

Postscript

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“A hundred wars are not as dangerous as knowing others but not oneself.” This is the first verse of the world’s greatest warfare strategy called “ancestor’s warfare tactics.” This proverb suggests that the absolute condition for accomplishing a purpose is to analyze in an accurate and calm manner, untainted by subjective desires, the present condition of the person or community and the possessions of the concerned party such as resources, manpower, and abilities. It is especially those who learn the “necessity of knowing oneself” from that proverb who will enjoy its effect and harvest.

Likewise, the Apostle Paul in the New Testament encourages the groups and churches to which his letters were sent to test and examine themselves (2 Cor. 13:5, Gal. 6:4, 1 Tim. 4:16, etc.). He recommended not only that they objectively clarify the connotative problem or subject, but also that they know the situation of the concerned party. When it comes to the content of faith, and the actions and words of people of faith, stopping periodically to do a self-examination is unchangeable common sense for all times and places.

In the past few years the JEA Theological Commission has published the pamphlets “Church and State” and “Agreement and Unity of the Church.” The theme coming from the fourth Japan Evangelism Conference (the Okinawa Declaration), convened in 2000, has been treated. But since the following year’s 9/11 event—the simultaneous multiple terrorist attacks—the condition of the world has changed significantly. The work of the Christian world in this political context has become closely inspected, particularly in the midst of instigation of war under the anti-terrorist banner of Bush’s administration in America (noted in the evening edition of *Tokyo Newspaper* on May 16, 2004). This is not just about the composition of the confrontation between pro- and anti-war positions; it is about the confusion which is generated. This publication, “Fundamentalism,” was put together while perceiving this reality and sorting it out theologically so that the church might be able to correctly explain it.

Six essays are included here, but each one is not merely a critique of “fundamentalism.” While capturing the problematic issues hidden within fundamentalism, these essays also have significance in encouraging the reader toward self-examination. The main purpose of this pamphlet is to have the readers try to ask themselves once again about their own Biblical interpretation concerning such things as their understanding of natural science, the ease with which humans fall into the trap of self-righteous deeds, their understanding of monotheism and polytheism, and war and Christian faith.

When we are shown the detailed results of a physical examination we sometimes feel bewildered, sweaty, and nervous. Perhaps some of those who read this pamphlet will have similar feelings. Self-investigation and self-examination have painful aspects, but my desire is that we surmount that pain, and together mature toward becoming a wholesome church and a people of healthy faith.

Finally, I would like to give my heart felt thanks to Pastor Mitsuru Fujimoto (Immanuel Takatsu Christ Church) for his work on the production and publication of the pamphlet. I would also like to thank the various members of the Theological Commission for the long hours spent in putting together this booklet. Furthermore, even though the Theological Commission examined each essay, I would like to confirm that the responsibility for the content of the essays lies with each author.

May the Lord richly bless you.

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