

S P R I N G 2 0 0 8

We are PLANTING A CHURCH

Update Letter From Robert Fletcher Adair

✕ Here I Come ✕

March 10th-April 30th I will be in the US. It's longer than I would like to be in the US but it should be a very productive trip.

WHY AM I COMING?

The main reason I am coming is for a course called PILAT. It is offered in Colorado and is a course in foreign language acquisition techniques for missionaries. Since I was coming to the

states for the class, I decided to come through Texas to see friends and family. I also brought 4 Japanese friends with me. The course was great, and I learned many things that should help me continue to acquire the Japanese language.



Surgery

Last fall, playing basketball, I managed to hurt my knee pretty bad. I rested, did my rehab, but the knee still didn't get better. I went back to the doctor a few months ago for a MRI. Turns out that I tore my ACL, which is only repairable by surgery. I have had the surgery and am staying at my parents until I am healthy enough to travel.

Prayer Requests お祈りください

Please spend some time praying for me and the cities of Minamata and Okuchi.

Pray that my recovery from knee surgery will go well and that I will be able to resume a full and active lifestyle soon.

Pray that the several young men who are currently studying the Bible and

considering Christ would quickly come to know Him.

Pray for unity and health for myself and the Japanese Christians whom you are partnering with here in Japan.



Japanese Friends in America

The last 2 weeks of March four Japanese from Minamata were in Texas. A young couple (Hitoshi and Ryuko Shimoda) and two high school students.

The young couple are members of the church in Minamata while the girls are English students who wanted to experience America.

TEXAS TRIP

DATES
MARCH 10-
APRIL 30

GOAL

See Family
See Friends
Training
Show Japanese
Friends Texas
Surgery
Eat American
Food



SEEING TEXAS

We did a lot of sightseeing during our two weeks in Texas. We took the students to Beaumont, NASA, San Antonio, College Station (TAMU), Tyler, and Dallas. They had a great chance to see our great state.



HOME-STAY

A second aspect of the trip was that every participant stayed with Americans every night they were here. The home-stay locations ranged from singles to families and allowed them to experience real American life.



American family life is significantly different than family life in Japan. All of the students really enjoyed getting to share meals and be part of

American families for their time here.

VISITING AMERICAN CHURCH

Finally all of our participants had an opportunity to visit American churches. They visited Sunday school, worship, and one of the High School girls was able to go to youth group at Aldersgate. The non-Christians had many good questions and we were able to have a nice discussion on how the church is the same in America and Japan

Encouragement

Recently we have had several exciting things that you should be encouraged by. Below are short stories about 4 of my friends, (using fake names of course). I put these in, so that you can be encouraged and so that you can pray more specifically.



Emily has been attending English class at the church for a little over a year. She is a high school girl, and can be a little flighty. But recently during an English chapel time something clicked. We were studying scripture in English and she was able to understand the gospel on a deeper level than ever before.

Her friends, who came with her, even noted that she seemed to act and think like a Christian.

Shawn is also a high school student. He loves philosophy. This is a little strange for a guy his age here, but through that interest he actually approached me (you would think it would be the other way around) about studying the Bible. We have been reading through the gospels and discussing them together at a local coffee shop.

Dr. Olympic is a researcher in Minamata. He has been attending English classes for almost 2 years. He has a daughter who attends a Christian preschool. When I asked him why he sends her there since he is Buddhist he said “I want my daughter to become more like the Christians I know.” He has a growing interest in the scripture as well.

Finally, Paul is a college student friend of mine who attends a

university in a nearby city. Whenever he is home for the weekend, he attends church and English. He is also in the process of reading through the gospels. Recently, at a conference an invitation was given for people who wanted to follow Jesus. He raised his hand and prayed to receive Christ. We are praying for his baptism in the near future.



These 4 stories involve Japanese young people who your ministry is affecting. Step by step they are coming closer to knowing the God who loves and created them. Thank you and please be encouraged as you pray.

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Closing the Deal

Recently I have been struggling with a particular aspect of sharing the gospel. Almost all of my contacts know the gospel on a basic level. Many of them can even discuss fairly deep theological issues pertaining to the gospel without too much trouble. The issue is that I don't know how to close the deal. I don't know where the line is between pressure and encouragement.

WHAT'S MY PART?

Currently we are having a lot of success building relationships where we can freely talk about the gospel and spiritual things. These people are studying scripture both in English class and on their own. They are also coming to me and other church members when they have problems or need advice. They even say that they feel something during worship or prayer. They are emotionally, intellectually, and relationally interested in the gospel. But there is still a disconnect and people are not becoming Christians.

What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, though whom you came to believe-as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

1 Corinthians 3:5-7(NIV)

It's a good problem to have though, isn't it? This time a few years ago we were struggling to find people willing to talk to us. Now we are trying to figure out the salvation aspect of things. Hopefully in a year or two, the problem will be how to disciple all the new believers. But in the present, the problem is trying to figure out what my role is in that step of faith.

I understand the passage above to a degree. But I don't know what it means in a daily sense. When do I know if I cross over from loving encouragement into pressure? Is pressure always bad? I know there is a burning in my heart to see my friends come to know Jesus. I am confident that I have been called to this country to help see that happen. So I will continue to prayerfully, and through both success and failure, figure things out as I go. Please join me in prayer on this subject and don't hesitate to e-mail me any wisdom or ideas you might have.

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Some fun picture from my time in the America