

Giving Up on a Dream

Chiune Sugihara was born in Kozuchi Town, Japan, on a day of new beginnings, Jan. 1, 1900. As a boy, he cherished the dream of becoming the Japanese ambassador to Russia. By the 1930s, he was the ambassador to Lithuania, just a step away from Russia.

One morning, a huge throng of people gathered outside his home. They were Jews who had made their way across treacherous terrain from Poland, desperately seeking his help. They wanted Japanese visas, which would enable them to flee Eastern Europe and the Gestapo.

Three times, Sugihara wired Tokyo for permission to provide the visas; three times he was rejected. He had to choose between the fulfillment of his dream as an ambassador and people's lives. He chose the latter. He dared to disobey orders.

For 28 days, he wrote visas by hand, barely sleeping or eating. When the consulate was closed and he had to leave his post, he was still writing visas and shoving them through the train windows into the hands of the refugees who ran alongside. Ultimately, he saved 6,000 lives.

Sugihara was not only a courageous Japanese, he was also a committed Christian. He spent his remaining days in Japan humbly selling light bulbs.



In 1985, the State of Israel honored Sugihara as one of the Righteous Among the Nations for his actions. He is the only Japanese national to have been so honored.

When his story was finally told, his son was asked, “How did your father feel about his choice?”

The young man replied, “My father’s life was fulfilled. When God needed him to do the right thing, he was available to do it.”

Sugihara’s story is inspirational and motivational. And our lives, too, are called of God. Oh, we won’t be asked to deliver 6,000 people from extermination, but God needs us to perform lifesaving, life-enhancing deeds with the people we serve in Life Care and Century Park.

He needs us to do the right thing – in the big things, in the little things, and in the in-between things of service.

(more)

In so doing, our lives will be fulfilled.

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace (1 Peter 4:10 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter