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Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well. (James 3:1-2)

FEBRUARY 2020

**DEAR FRIENDS AND PARTNERS OF THE
REACH BEYOND MINISTRY
TO THE PEOPLES
OF CZECHIA AND SLOVAKIA**

Fifty years ago, on January 15, 1970, we landed in NYC as refugees from Communist Czechoslovakia after the Russian invasion.



Thirty years ago this month, we arrived in Quito, Ecuador to join HCJB World Radio, and became Radio program producers in the Czech language. At the same time, Communism in Eastern Europe fell.

So many things in our life changed and are changing. Since that time there has been no more HCJB Shortwave broadcasting from Ecuador, there is no TWR shortwave broadcasting from Monaco ... There are no jamming stations in the Communist countries. The world of technology and those changes made a quantum leap forward. All those events shaped our lives. Looking back, we marvel that we lived through so many for us Earth-shaking events.

The founder of HCJB World Radio Clarence Jones's favorite verse was:

Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not. (Jeremiah 33:3)

If we had known then, we would probably have chickened out. As we look toward the future and new events ahead, we can see that even our days are not going to be boring. Our calendar is again full of plans and challenges.

The Winter Conference "God's love – difficulties in teaching about God's love" is behind us. It was a joyful reunion with old friends and encouraging meeting the new generation of believers. Conference attendance was very good and topic presentation of speakers was excellent.

However, we should never rest on our own evaluation. We need to listen to those who came and evaluated our effort. Surely, there is a lot of space to improve. It seems that we set the standard too high. Five speakers (each presentation about 45 minutes long) followed by a panel discussion, proved to be somewhat exhausting for some of the attendees. What is the human capacity to soak up information?

Shortly after the conference, we had our ministry board annual meeting to evaluate the past and chart the future.

We all agreed that for the next conference four speakers are enough, the presentation should not exceed 35 minutes, no panel discussion, more fellowship and direct interaction between attendees and speakers. We all need to connect and share more since people come from near and far.

MORE CHALLENGES

To tell the truth, to be church planters is not easy at all. As we are growing and maturing as a body of believers, some flaws are appearing. This is why we need your prayers for wisdom, and leadership to be light in this dark world.

It is one thing to be concerned about those who have never heard, about the refugee situation far away, the refugee crisis in Europe, Christian persecution worldwide, but it is also vital to living and be a true servant

of God to those around us. It is not an easy task in the land where people are living in relative prosperity and peace. We have freedom, but the situation is somehow stagnant. As we observe what is happening in the world, we are blessed in so many ways. The spiritual challenges are similar to those of the world, as we can observe leaders in governments, politics, economy, entitlements, and regulations. The world is concerned about coronavirus in China spreading around and its impact on the global economy. The European Union is facing its challenges, like Brexit and loss of tax revenues. The concern is causing a proposition on worldwide digital tax for internet services that can lead to custom war with America. How to implement labor tax on robots? Wherever we look, we can see tension, concerns, and lack of unity. It looks as though unity is present only in the enemy camp. Foolish and sinful people prosper while the church is getting more and more complacent.

After 4 years of church planting, we are starting to see our shortcomings and faults. We can say that we are strong theologically, but as to pastoring and application of what we know, there is much to learn. We do not have any role models and examples in our days. Our church has many needs. We know theological theories, which are by way of application as close to believers as the theory of relativity to most of us. Our fellow workers are exhausted; marriages and families are often sacrificed, problems are mounting. It is hard to realize, and harder to admit, that those in the ministry need help. I do remember years ago when we attended the Paraklesis Ministry for pastors and missionaries. After 10 minutes of filling out the questionnaire, most of us wept. The independent church is really not independent. What we do

not have in-house, we are trying to get from conferences; we may understand what the scripture is telling us, but in the area of application, there are shortcomings. We are dealing with people. As one Dutch missionary, author of "The Pineapple story" said: "If it were not for the people, I would be a pretty good missionary." Well, at least we can laugh because it is so true.

FRIENDLY WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

I have come to believe that we are living in a most unusual time in which God is moving the world into a new paradigm. There is a new spiritual awakening in unexpected places. People are having their eyes opened to the inadequacy of humanity to meet their needs. It seems there is a spiritual hunger and searching for real meaning to life. When we look at the civil unrest around the world, it is rooted in an awakening to the reality of the evil heart of humankind. They have previously put their hope and trust in the wrong places. They are therefore searching for something/someone worthy of their trust. We have the answer to their despair. We have scriptural answers to their questions and we can embrace them in Christian love and compassion. We can help lift the veil from their eyes.

– Thank you Kaye –

DID YOU KNOW THE WORD "ROBOT" IS OF CZECH ORIGIN?

For many, the word *robot* conjures up an image of a mechanical being clad in metal, adorned with all sorts of blinking lights and

buttons, and even a funny-sounding voice. Indeed, such robots have become stock characters in science fiction stories, novels, films, and television shows.

More recently, robots and the derived term robotics have come to represent the most modern engineering technologies for a myriad of functions ranging from artificial intelligence experiments and building automobiles to performing delicate surgical procedures.

As a word, *robot* is a relative newcomer to the English language. It was the brainchild of a brilliant Czech playwright, novelist and journalist named Karel Čapek (1890-1938) who introduced it in his 1920 hit play, *R.U.R.*, or *Rossum's Universal Robots*.

Robot is drawn from an old Slavic word, *robota*, for "servitude," "forced labor" or "drudgery." The word, which also has cognates with Czech in most Slavic languages, was a product of the central European system of serfdom by which a tenant's rent was paid for in forced labor or service.

Taking its cues from other literary accounts of scientifically created life forms such as Mary Shelley's classic *Frankenstein* and the Yiddish-Czech legend *The Golem*, *R.U.R.* tells the story of a company using the latest biology, chemistry, and physiology to mass produce workers who "lack nothing but a soul." The robots perform all the work that humans preferred not to do, and soon the company is inundated with orders. In early drafts of his play, Čapek named these creatures *labori*, after the Latin root for *labor*, but worried that the term sounded too "bookish." At the suggestion of his brother, Josef, Čapek ultimately opted for *robot*.

The robots revolt in "R.U.R."

In the play's final act, the robots revolt against their human creators. After killing

most of the people living on the planet, the robots realize they need humans because none of them can figure out the means to manufacture more robots, a secret that dies out with the last human being. In the end, there is a deus ex machina moment, when two robots somehow acquire the human traits of love and compassion and go off into the sunset to make the world anew.

Audiences loved the play across Europe and the United States. Soon after, robots became the darling of science fiction writers, most famously Isaac Asimov, who composed the Three Laws of Robotics and, eventually, Hollywood's dream merchants. With each iteration, robots became more fleshly and life-like, or should I say humanoid?

Ironically, *R.U.R.* was Čapek's least favorite work even as the play and his coining of robot ensured his literary immortality. He died of influenza in 1938 at the age of 48. Because of his so-called subversive writings against the rising Nazi party, his fatal bout of flu frustrated, outwitted Hitler, and the Gestapo, who had put a death warrant on Čapek.

WHAT IS AHEAD OF US

In March, we plan to attend the conference in Slovakia with D. A. Carson. This will be an opportunity to meet with Milan, who leads the Slovak radio ministry.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

- Wisdom for the leaders and servants. There is no other source than what we can learn with God's help.

- The Bible Church of Prague, its pastor, families, and its unity. We have some internal struggles, especially in the area of authority.
- For the Czech and Slovak countries, where the Lord has entrusted us to represent Him, as well as every one of you.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS,
SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION
IN OUR LIFE AND
THE CZECH & SLOVAK
MINISTRIES**

**In His Sovereign Grace,
Pavel and Klara Steiger**

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