

## **JAPAN'S CHRISTIAN ROOTS**

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Missionary to Japan and Asia since 1951

A. THE WORLD'S GREATEST MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

B. A NEW APPROACH TO EVANGELIZING BUDDHISTS IN JAPAN AND ASIA

### **A. THE WORLD'S GREATEST MISSIONARY MOVEMENT**

Why did Wheaton College's President V.R. Edman and Yale University's Kenneth Scott Latourette both say, without knowing each other, that *the Nestorian (Assyrian, Keikyo) missionaries were the greatest missionary movement the world had ever seen?*

What are the implications for today's missionary to Buddhist Japan?

1. Proclaim that Christianity wasn't made in NY and the Bible wasn't written in Chicago, but in the Middle East, the center of the world, standing squarely between the east and the west. That's where Jesus was born and that's where the Bible and Gospel came from. Therefore, Christianity is no more foreign than India's Gautama Buddha.

2. Proclaim that we are the "older brother" and that at one time in Japan's history, Christianity was the largest organized religion in the nation, in order to demolish the "This is a Buddhist Country" statement.

3. Proclaim that up to 1,300,000 Christian Japanese were martyred before America was founded as a country. Millions of today's Buddhists have Christian ancestors. We must ask them to return to the "faith of their fathers". Buddhism as an organized religion is only about 200 years old (before that, priests and temples acted as a city hall, registering births and deaths, keeping records of address changes, etc.). We must seek out some of the 80 Japanese surnames which have Christian ancestors, going back 5 generations, names like Azuma, Higashi, Hata, etc., and ask them to come back to their martyred ancestors' faith.

4. Avoid some of the mistakes that brought Keikyo low, such as:

- Praying for the dead, because the Chinese emperor bribed them to
- Watering down the Gospel under the pretext of contextualization to make it more palatable to the natives
- Compromising their faith by intermarrying with unbelieving nationals and thus diminishing their strict separatism
- Trusting too much in their own nationalism and their own doctors, teachers, and preachers and not delegating more responsibility to nationals, as Paul did to Timothy and as Timothy did to other faithful men. We see this today in Korean, Filipino and Chinese missionaries to Japan. Our mission sponsors 50 of them, so we talk from experience.

## **B. NEW APPROACH TO EVANGELIZING BUDDHISTS IN JAPAN AND ASIA**

Preach the minimum Gospel in pre-evangelism: Japanese "Christian Weddings," where, in over 1,000 million dollar chapels, 80 to 120 attend. A Southern Baptist calls this "Japan's greatest mass evangelistic ministry today."