", says, "My conclusion is that what causes marriages to fail over and over again, is the incapacity of the couple to cope with their own and each others anger." He characteristically says that the rock that causes untold marital wrecks is the destructive force of anger. This anger is one of our strongest emotions or feelings. If it is not dealt with properly and frankly it is a potential troublemaker.

What Dr. Mace means by the "Love-Anger Cycle" is that in the outset the purpose of a relationship is intimacy. Intimacy leads to inevitable differences. Differences become disagreements and disagreements produce conflict. The fruit of conflict is disillusionment and unless it is dealt with within the family relationship in a meaningful way, the inevitable result is destruction and tragedy.

Love thrives on intimacy, closeness, and openness. This is the atmosphere for shared feelings and thoughtful responses.

Dr. Howard Clinebell, who with his wife have produced a great deal of helpful literature for couples and families, was in Japan recently and conducted a seminar in our church for workers on the Tokyo English Life Line (TELL), a telephone counseling service. His wife is perhaps best known as the author of the book, "Meet Me in the Middle." Dr. Clinebell wrote the last chapter. In the seminar he had a number of couples participate in what proved to be a very interesting and helpful dialogue. Each couple was asked to speak a few minutes discussing before the entire group these subjects: (1) "What I admire in you." (2) "What I need from you." (3) "What I am willing to do to meet your need." Several couples took part and it was very revealing to them how their spouse felt on certain deep levels. Some definite promises were made, and I hope some long lasting changes were brought about in those homes.

I must say that Dr. Clinebell was quick to add that in cases of any serious problems a professional counselor should be consulted. For instance, to discuss the subject. "What I despise in you" might prove to be counterproductive in the above suggested dialogue.

I strongly recommend the use of such a method of discussion for your marriage and your family.

Our children have helped us a great deal during the years of their formal training and also since they have entered their professional fields. Since our relationship is now that of adults we have discovered them as good friends.

One area which has been helpful is that we can share feelings of pain—where we are hurting. We had thought, as perhaps most parents do, that it is better to shield children in the home, to protect them and keep from them those deep feelings of hurting which we all have. In a very moving experience a

furlough or so ago we learned that they had felt slighted, left out, unrecognized as real members of the family at times because we had not shared with them our deeper problems. This came as a shock. As hurts, deep feelings of pain, long-buried from view or comment, were revealed, tears began to flow. This brought forth other hitherto unrevealed feelings and there was sharing that night which brought closeness and a sense of oneness. In many ways I felt that we really became a family at that time. All of us learned a lot that we had not known before. The experience of that time of deep sharing has continued to bear fruit among us.

Dr. Paul Tournier, after almost fifty years of marriage, has had some very timely and timeless suggestions to make which should prove to be helpful to each of us. This great thinker, writer, and missionary to the world, believes that a successful family is one where there is “Unselfish Giving.” Everyone has problems. Every family has its own set of needs. When and if each member of the family is willing to give of their time, their ability, their concern, and their support in an unselfish, agape-love manner, most families could cope with their difficulties and a lot of unpleasantness could be avoided.

Dr. Tournier also recommends “Transparency.” There need be no secrets, no cover-up. There is much evidence that openness, “speaking the truth in love” will prove to be helpful. This is not always easy to accomplish. It takes effort and courage and a sense of self awareness and self esteem. It does help to bind a family group in the bonds of understanding love. Couples, in particular, and families in general, who play games, keep secrets, and engage in intrigue, are on the road to failure. They become rocks to wreck.

The third suggestion Dr. Tournier would list as a bedrock for a successful family is what he calls “Mutual Understanding.” Marriage does not make two people one except in a sexual sense. They remain individuals with their own personalities, their own unique talents and needs. It is cute to refer to an offspring as a “Chip off the old block”, however it is a disaster for a child not to be received and understood for its own self. Self identity is one of our most precious possessions. Respect, recognition, and mutual understanding are great building stones for a happy and a successful family.

Dr. Tournier makes one other suggestion, a very strong one. He believes that the most basic and meaningful rock on which to base the existence of a family is the spiritual one. He believes that the spiritual foundation of the home takes precedence over all others. By that he means a recognition that God created marriage and thus is the founder of the home. That is true not only of the first one involving Adam and Eve but is true of every happy and successful family relationship.

But a spiritual foundation is not just a matter of two people being joined in holy wedlock by a Christian minister in a beautifully decorated sanctuary before a great crowd of admiring friends. That is fine. However, the real test of the depth of a spiritual basis for the establishment and the maintenance of a home is in a living relationship with Jesus Christ.

There used to be a radio program in the United States called “The Family Theater.” Their forte was a weekly program designed to strengthen families and help to build strong homes. The closing thought of each broadcast was “A family that plays together and prays together stays together.” This is a beautiful commentary on a successful family.

In closing allow me to paraphrase the verse of scripture which I read in the beginning. “In everything you do—in your personal life—in your professional life—in your family life, put God first—make him an important part of every decision—claim his promises in the midst of every problem, follow his teaching and the leading of his Holy Spirit every step of the way—and he will direct you and comfort you and teach you and crown your efforts, your feeble efforts, your struggling efforts, your best efforts—with success.” He, when we acknowledge him, will smooth out our pathway. Jesus said, “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and he will supply your needs.”

THE FAMILY IN SCRIPTURE

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Introduction

When I was asked to take this topic I was hesitant because I feared that it would not include sufficient controversial material. You see, I am of the opinion that the chief distinctive of Hayama Conferences is controversy. We have opportunities for various studies and deeper life teaching; but only at Hayama do we have opportunity for those of divergent theological views to come together and freely express these differences. When we cease to do this, to a great extent, the need for Hayama will cease. At this point, some of you will note that even the purpose of Hayama is controversial. At any rate, after further thought on my topic, I came to see that a great deal of controversy can be raised in the study of the Christian home. So I consented to do this paper. As a matter of fact, I found so much debatable material that I am unable to go into as much detail as I would like to. In this paper I only outline my position. I look forward to the discussion period to see if my conclusions can stand up under criticism. So please do your best!

While there is no time to explain in detail the what and why of my basic premises, I do think that they should be stated. I believe in the inspiration, authority, and inerrancy of the Bible.

Home

First let me say a few words about what a Christian home is. A home, under normal circumstances, should have at least a husband and a wife, and ideally children. If all are Christians, with the possible exception of children, it can be called a Christian home. The unmarried state is not the normal state of adults although there are Biblical reasons for some to remain single. Both Jesus and Paul deal with these cases.

That believers ought to marry believers is clear. In the Old Testament, the principle of spiritual separation is taught through the ceremonial law and in direct commandments telling the Jews not to marry Canaanites. The nature of Christian marriage where God is number one requires the union of two believers. And, the principle is repeated in such places as II Corinthians 6:14–16. Some have objected that since there are many more believing women than men, if believing women don't marry unbelievers, many will not be able to marry at all; besides, it is suggested that they can win their husbands to the Lord. The most ingenious justification of believers marrying nonbelievers that I have heard is that the command to multiply and replenish the earth came prior to the command to not marry unbelievers hence where a believing husband cannot be found, a nonbeliever should be married. Personally, I think mankind has completed the task of replenishing the earth. Furthermore, the later command should have precedence over the former. In as much as Jesus and Paul give various reasons for not marrying at all, I can see no justification for marrying an unbeliever on the grounds that one must marry someone. Unfortunately, few seem to realize that an unhappy marriage is far worse than being unmarried. Emotionally being unmarried has disadvantages, but the Bible never promises the believer a life of ease and fulfillment of all desires.

As for winning the unbelieving partner, experience shows that the more likely result will be a watering down of the believer's faith. The basic issue is whether it is a good principle to do evil that good may result. Can a believer really expect God to use his witness when he has deliberately sinned?

On the other hand, the Bible has a separate set of instructions for those who have become Christians after having been married. God always has new promises for those who repent. In the case of the one who marries as a non-Christian and who is later saved, his or her testimony may be very effective in bringing the partner to the Saviour. Even for those who deliberately sin and marry a nonbeliever, if they later repent of their sin, God does not forsake them, and may even use their testimony to win their spouse.

Marriage

Previously I stated that a home has a husband and a wife. The more alert of you may already have perceived that this means that these two are married. This brings us to my second topic, marriage.

Marriage is a relationship between a man and a woman. Homosexual relationships are not Biblical marriages. The Bible is clearly against homosexuality. I also believe on the basis of lesser evidence that it is the homosexual acts that the Bible forbids, not the homosexual inclination. At the same time, on the basis of what Jesus said about lust in Mt. 5:27–28: “. . . everyone that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” . . . it must be added that the inclination can develop into sin without any actual acts. Of course, efforts should be made to bring the inclinations back to normality, but failure to do so does not, in my opinion, constitute sin. On the other hand, failure to be able to bring the inclinations back to normality does not constitute an excuse for homosexual lust or acts. We are all called upon to control our inclinations, whether they be normal or abnormal.

Much of what we have to say from now on will depend on a proper definition of what constitutes “getting married.” The two main factors seem to be the intention and the sex act. While there is no clear statement in the Bible proving this definition, it seems to me that it is a underlying presupposition. It needs to be recognized in order to make sense out of certain passages. (Mat. 5:32; 19:9).

An examination of the basic marriage texts such as Genesis 2:18–25 implies that polygamous marriage is far from the ideal although permitted in the Old Testament perhaps because of “the hardness of their hearts.” In the New Testament the qualification of the bishop stated in I Timothy 3:2, “the husband of one wife” seems to confirm this. There are a number of possibilities for the meaning of Paul’s statement, but to me, the interpretation that Paul was writing against polygamy seems to be the best one. On the other hand, the Bible is not clear as to what a man who becomes a Christian after having married a number of wives should do. I have heard that some missionaries insist that only the first wife is the real wife, hence the husband should put away all the others even if the first one is an unbeliever and the second is a believer, and even if in that culture the put away wives are social outcasts. The fact that the Bible does not spell out what should be done may be purposely designed so that Christians can find a practical solution that will meet varying situations. Fortunately, this is not a major problem in Japan. We already have sufficient major problems.

Now a word about the purpose of marriage. The Bible indicates that one purpose is for bearing and rearing children. Another is that man needed a helper. It was not good for him to be alone. Inasmuch as I have an idea concerning another possible purpose which I have not as yet seen in print, and which may be controversial, I want to say a word about this for your consideration. I wonder if another major purpose of marriage is to develop Christian character. Living alone does not require as much give and take, and restraints on selfishness as living with another does. Similarly, one reason that children today are more selfish than those of other generations . . . does this statement stimulate controversy? . . . may be because most children have their own room and need not learn to live with their brothers and sisters in a close relationship.

A great deal more could be said on this matter, but we must move on to more controversy.

Divorce

Concerning the marriage tie, no one will dispute that the Bible teaches that the death of one partner breaks the marriage tie and that the living partner may remarry (Rom. 7:2; I Cor. 7:39). It also seems, on the basis of Mt. 5:32; 19:9 that fornication is grounds for breaking the tie. There is some debate as to what fornication (in the Bible) is. I prefer the definition that includes illicit sexual acts both in and out of marriage, hence adultery is included.

When Jesus said that he that marries a woman who has been divorced, although she didn’t commit fornication commits adultery, he meant that just as marriage involves sex and intention, so Biblical divorce involves both the violation of the intention and the sex bonds. In other words, a divorce without fornication is only a half-broken marriage. If no fornication took place, a man marrying the put away woman would be marrying a half-married woman and so would be guilty of adultery. On the other hand, if the husband were to remarry, the sex act of the remarriage would complete the breaking of the marriage bond, hence the put away woman could remarry. Unless one party has committed fornication, divorce and remarriage would be sin. But if one party commits fornication and puts away his wife (breaks the intention), remarriage is not necessarily sin. This is in keeping with Moses’ intention in granting a bill of divorcement so that the divorcee could remarry. Of course, if one’s partner commits fornication, one should attempt to achieve reconciliation through repentance. Divorce is not the ideal even when fornication has occurred; but to divorce would not necessarily be sinful. Needless to say fornication is sin.

The Bible allows divorce for another reason. In I Corinthians 7:12–16 Paul allows for divorce if the unbelieving husband insists. However, on the basis of the previous discussion, this divorce would constitute only a half-broken marriage until the nonbeliever remarries. The believing partner should remain unmarried and pray for the other’s salvation and marriage reconciliation. If he should remarry, the bond would be completely broken and she could remarry.

From this we can see that the Bible treats the unsaved man differently than it does the believer. No

doubt the divorce caused by the unbelieving husband can be called sin; but the basic issue is the condition of the heart in its attitude towards its creator. Therefore, the Bible permits looser legal standards for non-Christians. This is what Jesus meant when He said that Moses allowed divorce for more reasons than just death and fornication . . . “because of the hardness of their hearts.”

I also see one other Biblical justification for divorce even though it is not actually dealt with in the Bible. It is based on my position on ethics in general. It seems to me that there are times when, in this sinful world, two of God’s commandments may be in conflict. The most frequent example of this in Japan is when a Buddhist parent commands his Christian child to engage in idolatrous acts. The Bible forbids him to engage in idolatry, but the child is also commanded to obey his parents. In such cases, we must try to determine which is the most important commandment using such principles as love; and to obey it while violating the lesser commandment. On the basis of this ethical theory, it seems to be conceivable that, for example, in order to save a life in an extreme marital situation, one might need to separate (which would probably lead to divorce) from one’s partner even though no illicit sexual act was committed. Perhaps the previously mentioned case in I Corinthians 7:12–16 is actually another example.

This topic would be very incomplete if it did not have some discussion of the church’s reaction to those who divorce and remarry in an unBiblical way. Most churches who profess Fundamentalism or near Fundamentalism will allow such people to become members, but not leaders. I take issue with this position. I do not see divorce and remarriage as an unpardonable sin . . . even when it is an unBiblical divorce and remarriage. Not only should repentant divorced people be allowed church membership, but when and if the character traits which caused the sinful divorce are corrected, I believe the person should be allowed in church leadership. In other words, I would treat such people as I would an alcoholic. Although he repents after each binge, until sufficient time passed with no binges to show that he had been able to control his desires for a drink, I would not consider him qualified for church leadership.

In as much as there are a variety of interpretations of the Biblical data, one should make allowance for legitimate differences in actual church life.

Husband-Wife

The instructions by Paul gives some basic principles concerning husband-wife relationships. Some women liberationists attempt to reduce the command that the woman should be in subjection to her husband to a result of the first sin which needs correcting. They say that subjection of woman to man is not ideal, but rather the result of Adam’s sin just as is pain in childbirth. And, just as we try to relieve pain by medicine, so we should try to relieve this evil result of sin. Others treat the command to obey husbands as cultural adaptations like slavery upon which progressive revelation should bring improvement. I reject both of these ideas. Paul’s teaching is based on creation and only incidentally upon the fact that Eve sinned first; furthermore, Jesus’ relation to the church is used to illustrate this ideal relationship. We might also ask, “If subjection, as well as slavery, are adaptations to culture, is the command for the husband to love his wife also a cultural adaptation?”

Some contend that equality and subjection are contradictory. Subjection implies inequality. The solution seems to be in that in one sense, in the sense of value and rights, men and women are or should be equal; but when it comes to ability, obviously depending on the activity they are not always equal. Often women’s talents compliment men’s. Let me illustrate with a bit of humor. My wife is talented as a cook and I am talented a eater. Men, in general, are better endowed to be the head of the family. Women are better at giving birth to children. It is impossible to contend that women and men are equal in all respects. Men tend to become bald sooner than women. Some think that this is because their brains are more active (one can’t grow grass on a busy street). On the other hand, women cannot grow

mustaches . . . for a similar reason. (end of humor)

Ryrie of Dallas Theological Seminary at times seems to think that much of Paul's teaching about women is for the usual person; but that Paul would allow for exceptions. However, this may be a misrepresentation of Ryrie's position for in other places it seems that he does not permit exceptions. Nevertheless, it is a thought worth thinking about.

Some also contend that submission is degrading. This is clearly untrue. Jesus was our example in submission to the Father both on earth (Phil. 2:1–8), and in eternity (I Cor. 15:28). See also Eph. 5:21, 25. Jesus was both equal and in subjection.

As for slavery and polygamy, while instructions concerning these institutions do exist, there is no commandment to have slaves or many wives. These commandments were to instruct on how to deal with existing man-made institutions. Marriage is instituted by God.

It is interesting to note that in all of Paul's teaching concerning the family there is a balance. He first tells the women to be in subjection to their husbands (Eph. 5:22), then he tells husbands to love their wives. Unfortunately, the Japanese Kogotai Bible must have been translated by men, for it says that women are to serve their husbands. The command for women to obey their husbands is modified by several important principles. Jesus said that the one who wants to be great and rule should serve (Mk. 10:43). Paul in Eph. 5:21 indicates that in some sense men should be in subjection to women. The command for men to love their wives precludes the idea that subjection means that women exist to satisfy their husbands desires and comforts. Love is defined as seeking not its own in I Cor. 13. Ruling involves serving. Of course, women also should serve since they are also commanded to love their husbands (Titus 2:4). What then does being the head of the family mean? I take it that being head of the house primarily refers to being ultimately responsible for determining God's will for the family. And, in a broader sense, "Leadership is committed to promoting the best interests of those who are led," (Renich, p. 81)

While the Bible is clear about authority in the family, it is not so clear as to whether what is true in the family should also be true in society and in the church. Wives should be in subjection to their husbands, but should women be in subjection to men? In as much as the Greek word can be translated either "woman" or "wife", only the context can tell us if the author is talking about the family or life outside the family. In almost all of the references touching on this issue, the context indicates that the word should be translated "wife."

However, at least one reference seems to be better translated "woman." (I Tim. 2:12). Many who have written on this subject just assume that a command for a wife to obey her husband implies that women should obey men. It is true that there would be psychological problems for a man to be the head of his wife at home, but in subjection to his wife at church where she is pastor. However, by God's power, this is not impossible. After all, Eph. 5:21 teaches mutual subjection.

For the sake of debate it would be best for me to take a dogmatic position on this issue; but unfortunately I cannot do so at this point. I could like to hold the position that women can be pastors; but I Tim. 2:12 bothers me. Prohl argues for subjection of women in the home, but not in church. If you want to see this position defended, I recommend reading his book.

Another issue which frustrates me is whether or not the woman's place is the home. Titus 2:5 certainly seems to teach that this is her sphere. However, the ideal woman of Proverbs 31:10–31 certainly did a lot of wandering around on business outside the home. Perhaps in this regard, the silence or near silence of the Bible is a prod to make us use prayer guided common sense. Children need to be cared for, and it ought to be the parents who do so for the most part. One of them ought to be home most of the time. In keeping with what Ryrie seemed to say, we can say that in most cases it would be best for

the woman to be home with the children, but exceptions might well exist. Certainly to the extent that it is not necessary for the woman to be home caring for the children, there is no reason why she shouldn't work or minister.

Forgive me if the next material is not controversial, but let us look briefly at some practical teaching about man as head of the home. One of the best books on this subject that I have found is Renich, The Christian Husband. Renich mentions three objectives:

1. To know each member of your family, beginning with your wife.
2. To encourage the development and use of the gifts God has given each member of your family.
3. To pace yourself as leader to the capacity of those you lead. This is a part of what Peter means in I Pet. 3:7, "Husbands, dwell with your wives according to knowledge . . ."

Concerning the command for the husband to love his wife, Renich also has some good advice on how to build love. I will list a few choice quotations.

1. To what degree are you committed consciously to do good to your wife? List on paper some of the things you do which indicate to you that you are really committed to doing good to her.
5. Make a list on paper of the positive qualities in your wife, then in each of your children. Go over the list and deliberately thank God for each one of the items.
9. Make ditches for love. Love is like a stream. It needs channels through which to flow. But we have to make the channels . . . When did you last ask your wife to forgive you? Or tell her 'thank you' for some little thing she did? . . . What can you do for your wife today to communicate your love for her? . . . Love is a very tender plant. It needs lots of cultivating." (pp. 104–111)

Children

The last major topic to be covered is parent-child relationships. Paul again gives a balanced teaching. Children are to obey their parents, but fathers are not to provoke their children to wrath. It is significant that both parents are to be obeyed, but fathers are singled out by Paul and warned about unreasonable treatment of their children, I am guessing that Paul does this for two reasons:

1. Fathers are more apt to be unreasonable. I added this point because I think it is controversial.
2. Paul's teaching always centers on the husband as head of the home, as being the one who is primarily responsible for the training of the children. The wife's authority is delegated from him. In this land, with rare exceptions, the husband has practically nothing to do with the training of the children. One survey mentioned in the Asahi newspaper indicated that the average Japanese child's communication with his father is about the same level as an American child's communication with a stranger. On one occasion, children were given 100 words to list in order of importance. Love was listed first. Sincerity got second place. Mother was 13th, and Father got 93rd.

The Bible is clear that chastening . . . including spanking . . . is a necessary part of training children. It is hard for me to understand how Christian parents who profess to believe in the inspiration and authority of the Bible can withhold spanking. The author of Hebrews says that those who love their children will chasten them (Heb. 12:7). The prevailing idea that children are naturally good and that if left alone they will grow up to be wonderful specimens of humanity may be good Confucianism and Christian Liberalism, but it is not Biblical, and certainly contrary to observed fact. Incidentally, how Liberals can believe in evolution and its struggle for a existence and survival of the fittest and yet believe that man is basically good is inconceivable.

At the risk of deserting controversy and becoming practical, let me give a few principles on disciplining that were helpful to me. I only wish I had been more consistent in following them.

I. Children are to obey parents, not parents obey children (Eph. 6:1–3). This involves punishment (Heb. 12:7; Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 20:30; 22:6, 15; 23:13, 14; 15:17).

- A. Save spanking for deliberate disobedience, Use other punishments for other wrong acts.
- B. Use only enough to be effective . . . no more, no less.
- C. Use padded areas when spanking, not the head, etc.
- D. Use punishment consistently. If the child has been told, always punish when the child doesn't do it.
- E. Use it from motive of love, not out of anger.
- F. When child is young especially, punish immediately.
- G. If possible, punish in private.
- H. Don't lie. If you threaten punishment, but do not do so, you are lying, and the child is learning that you cannot be relied on.
- I. After punishment, reassure the child of your love.

II. Don't provoke children to wrath (Eph. 6:4) which probably refers to unreasonable or inconsistent punishment.

- A. If any of above (I.) are violated, they could be a provocation.
- B. Be a consistent example.
- C. Show love . . . not by giving the child many things, but by giving one's self . . . play with child.
- D. Apologize when you have done wrong to your child.
- E. Expect what the child is able to do . . . no more, no less. This requires knowing your child.
- F. Be sure the child understands your commands.

III. Nurture . . . admonition (Eph. 6:4). Teach your child. Don't leave it for the church and school to do.

IV. Most common errors.

- A. Only punish when angry.
- B. Say "no" until the child screams, then say "yes".
- C. Think that love means no punishment (Heb. 12:7).
- D. Fail to praise your child.
- E. Ridicule child . . . especially in public.
- F. Think that spanking teaches child to hit others.

I have noticed that many parents wait far too long to begin disciplining their children. Some seem to think that if they give no commands, their child will never disobey, hence never need any chastening. Some even seem to think that they can't be taught anything until they become school age . . . and, that only the teachers are capable of training children.

Contrary to the teaching of Basic Youth Conflict's seminars, which in general I highly recommend, I do not believe that the command for children to obey their parents is meant to continue after the child becomes an adult and is financially independent of his parents. The norm is for the child to marry and leave his father and mother, which means to leave them mentally, psychologically and spiritually, not necessarily geographically. However, often geographical separation is necessary to become independent mentally, psychologically and spiritually. This does not mean that parents should be treated as strangers. Respect and honor should continue. And care for aging parents should not be neglected. I might add that, in case children do neglect the responsibility of caring for aged parents, the church has an obligation. This was one of the main reasons for deacons. The main point is that the parents should not interfere in the child's home and family life. The father is no longer head of his son when his son is an adult.

Related to this matter is a matter which has recently come to my attention. Parents need to be sure their spouse is not neglected while the children are growing up. Many have done so and when the children have all left, they found that they were living with a stranger. In order of priority, God is first, spouse is next and children third.

Lastly, the father as head of his family is responsible to be the spiritual example and instructor in his family. By his life he teaches what he considers to be most important, whether it be his work, God, or family. The following illustration from Renich's book illustrates this last and several other points I wish to make. With it I end my presentation.

"A friend asked to meet me for lunch. As he opened his heart it was just one more demonstration of the price men pay for material success. He had been offered an enviable promotion in his corporation. As Al and his wife prayed about the offer, it became increasingly clear that for them the promotion would prove detrimental to their family life as well as to their spiritual well-being. He declined to accept, and ultimately was given the option of resigning or being fired.

'There is no place on the corporate team for a man who refuses to move up,' Al was told.

Sticking to the decision Al and his wife made, he resigned. Upon receiving the resignation, Al's top boss, who had previously threatened him, called him into his private office. With tears running down his face he said, 'Al, you have had the guts to do what years ago I should have done, but didn't have the courage to do. I have position, power, and money, but I've lost my soul, my family and my God. I envy and admire you.'" (p. 122)

BOOKS IN MY LIBRARY

THE HOME - GENERAL

- Adams, Christian Living in the Home, Baker.
- Bell, The Family in Dialogue, Zondervan.
- Bowman, Marriage for Moderns, McGraw-Hill.
- Brandt and Dowdy, Building a Christian Home, Scripture Press.
- Capper and Williams, Towards Christian Marriage, IVP.
- Christenson, The Christian Family, Bethany Fellowship.
- Farah, How to Rear a Happy Christian Family, Moody.
- McDonald, Creating a Successful Christian Marriage, Baker.
- Narramore, How to Succeed in Family Living, Regal.
- Nystrom, Christian Romance and Marriage, Moody.
- Petersen, The Marriage Affair, Tyndale.
- Renich, The Christian Husband, Tyndale.
- Small, Design for Christian Marriage, Revell.

PLACE OF WOMEN and CHILD TRAINING *

- Boldrey, Chauvinist or Feminist? Baker.
- *Dobson, Dare to Discipline, Tyndale.
- Elliot, Let Me Be a Woman, Tyndale.
- Fitzwater, Woman, Eerdmans.
- Jewett, Man as Male and Female, Eerdmans.
- *Meier, Christian Child-rearing and Personality Development, Baker.
- *Narramore, How to Tell Your Children About Sex, Zondervan.
- Pape, In Search of God's Ideal Woman, IVP.
- Prohl, Woman in the Church, Eerdmans.

Ryrie, *The Role of Women in the Church*, Moody.
 Scanzone and Hardesty, *All We're Meant to Be*, Word.
 *Wilkerson, *Parents on Trial*, Hawthorne.

SEX

Piper, *The Christian Interpretation of Sex*, Charles Scribners Sons.
 Miles, *Sexual Understanding Before Marriage*, Zondervan.
 Narramore, *Life and Love*, Zondervan.
 Small, *Christian Celebrate Your Sexuality*, Revell.
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 Tweedie, *The Christian and Sex*, Baker.
 Vincent, *God, Sex and You*, Lippincott.

PROBLEMS

Bustanoby, "When Wedlock Becomes Deadlock", *Christianity Today*, June 20, 1975. DeHaan,
Marriage and Divorce, The Radio Bible Class.
 Duty, *Divorce and Remarriage*, Bethany Fellowship.
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 Stein, "Is It Lawful for a Man to Divorce His Wife?", *Journal of the Evangelical Society*, June
 1979.
 Stott, *Divorce*, IVP.

Critique of "The Family in Scripture"

Floyd Powers

First of all, I want to express our appreciation to Frank for the time and effort he has made to present us with so much thought provoking material. I am sure everyone is somewhat overwhelmed, as I was, by the sheer size of the topic under consideration. Any one of the five topics taken up is a huge subject in itself: the Home, Marriage, Divorce, Husband-wife relations, and Children. I am sure the one most perplexed by that was Frank himself. I am also confident he has accomplished his stated purpose of provoking controversy. He need touch only the area of women's lib to accomplish that.

Frank suggests that one purpose of marriage is to develop Christian character. This came as a new thought to me. Beyond doubt that development takes place daily in a sincere Christian couple. The question is, was that development a purpose or a by-product.

In the area of defining the meaning of terms we are in need of more clarification, particularly for the definition of what constitutes a home, and what constitutes marriage, and the definition for fornication is in conflict with the one stated in Webster's Dictionary.

We are all painfully aware that the validity of every established institution of our time is being hotly disputed to the point of utter disregard. Not least among these is the institution of marriage. Frank did not bring up the issue but among my acquaintances I am appalled to find leaders entertaining the idea that people are married as soon as they agree that they love one another and intend to spend their lives together, and from that time until the public wedding ceremony they are free to engage in sexual intercourse for it is no sin. In our promiscuous time I am aware that this is the norm for the world, but if Christians adopt this standard we shudder to contemplate the resulting moral decadence in the church. I hope we can address ourselves to this issue here today.

Some very helpful material from Fred Renich has been given us in the area of practical teaching on the man as head of the home.

THE FAMILY IN CONFLICT

Hugh Trevor, M.A., Cambridge University. Arrived in Japan 1960.

Present assignment: Pioneer evangelism, Yokohama.

We are living in a time when among Christians there seems to be a very great stress on the family and its importance. Many books have been written which are very authoritarian in tone, and castigate Christians, particularly men, for their failure in parental responsibilities (for instance one book, "The Effective Father" berates King David in the Old Testament for his failure as a father). These books often say explicitly or implicitly that bad children are the result of bad fathering, and Christian adults are to blame for giving too much time to church activities and not enough to their families. For instance the introduction to the film we are to see this evening says "If America survives, it will be because fathers begin to put their families at the highest level of priority and reserve something of their time, effort and energy for leadership within their own families." 13

Perhaps because of this sort of emphasis in home countries over the last ten years, in our own missionary society we can see a difference between older and younger missionaries in their attitudes to family and missionary work. This difference is well (though perhaps inaccurately) illustrated by the comment of a younger missionary that as he looked at the older missionaries' families and wondered what would happen if the wife/mother died, he expected that the family would remain on the field, and after a bit the husband would look around at the available single missionary women and marry one of them, whereas he, the younger missionary in a similar position would go home with his children, and if he got married again there, he would then consider with his new wife what work the Lord had for them in the future, whether on the mission field or not. Another, perhaps more relevant, difference between older and younger workers is that the older ones have felt, often with personal regrets, that sending their children to boarding school was inevitable if they were to fulfill their missionary society's calling of pioneer church planting in the unchurched and lonely areas of Japan, whereas younger workers tend to reject boarding school and seek for designations which put them near to American schools.

Modern Christian books often claim that the family is a divine institution, and use Biblical characters such as Moses and the New Testament Joseph to back up their exhortations to parental responsibility, but at the same time they often ignore the teaching of Christ which is mostly critical of the family's ability to deflect men from their proper response to God, and one wonders whether there is real justification for saying that the family is a divine institution, and whether the pendulum has not swung too far in modern evangelicals stressing family responsibilities as distinct from the claims of God on a Christian's time and energy.

In the Bible we can see that man's first civilization was started by Cain and his descendents, i.e. in Genesis 4 we read that Cain built a city, and his descendents included "the father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle (v.20), the father of those who play the lyre and pipe (v.21), and the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron (v.22)." I think it is not unreasonable to say that part of the reason for Cain's drive and initiative to develop the city, and for his descendents to develop other aspects of civilization and culture was the fact that he had been driven away from God's presence and he needed to do something to fill up the vacuum in his heart. Nowadays we Christians often take pride in the fact that Christians have taken a leading part in developing science and the arts, but I think we need also to admit that much of man's cultural and scientific advance has been made by non-believers, and it may

well be that, as with Cain and his descendents, part of the non-Christians drive and initiative has been an unconscious drive to fill the emptiness in their hearts caused by the lack of fellowship with God. Certainly we can say that there are many aspects of city life and of trade which represent man's rebellion against God. For instance in Revelation 18 we have the Fall of Babylon described, where Babylon is the city of trade representing man's pride and sin. Do other human social institutions, including the family, also partly represent a desire of the part of man to fill a gap in his heart caused by separation from God? Very often it is so.

For instance in Genesis 4, not only Cain's city, but his knowing his wife and her conceiving (in other words, their married experience together) may also be a part of their attempt to fill the gap of loneliness, of having been driven away from God's presence. The fact that Cain gave the same name Enoch (meaning "to initiate") to his child as to his city may also indicate that his motivation in both cases was the same. With Adam and Eve, Adam's knowing his wife and their having children (which is recorded after the Fall) may also be an attempt to make up for their loneliness after having been driven out of the Garden of Eden and their previous close relationship with God. It would not be surprising if it were so.

In modern Western culture the home is very often made a substitute for response to God and the involvement in society which God desires. For instance, the Australian singing group "The Seekers" had a song called "We'll make a world of our own, that no one else can share; all our sorrows we'll leave behind us there." Home is often regarded as a place where a person can get away from (unwelcome) involvement with other people and be their own (selfish) selves. Then too, families take pains to make their homes in residential areas composed of those of their own type and class. People do not want to expose themselves or their families to those of other classes or colour, and will often react strongly to the possibility of what they consider to be undesirable influences. Then since small children are totally dependent on their parents, having babies is a way of confirming the parents' sense of their own worth, and as a means of extending the parents' own sense of values. The selfishness in all this is shown by the resentment felt and shown should someone else offer advice as to the discipline or bringing up of their children. In Africa any adult can discipline any child seen to be misbehaving (thus helping to prevent juvenile delinquency), whereas in the West this is strongly frowned on (making police necessary for juveniles as well as for adults). In other words, parents in the West are often extremely selfish and possessive when it comes to questions of their homes and their families. This applies to Christians as well. Reference has already been made to boarding school for missionary children, and in the angry retort of one younger parent, "I want to bring up my own children", one can sense more than a hint of personal selfishness that is current in Western culture generally, and which, in my opinion, is being fuelled by the current boom among Western evangelicals seeking to emphasize the family. It is true that in Western society during the past 20 years there has been an increase in divorce and sexual permissiveness of every sort, but there are any number of contemporary articles (Essay in Time Magazine Dec. 15, John Lennon, the Pope, advertisements generally) which indicate that the basic attachment to the family system is as deep as ever, and that the recent permissiveness may only be a temporary phase. As the salt and light of the world, Christians are certainly to be among the foremost in trying to prevent and correct evil in society and to show God's better way, but this does not mean an uncritically favourable attitude to the family system, because that is not the Bible's attitude.

Christ began his ministry by calling some of his disciples to leave their parents as well as their work (Mark 1:20). To one who offered to follow him, but asked permission to first bury his father (Matt. 8:21), Jesus told him to follow now and leave the dead to bury their own dead. At their face value, these words are almost an insult to the parents and certainly indicate the far greater importance Christ gives to spiritual obedience and discipleship than to family relationships. In Mark 10:29 Jesus specifically mentions the leaving of brothers, sisters, mother, father or children for his sake and the gospel. In Matt. 10:21 he talks of brother delivering up brother to

death, the father his child, and children rising against parents and his followers being hated by all for his name's sake. In Matt. 10:34–39 Christ says that he had come to bring a sword rather than peace, to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother etc., a man's foes will be those of his own household, and the one who loves son or daughter more than Jesus is not worthy of him. If the subject of this talk is "Family in Conflict", then this teaching of Jesus must be the basis of this title. A person's family can be a very strong barrier to their whole-hearted following of Christ, and perhaps nowhere more so than in Japan. How many of us know of young people who have been forbidden by their parents to attend church, or to be baptized, or of housewives whose husbands have torn up their Bibles or have otherwise hindered their desire to know more in following Christ. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the tight-knit family system in Japan is one of the greatest obstacles to the free spread of the gospel in this country, greater than the hold of the business company over the men.

This attitude of Christ to the human family would seem to be supported by Paul's attitude in I Cor. 7:32–35 "the unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord; but the married man is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please his wife; his interests are divided." Paul then repeats this same advice to the wife. In these verses Paul specifically contrasts concern with the Lord's work with attention paid to the family, and he calls the latter "worldly affairs." This is in marked contrast to the modern evangelical books and films already referred to, where Christians are castigated for spending too much time on church work and not enough time with the family.

Does this mean then that Christians need not bother with their families, that they have no responsibility for spending time and giving adequate leadership? No, but it would seem right to apply Christ's words about taxes in Matt. 22 to the family as follows "Render to the family the things that belong to the family, and to God the things that are God's." It would seem reasonable to put the human family in the same category as responsibility to those in authority in society. Both are basic human functions and God has specific instructions to Christians (as to all men) as to how they are to behave in these relationships. It is possible to say that both a social hierarchy and the family are instituted by God (Romans 13:1 says this specifically of society) but yet as we have seen both the family and society are contrasted with serving God—the family in I Cor. 7, and society in Matt. 22. It would seem reasonable therefore, to regard the family (like the social hierarchy) as basically a human institution (i.e. it is only instituted by God indirectly). A Christian family member has important responsibilities within his family, but they are not the same, nor are they so important, as his responsibilities to God. The modern books which emphasize a Christian father spending time with his family members, communicating well with them, and seeking to develop them to become well-developed members of society are right, but they are only right in that such parents are properly fulfilling their worldly responsibilities (to quote I Cor. 7:33). To criticize King David as a failure as a father (as one modern book does) is to go way beyond the Bible, where David is presented as the man after God's own heart. Where David is shown as a failure, it is not as a parent, but only in his relationship to Uriah and to Bathsheba. To say that bad children are always, or even generally, the result of bad fathering denies the doctrine of original sin and the Biblical example of the Prodigal Son. When the Bible commends Abraham (he will charge his children to keep the way of the Lord) or castigates Eli, it is not because they help, or fail to help, their children develop as good members of society on the human level (as advocated by modern evangelical media) but because of their influence on the spiritual behaviour. When Dr. Dobson, whose film we are to see later, says that a parent's number one job is to evangelize his or her children, this is somewhat more in line with the Bible's emphasis than Dr. Dobson's earlier statement that a parent must seek to leave his children with happy memories of their times together (this verges on sentimentality). But if Dr. Dobson means that a parent is more responsible for his own children's salvation than for the salvation of other people, I do not think that there is biblical warrant for such an assertion, e.g. Christ spent all his public ministry on others when his own brothers were still unresponsive to him. Nor can it be said that a child's spiritual development is dependent on being with his own parents. Samuel developed

better spiritually away from his mother (even under the spiritual leadership of Eli!) than Hannah's later children did even though they were with her. In short though a parent is partly responsible for the healthy development of his children, yet a divine call could mean that we have to give a higher priority to other aspects of God's work, and at such times we can trust him to look after the legitimate needs of our children perhaps through other Christians.

Apart from Christ's actual teaching about the dangers of families holding a person back from God, there is the attitude of Christ to his own family. Although brought up in a family and obedient to his parents, yet when he was 30 he started his ministry for God, leaving his family and disowning their claim that their family relationship entitled them to interfere in his ministry, e.g. Mark 3:31–35: "His mother and brothers came and standing on the edge of the crowd they sent to him and called him. But Jesus replied 'Who are my mother and my brothers? Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother'." It would seem that for Jesus himself, and for his followers, relationships in God's kingdom (that is, in God's family) take precedence over the human family relationships and sometimes may supersede them altogether. Of course this needs to be balanced by such scriptures as I Tim. 5:8 "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his own family, he has disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." Also Christ's words to his mother from the Cross show that he had not forgotten his connection with and responsibility for her altogether, but even so, his use of the word "woman" rather than "mother" and his committing her to John's keeping rather than to her other sons could mean that the new community of Christ's followers is stronger than the human family, and that in that community all older women are to be treated with the dignity of a mother. This idea would receive some support from Paul's words in Rom. 15:13 about Rufus' mother being his mother as well. That family relationships give way to relationships in the Kingdom is a principle which applies to Christ's followers and not just to Christ himself seems to be shown by such scriptures as Matt. 23:9 and 22:30. The former states "Call no man father on earth for you have one Father in heaven and you are all brethren." Though in England this verse is usually quoted relative to the problem of whether one should call the local Episcopal or Catholic priest by the term "father", yet the basic meaning of the passage would surely be that though we have been born into a human family with a father, yet our being born into God's family is of such importance that our human relationships, at least to our father, is lessened or even set aside. Then in Matt. 22, Christ's words that in the resurrection men neither marry or are given in marriage certainly point to the fact that physical death ends human family relationships (unlike Mormon teaching), and since we are to be like angels after that, our only relationships are those of God's heavenly kingdom. So it is not surprising that our human relationships are weakened and partly superseded by new birth now and relationships within God's earthly kingdom.

However one must not go to extremes in interpretation. It is clear that in the New Testament period families were not done away with. Rufus' mother in Rom. 15:13 was presumably Rufus' natural mother and only acted as a surrogate mother to Paul. Nevertheless there is a real truth that Christ sees human family relationships being widened and partly replaced by relationships within the kingdom of God. At its worst, the human family has great power to prevent a member doing God's will, and even at its best the human family while being important for bringing us into the world and aiding our human development, yet fades into relative insignificance once a person has become part of God's family. In God's kingdom on earth being in a loving relationship with all men and seeing each needy person as our neighbour are Biblical ideals. A Christian needs to face up to the possibility of sacrificing himself or his family pleasures if God so calls.

God allows us to have families, but he lays no great stress on it. He allows us the joy of bringing up our own children, but here again there is no great stress on it. Perhaps his kingdom is better served if we do not marry. As Christ said, "there are some who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven." God's kingdom may be better served by letting others bring up our children, as with Samuel and King Joash (brought up by the priest Johoida). However this is not to advocate a

neglect of family responsibilities. Some of us who are selfish perhaps need to serve our families more faithfully than we have, as in Matt. 15:5 Christ rebukes those who set aside God's command to honour father and mother for the sake of their tradition. But no Christian should uncritically accept all that is said even by those who strongly advocate the importance of the family. The system may need defending in the face of those who decry it, but Christians need also to examine themselves, and to warn others, lest too much attention is paid to the family, and lest what is only temporary, though enjoyable, should keep us from God's highest call in his Kingdom.

(The completion of this manuscript was somewhat delayed due to the need to fulfill worldly duties of entertaining my children home for the holidays from boarding school! HT)

Critique of “The Family in Conflict”

Marlin Zook

As one of the younger missionaries who has moved from a rural area to a house within commuting distance of an American school, I would like to make a reply to this paper.

First of all, I want to say a big “Thanks” to Hugh for helping us to correct the perspective on the family. While many evangelical writers put too much emphasis on the importance of the family and our responsibility to it, many of the cults negate the family. By putting primary emphasis on the importance of the religion above family obligations, the cults get a high level of commitment which gives them a certain strength. Hugh has brought this perspective back into our thinking.

Yet, while I appreciate and agree with the emphasis of this paper, I find myself a little more toward the positive end of the scale putting importance on the family.

When God made man, he said that it was not good for him to be alone. Man is told to be fruitful and multiply and so procreation, while it can be a means of filling the vacuum of separation from God, can also be a meaningful and a joyful venture in intimate fellowship with God.

I agree that some evangelicals over-emphasize the importance of the family. Also I agree that Jesus put the Family of God as more important than the physical family. The early church certainly would not put the family above one’s obedience to God. However, when they chose their leaders, one of the qualifications was how he controlled his family. The way the family lived and related to the father was a good indication of how the people in the church would relate to him and he to them. This criteria for choosing a leader shows the importance that the church put on the home. While the Kingdom of God is number one in priority, I think the family should take precedence of the other priorities.

Another possible indication of the importance of the home was the fact that when people encountered Jesus, Jesus told them to go to their family. The Samaritan woman was told to call her husband. The Gadarene was told to go home and tell them what God had done for him: Luke 8:39. When a resurrection occurred with the parents present, Jesus told them not to tell anyone else: Luke 8:56. Such examples as these give some indication as to the relative importance of the home.

(17b)

THE JAPANESE FAMILY: ITS STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

R. Wallace Brownlee

B. D., Garrett Evangelical Seminary. United Church of Christ in Japan. Arrived 1951. Executive Secretary of Inochi no Denwa.

One cannot assess the strengths or weaknesses of the Japanese family without looking first at the culture in which these families exist. Also, for me, making value judgements, hopefully objective, about these families while being an outsider, looking in so to speak, is no easy task. The objectivity I should like to maintain is colored by my own cultural orientation, which is WASPian in tradition and influence. The danger for me is not to be overly critical but to be overly sympathetic by way of compensation. My attempt to assess the Japanese family is not only frustrated by this fact but also by the magnitude of the problem facing me, namely, where do I take hold of the problem? For example, which is the normative family group? Is it rural/fishing or urban/corporate-industrial related? How, in the brief time allotted, do I incorporate the many facets of family life found in both the rural and urban situation and deal effectively with the professional, business, salaryman and other occupations' differences?

The solution, when one has bitten off more than one can ingest, is to select one satisfying morsel and do something with it. In this case, the solution was provided by the announcement in a recent government white paper in which the Japanese by an overwhelming majority, over 80%, indicated that they thought of themselves as being middle class. The most representative type family in this category is the middle class salaryman. Consequently, much of what I shall report will be related to this type of family life. There is fairly good material dealing with the subject and it is this class about whom I feel I know the most, through reading and personal experience. I'm aware, too, that many of the things I shall mention are common understanding for many of you here and that some of the things I say will conjure up opposite opinions, and you will have adequate illustrations to prove them. So on with the fun.

First let us look at several concepts that are particularly Japanese in laying a foundation for understanding what goes on in their families. In Nakane's Japanese Society¹ we learn of the significance of the "ie" and her explanation of the importance of the group is a basic concept. Nakane feels that while the traditional "ie" is dying away that its core continues in Japanese group life, adapting to the rapid post World War II and current changes in Japan. The "ie" is a social group constructed on the basis of an established form of residence and often of management organization. The human relationships within this household group are more important than all other human relationships. The principles of Japanese social structure can be seen clearly in the household structure. This structure can be seen in the "kokka" (national family) concept with the Imperial family headed by the Emperor and in the corporations of Japan which are patterned after the "ie."

This concept persists in the various group identities which use the term "uchi" which Nakane feels is a colloquial form of "ie." For example, "uchi no kaisha, uchi no kurabu" gtc. For example the J.N.R. can be thought of as a modern "ie" (kokutetsu-ikka).² When a company is conceived of as an "ie", all its employees are members of the household. ". . . this 'family' envelops the employee's personal family and engages him totally . . . the employee's family (himself, wife, children) is a unit which can no longer be conceived of as an "ie" but simply a family."³

In this situation, individual autonomy is minimized. Some feel this is an encroachment on their dignity as individuals, but the majority feel safe in this total group security. Every problem of the individual is handled and solved in this framework: marriage, housing, and even funerals. Each group (company)

has its own rules which are totally binding on the family members and are acceded to.

How is individuality understood in the Japanese context? Briefly, an explanation by Professor Keishin Hamaguchi of Osaka University in the book Nihonjin No Kozo⁴ may be helpful. He coins a term “kanjin” which he feels is the basis for understanding Japanese individuality. The word for person is written “ningen” but he reverses the order to make it read () ”kanjin” and explains that the meaning of the Chinese characters is: “hito to hito tonon aida no wal”, i.e. the person is one in harmony with others. The individual is one who exemplifies the qualities of mutual reliance and mutual dependence, while western individualism is thought of as self or ego-centeredness. He contrasts them as follows:⁵

<u>Japanese</u>	<u>Western</u>
mutual reliance.....	ego-centeredness
mutual dependence (interdependence).....	self-reliance
interpersonal relationship in itself.....	interpersonal relationships as means

Edwin Reischauer notes that for the Japanese the word individualism (kojinshugi) is still ambivalent⁶ and notes that in the late ‘60s and during the ‘70s, the younger generation used the word “shutaisei”, which can be translated subjectivity or autonomy. This is to indicate that they are active subjects rather than passive objects.

Nakane sums it up thusly:

“A man becomes secure through tightly knit communal activities . . . within his group he is secure, but his security is maintained at the expense of his individual autonomy.”⁷

How is the Japanese person able to do this in an age of change that seems to flout the virtue of individualism? This is most easily understood through the concept of “amae.” Doi’s work The Anatomy of Dependence⁸, in defining and illustrating “amae” not only aids us in understanding Japanese family psychology but also gives insights into using this concept theologically.⁹

We from the West are prone to think of “amae” as over-dependence that curtails the healthy development that leads to adult maturity, and if one is led to make this oversimplification it will be difficult to understand the Japanese as a person and in his/her family context. The thesis that is being presented here is that the package, the “ie”, the “kanjinshugi” and the concept of “amae” go together like a “sandanjubako” used at New Year’s and other times. According to Doi, the psychological prototype of “amae” is . . . the relationship of the infant to the mother.

“With the realization that he is a separate existence from the mother, it is the craving for close contact with the indispensable mother that constitutes ‘amae.’ ‘Amae’ is simply an attempt to deny the fact of separation from the mother.”¹⁰

“Amae” works to foster a sense of oneness between the mother and child and, where it is predominant, the conflicts and anxiety associated with separation are very real.

If one accepts the thesis noted above, then “amae” can be considered a strength in the Japanese family system. I have found no mother to whom I have talked about this denying this fact. What I will now recount is hardly new to anyone here, but I’d like to show how this works in the Japanese family, especially through that tower of strength, the mother. This is done by adapting sections of Vogel’s Japan’s New Middle Class¹¹ and updating it with the aid of my own rose-colored glasses and observations and interviews with Japanese mothers.

The primary strength in the Japanese family is found in the mother, the conscientious, hard-working woman who is forward-looking, forever reading books and studying articles in magazines and newspapers to enhance her mothering knowledge. 19

The earliest relation between mother and child is both physically and psychologically very close. The typical middle-class salaryman’s wife is often isolated from relatives and the extended mother-child

relationship is often more intense than the traditional one might be. The father is absent for long hours, often for long periods, her opportunity for seeing friends is limited and so she turns her entire energy towards the child and the home relying on the child for companionship as the children rely on her for care. Weaning takes place between 12 months (urban) and 34 months (rural) and often begins when a second child is born. Mothers feel it unnecessary and even cruel to deprive the child of close physical contact and bathing together through middle-school age is not uncommon. The phrase, “hadaka de hanasu” (speaking frankly, i.e. nakedly) may come from this close association. Recently, a caller to Inochi No Denwa asked if we thought he should bathe with his daughter, a 2nd year middle-school student. Carrying the child on the back usually stops when the child is two or three or when a new baby is born, but it continues the closeness felt by the child. Inside the house, the child is usually within the view of the mother who seldom lets the child out of sight for fear he may fall off the porch or down the stairs in a “danchi” housing area.

It is assumed that the child will want to be close to his mother and be afraid if left alone. The mother deals with her child’s fears by being close by. The attitude projected onto the child that the outside is dangerous and that one must be careful of strangers, is communicated at an early age. All three-year-olds know about “obake” and “yurei” and if an older sibling teases a small child saying “obake”, causing the little one to be frightened, the mother will cuddle and promise to protect him. Our children early learned not to go to the toilet alone because their friends in the neighborhood warned them of ghosts who live under the toilet. The child will often be anxious about the mother leaving and this is used as a weapon for control. Mothers often use threats, such as “they will laugh at you, or at the family” or that the child will get sick, or that mother will leave home or send the child away.¹² The most common punishment is putting the child in another room, or outside, and who of us has not seen a child running after a mother screeching at the top of his lungs because mother is “leaving him.”

Small children are permitted to run, yell, stay up late, eat great amounts of sweets, hit, climb upon, distract their mothers with almost no limits. Yet, somehow, the mothers train their children to become properly behaved children and adults. One explanation is that she teaches only when the child is in a cooperative mood. Her aim is to establish such a close relationship that the child will automatically go along with her wishes. She concentrates on the relationship, getting the child to understand (*wakaraseru*) and is less concerned in getting the child to behave. She tries to avoid making the child do anything against his will which in effect limits the child’s opportunity to develop a will of his own. She seldom refuses a small child’s request, but will say “later” or “no.” So devoted is the mother that the occidental would think the child is pampered, but to the Japanese mother, this devotion is natural and necessary.

Mothers who do not have the relationship with their child that leads to willing compliance are often frantic and develop neurotic behavior that compounds the poor relationship. Dr. H. Inamura in *Katei Nai Boryoku*¹³ states that the mother’s attitude toward the child is a contributing factor in the homes where children have used violence against parents. In a survey of 70 such cases (20 girls, 50 boys, all teenagers), the mothers tended to have a combination of the following traits: over-sensitivity, overly anxious, unduly fastidious and/or perfectionistic. In their child training they had been overly meddlesome, overprotective and uniformly had too high expectations for their children.

Another area of conflict may arise if the mother-in-law is in the home and competition for control of the child develops. A report by the National Mental Health Institute states that in cases of uncontrolled pampered children that when the mother and grandmother undercut the child’s close relationship with either, the development of the close relationship with the child that leads to automatic compliance is frustrated. From the earliest days the “amae” thread is woven into the fabric of the child’s life and this dependency is later transferred to the school and the work group into which the person enters.

Since education is of great importance and the gateway to the upward mobile life, the mother must get the child to do an enormous amount of work in preparing for exams. During the child's primary school years, and depending upon her own education, even through junior high school, she is like an assistant teacher, and during the summer months she is the regular teacher. The problem intensifies both when the child reaches the 3rd year in junior and senior high school. The mother's problem is to get the child to cooperate in doing his work without having the authority, other than what comes from an almost always absent husband, to enforce it. Some mother-child relationships crack under the strain. Yet the majority succeed. One of the means by which they obtain the cooperation of the child is to remind him of the importance of the entrance examination. So all-pervasive is the talk, both at home and school, of the impending event that she rarely needs to use techniques to motivate her child. However, she may try to increase the motivation by comparing the status distance between their family and a higher status family in order to indicate the advantages of getting ahead. This creates an uneasiness in the child and encourages the child to respond to mother's direction. Actually, she need not force the child to study hard because he understands (*wakaru*), and wants to cooperate with his mother. The danger lies if the mother misreads her child and her aspirations and over expectations develop neurotic anxieties that lead to a breakdown in the compliance syndrome.

As you know, no single event determines the course of a young man's life in Japan as much as entrance examinations and nothing requires as many years of planning and hard work. The Japanese youth is conditioned to endure these tortures and knows, if successful, that he will be able to join a large firm where he will enjoy an extended "*amae*" relationship for life. One mother to whom I recently spoke told me that her son who graduates in the spring from W.U. has had offers from over 20 corporations calling at all hours and using various ploys to land a "highly desirable candidate" (quotation marks mine), namely her son.

The influence of the adult in steering the child down the educational pathway is related to a period when economic security was lacking. Parents of contemporary students came through a disastrous war that created much upheaval and insecurity. For them, a position in a large company comes as close as one can come to the security that rural relatives have had by belonging to a household attached to land and a local community. There are many opportunities for talented young persons today, but most young men are unwilling to take the risk of less security by joining a lesser known company even though wage incentives might be higher.

You are well aware of the pattern of exams, from kindergarten on through every school level that makes greater ones chances of getting into "*Todai*" or other elitist universities. But the role of the family, especially of the mother, is important. The student begins to prepare a year or more before the actual time of the exam and gives up movies, hobbies, and other recreation in order to devote full time to study. What church has not had dropouts of junior high and senior high students entering the third year class? During this year the mother spends much time investigating schools, their fees, entrance requirements and most of all, the school's record in placing graduates. She reads advice columns, visits the child's teachers and tries to accurately assess her child's abilities. At examination time, the child may take as many as 3 or 4 entrance examinations, but if the child does poorly on the first one, he may be so exhausted and discouraged that he will not do well on succeeding ones. So her assessment role is strategically important. The mother does the spade work, but the father and the child must approve of her choices. The usually absent father, who leaves the raising and education of the children to the mother, at this stage often takes an active supportive role.

Mothers accompany their children to all but the college examinations to give them moral support and often fathers take a day off and accompany their children. At the end of a series of two or three exams over a period of a week or ten days, the mother as well as the student are so exhausted that they have to

rest up for several days. When asked why they allow this type of pressure-packed situation to control them and their children many respond that it is because this country is so small and has such few opportunities. Implicit in this response is the feeling that one's opportunity is compressed into this one brief period of life and pragmatically they recognize that the best way to achieve is to enter a famous university.

The importance of the family and the school, like the life-time commitment a person (male) usually makes to a company, are manifestations of a striking characteristic pervading the Japanese social structure, namely the high degree of integration and solidarity within a given group. The interdependence and interrelatedness of these three, the family, the school and the company groups, make for a fabric of strength not enjoyed in most cultures.

Other than alluding to him occasionally, I have said little about the middle-class salaryman husband. How can we assess him in terms of strength and weaknesses in the family? First of all, his prior commitments to his own family, his attachment to his mother, and involvement with his company tends to make him the extra or weak link in the nuclear family. He acquires an education, then a job and then a wife, and, in time, a child or two. At home, he is the authority figure, the "shujin", but his contribution in the family is primarily his economic contribution. The more he is away the smoother things go. If he can lend a helping hand on his day off it is appreciated, but his presence is often more trouble than help. As long as he is loyal to the family, i.e. provides adequately for them economically, he may spend his time at his job, with his pals, with his girl friends, and have outside hobbies such as golf, mah-jong and pachinko, and as long as they don't make for economic problems at home, they are tolerated. When there is genuine affection and love between the couple, the arrival of the first child usually sends the male scurrying back to his major interests, job, pals, and extra-curricular activities. He expects to be catered to at home, expects the wife to run the home, raise the children and manage the home's economics, including his comfort. In the interests of harmony, and educated in the concept of "amae", the wife is able to "gaman suru" and concentrate on her responsibilities in the home.

One of the strengths of the Japanese family system is the use of the "nakodo" (go-between) in arranging marriages. It is difficult to obtain statistics on current trends in "miai" and "renai" marriages, nevertheless, the go-between is used in both cases. Often the husband selects a person in his company most likely to help him in his occupational future and the superior obliges, feeling more certain of the continued loyalty of the young man in the organization. After the marriage the couple will turn to the go-between if marriage problems develop. Two features of the go-between system need to be mentioned. First, the go-between operates through personal connections with both parties and helps to maximize the considerations in the decision making process. Through him, all necessary qualifications are considered frankly without damaging the relationship of the two parties. Secondly, the go-between is a functional director in the dating process especially in the case of the "miai" type. Japanese society is still very tightly structured, and personal relationships being paramount, makes for the necessity of the go-between to transcend relationship barriers. It is interesting that this system has not had trouble adapting to the fact that young people have been dating and have a say in the decision. In modern Japan the go-between has adjusted to the increasing power of the children involved but makes sure that the parents' wishes are heard and considered by the couple. Thus he serves an important integrative function for the family. This action is a decided strength in the family.

Now, at random, let me comment on some obvious weaknesses and strengths in a general way. Depending on one's point of view, taking care of the elderly can be considered a strength of the Japanese family or a bothersome necessity. Only ten years ago Japan had one of the youngest populations in the developed nations of the world, but by the year 2000, they will have one of the oldest. Life expectancy, according to the World Health Organization, is longer in Japan than other reporting nations. By 1990, 15% of the population is expected to be over 65 years of age. Even though many

corporations and government retirement ages are being raised from 55 to 59 or 60, many Japanese have to live 10 to 20 years beyond retirement with precious little economic security.¹⁴

The Prime Minister's Office has reported that 74.2% of persons over age 60 lived with their children in 1973,¹⁵ but of these the percentage in the large metropolitan areas was only 67.7%, indicating changes in the urban scene. However, Daisaki Maeda reports that the younger generations still hold a sense of strong filial duty to satisfy the parental expectations to live together or very close to each other.

“It might not be too much to say that Japanese older persons are not only allowed but are also expected to be dependent on their adult children . . . a very popular proverb runs, ‘When old, obey your children.’”¹⁶

A weakness in the family is to be seen in taking care of the needs of widows and women divorcees. Until recently, discriminating inheritance laws made it difficult for widows to survive, especially if they have no or non-filial sons. Women divorcees, who are on the increase, (132,000 divorces in 1978—over 53% by women)¹⁷ often have economic problems, have difficulty in returning to their own families, (especially if they have entered a “renai” marriage without parental permission), and if their parents are deceased, often have no means of financial support. Many call Inochi No Denwa, including those contemplating divorce, and the latter seem to make the decision to continue in an unhappy situation by deciding to “gaman suru.”

Another weakness in the Japanese family is the problem of not using the talents of middle-aged and “empty nest” mothers. While in rural areas and small businesses this is not a problem, it is one for wives of urban salarymen. The system has very few openings in the work force for women in this age bracket and a veritable mine of talent lies unexploited. The Inochi No Denwa organization is one type of service agency that benefits from this source of volunteer service and has over 300 trained women counselors in its ministry.

The solidarity of the traditional Japanese family is expressed in its religious observances. It is one reason why the Christian religion has made minimal headway in Japan. Tolerance of Christianity, especially in the non-urban areas, is extended as long as it doesn't enter the threshold through one of the family members. It is not just a problem of ancestor veneration but also a problem of a 19th century mindset towards the Christian religion that sees the Christian as one who is a non-conformist, who is rigid, abstains from tobacco and alcoholic beverages, and who can't relate to persons in the natural and traditional way of Japanese. A rural father who welcomes home a son from a college education in the city and learns that the heir has become or contemplates becoming a Christian fears that the son will not be able to “otsukiai” in business or relate to the other members of the family or community.

Perhaps we need to remember that Jesus was marked in his day as a wine bibber and glutton who related easily with publicans and sinners. Because the Japanese family can be adaptable, maybe we need to prepare seekers of the Christian Way to go back into their families and their communities with a redeemed “amae” and “kanjinshugi” instead of trying to lead them to come out from the integral elements of Japanese life. There is the matter of the conflict between a supreme sovereign Lord and the family life elements of the individual Japanese. Another way of looking at this is not to view becoming a Christian and being a family-corporate- group person as a conflict of loyalties but to see the Christian as one enveloped fully in the “amae” of the Father who enables the person to enter fully and lovingly into all human relationships, family and otherwise.

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Critique of “The Japanese Family—Its Strengths and Weaknesses.”

Philip Kinley

Anderson Graduate School of Theology 1955

We are indebted to Wally for his very helpful paper on the Japanese family. His many years of experience in Japan as a missionary and his research in this field have given him a great deal of insight concerning the nature of the Japanese family. To understand the family of Japan he has chosen three different factors and stacked them very neatly for us in his “sandanjubako.” These are (1) the importance of the group, or “ie”; (2) being in harmony with others, or “kanjinshugi” and (3) dependence, or “amae.”

He has given us ample illustrations of how these factors influence various areas of family relationships. When one looks through Wally’s “rosy” glasses, there is justification for the conclusions he presents. However, I wonder if perhaps the picture isn’t a bit idealistic. While he does mention some problems, such as the aged, single women, and using the talents of middle-aged mothers; it is no secret that the traditional pattern is changing. What about forces and influences outside the family? He does mention the examination system, but how much of the child’s training is dependent on other forces outside the home — TV, peer group pressure and others. Especially with the rising juvenile delinquency rate, with problems of shoplifting, smoking, drinking and gangs, do not these pressures undermine the structure of the home?

Relating to the Japanese family, I mention the following questions for consideration:

1. To what extent do schools enforce traditional values of the home?
2. What influence will the relatively late arrival of the nuclear family unit have on the traditional family structure?
3. The father has a rather ambiguous relationship to the family. What influence will this have on the family in future generations?
4. In the interest of “wall and “amae”, the wife is expected to “gaman suru” (put up with the situation). Is this a reasonable expectation for the future? Some of my young friends insist they do not intend to “gaman.”

Perhaps Wally’s final paragraph relates to us most closely, although it can be argued that evangelism of the family does not directly relate to the assigned theme. His appeal is for a redeemed “amae”, and “kanjinshugi” which can relate to the family in a more flexible way enabling the Christian to enter fully and lovingly into all human relationships. I think this is an idea which has many possibilities and should be explored further by the group.

Rather than having a critical view of his paper, I can identify positively with Wally’s views and am very grateful for his presentation.

A JAPANESE PERSPECTIVE

Akira Horiuchi, pastor of Yao Jiyu Kyokai, Osaka. Graduate from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (English & American Literature)

The following is a translation of the Japanese outline prepared by Akira Horiuchi, senior pastor of the Yao Free Church in Osaka. He also served as the national president of the Japan 1980 Billy Graham International Crusade.

Pastor Horiuchi became a Christian while a student at the Tokyo University of Foreign Languages. In 1951 he felt God's call to the ministry and lived then for a while with Ken Clark who disciplined him. From then until 1965 he worked with Ken Clark in starting and promoting the HiBA movement in Japan.

In 1965 our speaker became pastor of the Yao Free Church. This church now has five pastors with some 800 people worshipping each Sunday morning in five different locations. Yao Church maintains very strict entrance requirements. Pastor Horiuchi told me that it is sometimes said that it is easier to enter the Kingdom of God than to become a member of Yao Free Church. Yet in spite of this—or because of this—it is one of the fastest growing churches in Japan and may have the largest yearly offering of any Christian church in this country. This church is featured in the eighth chapter of LaVerne Snyder's new book, It's Happening in Japan Today.

I was asked to speak about family evangelism in Yao Free Church, so let me share with you what the Lord is doing in neighborhood evangelism as conducted by Yao Free Church.

I. Let me state my convictions as pastor:

1. God desires for all people to hear the Gospel and to be saved.
2. God uses all Christians in the work of evangelism.
3. God leads people to salvation by various means.
4. People from homes where there are outstanding Christians or where there is influence from the Christian faith or people from homes where there is good discipline are easily led to the Christian faith.
5. As kind calls forth kind, if Christian families engage in evangelism, families will be led to salvation. Family evangelism depends upon Christian homes.

II. Personal Thoughts:

1. The history of Japanese Protestantism already extends back more than 130 years. During this time many Christians have been born. Today a considerable number of their children are active in the worlds of business, politics, education, culture, and in various other fields. The fact that these people have not carried on the faith of their parents is, I think, one cause of the weakness of the church in Japan.

2. One of the strange characteristics of Japanese society must not be overlooked when we consider the communication of the proclamation of the gospel in Japanese society. If we ask how volition is communicated in a Japanese family, the answer is found in that who said it is considered very important. If father said it, or if mother said it, it has decisive meaning. For example, if mother is thought to be a gentle person who is always caring for her family, people will listen to what she says. But conversely, if mother in her behavior and speech becomes hysterical and is always griping and saying worthless things and things that cannot be respected, her children will not listen to what she says. This is a common occurrence within the Japanese family—and within society where people know one another well. Furthermore, in the extremely restricted society which Japan is, there are many aspects of the family which are made large in society as a whole. "Who said it?" comes to have more

communicative power than “How was it said?”

American society may be moved by eloquence, but Japanese people are not. Japan is a society which is moved because of what is said by people who are generally well known. It is a society where people are moved because of the establishment of trust in human relationships or because a person is admired. A person’s usual character plays an important part in the communication process.

From this we can say that the daily life of the Christian plays an exceedingly important role. A good Christian who always has a good relationship with the family at home is one who makes a huge contribution to the salvation of the family. Conversely, evangelism does not make progress where there are poor family relationships.

The church must help each member to be sure of his or her faith and must thoroughly discipline and lead members to an assurance of the faith. This is the foundation of the church which fulfills its evangelistic task.

The above are my thoughts concerning evangelism.

III. The Program of the Yao Free Church

We make it clear that the purpose of all our programs is

1. to lead people to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and
2. to lead people to increase their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and to grow into outstanding Christians. This is so we may ultimately respond to our God-given task.

(At this point a list of 16 different types of activities was given.)

Of special note is that we do not have any Sunday night meetings, and we encourage Christians to spend time with their families then. Also, we are careful to plan programs in which families can participate as families. We must not forget that each Christian is evangelism’s point of contact with families, friends, and society.

IV. Examples

Critique of “The Japanese Perspective”

Leroy Seat

The inclusion of Japanese speakers in recent years has, in my opinion, greatly enhanced the Hayama Seminar. We missionaries need, I believe, to speak less and listen much more to our Japanese brothers and sisters. This year we have indeed been fortunate to have Pastor Horiuchi speak to us, and I am sorry his remarks in their entirety could not be included in this booklet.

In Pastor Horiuchi’s presentation we were reminded of the basics and made to see their truth and relevance through concrete examples. This should cause us all to re-evaluate our own church’s efforts in family evangelism and to renew our resolve to be more active in our efforts to lead families to Christ. We are grateful to Pastor Horiuchi for this.

I was disappointed, however, that Pastor Horiuchi did not deal more specifically with problems that are uniquely Japanese—or at least with problems appearing in Japanese society which are not present in the West. He indicated that in Japan the stress upon “who said it?” is “a strange characteristic of Japanese society.” I thought this was going to lead to a discussion of the problem of the over/under relationships which are so prevalent in Japan and to discussion of the remains of the Confucian emphasis on filial piety which are still here. But he moved quickly to the emphasis on the character of the mother which determines whether her children listen to her or not—which is much the same as in Western society. I would like to have had some suggestions on how to combat the hierarchical structure in Japanese society. Also, I wonder how we can move from an emphasis on “who” or “how” to an emphasis on “what” as we seek to communicate the Gospel. Should not reason (along with will and emotion) discerning truth be emphasized—in Japan as well as in the West?

Also I would like to have had some discussion of how the problem of the Buddhist home altar is dealt with and what provision is made for remembering the dead. It has been my experience that the solidarity of families with the past is one of the main factors hindering Japanese persons from becoming Christians. This respect for one’s ancestors and the responsibility of the children, especially the oldest son, to take care of the home altar and to keep up the memory of the ancestors is a problem for evangelism which we do not face in the West.

I would also like to have had more suggestions concerning reaching men with the Gospel message. Only one activity out of the sixteen listed is specifically directed toward men. In most churches I know, there are far more women and young people who are members than men. How can men who are husbands and fathers be reached? Unless men are won and discipled, family evangelism remains limited and incomplete.

In spite of these unanswered questions and areas not treated as completely as I would have liked, I do want to take this means to express appreciation to Pastor Horiuchi for being so open in sharing with us and for inspiring us by telling us about the family evangelism of Yao Free Church.

REACHING NON-CHRISTIAN FAMILIES (Your Story and My Story)

George L. Olson, Master of Divinity, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.
Director Lutheran Office of Communication, Tokyo; Associate pastor Yukigaya Lutheran Church.

Along the Nogawa River where I jog every morning lies a bluff. Running on the road at the base of the bluff, there are little garden plots to my left and the slope on the right. For at least two thousand years people have lived along this stream which, archaeologists say, once was the main channel for the Tamagawa River. Generation after generation have tilled this shore. From these hills they have cut bamboo and dug out clay to build houses. Fruit and nut trees like these I now see have clothed these slopes for centuries.

Morning upon morning Japanese have awakened and looked out to the West to see if Mt. Fuji is visible. What history remains hidden beneath this soil? Stories of birth, childhood, toil, marriage, war, death, hope? Records of devotion: phallic symbols, gods and goddesses, family altars, ashes of the dead. Upon these layers of history, these people I now see are adding their stratum to the history.

It's over this road that this strange foreigner runs. I wave at a farmer pulling up daikon (huge white radishes). Behind me there are footsteps. Over my shoulder I see a middle-school boy keeping pace with me. Strange—that has never happened before. Why should a young man want to follow me? Why should anyone want to? With so rich a story behind him, why should any Japanese be interested in my—so foreign a story?

A FRESH LOOK AT FAMILIES.

Times are changing. In 1979 when the church asked me to help at the Yukigaya Lutheran Church, I accepted with the hope that through what we were learning through research and the use of media could help the local congregation. Also I believed it would be a concrete way to introduce congregational needs and experiences to the media work.

One of my first surprises came through the Haha no Kai (Mother's Group) of the Kindergarten. The kindergarten mothers I remembered were the ones 25 years ago in Saijo down in Hiroshima Prefecture. These Yukigaya mothers seemed like a new breed. Even if we allow for some extremes in urban Tokyo, because of national mass trends what's true in Tokyo likely will be pretty much true elsewhere. These are the mothers of the so-called "new families" begun by couples born after World War II.

Research shows them to have distinguishable, unique traits which mark them off from families of past generations. They are seen to have these characteristics:

1. Attitudes toward life
 - a. High interest in fashions
 - b. Rational
 - c. Use credit
 - d. Buy immediately what desired
 - e. Concerned more about what is needed than brand names
2. Characteristics of action
 - a. Enjoy going out together
 - b. Enjoy leisure close at hand
 - c. Treat relations with friends as important
 - d. Like parties in which families can participate
 - e. Have a wide variety of hobbies
3. Family consciousness

- a. Put family life first
- b. Husband and wife share in decision making
- c. Equality of husband and wife
- d. Husband and wife are friends
- e. Husband assists wife with her work¹

When Japanese tell their story to you, how many of these characteristics fit? How do they fit your own story?

Tokyo Broadcasting System's research indicates the life elements that likely will increase and decrease during the 1980's. By a careful studying of this chart, churches can begin to build programs which can better match the trends and increasingly meet the needs of these new families. (See chart on separate page)

However, as with all surveys, one must reserve some skepticism. There is plenty of research which is little more than wish fulfillment or public relations, but much of it can be helpful. At least it can be the basis for doing some market research of one's own. Therefore, before one runs off to plan a program on the basis of this research data, discuss the findings with some local people or run your own local survey on similar questions.

By this localizing of the data, one can search out the needs of the community. One can even interview local social welfare, education, health, and law enforcement personnel, etc. to get their input. When done with tact and maybe some appropriate introductions, most people will be willing to cooperate. The Institute of Cultural Affairs (address: 21-7 Honcho 2-chome, Nakano-ku, Tokyo 164, Tel: 03-375-2404) has pioneered with the town meeting format which has proved especially effective in smaller communities. Their staff is willing to help organize these community meetings. By enabling persons to identify their own and the community's needs, the Christian leader can work with people to develop a future orientation.

Once people become future oriented, can we not predict that at least for some of them this will imply the beginning of theological thought? Without naming the Name when people are faced with data and the future, the Spirit of Christ who is the ground of ultimate reality is at work in them. That sounds like one of Paul Tillich's incomprehensibles. What am I getting at?

For example, the JNN Data Bank has found that young wives can be broken down into four clusters, each with certain distinguishable characteristics:

1. Shopping and fashion type with an unmarried or unfettered spirit. Have a strong interest in shopping and fashion. They love women's weekly magazines and modern rock music. They're mostly from downtown, largely lower middle class families. (26.4%)
2. Anti-new family or traditional type is characterized by the wife who takes the familiar three meals a day and an afternoon nap, living in an ordinary wooden frame apartment, enjoying both TV and instant noodles, and filled with a strong desire to protect her home. (30%)
3. High life type who seems rational and speaks in a high brow polite way. She shows an interest in modern fashions. On the one hand her interests and activities are broad, but she can't shed her traditional values and she prefers quality goods. (27%)
4. Low class type who are more realistic than type 1. They want their own home; therefore, their life focuses on saving money for that, but they also have taken to the new fashions of the 1970's. (16.6%)

Each of these types will reveal certain differences in what they're interested in, their clothing, food and homes, leisure activities, shopping and attitudes toward life.

Having fellowship around such survey data, one can pray over the data while keeping known mothers in mind. It is there before the data that the Spirit will reveal connections and possible plans for action.

In June, 1979, a survey was published by Shiseido, about Tokyo and Osaka middle school students' attitudes toward their fathers. More than fathers who are respected or revered, the students wanted dads who could be the object of love and affection. In order of concern they listed father's

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. health (33%) | 5. sport and play (14%) |
| 2. work (32%) | 6. appearance of clothes (12%) |
| 3. reputation (22%) | 7. friends (7%) |
| 4. outside activities (16%) | 8. books (7%) |

Characteristics they liked and disliked were:

Liked:

1. Zealous about work (46)
2. Interesting (25)
3. Tries hard (22)
4. Knows a lot (19)
5. Skillful (19)

Disliked:

1. Angry face (45)
2. Fearful (24)
3. Doesn't play with me (16)
4. Arguments with mother (12)
5. Doesn't finish things well (12)

A sizeable majority want their fathers to be all around performers, devoted both to their work and homes.

This desire from the side of children can be a very significant motivation in the fathers' lives. As you know many men are wrapped up in their work not just during work hours, but also afterward in tsukiai activities.

Tsukiai are those obligatory personal relationships which are the oil which runs Japanese industry. In 1979 Japanese businessmen spent ¥13,800,000,000 on expense account entertainment. Not all tsukiai is covered by these expense accounts, but certainly the necessity for tsukiai activities has been a major factor in promoting expense accounts.

In a study of tsukiai among white collar employees Reiko Atsumi discovered that tsukiai is no substitute for personal friendships: it is a very pragmatic necessity in order to succeed.² If a man avoided tsukiai, as some in the church might advocate, "he would be greatly handicapped in his job. It is unlikely that he could cultivate and establish empathetic relationships with his workmates during office hours. His relationships with these people would most likely remain businesslike and superficial. In addition he would be cut off from important sources of background information . . . A deficiency in tsukiai would clearly be harmful, even fatal, to one's prospects for a 'successful' career as a company employee in a large Japanese firm . . ."

When the Church explicitly or implicitly tells its converts that since they have become Christians, they must give up tsukiai, they in effect are telling them not to succeed; the Church doesn't want leaders in top industry. Be content to be a leader in the yakuinkai at St. Andrews behind the noodle shop.

However, "it may not be quite so disadvantageous to employees with specialist positions, who at present constitute only a small minority in Japanese companies."

The reason for the exclusion of family members from one's work relations is self-evident. Wives of Japanese white-collar company employees are not included in their husbands' tsukiai activities because they are not a part of the organization and hence do not share a common goal for which tsukiai functions as a means.

One big reason for men's reluctance to change employment is that they would have to sacrifice all their carefully cultivated tsukiai relations. Without them they would be "miserably incompetent to do what is required and expected."

It is worth noting that in Japan work has always been primary. It's not just a new phenomenon since industrialization. Last November I heard Michio Nagai, former Minister of Education and now a Consulting Editor for the Asahi Newspaper, point out that the Japanese ie (household) is not held together primarily by

blood, but by work. Honke (main family) and bunke (related household(s)) “often are not blood related. The main thing is that people work together; thus companies become important and in Japan there are no high brow and low brow. Company presidents can converse with their chauffers.”

In what proportions these findings about wives, children and fathers are mixed together in each particular family will vary, but we need to listen closely to each family’s own story. 31

How does growth take place in the family? Within the family context how can faith in Christ be communicated? Here the lines between Christian and non-Christian homes will seem blurred. The reason is that there is so much confusion amongst Christians themselves over handing on the faith to the next generation that one must not assume too much difference. The principles I am going to suggest are, I believe, valid for both and need to be stressed for both with no apologies.

Recently Dr. Susumu Akahoshi, Head of the Psychiatric Department of the Ogawa Red Cross Hospital, said in a lecture that the most important ingredient for a new infant is complete trust in its mother. This trust begins in the womb and needs tender cultivation in the early years of life. He cited a World Health organization publication, Maternal Care and Mental Health by John Bowlby³ which tells of a number of studies which agree that the first three years of a child are very important. However, from six months after birth to the first birthday an be extremely damaging to a child’s psychic health if there is a deprivation of maternal love.

While the father’s supportive role for the mother is essential for both the other’s peace of mind and the child’s, we must not overlook that there is another person in the home who increasingly usurps the mother’s position. Toshitaka Kikuchi, NHK researcher, reported in June at the monthly meeting of the Forum for Children’s Television (FCT) that in a four months study in which infants were checked every fifteen minutes, it was discovered that one-half of those between 4 and 7 months old already were showing an interest in the TV picture tube. Both Japanese and Swedish studies agree that at 3 years of age over 50% have the viewing habit. For Japan the average viewing rate for 3 year olds is 3.13 hours per day and the rates for mothers even higher. The tragedy of this is that stations have not even begun to consider what is shown to the 0–3 year olds; yet that is their largest children’s audience.

What it means to have this consumption oriented electronic presence in the home is only beginning to be studied. But if the concerns of Dr. Jack Lyle of the East-West Center are correct, TV is a major cause of the increased mistrust of industry and the political system. At the very time when nothing is more important to a child’s psychic health than trust, an inanimate medium which potentially breeds mistrust is let in to baby-sit the kids. About half of the Japanese mothers are grateful for this cheap, built-in babysitter. This issue can be met in one of two ways: either throw the set out as Marie Winn recommends in The Plug-in Drug, or get parents to cope with TV viewing with their kids, using TV viewing as a process for learning and building up mutual trust.

By nature the infant years are primarily the mother’s responsibility, with the father as a strong supporter of mother and child. However, at about three years of age, according to Akahoshi, the father-child relationship becomes very important. The mother then needs to be able to transfer her trustful relations to the husband, the child’s father. Unfortunately what too often happens is that the mother selfishly clings on to her child—refusing to allow a natural, healthy relationship to develop with the father. Or on the other side, the father fails to see his own role of husband and father as necessary; thus, by default he condemns his child to mother’s domination. This may produce the “education mothers” (kyoiku mama) who continue to spoil the children, especially boys, so that the spiritual umbilical cord never is broken. On into college years and even marriage, the mother controls the child.

Where this relates to mission is crucial for us. “Let the children come to me and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” (Matthew 19:14) Here Jesus refers to that

basic trust an infant has toward its mother. I see this as a grave responsibility of the Church. As a mother lovingly breast feeding her child transmits trust; so I believe God in Christ transmits trust by the Holy Spirit in baptism. It is a wonderful gift of God to our households. Even when only one of the partners in marriage is a believer, St. Paul tells us in I Corinthians 7:14 that the child is holy.

Where we too often fail is in what comes afterward. Here I do not think we should apologize for a proper manly role. Our fathers in the faith spoke of the “God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” These patriarchs handed down their faith. We should teach that, too. Just as mothers should transfer trustful relations to their husband and father of their children; so they should transfer the responsibility of the faith to them. Husbands as the head of the new families should accept this trust in themselves and pass on to the children trust in Christ. This is done in the home, of course, but also in the church.

More and more our leaders in Japan are seeing that Holy Communion needs to be celebrated by families much earlier than previously practiced. Already in the mid-primary school days, our children need to feel God’s grace in the bread and the wine. They need this spiritual food with God’s Word to be able to face up to the inevitable temptations of adolescence and youth. To wait until middle or high school may be too late for many.

What is the story of the Christian families you know? What is your own story? As we deal with these issues it’s strategic to ask others to tell their story. Then you will have earned the right to tell your story.

Before I was born my mother dedicated me to God. When less than a month old, my parents gave me in baptism to Christ. Before I could chew my food, Grandma chewed it for me. At a very early age I heard stories of the past: stories of Swedish Kings and knights, fairy tales, Robinson Crusoe, but also stories of faith. My greatgrandfather had a great awakening one Christmas morning as he sobered up outside the Church in Vannersborg, Sweden, where he had been refused admission. His wife, my greatgrandmother, who had but the barest education, supposedly always thanked God that the Lord had made the Bible so easy to understand, etc., etc. “The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” has come down to me as my God, my Saviour.

But the topic is “Reaching Non-Christian Families” isn’t it? How do we reach out to them? My basic answer is, “We don’t.” Rather, we let them reach us. That is, we accept them not as outsiders, but because we belong to God, we accept them. Their concerns are our concerns.

THE CHURCH AS GO-BETWEEN

The Church, then, is a go-between “like a priest in preaching the Good News from God.” (Romans 15:16) As we all know, a priest takes the needs of men to God so that God’s sacrifice can atone for sin and be the basis for a new relationship which is announced in the Gospel. There is always a going and a coming between men and God.

One method for facilitating communication between communities and the Church would be the setting up of a community relations (CR) system. Each church member and sympathizer is asked to identify his or her organizational connections in society. By charting these connections, one can visualize potential channels of information. These people become contacts through whom messages are relayed and received. Thus a two-way flow can develop: the Church hearing the needs and the Church passing on good bits of news and encouragement.

This has tremendous implications for our church services. When the priesthood of all believers meets in worship, they should function on behalf of all society like representatives. Their prayers can touch specific needs. For instance, last Mother’s Day our Yukigaya Church was packed with young mothers. As part of the sermon, we passed out a questionnaire on Kitai Sareru Joseizo (Ideal Feminine Image). It took 6 or 7 minutes to fill in. We collected the questionnaires, and after reading some anonymous replies, placed all the papers on the altar. Then we prayed that God would honour their wishes, purify them, and

fulfill them in the best way for them and their families.

Besides the role of intercessor, the Church is a healer. In this connection ought we not be bolder in how we pronounce absolution? As persons who receive healing through the forgiveness of sin, we can be much clearer in relating the so-called spiritual healing to physical healing. Even with those who are terminal cases, we should not fear to pronounce the Gospel of forgiveness and pray for healing. Dr. Edwin Mahnke who has made cancer patients his primary ministry for counseling, said in Tokyo last year, "I've never had any family members express anger for my prayer of healing for their loved one even though he or she died."

In all cases the Gospel must be good news. It can be communicated in many ways. The report from the "Reaching Secularists" section at the World Evangelization Consultation in Pattaya, Thailand, June 1980, says "We are discovering that the point of contact is found in the meeting place between his felt need and the facet of our multi-faceted gospel which is God's good news for that human need."

THE CHURCH AS A FAMILY PROMOTING FAMILIES

Within the overall role as go-between between God and man, the Church should see herself as a family promoting families. Under the Old Testament dispensation the blood relations of Israel prevailed. But with the coming of Christ, not only were the temple sacrifices made obsolete, but a new family relationship was born: a new blood relationship based on Jesus' blood. Through the trust His Holy Spirit worked in us we were made members of a new family, the Church. We know this experientially in our congregations. There we are baptized into the head of the family, Christ. There we eat His body and drink His blood in the common family meal, Holy Communion. (cp. section on A New Christian Style in my presentation on "Witnessing Through the Japanese Family", pp. 106, 107 Hayama report for 1978)

This Church is for Japan, not against her. The ancestors in Japan also are not against Japan, but for her. They "pray" for the welfare of their descendents. With the wisdom that their post-death existence is believed to give them, may we not say that they wish their descendents to serve the world? Cannot we Christians identify with those same noble thoughts and preach a vision for the coming generation which will make parenthood really make sense? Like Israel, Japan is not called for her own sake, but for others. Families must exist to bless others as well as one's own.

On that framework can we help families set their goals? Within the church, her Sunday schools, youth and adult groups, and satellite organizations, can we emphasize an outgoing mission pleasing to the highest wishes of the ancestors and to Christ? This ennobling vision can give added purpose and beauty to pre-courtship, to courtship, to marriage, to the children.

My modified version of Kanzo Uchimura's tomb inscription would be: "Christ for Japan, Japan for Christ, and Japan for the world." This can be believed and taught.

1. Ken Sato, New Family Rosen ni yoru Shijozukuti" Gekkan Minpo, July 1977, p. 11.
2. Reiko Atsumi, "Tsukiai—Obligatory Personal Relationships of Japanese White-Collar Company Employees." Human Organization Vol. 38, 1979, pp.63–70.
3. John Bowlby, Nyuyoji no Seishin Eisei (Tokyo: Iwasaki Gakujutsu Shuppansha, 1979), pp. 1– 58

Increasing and Decreasing Things in 1980 's (TBS research information)

	Food	Tobacco	Fashion	Housing
+40%	natural fruits regular coffee			home ownership re-selling homes systems for re-selling homes
+30%	bread meat natural foods delicatessen quality		cotton and flax precious stones and jewels fur	
+20%	homemade foods eating one's native foods out eating Western foods out vegetable juice milk beer brandy Japanese whiskey health tea mineral water ice oream snack cookies eating Chinese food out craobetti	filter cigarettes	party dresses imitation leather sneakers jeans formal wear	bigger dwellings Western style reinforced concrete single homes with a garden
+10%	Chinese food at home pizza Western cookies dry <u>sake</u> white liquors shochu spirits Scotch whiskey lactic acid drinks black tea	pipe	wool foundation wear	second house suburban living inner city living
-10%	eating fish cola drinks cider drinks		neckties one-piece swimming suits	Japanese style homes
-20%	<u>sembei</u> crackers school meals candy caramel		Japanese dress (male)	
-30%	sweet <u>sake</u> Japanese candy eating rice			
-50%		non-filter cigarettes		

	Health and Medical Care	Leisure	Sports	Hobbies
+70%		5-day work week		

		overseas trips		
+60%	neurosis	domestic plane trips		
+50%	physical exams	women drivers overseas plane trips automobile drivers	tennis jogging sports clubs	gardening
+40%	institutions and organizations for the aged mental illness sexual incapacity	hotels free time fuel regulations		home carpentry growing vegetables <u>to</u> (Japanese checkers)
+30%	Chinese herb medicine special 24-hour service hospital associations doctors obesity acupuncture beauty foods	domestic trips non-group trips long vacations leisure expenditures regulations on exhaust gas week-end leisure trips alone	skiing fishing sports centers swimming high school baseball	horse racing remote control cars, boats, planes, chess
+20%	natural food advocacy yoga	use of bullet trains	professional baseball sandlot baseball soccer golf yachting mountain climbing driving American football	antiques cooking classes knitting, sewing dwarf-tree culture visiting historic spots mahjong
+10%	vegetarianism cancer health insurance <u>zazen</u> (meditation) plastic surgery physical therapy tranquilizers	home hostels deficit National railway lines traffic accidents hiking adventure leisure	rugby volleyball horseback riding skating surfing martial arts roller skating ice hockey rifle marksmanship	making models betting on boat races
-10%	doctors' associations		pro-wrestling	<u>osero</u> (game)
-20%		use of existing national rail lines	bowling kick boxing women's wrestling	<u>hanafuda</u> (Japanese card game)
	villages with no doctors	Japanese inns		

	Public Morals	Public Entertainment	Household and Family	Media
			pre-marital sex	
+50%	bribery		mothers poor at rearing children extra-marital relations cohabitation unmarried mothers	sportcast
+40%	adult education juvenile delinquency male foods homosexual and lesbian relations gambling	new music	social status of women use of birth control pills loners	town magazines specialized hobby magazines FM radio
+30%	women and children's shoplifting specialist school's popularity festivals alcoholism girls' prostitution children's suicides	independent productions musicals	movie nuclear families juvenile violence in the home caused by rejection	further segmentation of magazines <u>mini-komi</u> publications commercial television
+20%	purse snatching, etc. bank robberies drug addiction influence of aged college entrance competition percent of college entrants preparatory schools murder for insurance money white collar crimes: embezzlement,	popular music	free sex	TV animation other media being influenced by television area publications concentrated TV drama series

+10%	fraudulent marriages bizarre passion crimes pirate broadcasts kidnapping rape sadism, masochism swapping young culture snack bars venereal disease fake business trips middle-age power organized crime Japanese mafia	Japanese popular songs (<u>enka</u>)	younger marriages education “crazy” mothers	commercials specialized evening papers sports papers 3F mystery PR magazines city information magazines (<u>Pia</u> , <u>City Road</u>) Japanology boy and girl comic magazines morning broadcasts for housewives slapstick programs TV novels
-10%	hijacking backpacking left-wing groups long hair	circus revues		TV viewing time literary magazines true story magazines
-20%	hippies radical groups devout people Japanese restaurants	<u>shingeki</u> drama <u>bunraku</u> puppet drama		overall monthly magazines
-30%	geisha	<u>shimpa</u> drama	three-generation households	
-40%		<u>kouan</u> storytelling <u>?????????</u>		
-50%	Giant fans		birthrate families with 3 or more kids	

Critique of “Reaching Non-Christian Families”

Dale Bidwell

Family values are changing. Japanese families, especially the wives, have a more liberated outlook on life. In this presentation, Mr. Olson has not concretely told us how to reach the Japanese family for Christ—which was the assigned topic. Rather he has given us a fine paper on the make-up of the Japanese home and how to establish lines of communication with that home and its community. It is largely left up to us to interpret and apply this sociological data. You’re invited to share your interpretation and application in the discussion that will follow.

This paper is to be commended for its imaginative suggestions. For example, with regard to identifying community needs to which the church can minister, George suggests interviewing local social welfare, education, health and law enforcement personnel. Or consulting a community meeting for input. Or identifying our church member’s organizational connections in society to facilitate communication between church and community. These suggestions, if followed, would have another important effect in addition to identifying the perceived needs of the community. They would tell our communities that we are vitally interested in serving them. Such a message could only help us in the difficult task of penetrating the Japanese community.

George brings up the question of the Christian and tsukiai. He feels that we should not pressure the Japanese male to be less devoted to tsukiai. I would like to hear something concerning how tsukiai can be used positively for Christian witness. Is it unreasonable for me as a pastor to expect my parishioners to use their tsukiai friendships as bridges for Christian witness? Again, we invite you to address this question during the discussion.

Mr. Olson makes a much needed appeal for the Japanese Christian parent, particularly the father, “to pass on to the children trust in Christ.” Certainly this is a point that needs greater emphasis in our teaching to the Japanese church. Is this not a basic reason why the Japanese church has such a slow growth rate—the lack of a substantial “biological” growth? Whereas in America the parents sometimes go overboard in imposing their faith on their children, in Japan the contrary seems to be true. What can be done to counter this situation?

Finally, George reminds us that the “Church is for Japan, not against her.” I agree that the church must not give the impression that it desires to destroy all things “Japanese”—while at the same time avoiding syncretism with Buddhism. How big an obstacle is this in trying to reach non-Christian families? Are some rejecting Christianity because they perceive it to be anti-Japanese? Here is an area where I wish George would have spent more time, rather than giving so much time in the second half of the paper to the Christian family which was actually outside the thrust of the assigned topic. Keredomo . . . Mr. Olson does touch upon this subject in his 1978 Hayama presentation “Witnessing through the Japanese Family.”

The more I read this presentation the more I appreciate it. There is too much information to be absorbed in one hearing. It will be worth your time to re-study it when it comes out in printed form.

FOSTERING CHRISTIAN FAMILIES IN JAPAN

Charles Shenk, M. Div. Mennonite Goshen Biblical Seminary. Missionary with Japan Mennonite Missions. Arrived on field 1957.

This paper is not submitted as the polished lecture of an expert by any means. We have not read all the books or attended all the seminars, nor has our experience been so extensive. This is rather a progress report on the study we have done and on some of the efforts we have made in the Hokkaido church to foster Christian families. The fact that we continue to make these efforts is not based on a lot of measurable success, but simply because the need is there and the conviction to work at it doesn't go away.

I. The Problem Before Us (Why work in this area at all?)

If the family, as generally recognized, is the basic sociological unit in human society, then the fundamental importance of healthy family units as the building blocks of a stable society is self-evident. And as members of the body of Christ, committed to the extension of that body within our social framework, the promotion of the family according to the biblical ideal must be one of our essential concerns.

The home is the place, ideally, where basic human needs such as security, love, acceptance, discipline and affirmation are met. It is a place where spiritual guidance is given on the meaning and purpose of life, where equality and mutuality in human relationships give birth to a wholesome sense of self-worth and freedom to develop one's potential, all of which leads to a responsible, useful and satisfying pattern of life.

However, through the news media and by personal experience, we see that the home in our society and the relationships therein are often in deep trouble, for the lack of these basic requisites for a healthy family situation.

Through our years of mission work in Japan, giving witness to Christian marriage and family life has taken on increasingly high priority for us. Here is one point, perhaps the most obvious one we've found, where the way of Christ quickly stirs interest and serious response. (Someone said that if you want to arouse an awareness of sin, talk to men about the marriage relationship!) But we have also observed that simply becoming a Christian, or even a church leader, does not mean that Christian family patterns and atmosphere automatically appear.

So our sense of mission has been honed from both sides—from the church, a call to teach and model Christian family and from society, spoken and unspoken requests for help.

The main areas of need as we see them, are three: (1) women's position of disadvantage; (2) lack of mutuality and true companionship in marriage; (3) lack of confidence in child discipline. And the most basic problem may well be number one.

The new Japanese Constitution of November, 1946 gives equality to women (Article 14), and mutual consent of the individuals, cooperation and equal rights, to marriage (Article 24). But the legal means for change is not all that is needed to effect change. While the ideal of a union between a man and a woman based on love and mutuality is in wide circulation, the actualizing of it is slow in coming. “. . . modern women of Japan have not yet attained to a status that even approaches that held by men.”² In their study of the traditional ie published in Village Japan, Beardsley, Hall and Ward say that there is an obvious hierarchy in the structure of ie, and an order of obligation and privilege. Each person is measurably above or below the other. There are no equals. Three principles govern this hierarchy:

1. males are superior to females
2. elders are superior to juniors

3. those born in the household superior to those born elsewhere³

But there are specific traditional influences behind this pattern of male dominance. One is the ancient concept of biology which says that just as a man plants seed in the ground and later there is a harvest, so he plants his seed in a woman and the seed and the offspring are his. The woman is merely the “soil.” His problem was that he knew nothing of the existence of both sperm and ovum.⁴ Other influences are Confucianism which taught that woman was basically inferior to man and Buddhism which has said that she was “the personification of all evil.”⁵

There is scant reason, however, for us as the Christian community to gloat over our record in regard to this issue. What we have brought to Japan has included the influence of pronouncements made by great leaders in the church’s history. For example: “Men have broad and large chests, and small narrow hips, and more understanding than women, who have but small and narrow chests, and broad hips, to the end they should remain at home, sit still, keep house, and bear and bring up children.” (Luther) And another one: “If I am asked for what purpose it behooved man to be given this help (woman), no other occurs to me as likely than the procreation of children . . . I do not see in what way it could be said that woman was made for a help for man, if the work of childbearing be excluded.” (Augustine)⁶ And lest I be accused of partiality, here is one from our venerable church father, Menno Simons, “. . . the man a sower and the woman as a receptive field, prepared by God unto procreation.”⁷

At any rate, though woman’s position in this society is improving, it is still obvious that there is considerable unhappiness among them, even though it is often borne mildly and stoically. A recent study published by Doctor Narabayashi in his new book Gendai no Katei Ron compares the marital happiness of husband and wife in Japan and in America.⁸ Whatever significance there might be in comparing two cultures, I am here more concerned by the comparison, or rather contrast, between the Japanese husband and wife happiness lines. One look at this graph would give the young Japanese woman considerable pause about marrying unless there would be some promise of change in the pattern.

We have no doubt that God’s way for man and woman and family provides the ultimate solution to this problem, whatever culture we are talking about. Our task is to try to communicate this “way” through humble, understanding, forgiving, loving and as far as possible, articulate human instrumentation, under the presence and blessing of the Spirit of God.

II. Some Practical Approaches to Fostering Christian Families

1. Preaching on the theme of marriage, child training and discipline in each congregation from time to time seems like a must and brings live interest and discussion. Parents, especially mothers, very much want guidance in raising their children. Wives are eager to realize the new dimension that Christ brings to the marriage relationship. Not always, but sometimes the men are afraid they might learn something new and brace themselves against the possibility!

2. Modeling Christian marriage and family is another “approach” that we cannot avoid. This has a slightly arrogant sound, but like it or not, we are doing it! Testimonies as to what this modeling has meant over the years are not rare. And when church leaders talk about the missionary role, this is often mentioned.

3. The “katei shukai” or house meeting to involve the spouse and family of believers is taken seriously in our area. In very recent years in one congregation, four non-believing spouses have been brought to active faith and baptism largely because they were gathered into the Christian community

through the meeting in their home. Several others are currently in the process, but not yet baptized.

4. The enrichment seminar for married couples is something we've done only once so far. The resources used were largely western. The results were interesting, but not overwhelming. In asking each spouse to share something they liked about their partner when they first met, one husband could not think of anything. Later the question was "What do you appreciate about him/her now?" Again, he could not give us one thing. Feeling much pain for her, we asked how this made her feel. She said, "He's a Japanese male, and I'm long since used to it." But two days later, the couple came to our home and both were beaming. He said, "When I really started to think about it, there were loads of things that I appreciate about my wife." And then he went down his list one by one. Another result of this seminar is that these four couples who related so closely during the four sessions have become important to each other in terms of trust and the ability to counsel one another.

5. There are always the couples, married or approaching marriage, who need a listening ear or some specific help. So one-to-one or one-to-two or two-to-two counseling becomes, of necessity, another approach. One time this meant sitting with a young wife and mother, whose suitcase was already packed, until the bus she was planning to leave on had gone and until her husband came home from work! Another time it meant answering a late-night call to go out and listen to and pray with a farmer whose wife had taken the car in a huff and gone to her parents a few miles away. In another case it was a longer process of staying with a young Christian wife and her husband until he finally came to Christ and then helping him to get free of the control of mother and older sister. Indeed, in most cases of marital problems we have been close to, at least one spouse has not been able to make the necessary break from parents. Then there are, happily, those non-problem oriented cases where young couples come for pre-marital instruction and counseling.

6. Family camps seem to offer a rich opportunity for strengthening relationships with the church community and actually enhancing family atmosphere and spiritual growth. Last summer 22 complete families from five small congregations took part in a two-day camp. Enthusiasm was high whether it was the softball game or the Bible study or the mutton cookout. Families were learning to know themselves better and also learning to know and to learn from other families.

7. Getting families together in worship. Dan Stewart, an Australian minister who has studied children's ministries in his country said, "The common denominator in sick and dying churches was that children were consistently segregated and sent off to another place." While the growing churches expected children to take part in worship, the declining churches "hid the children away," Stewart said.⁹ So far, we are not doing well with this in our local congregations.

8. Perhaps one of the most crucial opportunities that our churches have just now is working with youth. Youth are seeking and they are coming to faith. And among other things, they are eager to know what the church says about sex and marriage. But they want more than book learning. They want to know where and how to find suitable companions.

Knowing that the church must work at this, we have tried various things. Several years ago, a number of 3-day work and study camps were held for youth from our Hokkaido churches. Aside from the study on marriage and the family, youth expanded their circle of acquaintances and in working together on some project they learned to know each other in more than just a casual way. Two couples who met at these camps were later married.

Another effort to get youth in touch with each other within the larger church community was an all-Hokkaido youth "meibo" (name list) of unmarried persons 18 years and older. This went over something like the proverbial lead balloon. Out of fourteen churches, only one responded.

But something that happened last February seems to hold more promise. A two-day retreat for the youth

of our five eastern congregations was held at a

“ryokan” (inn) along the coast. To the delight of the planners, 25 youth participated, more than twice the number expected, and as an outgrowth of this retreat, a bi-monthly youth meeting was established. Now they plan their own activities whether it be a camp or a fellowship meeting or a one-day marriage seminar as they did last month.

Simultaneously, youth groups have also developed in other parts of the island, and they’ve begun to arrange fellowship visits to their counterparts in other areas. So this opportunity for family building, as well as evangelism, is being opened up in a very natural way.

9. Another “approach” to family work is being given to us by society outside of the church. We have received invitations to speak to school and kindergarten PTA groups, women’s meetings and local “Kominkan” parent education classes on the subjects of women, child training and discipline. This is not central to the subject of this paper, but suffice it to say, these people (mostly wives and mothers) are seriously interested in what Christianity has to say on these subjects. They listen, they ask questions and present their problems and frustrations and they buy Christian books on the subject by the dozen that are introduced to them!

10. The last approach to Christian family work that we will introduce is the Marriage and Family Seminar and that will be the content of Section III.

III. The Marriage and Family Seminar

Twelve years ago we were requested by our conference to do one-day seminars on the Christian home throughout the Hokkaido Churches. More recently this has been incorporated into the Eastern Hokkaido Bible School core curriculum extension program, which has again taken us into many of the congregations. Sometimes this seminar is sponsored by one congregation, sometimes by a group of congregations and on a couple of occasions, by youth groups.

Earlier seminars tended to be rather doctrinal in nature, laying out the duties of each member of the family. But now we feel much more comfortable dealing with the family in terms of relationships.

For what it is worth, I am going to share here, in abbreviated form, the basic materials we are presently using. Normally, when being given for credit, the course has ten class hours. About half of this time is used for input and the other half for discussion, role-playing and book reports which are required.

Introduction. Some time is spent getting acquainted, each person introducing oneself and family. So that this can become as much as possible a meaningful group experience where trust and freedom develops, we urge attention to these ground rules: attendance at every session; free sharing of self and support of one another; and keeping strict confidence where deeply personal things are shared.

1. Not Good That Man Should Be Alone. (Genesis 1 and 2)

Persons are created as social beings, to relate and have fellowship. So God established community, beginning with family. What is family? One definition is “persons in community.” But what does it mean to be a person? For one thing, it means to be alive, to grow, to have identity and potential. Secondly, it means to be able to say “yes” and “no” as a moral being able to choose and give direction to life. Thirdly, it means to be able to say “I” and “me”, being aware of oneself as a feeling, thinking, acting being. Fourthly, it means the ability to say “you”, to be aware of others in relation to or in contrast to self. And finally, it means to say “you and I”, to enter into relationships, deep and growing and reaching toward total mutuality.

In the Bible, this personhood is the highest form of existence and is, indeed, the likeness of God which He has given to Man. He is alive and has given us life. He is moral, saying “yes” and “no.” And as the great “I Am” He acts purposefully. He longs for relationship and in relationship He is just and righteous and merciful. 39

The supreme revelation of all of this about God came to us in the form of a person, Jesus Christ. And the means through which we come into relationship with God is that community known as the body of Christ. While God’s love to man stands prior, we come to know Him as a person through a community of persons.

Recognizing these things then about the nature of personality and the personal way that God revealed this knowledge to us, we begin to realize in a deeper way why man should not be alone and we see the beauty of His plan for community, beginning with family. (While family is the subject here, we recognize that the single state may well be blessed as God’s way for some.)

2. Leaving, Cleaving and Becoming One Flesh (Gen. 2:24, Mat 19:5)¹⁰

In the Creation account we find a very instructive formula for the marriage relationship. Genesis 2:24 says, “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.” Weight and validity are given to this principle in that both Jesus and Paul quoted it in their ministry.

The three action words are leaving, cleaving and becoming one flesh. “Leaving” must be indicating the importance of a forthright break, physically and psychologically, from one’s family of origin for the purpose of establishing a new entity. If the leaving is accomplished, only then can there be true “cleaving” of two persons, closer to each other than to anyone else, in a relationship that is more important than profession, relatives, children, guests or friends; where there is recognized equality and where the welfare and happiness of the partner is the greatest concern for each. And here begins the process of “becoming” one flesh in body, soul and spirit. They grow in oneness, for example, in regard to possessions, thinking and feeling, joy and suffering, hopes and fears, success and failure, faith and prayer. And the sexual union symbolizes and reminds the partners of this deeper and wider union.

These three “actions” may be seen as the poles of a tent, essential for a sturdy, happy, permanent marriage. All three are necessary.

3. Christian Love and Mutuality in Marriage (Eph. 5)

A. W. Verrall, the great classic scholar, once said that one of the chief diseases of which ancient civilization died was a low view of women.¹¹ In Ephesians 5:21–33 the apostle Paul paints a beautiful picture of God’s intention for marriage and at the same time lifts up the dignity and worth of women. But, as William Barclay outlines it, things were quite different in the world into which Paul’s message came.

The Jews had a low view of woman. The Jewish man prayed every morning his thanks that he had not been made “a Gentile, a slave or a woman.” (Talmud) In Jewish law, she was more of a thing than a person. She was a man’s possession and absolutely at his mercy. According to Deut. 24:1, it was very simple for him to “send her out of his house.”

The position of woman was even worse in the Greek world. Prostitution was an essential part of Greek

life. Even Demosthenes said, “We have courtesans for the sake of pleasure; we have concubines for the sake of daily cohabitation; we have wives for the purpose of having children legitimately, and of having a faithful guardian for all our household affairs.” There was no possibility for companionship and fellowship in marriage for the Greek woman.

And matters may have been worse still in Rome. Divorce was rampant. It was an adulterous world. So Paul’s lovely message was not simply a restatement of what everyone already believed, but a new call to fidelity and purity and fellowship in married life.

A great problem through much of the church’s history has been that men—Bible readers and church leaders—have gotten carried away with verses 22–24, the “wives be submissive” doctrine. They have overlooked verse 21 where subjection is to be a mutual thing and verses 25–33 which makes the wife the worthwhile object of the highest kind of love and regard. Paul likens this love to that of Christ’s for the Church. What kind of love is this?

It is sacrificial love as Christ gave Himself for the Church. He loved the church not so the church would do things for Him, but so that He might do things for the church.

It is purifying love. As Christ cleansed the church, as members were baptized into it, our love should lift and make a better person of the spouse.

It is caring love as one cares for his own body. There is something wrong when a man regards his wife, consciously or unconsciously, as a kind of permanent maid who cooks and cleans and takes care of the children.

It is unbreakable love. He is united to her as the members of the body are united to each other.

It is clear in this passage at any rate, that love is central, and not control.

4. Preparation for Marriage

Seeing the depth of meaning and the permanence of marriage in God’s plan, how does one prepare? Probably examining one’s reasons or motivations for marriage is a good starting place. Marrying, for example, for financial reasons, or because someone says you’ll soon be too old for anyone to want you, or to quickly fill the void left after being jilted by a recent lover, are hardly reasons calculated to lead to successful marriage.

Also, one might ask himself some basic questions about personal maturity. Where am I in the process of unselfing, in the spirit of John 12:24–26? There can be no real personal fulfillment without commitment. One can hardly say he or she is ready for marriage until the security and well being of the companion is just as important as his own. Or, Do I have the capacity and willingness for responsibility in carrying my role in marriage? Or, How will I do in acceptance, “in sickness and health, for richer or poorer,” and so on? Or, How forgiving can I be?

Perhaps few people would marry if they waited until each of these questions could be answered confidently with a positive reply. But neither should they marry until they realize that success in marriage will be very closely related to the presence or absence of these personal qualities.

5. The Mate-selection Process¹²

Abraham Schmitt believes that this process of finding the “right” person is like an iceberg. Only one-tenth of it is visible or conscious and the other nine-tenths below the water is unconscious. There is something much deeper going on when we start looking into one another’s lives—a process we are

largely not aware of. We cannot rationalize about our deepest, inmost needs, but rather we are truly given the spouse that we need by the great Matchmaker Himself.

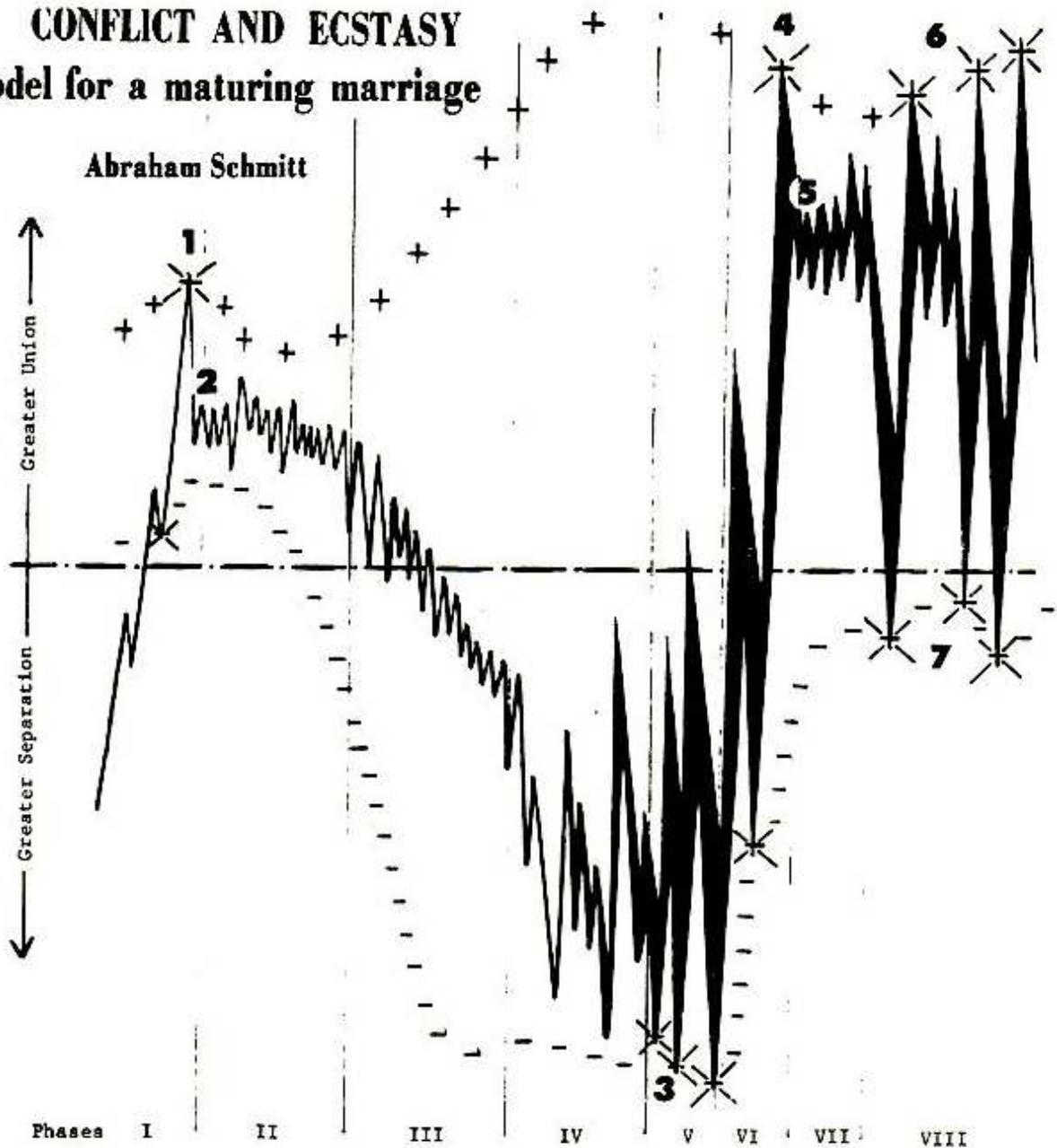
Schmitt is saying that while we may consciously be looking for someone like ourselves, or in accordance with our ideal—similar hobbies and tastes, similar social and economic background, good looking, etc., the larger process going on unconsciously, is drawing us together with someone quite different in the deeper personality dimensions. For example, the person who talks a lot needs someone who can listen! Or more seriously, the extrovert goes precisely for the introvert who is so different and therefore able to complement his being. This theory seems to fit well with recent studies of personality showing that persons do want wholeness.

6. Model for a Maturing Marriage¹³

“The two shall become one flesh” must be seen as a process and not something that happens the day of the wedding. But it begins with commitment! Elton Trueblood says that marriage is not a contract assuming obligations and rights, but a

Continues on Page 49

CONFLICT AND ECSTASY model for a maturing marriage



Phases 1. Peak Experience, first ecstatic union.

- I. Courtship, search for a complementary mate.
- II. Honeymoon, fading dream, "unending bliss."
- III. First Movement, self-affirmation, projection
- IV. Confrontation, grasping for unresolved negative issues.
- V. Conflict, complementary encounter on negative issues.
- VI. Second Movement, uniqueness of self and mate accepted.
- VII. "Glorious Union," complementation actualized.
- VIII. The Fruition of Marriage Maturation, free to be: near and far.

- 2. Wedding, first rite of passage.
- 3. Deepest Root Issues of marriage faced.
- 4. Peak Experience, second ecstatic union.
- 5. "Unity of Destiny" Ceremony, second rite of passage.
- 6. Deepest Intimacy Needs Met.
- 7. Deepest Identity Needs Met.

~•^~ Union - Separation Fluctuation

+ + Unmet Intimacy Needs

- - Unresolved Separation Issues

✱ "The Existential Moment" or "Peak Experience" – Pin.

(42-A)

commitment—giving everything we have and are. The question is not “What will I get out of this relationship?” but “What do I bring to it, and to my lover?”

The first step in the maturation process, says Schmitt, is the absolute necessity to commit oneself to the marriage by simply accepting that “we are meant for each other.” This is believing that the mate you have selected is not only what “God hath joined” to you, but also the one whom you deeply need psychologically. Therefore, if trouble begins, the problem is not with the selection, but in the failure to let the complementation process progress after marriage.

Let us look at the graph “Conflict and Ecstasy—model for a maturing marriage.” (point out early phases)

Schmitt emphasizes that this is not a troubled marriage, but a normal one going through the dialectic pattern of union and separation (conflict and ecstasy) experiences absolutely necessary for the development of the two individuals and the relationship. “Movement into relationship is an act of union when one discovers his likeness to the other and his likeness to humanity and hence his self-worth. Movement out of relationship is experienced as separation when one affirms his difference from another person or mankind and thereby discovers his identity.”¹⁴ There is no shortcut from the peak experience of courtship and marriage to the next major peak in marriage other than by way of the valley. The high cost of true intimacy involves the reckoning with and affirmation of each other as unique personalities. The intimacy we seek is not the blending of two personalities into one common unit.

The problem is that most couples begin married life by trying to remake the partner to fit themselves (which is ironic because this “different” person who now seems so often “wrong”, is precisely the person they needed!) And the valley experience will continue as long as one partner assumes he is better or can dictate behavior to the other. But as soon as the couple can stop interfering in each other’s life and begin to accept each other as is—unique and different—then the journey begins to move upward.

The tension past and equality recognized, change suddenly becomes possible. With new humility one can say, “What am I doing to my partner? What is wrong with me? What must I do to rescue this marriage? I married her because of her difference, and it is in accepting our difference that we will grow.”

A couple enters the final phase of marriage maturation as soon as they are able to trust both the unions and the separations, the intense intimacies and the inevitable conflicts, both the agonies and the ecstasies of marriage.¹⁵

7. The Function of Sex¹⁶

The Bible talks of man in his totality as being good. A human being is a whole person comprised of the essential parts, body and spirit. Also, from the beginning he is created male and female, which means that sex is built into our very nature and structure.

Every man and woman is an embodied spirit and they are made for communication, for fellowship and relationship. But the spirit cannot talk to the spirit. The body must come to the aid of the spirit as the spirit moves the body. And this fact underlies the meaning of sex.

Love is a thought, a feeling, an aspiration, a determination that seeks expression, but is dependent upon the body. Therefore, we have the handclasp of a friend, the communion and communication between mother and child at feeding and bathing time, the kiss of lovers. And ultimately, we have the highest and most complete communication between man and woman in sexual intercourse. Whatever our age, the physical is the outward expression of the inner spirit.

In his chapter “The Role of Sex in Love,” Reuel Howe teaches that sex has two purposes, procreation and re-creation. But he sees the re-creative purpose as actually of prior importance. In explaining this he says that the re-creative purpose has two functions. First, as an outward and visible expression of any reunion achieved between partners, such as after working or playing or worshipping together. The act of physical love becomes a seal of this experience of union. Second, sex may be the physical instrument by which two partners seek to break through separateness, to find the other as a person, and to experience the complementary fulfillment of what one, as an individual, lacks. So in these two functions we find an important resource for renewal and reunion.

Howe believes that the re-creative function is prior because it is important in establishing the community upon which the children of the union must depend.

A nagging question still remains, however. Why can't we more perfectly love those we love? The answer is that we need more love than we can give. In spite of our best, a degree of need is always remaining. This points up the already and not yet in the love relationship and the need for growth. As Christians we believe in the enabling power of God. “When we make a positive effort to love and to forgive, we ally ourselves with the power of God's love which is always at work to unite and reunite us with one another and with Him.”¹⁷

8. Meeting the Basic Needs of Children

The Bible makes it clear through passages in Deuteronomy and Proverbs and again in places like Ephesians 6 that God does give into the hands of parents a specific responsibility for the training and discipline of children. Happy, useful, responsible people don't just happen. And yet the society around us today has largely handed the responsibility for teaching and even moral training and discipline over to the institutions. Parents repeatedly confess they have no standard from which to teach children or any confidence in how to discipline.

As a “Primer” of easy-to-get-hold-of guidance for parents, we like to introduce the book Seven Things Children Need by John M. Drescher.¹⁸ The author seems to assume two things: (1) that the primary requisite for meeting our responsibility to children is a warm, mutual parental relationship, and (2) that meeting these basic psychological needs stands prior to the teaching of precepts. What are these needs?

(1) Significance

A healthy sense of personal worth is essential. For this, a child needs to be noticed, appreciated and loved as he is. If he cannot find recognition through proper conduct he may try the improper, and this does not always stop with childhood. Witness the “bosozoku” or the frenzied fan who shoots and kills his idol.

Spending time with the child, listening to him and giving him things to do will all help promote in him a sense of significance. But don't make the mistake of thinking that now the parent-child relationship is more important than that of the husband and wife. There is nothing so central for the child's happiness and sense of worth as love between parents.

(2) Security

Children need some kind of assurance that the ground is not going to fall away from under their feet. Again, studies show that insecurity is produced more than anything else by parental conflict.

Some essentials, then, for building security would be: security between father and mother; being together and doing things together as a family; and more important than was once thought, communicating love and assurance through touching.

(3) Acceptance

A child who does not feel accepted by his parents becomes vulnerable to destructive group pressure. He fights for acceptance from others. He is also likely to feel that God hates him.

Parents seem prone to criticism, comparing the child with others or expecting him to fulfill their own dreams. Rather, we must recognize his uniqueness, listen to him, accept his friends and, by all means, communicate acceptance in both success and failure.

(4) Love

Psychiatrist William Glasser says that what we call mental illness occurs from the absence of two basic needs: to love and to be loved. A study in a large Oklahoma high school revealed that the ten most troubled students could not remember an expression of love from their parents, while the ten best students had all received that assurance within the past 24 hours!

(5) Praise

Benjamin West attributes his becoming an artist to the praise and affirmation of his mother in spite of the mess he made in the kitchen when he was trying out his skill as a child.

The American Institute of Family Relations discovered in a survey that mothers criticize children ten times as much as they praise them!

Persons seldom change because their faults are pointed out, but they may well become more beautiful people through sincere praise and encouragement.

(6) Discipline

"A child with unlimited freedom gets frightened; he suspects he isn't loved."¹⁹ But discipline is not simply punishment. It involves the total molding of a child's character through encouraging good behavior and correcting unacceptable behavior. Drescher introduces James Dobson's Five Principles:²⁰

- i. develop respect for the parent
- ii. recognize the opportunity for communication after punishment
- iii. control without nagging
- iv. don't saturate the child with excessive materialism
- v. avoid extremes in control and love

(7) God

A child needs to be nourished early in correct concepts of God. Harmful lifelong views are learned by such statements as "God does not love you when you are naughty" or "If you keep on being very good, you will go to heaven." A child can never be sure of his spiritual status when "if" statements are used. Deuteronomy 6:4-8 calls parents first of all to be right with God and then hands them the responsibility for constant and consistent religious training of their children.

Blessed is the child who is led early to the assurance that people are made by God and for God and find their ultimate security and purpose and rest in Him.

IV. Conclusions

Wherever we go, interest in efforts made on behalf of marriage and the family is very high. This

is especially true on the part of women. And there are visible responses and changes made that are most gratifying. Men do sometimes indicate change in old attitudes toward wives. People have had their sights raised for their marriages. Appreciation for the deeper meaning of sex is expressed. A new approach to discipline has been helpful to others.

We, ourselves, are eager to do more reading and especially in the increasing body of good materials in Japanese. We are also interested in learning from what the Roman Catholic Church is doing in marriage seminars both in the U.S. and in Japan which, reportedly, is very effective.

In our own practice, we would like to work more with just couples. We also see a great need for more efforts on behalf of Christian young people in finding suitable Christian mates.

Finally, it is a great satisfaction to us to be witnessing currently that Japanese pastor couples are becoming the models and counselors and teachers for their own people!

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Critique of

“FOSTERING CHRISTIAN FAMILIES IN JAPAN”

Robert E. Cunningham

I am very grateful to have this account, which is what Charley’s paper really is, of the actual procedures he has been using in his family-enrichment ministry. This is where the rubber hits the pavement, so to speak, in the effort to help Japanese Christian couples and families, and youth before marriage, too, to achieve the degree of fullness of life which is theirs as new creatures in Christ. Charley has described for us ten practical approaches, the last of which, namely, “The Marriage and Family Seminar”, is spelled out in much detail.

However, I note that the topic assigned is “Fostering Christian Families in Japan. While the speaker has addressed himself carefully and concretely to the first portion of that subject, I was eager to learn more that relates to “in Japan.” May I suggest a couple of areas in hopes of drawing him out for more information in that direction. My first request is in reference to a sentence near the end of the presentation, noting “the increasing body of good materials

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in Japanese.” Yet nearly all of the quotations used in the paper are taken from Western authors. What are some of these publications and other helps we should know about? More specifically, I wish you would share with us, Charley, samples of contents of this kind of material that form meaningful expressions of Japanese faith and life that we can learn from for this aspect of our contacts with Japanese families and youth. (N.B. A list of publications was distributed at the Seminar, and can be found on pp. 46–47 in this book.)

In the Marriage and Family Seminar experiences, what have you picked up that is uniquely Japanese in the approach to ministry to families? Surely there are struggles as families in Japan attempt to apply to their situations what has a Western structure and flavor. What do you hear these people saying? What have you learned in dialogue sessions? I believe this sort of input would be very useful for us.

So much for starters—I’m sure there will be questions relating to the hows and whys of the approaches outlined in the presentation. Thank you for the work that has gone into preparing this paper.

* * *

THE MISSIONARY FAMILY

Thelma Moorhead, M.R.E. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Came to Japan 1948. Present assignment: Minister of Counseling, Tokyo Baptist Church.

After careful research in some six libraries in the United States including Harvard University and Boston University and after writing authorities in Foreign Mission Boards and Pastoral Counseling Training Centers, I came to the conclusion that very little research had been done on the missionary family. If such research has been done it has not reached the major research centers or is still in hard-to-obtain dissertations or other private research. There is far more research and publication concerning the Third Culture Kids (T.C.K.'s) which includes Missionary Kids (M.K.'s).

For the above reason I composed a questionnaire containing some twenty-five pertinent areas of missionary life with a low stress figure of one through a high stress figure of seven. Anything above the median of four I considered as stressful. Eighty-seven of the questionnaires were returned. They represent an average of eighteen years spent in Japan with forty-five missionaries of the eighty-seven having spent twenty years or more in Japan. Twenty-two have been in Japan for more than thirty years.

Presumably we have come as missionaries to make Christ known and to make disciples of those who accept him as Lord and Redeemer. This is done in many, many ways and the missionary, whether man or woman is usually freer than are those in most professions to choose the way they wish to do this. Just as in Eric Erickson's stages of development of the child, which requires that certain tasks be accomplished at certain stages of life or the person is in trouble, I think that the missionary family, to be accepted and successful, has some necessary tasks and these must be successfully achieved.

In this paper I have chosen the four which had highest stress reported in the survey: Adjustment, Language, Work, and Children.

The first task is that of adjusting to all the changes that come in moving from the old to the new. According to the answers given in the questionnaire on stress, relationships with mission boards, to missionaries within their own group and other groups, with Japanese neighbors and co-workers, between husband and wife, parents and children, a stress factor of over four was reported by from 12–15%. Concerning change of social environment 16% indicated stress, whereas 20% reported stress concerning change of work/status.

Since forty-five of those who responded have lived in Japan twenty years or more, this first task of adjustment has seemingly been completed and thus this fairly low stress factor. Perhaps those who have not been able to do this have already left Japan. In my own Southern Baptist Mission we have had more than one hundred missionaries to resign during the thirty-two years I have been here. This is not to say that many of them have not resigned to take jobs related to missions or churches. However, many have been for health reasons, and the old saying is still true: "when the mind is silent the body shouts." Some research on the whole matter of the resignation of missionaries would be very worthwhile in helping us to understand better what really happened.

The task of identity and relationship to others is of vital importance for every member of the family, as each affects the other. "It is one of the laws of life that one stage successfully completed prepares the way for the next, while failure in one stage lays in advance a heavy handicap on the next", writes Paul Tournier in A Place for You.¹ Three basic needs for the formation of self-identity are a deep feeling of belonging; a feeling of self-worth; and a feeling of competence, ability to achieve. For a fulfilled, happy, achieving life this is an absolute necessity for each missionary and each child in the home. The need of love must be met before the gift of love can be given to anyone, spouse, children, or others.

Jesus said, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” In answering the question concerning which was the greatest commandment, He said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your strength, and your neighbor as yourself.”² We as missionaries have seemed to understand about the command to love God and our neighbors, but have not understood the matter of love of self. The missionary must have worked out his or her own healing in learning to esteem and love self in the way Jesus meant, fully receiving God’s love in order to have love that can flow out to others. We cannot give what we do not have. Teilhard de Chardin writes, “A man who has not got happiness cannot impart it.” He recalls the ancient proverb: “Nemo dat quod non habet”, “No one gives what he does not possess.”³ Paul Tournier writing in A Place for You, says, “Because he has not been loved or not loved well, he can neither love nor believe in and accept love. He is still a prisoner of the past even when he tries to leave it behind. If I may be permitted a paradox, he remains fixed in the place he has not left”⁴ “One must first have a place before leaving it. One can only give up what one has received.”

Langdon Gilkey writes in The Shantung Compound, telling of some two thousand people imprisoned by the Japanese under very adverse conditions, “Somehow each self needs a “place” in order to be a self, in order to feel on a deep level that it really exists. All of us needs a space that is ours in every environment in which we exist, whether it is in the physical world, in the social world of family, friends, and community in which we identify ourselves as persons, or in the vocational world where we function professionally. In many cases one of these levels can replace another level—but no person can bear a rootlessness on all levels at once.”⁵

In April 1979, the Christopher New Notes put out by Pergamon Press had an article called, The Stress of Adjusting to Change. Of forty-three items, fourteen definitely apply to missionaries leaving their own culture. The stress factor comes to 285. Researchers found that an accumulation of 200 points, or life change units in a single year is followed by a significant increase in psychiatric disorders.⁶ As far as I know, there have been no studies concerning these disorders among missionaries or their children.

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There seems to be no doubt that leaving home, both the physical house as well as the emotional, supportive network of home and friends, work and the social life and environment of the known culture, is to throw the family into crisis, causing a great deal of anxiety in every member of the family, including very small children who may not be able to verbalize their feelings. The good or poor adjustment of each family member spells success or failure for the future.

The missionary has come to give, to seek to make Christ’s purpose known. To do this we must accomplish what Paul Tournier calls the first movement, “Creation.” This is enrichment and possession. The second is what Simone Weil calls, “Decreation.” This is shedding and detachment. We are called on to make this act of renunciation. This is self-denial. Taking up the cross and following Jesus comes and can only come after the first movement or task is completed. The missionary task is not an easy one and the entire family is involved emotionally, physically, spiritually and in every other way.

Dr. Roger Sider writes in his article “The Missionary as a Marginal Person”: “Why is it that God calls us to these difficult marginal places and to this kind of life? I believe it is because that is where the action is. In physics, chemistry, biology, in any physical system of which I am aware, the dynamic is always at the interface. To use a popular phrase, it is where the rubber meets the road. It is the point of contact. If we can once find for ourselves stability at the margin, I do not think there is any other place where so much can happen because that is where life, contact, and interaction are greatest. That is the place where a tremendous amount of vitality and life can be seen. Life on the margin can be a life of rare opportunity to make a difference, to have impact, to be effective, and to be affected in return. To live at the margin is to be truly alive and vital as Jesus Christ was.”⁷

To establish stability, adjustment, self-identity in a joyous, giving, receiving way in Japan is our

first task. If we have neither over-identified nor under-identified with the culture in which we live, if we have not lived in a “ghetto” with our own kind, nor sought to make everyone like ourselves, perhaps we have successfully completed this task of adjustment. Perchance we can even become what Abraham Maslow calls “self actualizing”, the equivalent of receiving a gold medal at the Olympics. He says that this only comes about as we grow older, making the growth choices. “Self actualizing people are, without one single exception, involved in a cause outside their own skin, in something outside themselves. They are devoted, working at something, something which is very precious to them—some calling or vocation in the old sense, the priestly sense. They are working at something which fate has called them to somehow and which they work at and which they love, so that the work/joy dichotomy in them disappears.”⁸

Our adjustment, choices, creation and decreation, can help us in some small way to help bring the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven, to be in some faint way like the Christ, saying with Paul, “For me to live is Christ . . .”

Perhaps the second task of the missionary family is to attain some degree of fluency in the Japanese language, not only to hear and understand words, but to understand the culture and the psychology behind the language.

In the survey it is only concerning language that the stress factor goes over 33% and reaches a high of 57%. Here are some results indicated by the questionnaire:

<u>Missionaries</u>	<u>Years in Japan</u>	<u>Number in high stress</u>
15	0–5	14
24.	5–20	8
23.	20–30	14
22.	30 +	14

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Further research on these results would be very interesting. The high percentage of missionaries with stress who have been in Japan for over twenty years may have many reasons. One of these may be that by this time the missionary is engaged in very demanding, responsible work and may have attained a position where a high degree of fluency in speaking as well as in understanding is expected. Another may be the high achievement that the missionary expects of him/herself, and thus the anxiety.

One other factor may be significant but since the survey did not differentiate between male and female we cannot know which has the greater stress, men or women. Of those in Japan over twenty years who gave their names, there seems to be no great difference. However, concerning language study opportunity given to men and women, Dr. Donald Larson of Bethel College and Toronto Institute of Linguistics, says, “In too many orientation programs (including language study) the serious long term consequences of the ‘spouse-gap’ are casually accepted. While the male is given every advantage, the female is expected to graciously receive whatever can be worked out.”⁹ This “spouse-gap” could also be a factor in the loss of missionaries from Japan. If language is so frustrating that a meaningful ministry cannot be engaged in by the wife as well as the husband, this would seem logical.

Our next task and the main one for which the missionary has come to Japan is the work she/he is to do. Missionaries are keenly disappointed by the number of registered Christians and have always had high hopes that there would be a breakthrough which would see the majority of the Japanese come to Christ. Most of us are aware of the fact that we are still preparing the soil, planting the seed, watering and cultivating, rejoicing in the harvest of those who do accept Christ as Redeemer and Lord. We also rejoice in Christian schools and hospitals and other work, as well as the tremendous influence Christianity has had in Japan even though the number of professed believers is small.

In the work situation our survey shows that 28% of those who responded had stress. This

compares with high stress in other areas as follows:

Language	57%	Separation from children	33%
Children's education	25%	Change of work/status	20%

The survey did not go into the reasons for stress in work but it seems safe to say that some of it is over lack of definite work assignments, or definite opportunities for work, or perhaps fear of not being able to accomplish the task given, or in disappointment over results. We can rejoice, however, over the success we do see in the work in Japan. The Japan Harvest reports that there has been a 35% increase in the number of churches in Japan since 1969 when there were 4,251. Including Okinawa, in 1980 there are 5,875.¹⁰ For example, since 1948 the Japan Baptist Convention has increased its number of churches from 16 to 246, and church membership has increased from about 1,000 to almost 25,000.

Perhaps in no other work is there the freedom to choose the type of work best suited to the personal interest and talents of the individual as there is in the missionary community. There is often choice, a flexibility so that husband and wife can work together professionally as well as together carry out the responsibilities of home and children. Sometimes the children are involved, thus giving the entire family a real sense of achievement and satisfaction. The missionary home and its relationships is a vital witness as to the real meaning of Christianity. The loving care and concern for each other and the hospitality of the home reaching out to others and including them in that love can be a powerful testimony, and is mentioned again and again by Japanese who have accepted Christ. The choice and the flexibility concerning the work assignment helps tremendously in the growth and development of both parents and children in the various stages or cycles the family goes through. When it is possible for both parents to have rewarding responsibilities and the joys which come from a job well done; the unity, communication, and love within the family is strengthened. A sense of belonging, of self-esteem, of competence is engendered in each member of the family. This results in a stable, happy family able to give to others.

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The position of women in ministry has not been dealt with in this paper, but from the standpoint of psychology there can be no second-class persons in any group without great hurt and loss to the entire group. The Christian church, to me, should be in the vanguard of any movement dedicated to true freedom for women as well as for men. Dr. Ronald Iwasko, in his report to the E.F.M.A. Annual Convention, says, "With the proper understanding of the prohibitions against women peaking in the church and teaching and usurping authority over the man within their context, the fact that there were women prophetesses in Old Testament times, that women prophesied in New Testament times in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, that gifts and ministries are bestowed upon all believers as priests and members of Christ's body, and that in Christ there is no male and female, this gives assurance that it is in error to deny women a God-given right of ministry to the church."¹¹ Perhaps it is true of the church what Plato had to say of the State. "Nothing can be more absurd," Plato the philosopher, wrote more than 2,000 years ago, "than the practice which prevails in our country of men and women not following the same pursuits with all their strengths and with one mind, for thus the state, instead of being whole, is reduced to a half."

According to the survey done in preparation for this paper, the education of their children and the separation from them were of deep concern to missionaries. For those who had served over thirty years, 50% marked stress over the education of their children, and the highest percentage of all, 63%, over separation from them.

Margaret Taylor, a long time missionary in Japan, writes in the Japan Christian Quarterly, "Few professions devour the time, energy, and psychic sources of persons as does the missionary life. Wise people will take this into account when deciding whether to have children, how many, and who is to provide what kinds of care, and what study to do in preparation for the events. Few individuals have the physical, emotional, and psychological resources to carry on effective missionary service and rear a large family."¹²

The first five years are without doubt the most important years in any person’s life. Within these years are laid down in the unconscious depths of the individual habits of thinking, of being, of doing that will endure for life or will be changed only through pain, time, and expense. The sense of being accepted, of belonging, of being loved and enjoyed; the sense of having value as a person, of being worthwhile; the sense of being able to accomplish life’s tasks, to be able to change, to be creative, are all learned in the early years or their very opposite is learned. Even the physical brain by age one is two-thirds of what it will be at full maturity.

Perhaps the greatest stewardship we will ever have is the influence we have in the forming of the personality of our child, and the greatest gift that can be given them is the love and affection the parents have and show for each other and to the child. The highest priority must be given to this task by mother and father. Even for the most selfish of reasons, to be there for your child in their need means they will be there for you when your need arrives. Fortunately in many cases the missionary schedule is flexible enough to give this priority and to ensure that the child has quality time with each parent. The separation from the greater family or clan makes this doubly important.

The early education of children is of concern and many have been taught by mother, father, or other missionary and Japanese teachers either at home, in small local schools, in Japanese schools, or military or international schools. The greatest anxiety on the part of parents seems to be at the time the child must leave home and many missionaries feel guilty about this. In research on “Self-Concept Differences Between Early, Late, and Non-Boarding Missionary Children”, done by Colleen Bolte, Director, Overseas Division of Interaction Inc., she reports, “There is some justification for concluding that in the context of overseas/boarding schools the early boarder (grades 1–3) may leave home too soon, the nonboarder may stay home too long, and the late boarder (grades 7–9) may leave home at the

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developmentally optimal time.”¹³ Self Concept’s three components were: a sense of belonging, of worth, and of competence. These appear to be higher in the late boarders than in the other two groups.

The religious training, beliefs, and the attitudes of their children are also of deep concern in the missionary home, and may be a real element in the stress felt upon separation from them. Some missionaries feel that if they fail in this, they have truly failed and some have returned to their home country. They felt that these needs were not and could not be met in Japan in the situation they were in.

In a survey done by Mrs. Louise Copeland and Mrs. June Seat with the Southern Baptist Mission of Japan in 1978, some 20% of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the way that they had been able to rear their children in Japan. There was some pessimism concerning the church opportunities for missionary children in Japan. To cultivate a real love for the church when in the church not much is geared to the interest and understanding of children was considered difficult.

In the fall of 1979, Mrs. Copeland, Mrs. Seat, and Mrs. Margaret Moffett sent a questionnaire to some Southern Baptist Missionary Parents to find out the basic attitudes of grown M.K.’s toward Christ and toward the church. Data was returned concerning some fifty M.K.’s in the United States. Looking at these figures we find:

Years in Japan	Felt a vital relationship with Christ.
0–9	55%
10–14	67%
15–19	69%
20–24	67%

The others felt some interest in religious matters. However, concerning an active participation in the church we have a different picture:

1. Take a vital part in the church..... 31%
2. Attending but taking no part 20%

3. Occasionally attending 35%
4. Not attending 10%

Parents reported that 62% held Southern Baptist views (whatever that may mean), whereas 26% held views of their own. One M.K. said, “We know Christianity has top priority for our parents so it is at this point that we can declare our independence of them.”

In the Spring 1976 issue of the Japan Christian Quarterly, in an article by Evelyn MacNeil, one M.K. is quoted as saying, “Sermons are impersonal, either political or having to do with social change.” In that same article, another M.K. is quoted as saying “I think your accusation of the sermon or the congregation is a ‘cop-out’.”¹⁴ My own observations have been that though M.K.’s have attended church regularly in Japan, many have not had the experience of being a vital and integral part of the church. Upon leaving Japan, they often find the church in their parents’ homeland irrelevant to their life, boring, social clubbish, often provincial and affluent. Some make no real effort to become part of the church. Some are drawn to Eastern Religions or to other religions or cults quite different from their parents. Some upon leaving parental control seem to want a strong authoritarian type of religion. They long for a mentor and seek to find one. Many of these M.K.’s are young and their story will no doubt be different as they grow older.

Dr. Paul Tournier in his book, “A Place for You”, writes that the young must go away from their parents to establish their own beliefs and values, but they will eventually come back much closer to their parents beliefs than either parent or child is aware of.¹⁵ So, we do rely upon Scripture: “Bring up a child in the way that he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

The M.K. is a third-culture-being and as such may have that “happy but lonely feeling” of always having been special or different in Japan. Upon returning to their parents homeland they find themselves different in another way; having broader interests, more adaptability and flexibility in the solving of life’s problems, less bound by the status quo, more creativity and sensitivity than their peers, coping better with less financial support than their peers, usually ranking high in grades while having lower self-concept of their intellectual ability than their counterparts.

Adjustment to the new circumstances is not easy and usually takes some time. The seemingly most confident of M.K.’s later admit to a great deal of trepidation when they leave their known environment and go away to school. It seems that more could be done to prepare them for this. A start has been made by some missions in planning sessions where M.K.’s who are preparing to leave Japan have an opportunity to talk to and ask questions of M.K.’s who have been or are in college at that time. Some Boards have college M.K.’s meeting together for a weekend their first Thanksgiving away from home, or at other times. Others pay expenses for college M.K.’s to return to their parents’ home at least once in their college career. All of these help in alleviating anxiety both on the part of the M.K.’s and the parents, and to help those who have real illnesses brought about by such a drastic change in their lives.

Dr. Ruth Useem, sociologist at Michigan State University and the creator of the word “Third Culture Kid” is highly optimistic concerning “T.C.K.’s.” She thinks that they will be the leaders in helping to solve the problems of the world since they have an understanding and experience of that world which people of one culture do not have.¹⁶

In “A Look at the Third Culture Child” an article in the Spring 1976 Japan Christian Quarterly, Mr. Ray Downs, Headmaster at the American School in Japan, himself a third culture child, says, “I cannot think of a single case in which a T.C.K. looking back on his overseas experience has expressed anything but gratitude for the opportunities provided by his early involvement in cross-cultural contact. For the parents who may worry about the impact of expatriate life on their children, this almost universal enthusiasm is of no small significance.”¹⁷

In answer to the question, "Would you like your children to have a similar dual-cultural experience as you have had?" on the questionnaire sent out by Mrs. Margaret Taylor to twenty-six adult M.K.'s, twenty replied in the affirmative.¹⁸

Thus it would seem that though the task may be difficult, the children of missionaries do not regret their experience overseas, and in the end use it for their own good as well as for the good of others. To my way of thinking they are very blessed in their backgrounds and opportunities.

In conclusion, the missionary family is made up of fallible human beings. Perhaps, more than in an ordinary family, the communication and the emotional support system of the family is important to each member. The sense of belongingness, of worthwhileness, of being competent to do, by God's grace, what He has called us to do is an absolute necessity if we are to be effective. Each member of the family, accepted and loved, each member given a voice in decisions, feeling free to express both feelings and opinions, trusting enough to be able to confront each other and "speak the truth in love", is imperative if the family is to be an example of a Christian home.

The missionary family wishes to be a witness in Japan and both by word and actions inculcate in its young that life is joyous, full of meaning, and that God has a purpose and a plan for each life. The prayer of each missionary, if he/she has accomplished the given tasks well, is that the children may know the challenge and joy of following Christ.

For the missionary family whose children have gone, the years remaining can be joyful ones with a great deal more time available to give to others, knowing that God's grace is all sufficient and that God loves our children more than we know how to love them. He will take care of them and we can continue the work he has for us in quietness and confidence, "casting all our care on Him, for He cares for us" (I Peter 5:7).

NOTES

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11. Dr. Ronald Iwasko, "Married Women in Missions, Attitudes and Opportunities", in a report to E.F.M.A. Annual Convention, March 6, 1980

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CLOSING WORSHIP MESSAGE

“MAKE US A FAMILY”

Austin Warriner, Th.M. Fuller Theological Seminary. Arrive in Japan
1959. Present assignment: Educational and pioneer evangelism, Osaka.

We have had a rich time together this year at our Hayama Seminar, contemplating the theme: “The Christian Family in Japan.” Each Seminar paper has brought fresh insights, the discussions have been spirited and helpful, and the devotional messages outstanding. Personally I have benefited much from this session of Hayama, and give thanks to God for the privilege of being here.

In the last paragraph of the final paper of this Seminar, Thelma Moorhead remarked that “the missionary family is made up of fallible human beings. Each one of us needs the emotional support of the family and the communication of the family.” I say “Amen!” to that. I’m one of those persons who has such a high self-image that sometimes I forget that I’m a fallible human being. I’m almost never depressed and generally feel, “I’m O.K. You’re O.K.” But right now I am very aware of the fact that I’m human, because I’m hurting. And when you are hurting inside, you need the emotional support and the prayer support of your family and friends.

You wonder why my wife and I are hurting so much? Well, we have two beautiful daughters and one of them has chosen a life style that seems foreign to almost everything that we believe and hold dear. In a recent letter, she made very clear again her declaration of independence, and said, “You and I live in two completely different worlds.” This parting of the ways has been on again off again over the past five years, but the latest frustration for us has been her marriage to a man whom we know not at all, and whom she herself had only met recently. We didn’t even have the opportunity to go back to the States to be with her for the wedding. With shattered dreams we look up to God and say, “Where have we failed? What did we do wrong? And where are you, God? And what have you been doing? Haven’t you been listening to our daily prayers?”

It is at such times that we really appreciate the various family groups that we belong to. Besides our own wonderful extended family of blood relatives, we have our Mission family, our Japanese Church family, our family of Nojiri friends, our Osaka Prayer Fellowship family and this Hayama family. When any of the Osaka prayer group is faced with a problem he just has to make two phone calls and the prayer chain is promptly put into action. You can sense the difference at once. And then at the next prayer meeting, everyone is so supportive and loving and prayerful. It is great to be able to communicate with those who care.

Hayama is like this. I have made some wonderful friends here at Hayama. And I have become a good friend to others too. One evening many years ago, I happened to commend someone for his good job in handling a devotional prayer period. He said, “Why don’t we spend an hour or so getting acquainted? I hardly

feel I know you.” What a privilege it was to be able to take the time to become friends. Before we parted he said he had something he wanted to share—a need so deep that he had never felt able to share it with anyone. I listened and empathized, and we prayed together. And it made a difference.

That’s what Hayama is all about. We are a family. We come together because we care about what the other fellow is thinking and feeling. We want to learn from each other and to be ready to give the emotional support that will help a fellow to clear some of the high hurdles that life has thrown in his path. I’m sure that many of you are hurting inside too. Some of you may be desperate for communication from someone who has already traveled the same path. Let’s all remember that Hayama

is a family and that we can get and give real help during these three days each year.

In preparing for this message I searched the Old Testament for a clear success story in the matter of rearing a family. Of course there are clear instructions in the Mosaic Law concerning the ideal family life and the book of Proverbs is chock full of good advice. But when it comes to actual family examples we find mostly a series of failures. Adam's family got off to a very bad start in Genesis 4, and only one family was allowed to survive the Flood. Abraham had his troubles with Ishmael and Isaac had even worse trouble with Esau and Jacob. Jacob's family history is one long series of disappointments. Judah, through whom the Messiah is to come, lived to see the day when God had to slay his two oldest sons because of their wickedness. Aaron the first high priest, saw the same thing happen to his two oldest sons. Eli's spectacular failure and the tragic end to his family didn't prevent Samuel's two sons from turning into a couple of crooks. David, a man after God's own heart, had much grief over Amnon and Absalom, and Solomon, for all his wisdom, was not successful in training Rehoboam for responsible kingship. Good King Hezekiah fathered a son so wicked and idolatrous that Manasseh's sins brought about the announced doom of the kingdom of Judah. And though King Josiah brought the people back to the book (Deuteronomy), and caused Judah to hold the greatest ever celebration of the Passover, his sons Jehoiakim and Zedekiah resisted the words of God's prophets and in their rebellion led the kingdom of Judah to destruction by their sins and idolatry.

Am I rehearsing all of these "failure fathers" just to nurse myself back to having a good self-image? No, that's not it. What I want us to remember is that the job of building a good family is a very difficult one. We need all the help we can get from God and from one another, and we need to be sympathetic with those who fail.

In the New Testament we see the beautiful family life of our Lord Jesus and of his cousin John the Baptist. Joseph and Mary, Zechariah and Elizabeth, seem to have done a good job. And Paul talks to his son in the faith, Timothy, praising his grandmother Lois and mother Eunice for the good job that they did. These examples are an encouragement to us all.

Last winter we took a trip to China for eight days, visiting Peking, Nanking, and Shanghai. By way of preparation I read a famous Chinese novel, The Family, which portrays very critically the debauchery and selfishness and superstitions and cruelty that was standard fare within the upper class families in China before the Revolution. But during our China trip we were privileged to visit the home of a 92-year-old pastor. As we fellowshiped in his home we felt we were seeing an ideal family. Pastor Yang told us, "In a house where there is a step-mother, she ordinarily favors her own children and slights the step-children. But not so in our home. We are all Christians. My second wife treats all of the children alike. And although my three married sons and their wives and children all live under this same roof, instead of the usual jealousy and jockeying for position and privilege, my daughters-in-law really love each other. It is Christ that makes the difference." And we could see it was so. What a beautiful Christian home with its simplicity and purity of faith and practice. What a testimony there in the midst of an atheistic communistic society! The ideal is possible. And as Christians we must aim for the ideal.

In recent weeks I have been reading Larry Christenson's book, The Christian Family. (Bethany Fellowship, 1970). He portrays family life lived in the power of the Living Christ and reminds us of the high standard in God's Word. Let me read you a few lines from the Introduction and the concluding chapter:

"In Christianity there is set before man and wife the task of representing upon earth the image of this union between Christ and His Church—an image of self-sacrifice, devotion, fidelity." (p. 10).

Christian family life, therefore, is not a simple human possibility. It is not just a matter of putting our mind and our will to it, and building a good family life . . . It only becomes possible as we

come to see that God is in charge of our families. If we amount to anything at all, it will be because of His doing. (pp. 200–201).

You cannot cast family worries on Jesus if you are trying to arrange your life in all kinds of self-chosen patterns, with Jesus over at the side as a Sunday activity. He will take charge of a worry only when you truly “cast it upon him” which means that He then is free to handle it in His own way. (pp. 208–209)

Families that cast their worries on Jesus will not have to think up clever ways to “witness.” God makes them His witness, by letting them experience His fatherly care. (p. 211).

For the Christian family which finds its life and hope upon the faith that the Lord to whom its life and words testify, the Lord whom it awaits with eager longing—the very God of heaven and earth—this Lord has already taken up His dwelling in the circle of their family, there to manifest beforetime a likeness of His Kingdom, a foretaste of that Day when He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them. (Revelation 21:3) (p. 216).

I want to consider one final quotation, this time a quote that Larry Christenson had taken from the 19th century German theologian, Dr. Heinrich Thiersch: “There is no building up the Church without the building up of family life.” (p. 11) Especially here in Japan we need to demonstrate the warmth and wholesomeness of the Christian family life as a model for the Japanese Church. Our daughter loved to talk with her peers. While visiting us at Christmas during her college senior year, she talked long and often to a Japanese neighbor fellow. To our great joy on the night of the Christmas Candlelight Service during the informal testimony time this young man stood to his feet and astonished us by saying, “I want to join the family. For too long I have been an outsider. I want to come inside the fellowship. I have decided to accept Jesus Christ as my Savior and confess him as Lord.” Many more will find their way to Christ as the churches in Japan more truly reflect the warmth and loving support of an ideal Christian family. May we do our part to make it so.

In closing I will share a tract put out by Concordia Tract Mission that mysteriously turned up on my desk last month when I began to think in earnest about preparing this message. Maybe an angel put it there. It is written by a man named Jaroslave Vajda, with no explanation of his situation or nationality. But it speaks eloquently of our common human needs and aspirations. The title is “Make Us A Family.”

MAKE US A FAMILY

We're tired of being alone, Lord.

A little solitude goes a long way, and we've had more than enough.

Now, while there is time, fulfill our longings for a family,

for the security of a father catching us up in his arms after work,

heroic in our eyes, one to walk the unknown path before us;

and a mother: kitchen-warm, bedtime-near, keeper of the dream;

brothers and sisters: secret-sharers, quick forgivers;

funmakers, growing through it all together;

children: incredible miracles, haunting images of ourselves,

hope for tomorrow, bittersweet joys.

Gather us into a family—us loose pieces of a living jigsaw puzzle.

Make us belong to someone beside Yourself—someone who is

flesh of our flesh and bone of our bones.

Gather us all into a family, Lord,

all Your children everywhere—one faith, one baptism,

one Lord, yes—and one world,

one family, where each belongs to each,

where each belongs, warm and safe,

where we can hear laughter and singing

and greet each other with love

in a rare and overdue reunion.

(Reprinted from This Day)

P. S. A few days after returning home a friend sent us a helpful book that I think many in our Hayama family would find helpful:

THE HURTING FAMILY, by MARGIE M. LEWIS, Zondervan, 1980.