

# Missions

## JAPAN

### A Glimpse Below the Surface

Lessons from a  
Missionary's Legacy

"What's Next?"  
Youth Conference Report

15 Bags, 15 Years—  
Serving the Lord in Paraguay





# Thinking It Through

KEITH KEYSER

## All the King's Men

On the Mount of Olives, the Lord Jesus gave His disciples a verbal tour of the last days of the world as we presently know it. In an astonishing display of grace, He speaks of bringing the truth to the governing elite. "But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them." (Mark 13:9) He predicted the ill-treatment that these authorities would dole out to them; then He instructed them to present the good news to these same authorities. Rather than a mere platitude, "love your enemies" is Christ's missions modus operandi; accordingly, it is standard operating procedure for His servants in all ages.

### Suffering witnesses

The Lord described events that stretch far beyond the first century into the still future period that Bible students call the tribulation, which is also known as "the time of Jacob's trouble." (Matthew 24:29; Jeremiah 30:7) Not only would the 12 apostles suffer and strive for the Gospel, but future believers of that dispensation (not to mention Christians today) must also "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." (Jude 3) From the beginning of his Christian life, Paul knew that his pathway would entail suffering (Acts 9:16). No wonder that he later repeatedly stressed this element of the believer's life, such as in his famous aphorism: "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12) Echoing His teaching in Mark 13, the Lord also promised that the persecutor-turned-preacher would evangelize the powerful of this world, telling the man who baptized him that "this man is an elect vessel to me, to bear my name before both nations and kings and the sons of Israel." (Acts 9:15)

Considering their treatment of the Savior, one might naturally think that God has little regard for the powerful of the earth. After all, 1 Corinthians 1:26 observes: "For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh,

not many mighty, not many noble, are called." However, it is essential to read Scripture carefully; it does not exclude all people who are naturally wise, mighty, and noble in this world. As one 19th-century noble-born disciple expressed it: "I am so glad that it says 'many' rather than 'any.'" (Thank the Lord for faithful Christians like Lord Congleton [aka John Parnell], Lady Powerscourt, and Lord Radstock. This last brother was a bold missionary to the royal and aristocratic houses of Europe as well as the upper echelon of Czarist Russian society.<sup>1</sup>)

### Order in the court

Instead of rejecting the privileged ruling classes, the Lord seeks to woo and win them just like other sinners. "Kings and all who are in authority" are specifically listed in the exhortation of 1 Timothy 2:1–7 for prayers to be offered for all men—with a special view to them being saved through faith in the "one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5) The testimony of believers on trial (such as Paul's various hearings before the Sanhedrin, Felix, Festus, and Herod Agrippa) presents a powerful, sustained witness to the reality of the risen Christ. If Jesus were a mere human teacher, whose bones lay in a tomb, then the early Christians would have caved under the intense religious and governmental pressure that was put upon them. Through the risen Christ's commissioning, and the empowering of the indwelling Holy Spirit that He gave to them, the first century saints bore testimony to the Lord Jesus and His Gospel.

That same spirit—"of power, love, and a sound mind"—enables the modern church to speak truth to the powers that be (2 Timothy 1:7). Believers are to pay taxes, honor rulers, and obey the laws of civil authorities. But when the cause of Christ brings them into conflict with governmental leaders, they "...ought to obey God, rather than men." (Acts 5:29) The representatives in glory from every kindred, tribe, and tongue will doubtless contain some from the moneyed and powerful of this world. By then, they will be well-practiced at casting their crowns at the Lord's feet. Hallelujah, what a Savior! ■

<sup>1</sup>GospelHall.org/index.php?option=com\_content&task=view&id=3141 BelieversMagazine.com/bm.php?i=20081211 Archive.org/details/lordradstockinte00trotrich

# JAPAN

## A Glimpse Below the Surface

BY TIMOTHY MARCY



When you think of Japan, what immediately comes to mind? Mt. Fuji? Sushi? North Americans are so far removed from Japanese life it's understandably difficult to think of anything but surface things like these. For instance, almost everyone knows Japan as an economic superpower. Toyota and Sony are household names. You may be aware that Japanese are by and large well educated, hardworking and financially prosperous. Their scientists are world-class and their technology cutting-edge. You may even know that since the war Japan has been one of the safest and most peace-loving nations in the world. The crime rate is low.<sup>1</sup> Individuals and communities are as a rule clean, neat and orderly.

Just below the surface, however, there are many things you may not know about Japan. For instance, did you know Japan has the ninth highest suicide rate in the world? On March 11, 2011, a massive tsunami struck northeastern Japan. Taking the highest number given for casualties, about 25,000 lost their lives. That number is staggering, but equally gripping is the fact that in that same year there were more than 35,000 suicides. That means that in 2011 by far more people died from suicide than as a result of the tsunami. According to government statistics, every year from 1998 through 2011, more than 30,000 Japanese took their own lives.<sup>2</sup> In a manner of speaking, then, there's a tsunami in Japan every year—a tsunami of suicides.

## THE REALITY OF SUICIDE

When my wife and I arrived in Japan several years ago, we came head-on with this issue of suicide. Soon after arriving we went out for coffee with a man who was my English student back in the early 1990s. (When I was younger I spent almost four years teaching English in Japan.) It was a happy reunion, but I had the impression he wasn't his old, cheerful self. A few weeks later we received a phone call from him. His voice sounded agitated and I knew something was wrong. He got right to the point and told me he was about to slip off a chair and hang himself. By God's grace I convinced him not to follow through. Since then, he underwent treatment and regained some stability in his life.

So why do so many Japanese end their own lives? It's not easy to explain. More than 60 factors have been found that, with at least four being present in each case, lead to the despair that ends in suicide. Some of these are unemployment, overwork, debt, relationship problems, family discord, caring for elderly parents, and depression.<sup>3</sup> A Japanese unable to cope with problems like these is a failure in his own eyes and fears the censure and rejection of others. Since the Japanese identity is so bound up in group harmony and acceptance, hope for the future disappears and such a person chooses the option that will cause others the least shame or disappointment—he removes himself.

## A LIVING SUICIDE

Another less drastic way of removing oneself from society is called "hikikomori," which literally means "pulling oneself into seclusion." It's a kind of living suicide, in which a person shuts himself up in his room and refuses to interact with others. This problem is widespread among young people who, because they've failed to fit in, have been bullied or otherwise persecuted to the point of despair.<sup>4</sup> There's a young man in one of the families at our assembly who was hikikomori

for about 10 years but has recently come out of seclusion and managed to get his GED.

Cases of hikikomori are more and more common among adults as well. Within our first year in Japan we were introduced to Mrs. T., who had essentially dropped out of society. Overwhelmed with hatred for her husband, who had betrayed her deeply, she entered a depressed state. She was treated with lots of meds and ended up sleeping most of the day in her apartment. When she had recovered enough



to begin attending Gospel meetings, we also invited her to our house. After talking with her several times, she put her faith in Christ. Since then she's been experiencing growing freedom as her understanding of forgiveness deepens.

## TRADITIONS HARDEN HEARTS

We are seeing souls saved here and couldn't be more excited about this, but compared to the total population, Christians in Japan are like a drop in a bucket. Did you know that of Japan's 126 million people, only .25 percent are evangelical Christians?<sup>5</sup> In more practical terms, if 400 Japanese pass you by, according to statistics, only one will be a genuine believer. The Gospel has been preached in Japan for 450 years now, and the door has been wide open to missionaries since after the war. Why then are there not more people like Mrs. T. embracing the hope held out in the Gospel?

The simple answer is that the Japanese are born sinners, hell-bent on resisting God and the truth of His Gospel. But this doesn't distinguish them from any other people group in the world. What makes the Japanese different? From our perspective, Satan has an unusually

*Those whose hearts are attracted to the Gospel often **RESIST** it because they **FEAR***

tight grip on the Japanese. To maintain this grip he uses various devices, but topping the list are tradition and pride, perpetuated through two ubiquitous forms of idolatry.

### **IDOLATRY: THEN AND NOW**

First, traditional idolatry. Japan's two major religions are Shintoism and Buddhism. The average Japanese owns no scriptures for either religion. But this doesn't matter, since far more important than what you're to believe is what you're supposed to do. For instance, the average person doesn't bow and pray to a cold, stone image of Buddha because she has compared the tenets of all major world religions and concluded Buddhism is most worthy of her devotion. She does so because her mother, grandmother and great-grandmother did so before her, and she's expected to follow suit.

In this regard, traditions surrounding funerals and the Buddhist family grave are particularly binding. Anyone who doesn't follow course and offer incense and pray to his ancestors is considered disloyal to the family and somehow less-than-Japanese. Those whose hearts are attracted to the Gospel often resist it because they fear the reaction of their families. Satan uses the pride of maintaining traditions on the one hand and fear of persecution on the other to keep generation after generation in a spiritual death grip.

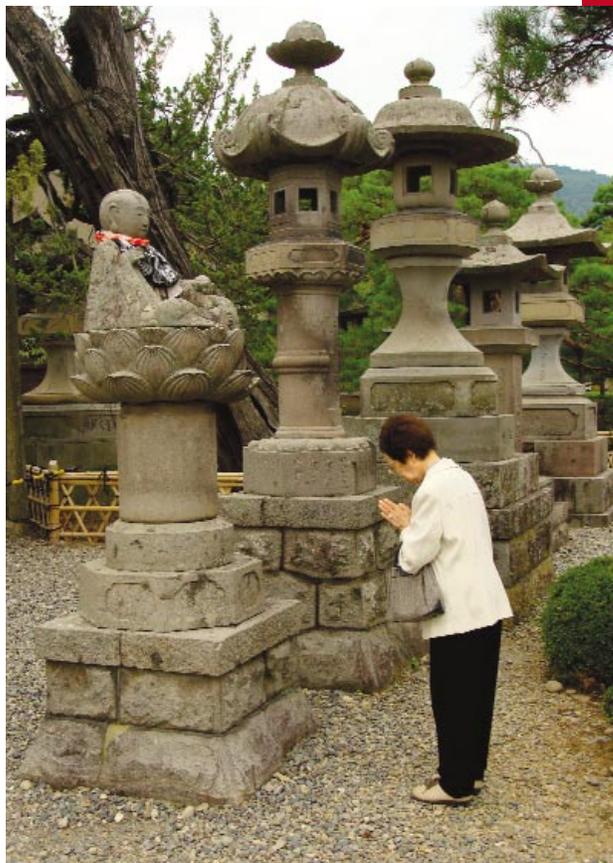
Second, there is contemporary idolatry. In today's Japan, education has become a god. With a good education, you get a high-paying job. With a high-paying job, you get lots of money. With lots of money, you buy what you want. Work, money, and consumer goods have become gods. But from my perspective, the ultimate god in Japan is simply being Japanese.

Imagine climbing a tall building and taking a photo of modern Tokyo. Then imagine taking a photo from the same spot in August 1945, the month Japan surrendered. What would you see? Nothing but ashes and rubble. In 65 years Japan has risen from the ashes of defeat to cre-

ate the third largest economy in the world.<sup>6</sup> If you were an unsaved Japanese, how would you feel about that? The pride of loyalty, uniqueness, and accomplishment is extremely strong here. Being part of this small island nation, which at one point controlled half of Asia and has made itself a modern economic superpower, is, in my opinion, the greatest idol in Japan.

### **SMILING FACES, WEeping HEARTS**

I have to admit, what the Japanese have accomplished economically is, on one level, awe-inspiring, and yet on the very day you're reading this article, according to statistics, about 75 Japanese will end their own lives. Tomorrow another 75, and so on. The Japanese people are truly, as Paul put it, "without hope and without God in the world."<sup>7</sup> They've made for themselves impotent gods and empty



**Opposite page:** Mrs. T and Christiane at church.  
**Above:** Woman praying at Zenkoji, a Buddhist temple.

JAPAN

*the reaction of their families.*



hopes. While the majority of Japanese are financially stable, spiritual poverty is visible everywhere you look. In this sense it can be said that Japan, although an economic superpower, is one of the poorest nations on the globe.

This article gives only a sampling of Japan's spiritual needs. We could easily go on about various other issues plaguing Japan. We should not overlook the Japanese people because outwardly they seem so accomplished and stable. We just had dinner with unsaved friends who told us that, although we always see them smiling, in their hearts they're weeping. For me this is a microcosm of the entire country.

### PRAY FOR MORE WORKERS; BE A WORKER

So how should we respond? What can we do? First of all, we can pray. In Japan it's very true that laborers are few. We can obey Christ's command and pray that He'll send more gospel workers to the Japanese field. Open your *Missionary Prayer Handbook* and see that only four couples from the North American assemblies are here in Japan, and none of us is getting any younger. Where is the next generation of assembly missionaries to Japan? In order to pray more intelligently, assemblies can be in contact with missionaries in Japan, get current information on needs, pray for specific requests, and praise God when answers come.

Second, in answer to Christ's command, we can go. As the Lord leads we can send mature, qualified, and experienced believers from our

assemblies as new missionaries to Japan. The door is currently wide open. The Japanese constitution guarantees religious freedom—at present. How long this will last, no one knows, but as of now, Japan is still issuing missionary visas.

It's true there are already close to 150 Japanese-led assemblies in Japan, so some may ask, "Is there still really a need for foreign missionaries to Japan?" In response to that question, there's no addendum to the Great Commission that says, "Stop going to a particular place once national-led assemblies have been established." Of Japan's 126,000,000, only 315,000 are evangelical believers. Right now in Japan there is only one assembly for every 840,000 unsaved Japanese. The Japanese church doesn't have adequate numbers or resources to evangelize their own people. This makes Japan the second-most unreached people group in the world, second only to the Shaikh people of Bangladesh.<sup>8</sup> Does Japan still need foreign missionaries? As far as I'm concerned, that question hardly needs to be asked.

Please consider more deeply the spiritual needs of Japan and before the Lord see how He'd have you participate in the work of the Gospel here. ■



*Timothy and Christiane Marcy were commended in 2009 by the assembly in Ardsley, Pennsylvania.*

**Above (L-R):** Mrs. I. with mother-in-law and Christiane; Sumi and Tim; Tim looking at Tokyo below.

<sup>1</sup> The Japan Times. "Crime rate in Japan falls for the 11th straight year." [www.JapanTimes.co.jp/news/2014/01/10/national/crime-legal/crime-rate-in-japan-falls-11th-straight-year/#.U3OGyhzehR](http://www.JapanTimes.co.jp/news/2014/01/10/national/crime-legal/crime-rate-in-japan-falls-11th-straight-year/#.U3OGyhzehR); <sup>2</sup> The Japan Times. "Suicide Rate in Decline." [www.JapanTimes.co.jp/opinion/2013/02/04/editorials/suicide-rate-in-decline/#.U2eXHK1dUQQ](http://www.JapanTimes.co.jp/opinion/2013/02/04/editorials/suicide-rate-in-decline/#.U2eXHK1dUQQ); <sup>3</sup> *Ibid*; <sup>4</sup> Kremer, William, and Claudia Hammond. "Hikikomori: Why are so many Japanese men refusing to leave their rooms?" BBC News. [www.BBC.com/news/magazine-23182523](http://www.BBC.com/news/magazine-23182523); <sup>5</sup> OMF International. "Japanese." [www.OMF.org/omf/us/peoples\\_and\\_places/people\\_groups/japanese](http://www.OMF.org/omf/us/peoples_and_places/people_groups/japanese); <sup>6</sup> Bergmann, Andrew. "World's largest economies." CNNMoney. [Money.CNN.com/news/economy/world\\_economies\\_gdp](http://Money.CNN.com/news/economy/world_economies_gdp); <sup>7</sup> Ephesians 2:12; <sup>8</sup> Joshua Project. "People Group Listings." [JoshuaProject.net/listings/Population/desc/25/allctry/allcon/allreg?jps2=5&jps3=5](http://JoshuaProject.net/listings/Population/desc/25/allctry/allcon/allreg?jps2=5&jps3=5).

# Available, Faithful, Teachable

## *Lessons from a Missionary's Legacy*

BY JOSHUA MIEKLEY

*"The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others." (2 Timothy 2:2)*

"You have freedom," Ron Young replied via email when I asked his permission to write this article, "but don't feel constrained to only write about the good and nice; mistakes can also be helpful." Without knowing it, Ron summed up exactly what I planned to say in this article—that a willingness to take an honest look at oneself can be helpful to others.

I got to know Ron while we worked as church planters in Albania. Ron and his wife Carrie served in Albania for a total of 18 years, returning to Texas in 2013 to help care for Ron's aging parents. It has often been said that the type of man or woman God uses must be available, faithful and teachable. The purpose of this article is to look at the practical lessons that you and I can learn from Ron's availability, faithfulness and teachability.

## AVAILABLE

*From the U.S. to Spain to Albania*

*"Here am I, send me." (Isaiah 6:8)*

Ron has impressed me as a solid example of someone who made himself available to be used by God. Ron grew up near Alamosa, Colorado. He was by nature a shy kid, often keeping to himself and never jumping in with strangers. But when Ron and his wife Carrie came to Christ in their early 20s, his love for the Lord, passion for souls, and respect for other people changed that.

Ron and Carrie moved to Spain with a family of six children in 1990, devoting themselves to evangelism and church planting for five years in the small town of Jaca. When an opportunity to fulfill a need in Albania opened up, they moved their fam-

ily of eight children to the city of Elbasan in late 1995. Ron and Carrie loved the people of Albania, with five of their 10 children getting married to Albanian believers while they were there.

What can you and I learn from Ron's example of being available to be used by the Lord? Another way to ask this question is, "If I made myself completely available to God, what would be the first thing God would send me to do?"



## FAITHFUL

*Helping people in need*

*"Love your neighbor as yourself." (Luke 10:27)*

In addition to Ron making himself available, I appreciated his faithfulness in reaching many people in Albania's forgotten villages. He would drive hours away from the city on the worst imaginable roads even if it was just to meet with one or two Christians or to slowly walk through the Scriptures with someone seeking Christ. Ron's commitment to these people—old and young—was unwavering. During a short period of anarchy in Albania, in order to visit a village, Ron even defied armed

**Above:** A village in rural Albania that Ron visited for years.

bandits who had blocked the road attempting to stop vehicles from passing through.

“The thing that impressed me the most about Ron,” said Andy Burghardt, a church planter from Germany who worked with him, “was that he was very willing to meet peoples’ physical needs. You wouldn’t believe how many people he drove to



the hospital, how many times he was interrupted during lunch—even just to hand out some burn cream to a villager who knocked at the door.”

In one of the remote villages where Ron led a weekly Bible study, a very poor young mother had triplet girls. Since she wasn’t able to provide adequately for them and they weren’t gaining weight, Ron and others began to supply them with milk and other basic needs. Soon Ron learned that the triplets’ father would sell the milk and supplies to buy cigarettes! With no other alternatives, Ron arranged for the three girls to go to an orphanage where they were well cared for for many years.

Andy continued, “Often on the way back from a village he would go another route to help someone deliver his sack of wheat to the market.” Ron was very generous, “sharing his vehicle with almost everyone who had a license,” added Andy.

Let’s again take a look at our lives. How has God uniquely prepared you to faithfully care for those in need in your family, your church and your community?

## TEACHABLE

*Willing to admit mistakes*

*“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” (2 Corinthians 12:9)*

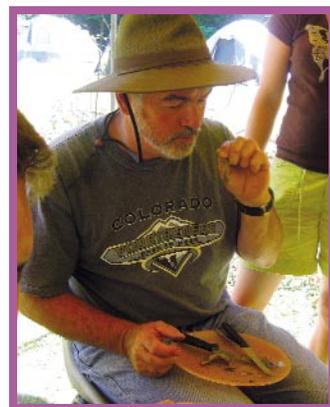
What I learned most from Ron was the difference it makes when we are willingly transparent about our shortcomings. It’s often challenging for Christians—perhaps even more for missionaries—to confess sin and to admit where we’ve made incorrect choices. But Ron was not afraid to let others see both

his strengths and his weaknesses. Andy, one of Ron’s co-workers added, “I think the fact that Ron had people live with him, sit with the family at the table... made people see his marital and family life.” A few years ago, after Ron took some youth from the church on a camping trip, one of the teens shared with me, “It was really encouraging for me to hear that even Ron—our missionary—struggles and to see how God is helping him.”

Let me share how Ron’s willingness to admit his shortcomings had an impact on me. My wife and I had spent a couple years in the neighboring country of Kosovo when Ron and some of his family came to visit us. While at our home for the weekend, Ron went out for coffee with a young Christian man I had been meeting with.

When Ron returned he told me, “Josh, you might want to talk to him because he seems to be having a hard time reading the Bible consistently.” That’s weird, I thought to myself, why did my friend open up to Ron the first time they met when he hadn’t shared this with me during the two years of our friendship?

But I swallowed my pride and took Ron’s advice. After all, I thought, Ron has often shared stories of his mistakes and what he’s learned from them, so this is just part of the process for me. I met with my friend the next week. He was discouraged, thinking that he had let me down. On top of that, he was embarrassed that up until that point, he didn’t have the courage to tell me. I told him that I also had similar struggles.



This conversation sparked the beginning of a more transparent, open relationship where our discipleship times involved not just Bible study and Scripture memorization, but also confession and repentance. My friend and I began to learn each other’s weaknesses. We’ve talked about areas of deep struggle, and we’ve seen the Gospel of Christ shine on areas of



darkness and bring about transformation. I’m thankful that Ron challenged me to initiate a deeper relationship with this friend, and I’m glad that Ron had set the stage for this gentle rebuke by wisely admitting his own struggles as well.

**Left:** Ron leading young people on a mountain hike. **Right (from top):** Ron eating a snake he caught and cooked over a fire; Ron, Carrie and three sons.

Let me suggest a couple applications that may be helpful for you.

1. Make confessing sin to God a regular part of your relationship with Him (1 John 1:9).

2. Find a trusted friend with whom you can share your struggles. God doesn't command us to confess every sin to every person we know—that would be an abuse of Scriptural teaching on confession. However, it's easy for us to swing to the other extreme as well by not confessing sin or sharing struggles at all with others.

### *Learn from those before us*

I realize Ron's not perfect. After all, he was the first one in this article to admit that! But thankfully, he's left a legacy of availability, faithfulness and teachability—a legacy we can learn from. What will you learn from this legacy? ■



*Joshua and Bona Miekley are commended by Northern Hills Bible Chapel, Cincinnati, Ohio.*



BY ANNIE O'CONNOR

In their teenage years, young people are faced with important "what's next" questions. For many, it's the first time they are required to make life-changing decisions: what school to go to; what friends to associate with; what ministries to be involved with. In an effort to encourage Christian young people to faithfully follow the Lord in the steps that come next in their lives, CMML hosts the annual "What's Next?" conference for junior and senior high students (approximately grades 7 through 12).



Held Saturday, May 10, this year's conference attracted 90 teens and youth leaders. Missionaries Ken Hardisty (Philippines) and Sid Halsband (South Africa) shared from God's Word and challenged the audience to follow the Lord and make decisions that will bear eternal fruit. Bob Dadd, CMML president, and Stefan Johnson, an Emmaus Bible College representative, briefly shared about each organization's ministry. Additionally, participants enjoyed a barbecue lunch, and games including volleyball, basketball, and various field activities.



Additional photos from this year's event can be viewed on CMML's Facebook and Instagram accounts. Lord willing, CMML will host the fourth "What's Next?" conference in spring 2015. ■

# Home with the Lord

**Joan Lehmann**

*Missionary to Colombia • 1925–2014*



The youngest of six siblings, Joan Leece was born May 8, 1925, in Stockton-On-Tees, North East England. When she was four years old her father moved the family to Canada, where he became an administrator of apple farms in southern Ontario.

Joan started working when she was a teenager, and during those years she met Christian friends who led her to Christ. She attended Ontario Bible College for two years and then transferred to Emmaus Bible School in Toronto. It was there we met.

In 1952, a professor took some young people to the Bahamas for DVBS and evangelism. Through that experience, we both became interested in serving the Lord and were married in 1955 after finishing Emmaus. We worked in the Bahamas for three years doing children's work, open-air preaching, and assembly building. But gradually we became burdened for peoples who do not have the Bible in their own language.

We returned from the Bahamas and prepared for missionary work among tribal people in Colombia. This was difficult for Joan, since we were happy and blessed in the work in the Bahamas. But she willingly studied with me, and during those four years the Lord blessed us with our daughter Lavinia Joy. The Lord also used us to help start an assembly west of Chicago during those years of preparation. That assembly, Warrenville Bible Chapel, joined our commending assembly, Blasdell Gospel Chapel, in sending us to Colombia.

Again, it was difficult for Joan to study Spanish in Bogotá, but the Lord helped us, and we began to work with the Yukpa Indians of northeast Colombia. We hardly got started when Joan and I contracted hepatitis. After we recovered, we made our first trip to the mountains where the Indians lived. Before

we left that morning, Joan read the *Daily Light* portion which was Isaiah 43:2, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." This was a sure promise from the Lord; that very day we had to walk down a mountainside which had been set afire by the Indians to clear land and then down to the river to cross safely.

After a few years among the Indians, it became necessary for us to leave Colombia for a time. During those days, our fellow missionary who replaced us was killed. Joan was spared the abuse of those men who came to kill me and to rob our house. Before we left, we chose a little boy at an orphanage and later adopted him. We named our son Ernest for the brother who died in my place.

We later returned to work with Literature Crusade and are still involved with the Bible correspondence ministry. Joan was a blessing to many believers in Colombia. She befriended the family next to us, and they were won to the Lord. Her loving and tender heart for Colombians left a

lasting impact on many lives.

Her parting was peaceful here at home, although she had suffered long. She was blessed to be near her grandchildren. Moments before she died, Anthony told her "Nana, I love you." and Joan softly replied, "I love you, too." Those were the only words she spoke. While we sang hymns, she was peacefully taken from us to her heavenly home. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." (Psalm 116:15) ■

## "Gone From My Sight"

by Henry Van Dyke

I am standing upon the seashore. A ship, at my side,  
spreads her white sails to the moving breeze and starts  
for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength.  
I stand and watch her until, at length, she hangs like a speck  
of white cloud just where the sea and sky come to mingle with each other.

Then, someone at my side says, "There, she is gone!"

Gone where?

Gone from my sight. That is all. She is just as large in mast,  
hull and spar as she was when she left my side.  
And, she is just as able to bear her load of living freight to her destined port.

Her diminished size is in me—not in her.  
And, just at the moment when someone says, "There, she is gone,"  
there are other eyes watching her coming, and other voices  
ready to take up the glad shout, "Here she comes!"

And that is dying.

CARL LEHMANN



# Fifteen Bags, Fifteen Years

## SERVING THE LORD IN PARAGUAY



BY DALE AND ROSEMARY KONKOL

### September 1999

This September marks 15 years since we left the U.S. to serve the Lord as full-time missionaries in Paraguay. We had barely been married two years when we sold most everything, put some personal items in storage in a friend's garage and packed what we thought we needed. Back in the good old days of airline travel when you could pay for extra luggage, we packed 15 suitcases and plastic tubs and headed to the airport. After an overnight flight we arrived in Asuncion, Paraguay, and were picked up by the host of our mission's guest house. We had felt the Lord's leading to move to Paraguay but did not have clearly defined where in the country God was leading. After we spent a month at the guest house, a friend mentioned a house for rent near her, so we moved there. All the while we studied Spanish and Guarani (the Indian language that was spoken before the Spaniards arrived), made numerous visits to Immigration to get our residency papers and, whenever able, traveled to visit other missionaries and major cities, praying for God's direction as we went.

After eight months (and having received permanent residency), we felt led to move to San Juan Bautista, (population 20,000) capital of the department of Misiones (a department is similar to a state or province). We found a house to rent and started "the work." One of the things that is different about being a missionary, for us at least, is the lack of a human boss and a business-determined schedule. How exactly does one start a work or be a missionary? In our case, looking "foreign" was the ticket. As we went about our daily routine, people would ask us what we were doing in their town. We answered, "We are here to help people to understand the Bible. Would you like to study God's Word?" Many would answer negatively, but slowly some interest began. Some of the first contacts were through a young man's desire to practice English, which led to reading the New Testament out loud in a simple English translation and then a Bible study and his salvation; a university student looking for a classmate but going to the wrong house (and coming to our door which led to a Bible study and salvation); and even a minor car accident on a rainy road. When

Dale went to a mechanic to get an estimate, he met a man whose car was being repaired after his son hit a cow. Casual conversation led to a Bible study which led to the man's salvation.

Little by little and through different means, the Lord Jesus began to build His Church. In August 2001 the first Breaking of Bread service was held and Iglesia Biblica (Bible Church) of San Juan Bautista was born.

### 2002

A young lady, who worked as a waitress in a little restaurant we sometimes ate at, came to our home one day asking us to help her mom who had advanced cancer. We gave the woman a ride to the hospital and began to get to know Maria Asuncion. She had had some contact with missionaries before and made a profession of faith but hadn't learned much about the Christian life. We took our sister in the Lord to the capital for several months of radiation treatment and meanwhile cared for her two youngest daughters. Little did we know that our lives would be forever changed! As time went on, we had to accept that the treatments were not helping, and she grew sicker and weaker. Maria Asuncion then asked us to take in Elizabeth and Liliana, ages four and eight. God used the story of the Good Samaritan to show us that we, the foreigners, were the ones to care for the girls. In the midst of all the medical and legal occupations, we discovered we were expecting a child of our own! So in 2002 we had "triplets"—becoming legal guardians to Ellie and Lily and having Sarah! It is a different family but such a blessing.



Konkol family—2002 and 2013

Having a family changed our ministry, causing Rosemary to spend more time at home, but at the same time helped it tremendously as people saw that we took in and loved two girls who were not biologically ours. As parents, we also became involved in the public schools. Slowly but steadily God added to the church those that were being saved. Either through contact with us personally or through the first believers sharing with their friends and family, more people were accepting Jesus as their Savior. With our growing family, we moved from our rental home to our own house.

### 2007

At its beginning, Iglesia Biblica met in our living room or on our porch. As more and more people attended meetings, and wanting to have a more visible presence in the town, we began to look for a place for a church building. We bought

property on the edge of town and were just about to begin building when five siblings approached us about selling their old family home that had been used as a night club for several years but was now abandoned. The location was wonderful and the Lord provided the funds, so at the end of 2007 we purchased the building. It required much elbow grease and many coats of paint to transform the black building—inside and out—to a place of light and life.

Several times, young people have attended meetings just to see what it looks like now. We have a main meeting room, two classrooms, a large kitchen, restrooms, a very large yard for playing volleyball and holding children's meetings, and a small house where a family from the meeting lives, providing a 24-hour presence and security for the building. Praise the Lord, we are quite full most Sundays and are praying and investigating options to remodel and create a larger meeting room.



A MAN'S HEART  
PLANS HIS WAY,  
BUT THE LORD  
DIRECTS HIS STEPS.

Proverbs 16:9



**Top (L-R):** Church building 2007; 2010; 2013. **Middle:** Children coming to a church program. **Bottom (L-R):** Kids' program at the church building; Church gathered in the backyard for a baptism; Young ladies serving at a fellowship meal.

## Looking ahead

When we were planning to leave the U.S., we idealistically thought that we could stay in a town for five years, establish an assembly, and then move on! After 15 years here in San Juan Bautista, and just now having a stable meeting and the beginnings of local leadership, we have had to rethink our vision. We are focusing more on training the believers and encouraging them to reach out beyond our boundaries. Currently there is a small Bible study led by two Paraguayan brothers and conducted almost all in Guarani in a village about 7 miles outside of town. That is something that we would never be able to do. We have a desire to reach some of the surrounding towns with the Gospel. Traveling north, the next closest assembly is about one and a half hours away (150 kilometers or 93 miles) and to

the south, about two and a half hours (166 km or 103 mi). In between there are many good-sized towns, with between 15,000 and 25,000 inhabitants, that have small evangelical works, mostly Pentecostal, but no New Testament assemblies. Please pray with us as we look for where God is at work and get involved. We have learned that "a man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps." (Proverbs 16:9) ■



*Dale and Rosemary Konkol met at MOP (Missionary Orientation Program) in 1997. They are commended by the assemblies in Alamosa, Colorado, and Berkeley Heights, New Jersey. They, along with their three daughters, serve the Lord in Paraguay.*

## Emmaus ICS Students Visit CMML

BY JENNIFER ROGERS

Students in Emmaus Bible College's inter-cultural studies (ICS) program visited CMML to see how a faith-based missionary service organization works. They learned firsthand what missionaries go through before going out on the mission field. The Emmaus ICS major requires students to complete a semester-long cross-cultural internship that places them alongside an experienced mentor in an international setting where they are involved in research, begin studying the language, and put the skills they learned in the classroom to use.

Joel Hernandez, the ICS department chair and former missionary to Mexico, Dr. Frank Jabini, another ICS faculty member, and Dr. Jabini's wife Irene, made the trip to CMML with eight of their students. They were excited to stay at the Missionary Guest Home and meet with the CMML staff to learn about the services they provide to missionaries. The seminar topics included: the new work of missionary care and assembly relations; writing a newsletter and the importance of communication while on the field; a challenge from CMML's president, Robert Dadd; and the history of CMML, which included a tour of the Guest Home.

The next day, Joel reviewed the ICS orientation with the students, and then they had free time in the afternoon to enjoy CMML's grounds and the surrounding area. In the evening they learned about the Missionary Orientation Program (MOP) and the paperwork needed for new missionaries. They also drafted their own "May We Introduce" testimony to give to their missionary mentors.

Please pray for these students as they seek the Lord's guidance in their internships. CMML is excited to work with Emmaus's ICS program to help students prepare for the mission field. ■





# Home with the Lord

## Pearl Winterburn

Missionary to the DR Congo • 1920–2014



### *P*ersevering:

Pearl was born and raised near Norland, Ontario, on the shores of Head Lake. Her parents, John and Carrie Winterburn, had a small farm and eventually enlarged their home into a tourist facility called Sunset Lodge. Pearl and her two brothers, Jack and Cecil, walked three and a half miles to the one-room school—summer and winter! Pearl was a great help to her mother, who was handicapped with Parkinson’s disease. At age 13, she learned about God’s love to her through His Son Jesus, and accepted Him as her personal Savior. Determined to become a nurse, Pearl attended high school in Lindsay, Ontario—35 miles from home. She found a place to live where she could work for her room and board, and became active in a Christian youth group at the high school. She moved to Toronto for her last year of high school and three years nurses’ training at Women’s College Hospital. Her parents moved to North Bay, so Pearl applied for work at the North Bay Civic Hospital and lived with her parents and sister Alma.

In 1946 Civic Hospital approved her proposal to take a course at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore to qualify as a surgical supervisor. Next, it was Emmaus Bible School in Toronto. Then in 1950 she went to Bethel Bible School in Sherbrooke, Quebec, for a year of French language instruction. Contact with Bill Deans, missionary from Africa, provided her with information about the need in Belgian Congo and gave her a strong sense that the Lord was asking her to go there.

### *E*nduring:

Breaking the news to her father was difficult, especially with his concern for her mother’s health. It made their parting very sad. However, Pearl was sure that it was God’s will for her to go, and He would heal the bitterness her father felt. She spent a little over a year in Belgium to earn the required certification in the French language, colonialism, and tropical diseases. Her six-week internship in the hospital in Stanleyville was a difficult experience. However, with her certificate in hand, Pearl arrived in Nyankunde, Belgian Congo, in August 1953.

Her father became gravely ill, so Pearl flew home and was

able to spend three days at his side before he died on June 29, 1957. Her mother died on April 10, 1958. Pearl completed a course in midwifery at Johns Hopkins University, and returned to Africa July 23, 1958.

### *A*chieving:

During the next 45 years Pearl experienced the turbulence of independence, tribal unrest, the Simba Rebellion, and numerous evacuations. More importantly was her offering of love, care and healing to her people, confirming her primary purpose in going to Africa.

### *R*esilient:

Terrifying situations she encountered because of political unrest in D.R. Congo could have left her fearful and even angry, but Pearl had a sense of the Lord’s protection.

### *L*oyal:

In 2002 Pearl broke her hip and, after surgery in Nairobi, flew home to North Bay. Even through discouraging situations, Pearl kept in close communication with Mandro and Joici at Tchabi and prayed for and supported the work there. In 2007 former missionaries Ed and Hilde Morrow accompanied Pearl to Africa. She had come to say goodbye! It was a wonderfully busy two weeks, which thrilled her heart. Her close friends Margaret Allison, Val and Marg Crosswell, and Alma Turnbull met her at the airport. They asked her if she planned to visit there again. She responded “No, I asked the Lord to give me an opportunity to make one last visit to say goodbye to my people. He granted my request, and I’m content!” These comments affirm the God-given “grit” of her 54 years of loving and serving her beloved African people.

“PEARL” ACROSTIC BY HUGH INNES  
MEMORIAL BY ALMA TURNBULL