



Japanese children at a kids crusade.

Photo by Dale Jackson

Reaching men and boys within the Japanese culture.

return home around 8 or 9 p.m. to do their homework. According to government statistics, Japanese youth spend 15 hours a day, 6 days a week, in study. With only a brief summer vacation, this routine continues year-round.

When these young people reach junior high age, the pressure for group identity intensifies. Looking for recreation and diversion from rigorous mental exertion, young men join their fathers and older brothers in playing baseball, currently the most popular sport in Japan. Since weekdays are taken up with study, Sundays are the only time for physical activities.

Because we have had nothing in the way of a challenge or recreation to offer them, these boys are being lost to the church. Males have the dominant role in this culture, so women and girls often follow this exodus.

We believe Royal Rangers, implemented on a national level, will be a major part of the answer to this problem.

Uniforms, already important to the Japanese, will serve as a drawing card for Royal Rangers. Sunday afternoons, the time boys are usually involved with their ball teams, can be utilized for Royal Rangers classes and activities.

We want to give the boys something with which to identify, a challenge without pressure, and a time of recreation.

Since the Royal Rangers program has a strong spiritual emphasis, we hope to use it as a means of evangelizing boys and establishing them in the church. Christian men, realizing the potential of this program, will, we hope, be challenged to provide leadership. Thus we expect to see a reversal in the outflow of our boys, and a means of providing a fulfilling ministry for our men.

The key to the effectiveness of this program is the Holy Spirit. Please pray with us that God will send an outpouring of His Spirit in Japan as we move forward in the direction we feel He is leading.

Royal Rangers can fill the gap


In Japan we lose about 90 percent of the Assemblies of God youth from our churches around the time they enter junior high school. This is an observation I have made during 11 years of ministry in Japan.

What is the reason for these staggering statistics? What can we do to reverse this trend?

After examining the reasons for this phenomenal loss, missionaries and national church leaders decided the Royal Rangers program would

have been careful to emphasize that they are not attempting to replace missionaries. Again and again they are asking for our assistance. But the task is so great that they feel they must expand their evangelistic efforts in order to more quickly and efficiently reach their continent for Christ. American missionaries will continue to assist in varied roles and will help in this new endeavor as consultants.

In the days ahead, as Africa faces times of political and economic uncertainty, the West African Assemblies of God missions program will be actively engaged in sending workers to reach the multitudes searching for stability.

Praise God for the vision of the West African Assemblies of God. The church of Jesus Christ moves forward! 

By DALE JACKSON
Missionary to Japan

fill a gap in the lives of these young people. Royal Rangers challenges boys and their leaders to intellectual, physical, spiritual, and social excellence. During our furlough this year I am studying the program so we can implement it when we return to Japan next spring.

A highly structured society, Japanese culture emphasizes group identity. Company uniforms are worn by almost everyone in the business world. In the athletic and social worlds, both vital to the Japanese, the need to be identified with a particular group is no less important.

Japanese culture also dictates that adult children are financially responsible for their aging parents. Pressured by parents to excel academically in order to gain entrance into the best schools and thus be assured of the most lucrative careers these youth become highly competitive.

From the time a student enters one phase of instruction, he is already studying for exams that he hopes will gain him admission into the next. This means devoting an unusual amount of time to academics.

After attending classes each day, these young people often go to tutors for help in the areas of their strengths and/or weaknesses. They