



A Publication of the San Lorenzo Japanese Christian Church
"Growing together and reaching out in the love of Christ"

Firmly Rooted

"Just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in Him." Col. 2:6a

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A Kiss and a Cuddle

The Apostle Paul presents an awesome picture of marriage using the church as an example. In his letter to the Ephesians he writes, *"But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless."*

Being a member of a Christ-body church is like marriage. Just as marriage takes commitment, dedication, loyalty, and hard work, the church needs people who are committed to Christ Jesus, dedicated to His service, loyal to His teachings, and willing to work with their gifts and talents to build His church.

At the conclusion of the General Conference this year, SAN LO will celebrate



its 80th anniversary with a dinner. We will have a special time of remembrance and

reflection of the Lord's gracious provision. We are very thankful for the place He has given us to be equipped for His work and honor Him through our worship.

In the early years many dedicated pastors and members made great personal sacrifices to establish a firm foundation from which SAN LO could be built. These founding members made choices based upon their desire to honor God, placing His desires above their own.

Frank Milford, 100 and his wife Anita, 99, recently celebrated their 80th wedding anniversary, which equaled England's longest-ever marriage.



They said, "The secret to a lasting marriage is to iron-out your arguments before bedtime and share a kiss and a cuddle every night before bed."

Of course I am not suggesting that we kiss and cuddle, (unless married!), but maybe there is something about Frank and Anita's secret to 80 years of marriage. I imagine it was their love and concern for one another that motivated a quick resolution to any arguments they had.

In our marriage with Christ and as we continue to build upon the foundation which was laid for us 80 years ago, maybe we at SAN LO should ask,

"Lord Jesus, how can I love You more?"

-- Pastor Brian

Reversing the Perfectionist

By: *Chris Wu*

Let me break with you: this is roughly the third draft of what was supposed to be a brief and simple testimonial. Honestly, that's not too shabby for me since without a little healthy prodding I probably would have written three more iterations and ended up with something closer to five pages than one. Those few statements alone tell you something about who I am.

One, I tend to be overly verbose and two, I am both procrastinator and perfectionist. I've been this way pretty much since day one (you can ask my mother, but please don't) and while sometimes frustrating, it's also worked out well for me at times. The thing about perfectionism though, is that sometimes it takes a while for you to realize your obsession with it, and sometimes that "while" is a lifetime. You see, perfectionism doesn't always come out in really overt ways.

We often think of perfectionists stereotypically like we do of those who suffer from obsessive-compulsive disorder: high-strung, demanding, peculiar taste...you know, like Detective Adrian Monk (google the name if you don't know it). But being a perfectionist is often a covert operation. We walk around like the rest of our imperfect peers, with nary a single clue to give ourselves away. And yet deep inside we are distinctly different. Let me tell you about that life...

Perhaps many of you are like myself, who grew up in what the media might call a successful, "faith-based household." My parents were and are faithful followers of Jesus Christ. At the ripe age of three, I myself became a follower of Christ. My entire family has an extensive history in ministry. It's a familiar story. "Church-grown know-it-all kid terrorizes Sunday School teacher with too many correct answers!" Yes, that was me, school wasn't a breeze, but I managed to get good grades without overworking and was usually near the top of my class. I pursued few extra-curricular activities, but did mostly well in the few that I chose. Church? Check. School? Check. Piano? Check. I didn't live to please those who had expectations of me (parents, teachers, etc), but I certainly enjoyed the fact that I rarely disappointed. I was doing well. People were impressed with me. I was happy with myself. Perfectionism can be tricky like that: there's no reason to notice it while everything is going well.

Time marched on, and sure enough, failure came knocking. What surprised me wasn't that I failed a test or bombed a performance; it was my reaction to those events. Perfectionism rears its ugly head when one doesn't meet one's own expectations. For example, I once lost a camera by putting it down to listen to a discussion, then walked away without it. That night, after realizing hours later that I had completely forgotten about the camera and had lost it, I angrily



Chris serves as a worship leader on one of the praise teams at SLzJCC. Chris and his wife, Karen, became members of San Lorenzo earlier this year.

stared at myself in the mirror for what seemed like hours. I wasn't just disappointed in myself or sad about the loss of an expensive item, I was mad. Mad that I had done something so careless. Mad that I had made such an obvious mistake. Mad that, in this matter, I had not been perfect. Nobody could convince me that it was okay.

What I've come to realize (and continue to day by day) is that perfectionism is more than a desire to do well or to excel. It is an internal expectation that under my own power, I will achieve and accomplish things that are deemed excellent in my sight. I am the performer. I am in control. I am my own judge. Wow.

When it's printed in black and white like that, it is so obviously wrong. And yet someone who has known Christ his whole life can fall so easily into that viewpoint. Like many sins, it is a perversion of what was originally a good, God-given gift. Over the course of my life, the Lord has been revealing that truth to me, redeeming my attitude piece by piece along the way. My story, my testimony, has been that of reversing the perfectionist.

What is the reversal of perfectionism? I would argue that it is a faith-filled life. I have been challenged to die to my life and to live in Christ. When I recommitted myself to live for Him back in 1995, it was a decision to put aside personal ability and expectation. It was a decision to live under Jesus' kingship and to do so by His power - the same power that raised Christ from the grave. Every day since then it has been a healthy struggle and process to put off my old self and to live that life. My goal is to please my Lord, and my Lord is pleased to give me the strength to do His will.

Let me illustrate: Many of you know the story of how I asked my wife, Karen, to marry me. It is shall we say a long tale, but the quick version is that shortly after I proposed (and she graciously accepted), Karen lost the ring. It was an expensive item to lose, materially and emotionally. As we frantically searched for it, my mind turned to "why?" It wasn't exactly the outcome I had hoped for or planned for. From my attitude of "why?" came anger and frustration (remember the camera?). The moment I had planned for was reeling far away from perfect. I decided to slow down and gather my thoughts.

I was upset. I asked for peace. In my heart I felt God answer, "I can grant you peace. What will you do with it? You have a choice to do my will here. If you choose to follow me, I will supply the power and ability." I realized that we were in the middle of God's plan unfolding, not my plan unraveling. I decided in favor of faith, and committed myself to doing the Lord's will. He sent me to Karen in the midst of our troubled, desperate moment and granted me the peace and love to stop her, embrace her, and reaffirm my love for her. It was something I never could have done left to my own devices. I had been overwhelmed by the circumstance. My patience was too thin, my own love too shallow compared to the richness of God's. And guess what? In that same moment, unbeknownst to me, Karen had silently prayed for God's intervention to bring me to her and simply say, "I still love you." What an amazing result to what first appeared to be chaos. A result that never had a chance to happen had it all gone according to my "perfect" plan.

Our engagement story is just one example. It is one fruit produced from living a life of faith over a life of performance and plans. Some neat things happen when we choose to trust in God and follow Him: We don't get disappointed (in fact, we are fulfilled) and God is given glory. That beats any of my plans any day.



Notes from the Annual Business Meeting

On Sun., June 14, the Annual Business meeting had 66 people present which gave us the quorum that was needed to proceed with the meeting. Cary Mitsuyoshi presented the financial report. The budget for the next fiscal year was approved.

There were two openings for the Board of Deacons: Christian Education and Worship. Christian Education is still open. Ken Yoshioka who was our Worship Deacon will end his term and John Chisaki was nominated for the Worship Deacon.

The Board of Trustees had two positions to fill. Ross Yamamoto and Gary Kadomatsu have finished their terms. Eric Lee agreed to be nominated for the Trustees and will come off the Board of Overseers.

On the propositions: Proposition 1. General Fund Budget - Passed. Proposition 2. Licensing of Unordained Pastors - Passed. Propositions 3. Revised Constitution - Passed. Proposition 4. Implementation of OMS Holiness Churches of North America Policy Manual - Passed.

Pastor Eric gave us an update on the small groups ministry. From the survey he put out, the most favorable was the community/life groups. For now, there's a possibility of starting 3-5 small groups. Possible areas that will host groups are: Castro Valley, Alameda/Oakland, Tri-Valley, San Leandro/San Lorenzo, Hayward/Union City/Fremont. The groups will continue to align their study with the sermon series. Training for small group leaders will take place in the Fall, during the Sunday School hour.

**Come join
our Vacation
Bible School's**



**Be sure your children come to
V.B.S. on July 27-31,
9 a.m. to 12 noon.**

They will take part in fun and exciting Bible learning they can see, hear, touch and even taste! Crafts, games, lively Bible songs and tasty treats are just a few of Crocodile Dock's fun activities. Registration forms are on-line at www.slzjcc.org or are at the church.



**Don't miss out!
See you there!**

**General Conference and
80th Anniversary Celebration...**

coming soon!

The General Conference Planning Committee is working hard to give a warm welcome to all our Conference church delegates and pastors on July 10-11! Registration, housing, transportation, meals, and other areas are still work in progress. Your prayers and help are needed -- especially for housing. If you are able to house a delegate, please contact Lynne Kishi.

The 80th Anniversary Dinner will be held on Sat., July 11, 4:30 p.m., at the church. We will celebrate God's faithfulness to our church for 80 years! We are blessed to have as our guest speaker, Rev. Yuichiro Nakano.