As an Ambassador for Christ

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A CHALLENGE FROM GENERAL MacARTHUR

One of the greatest thrills of Louie’s life came to him in Japan. His zeal for missions was an unquenchable flame, and Biola granted his deepest wish when the board sent him on a missionary journey to great mission fields of the world.

With Paul Bauman as his photographer, Louie landed in Japan; and what a refreshing time of rejoicing in the fellowship of glad reunion it was for him and the Biola graduates serving there.

On September 23, 1949, Louie wrote: “I am amazed at the splendid work General Douglas MacArthur has done to restore order and to inspire the people with a hopeful spirit. People are learning to appreciate the American way of life and what true democracy is. The spiritual need is very great, and the opportunity is correspondingly great because the people have open minds for the Gospel message. I am thankful for the part Biola graduates are having in the molding of the future of this great nation by their missionary endeavors.”

In conversation with General Whitney, Louie found him very cooperative, and he arranged an interview with General Douglas MacArthur, supreme commander of the Allied forces in Japan. Louie had long admired him, and the interview became one of the most treasured moments of his lifetime.

When Louie and Paul arrived at General MacArthur’s headquarters, a military aide said that they had been allotted twenty minutes and that he would come for them when their time was up.

As they walked into the room, General MacArthur was seated at a large desk. Louie and Paul stood immobile in the presence of that impressive general, who was known to be autocratic, brilliant, and supremely dedicated.

Louie described that tense moment: “He put us at ease with the
gracious words, 'Welcome to Japan! Come over and sit on the davenport, and we'll have a talk about the Japanese problem.'

"As we started walking toward him, somehow the distance seemed to get longer and longer. But soon we began to converse as though we had been friends for years.

"I'll never forget the direct impact of the General's first question, 'What brings you to Japan?'"

As Louie described Biola and its students in training for Christian service, the general's eyes kindled. "I stated that twenty of our graduates were laboring as missionaries in Japan, and hundreds more all over the world. He was greatly interested to learn that the board of directors of our schools had commissioned us to visit these mission fields to photograph our graduates in action, and to acquaint ourselves at first hand with the needs of these lands in order that we might better equip our students to serve the people. . . . Then I asked
General MacArthur: ‘What is the very best equipment we can give our students to fit them for service in Japan?’

“To this he replied that it was his conviction that the only permanent solution for Japan’s problem was to put the Bible in the hands of the people. In order to accomplish this, he has called for 3,000 missionaries and for 10,000,000 Bibles for Japan within the next three years. Later he will ask for 8,000,000 more copies of God’s Word, or a total of 18,000,000. Never in the history of any land has a top-flight general, or any military power, ever made such an astounding request! But I heard it with my own ears from his own lips. What a challenge!

“About this time the door opened, and there was the military aide indicating our time was up.

“But General MacArthur said to him, ‘I want to spend more time with these gentlemen.’

“I was deeply impressed with the General’s unequivocal declaration that he believed the Bible to be the Word of God, the foundation of all lasting government.

“It is my firm conviction,” he said, ‘that there is power in that Book, for it has never failed. Now is the time to strike. The Church has the greatest opportunity of her career right here in Japan; and if she fails to rise to it, history will write it down as the greatest tragedy since the beginning of the Christian era. God will hold us responsible.’

“As we were leaving, I said, ‘General, when you return to the United States, the people will give you a great welcome.’

“I have a job to do and I must complete it first. I long to see my homeland again,” he replied. ‘My eleven-year-old son has never seen his country, and it is hard, but my job is yet unfinished.’

“We assured the General of our prayers and cooperation, and promised to convey his challenge to the Christian youth of America. We shook hands heartily, and with a parting ‘God bless you,’ we went on our way. We had been with the General a full hour.”

Louie and Paul next turned their faces toward Borneo, where Louie was astounded at what he found.