

During the last three days of August 1973 a most important meeting will take place in Seoul, Korea. Eminent Asian Christians, thoroughly convinced that Asian Churches should be sending missionaries on a much larger scale, will gather to attempt great things for God. I hope those planning for the 1974 Lausanne Congress on Evangelism will see the enormous importance of the Seoul meeting and further the advances projected there.

Philip Tsuchiya, a minister of Christ in Japan, bright eyed with excitement, told me a week ago that whereas the denominations in Japan are already sending out a few missionaries, missionary minded Japanese Christians are now planning to send out a thousand. And why not? One immediately thinks of the tremendous man power of Afericasian Churches. Let Korean Churches send out five thousand! Why should not the four million Christians in the islands of the South Pacific send out two thousand missionaries? They would bear convincing testimony of the transformation God has wrought in the islands during the past four generations. In the Hump Country are strong Baptist Churches of 250,000, 150,000, 100,000 and 50,000 communicants. The Christians are citizens of India and Burma and can work anywhere in those lands. Suppose Hump Country Churches were to send out five hundred missionaries!

As Christians of all six continents enter the last quarter of the twentieth century, they observe a most responsive and winnable world. More individuals and more segments of populations are receptive to Christ than at any other time in the last two thousand years. Men from hundreds

of Macedonias are appearing in hundreds of Troases. To be sure, timid Christians bemused by the post war pessimism and loss of nerve which collapse of Europe's empires occasioned are inclined hastily to deny that any such responsiveness exists. But the facts are against them. The facts prove widespread receptivity. To be sure, many populations exist still indifferent or even resistant; but enough receptive populations exist that into them the whole available missionary resources of the Churches can be poured and they will not be satisfied. This kind of world confronts the Asian leaders as they meet in Korea.

Large sendings of Afericasian missionaries by Afericasian Churches will change and reinforce the image of the missionary. They will change it in that missionaries will be Afericasians, carrying passports from India, the Philippines, Korea, Zaire, and Brazil. They will have darker skins than most missionaries did in the first quarters of the century. They will present not European but Afericasian Christianity. They will be talking about Taiwan, Indonesia, Fiji, Zambia, South Aferica, Ghana, or Ecuador, not about Sweden or Scotland or South Carolina. The cultural overhang they will guard against will be Afericasian, not Eurican.

They will reinforce the image in that they will proclaim the same Christ, regard the same Bible as their sole authority, multiply churches and consider themselves part of the world-wide Christian Movement. They will be salt and light in the world. They will be a blessing wherever they go. They will endure persecution patiently and pray for those who despitefully use them. They will, in short, be real missionaries and will advance the banner of Christ.

I hope Seoul will change one characteristic of Afericasian missionaries. These, at present, usually go to established European missions or to Afericasian Churches and become parts of an international team. This has some advantages. It helps Eurican missions to overcome their excessively white image. It emphasises the international character of Christianity. It demonstrates that missionaries of different racial backgrounds can live together harmoniously. But it does not, as a rule, accomplish much evangelization. These international teams function well in theological seminaries, but seldom spearhead the discipling of a district or a valley. Too much of their time is spent adjusting to the cultural differences of the various members of the team. Perhaps the greatest disadvantage of such a disposition of Asian missionaries is that they become permanent minorities in organizations dominated by other nationalities. Their national creativeness is handicapped.

When Afericasian Churches were sending out one or two highly educated missionaries, it was inevitable that these go to already established institutions. That was a good way to begin. But the time has now come for bands of missionaries from each Afericasian land to take a segment of a city, a fertile plain, a mountain province and work there till they have established a cluster of on-going congregations. Then they will move on to another place and do the same - just as missionaries have always done from the time of Paul onward. Let a Korean team of ten missionaries go to Sao Paulo, Brazil and multiply churches there

for the next twenty years. Let a Japanese team of twenty families harvest the fertile field north west of Adilabad between the Church South India and the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Let a Filipino Team of seven families disciple a responsive population along some great river of inland Kalimantan.

One advantage of teams of missionaries of this sort is that their standard of living can be - and should be - substantially that of the ministers and laymen of the congregations which send them out and support them. If all the missionaries of a given mission live on the same standard of living, interior tensions are minimized. Supporters know that our missionaries live like we do. Support becomes easier to raise. There is no future for Asian missions if Asian missionaries have to live as parts of multi-national teams, each member of which is recompensed at a different level. A Taiwanese missionary society will make whatever rules it thinks just and practical for the twenty Taiwanese missionaries it sends out. These rules will be quite different from those made by a Japanese missionary society.

Exciting possibilities open up before Seoul and Lausanne because, once Afericasian missionary societies begin sending out bands of missionaries, it becomes possible for Eurican missionary societies - who are working toward exactly the same goal - to say, "The annual cost of your mission is 10,000. Recruit four times as many missionaries. We will give you without strings 40,000 a year to add to your 10,000. The condition of the gift will be a simple one - that all the money we give go into intelligent great commission mission. As long as you are carrying out church multiplying mission, we leave entirely in your hands the administration of the enterprise."

I hope that Seoul will plan aggressive church planting Asian missions. And that Lausanne will give serious consideration to making available to all such Asian Missions financial resources from affluent Eurican denominations. Why should not the man power of Afericasian Churches be wedded to the financial resources of Eurican Churches to meet more effectively the needs of the world? The Great Commission could become the strongest link binding Afericasian and Eurican Churches together.