



SAN DIEGO JAPANESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

UPWARD WAY

JESUS SAID, "I AM THE WAY AND THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE. NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME." (JOHN 14:6) JESUS IS THE UPWARD WAY!

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I would like to share with you portions from Rev. Iso Sekiguchi's sermon, "Seeing Beyond the Headlines":

Charles Kuralt of CBS recalled a conversation he had with a graduating senior at the University of Wisconsin. This was a bright young man who had spent four years at the university and who had his entire life ahead of him. But, instead of looking at the future with anticipation, he dreaded it. He spoke of the energy crisis, inflation, the difficulty of finding a job, and then he said, "This must be the worst time in the country's history to be graduating from college."

Kuralt was amazed at this statement and wondered how this young man could have spent four years at a great university and yet know so little about American history. Didn't he hear about the graduates of 1861 who went from the campus to Bull Run and Antietam? Or the graduates of 1931 who did postgraduate work in selling apples on street corners? Or the graduates of 1943, many of whom died in the Battle of the Bulge or on the beaches of Iwo Jima?

This graduate knew all the headlines of today, but had no feeling for what Americans endured in the past. He had no sense of history, not even recent history. So, his vision of the future was clouded by the problems of the present.

This sermon was given in anticipation of 1981. Today, we are in a recession with high unemployment, there are terrorist attacks reported almost daily, and we hear of the devastation by hurricanes and earthquakes around the world. Where do we find hope?

Rev. Iso continues by stating:

But, we as Christians are invited to see beyond today's headlines. We are invited to see Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. Henry Drummond, a 19th century Scottish minister, once said that "when the outlook is bad, try the uplook." That is, look to Jesus Christ when things seem the bleakest and there's no hope in sight; because the future rests solidly in the hands of Almighty God.

The author of Hebrews (see chapters 11 and 12) would invite us to go beyond the headlines of today and see the possibilities that life in Christ can bring. Let's devote our time, our energies, and our efforts, not in worrying about what the future may bring, but concentrating on living according to God's purposes for our lives. Let's replace despair with hope, and sadness with joy. Let's look for ways to move close to one another, to care for each other, to help those in need, and to love each other.

Wise words! This is my prayer and hope for all of us!

Love in Christ, Pastor Ichibei

LET US PRAISE, PRAY, AND PARTICIPATE

"Give praise to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts." (1 Chronicles 16:8-9)

• We thank God for His continual care for all of us. We thank God for the recent provision of jobs for some of our church members! Please pray for: *Frank Ogura* (general health); *Masako Shima* (general health); *Kiyo Uda* (back pain); *Florence Uyeda* (for strength); and *Rose Uyeji* (general health).

• We want to praise and thank God for our **Christmas Dinner & Program** that we had in December! It was the best dinner and program yet! We thank God for all Christ's servants, new and old, who used their gifts and talents to glorify God from cooking and set up/decorating, to helping out with the play!

• We praise and thank God for the **Joint New Year's Worship Service**, being able to worship God with the Nichigo congregation. It was a blessed time being able to worship God in English and Japanese and celebrating communion together.

• **Rev. Art Tsuneishi** went home to be with the Lord on January 11th. Please remember Sally and the Tsuneishi Family in your prayers. "The Celebration of Life" Service for Rev. Art will be held on Friday, January 29th, 11:00 am, at the Journey of Life Church (1243 Artesia Blvd., Manhattan Beach, CA). We are looking to arrange car pool rides or rent a van for those who are interested in attending. Please contact the church office for details.

• We thank you for your continued prayers and patience with our Kitchen Remodel Project! As many of you know, we have received the necessary permits from the city to move forward with what is now called the "**SDJCC Voluntary Site Accessibility Upgrades and Kitchen Tenant Improvements**" Project. We are currently obtaining bids from contractors, and as soon as we have firm financial figures to work with, we plan to discuss the matter in a special congregational meeting. Since our By-Laws state that an announcement two weeks prior to such a meeting must be made, we will not have the meeting until most likely the beginning of February. Please continue to be in prayer for this whole process.

• We thank God for the opportunity to serve our Conference by hosting the **2010 General Conference** next July 9-10. We especially thank God for Pastor Stephen Sato coming down from Los Angeles to help us get started and offer tips and advice. We also thank all those that are willing to help out. The next planning meeting will be on February 3 @ 6pm. Please continue to pray for this event and for those helping, that they will keep their hearts focused on serving God and each other.

• We praise and thank God for those that were able to attend this year's **WinterVision Conference**. Please continue to pray that what they have learned will be reflected in their lives and that their passion for God will continue throughout the year!

• On Sunday, January 31st, after the worship service, there will be a **Val's Valentine's and All Occasions Cookie Fund Raiser for Missions**. The proceeds (suggested donation) from the fund raiser will go into our general missions fund to support our church sponsored missionaries.

• Next week, from Monday Jan. 25 through Thursday Jan. 28, Pastor Ichibei and Pastor Okura will be attending the **Holiness Pastors Retreat** at Mater Delarosa Retreat Center. Right after on the 29th and 30th, they will be attending an **Executive Council Meeting** at San Fernando Valley Holiness. Please pray that they will be refreshed with the Spirit amongst the busy week.

• The next **Family Outdoor Fellowship Activity** will be on February, 14, 2010. They will be going to the children's Museum for free! They will be eating lunch at the park across from the museum. Please join them for a fun time of fellowship!

• Praise God that **Pastor Brent** raised all of his funding! Please continue to pray for him in his overseas work in Central Asia. Please also continue to remember **Pastor Roy & Nancy Toma** in their missions work in Okinawa, Japan, with Campus Crusade for Christ in your prayers.