

WE ARE PLANTING A CHURCH

MARCH 2007

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1

Valentines Day, New Food, and a Few Other Things

Recently, I have had a chance to learn several new things about Japanese culture as well as try a couple of new foods.

First Valentines day. Japanese Valentines Day is considerably different from our American version. It is still on February 14th, but in Japan women give chocolate to men they know. There are three types of chocolate. Giri-choko is obligatory chocolate, and women give this to co-workers, bosses, or other people they feel obligated to give it to. Tomo-choko is friend chocolate. Finally women will give chocolate to men they are interested in called honmei-choko.

White Day is the reciprocal holiday on March 14th. Men give white chocolate to anyone that gave them chocolate on February 14th. Needless to say, I am a big fan of the Japanese system. A lot less pressure than



ON A TRAIN IN ST. LOUIS

the American version.

The other day I had the opportunity to try a new food at a friends house; raw deer! Contrary to what you may believe, it was actually delicious and I would happily eat it again.

Finally a note on winter in Ja-

pan. Most homes don't have central heating. Winter in the area I am in is comparable to East Texas. Not horrible but it gets cold. Most people in Japan heat their homes using portable gas heaters. They are very effective, but it is a big change waking up to a cold house.



What is a Christian???

Evangelism in Japan tends to be a slow process. You pour a lot of time and energy into people and don't always see results. I have some people that I spend a lot of time with and seriously wonder if it is having any effect on them.

Two weeks ago, the topic of Chapel Time was about how someone becomes a Christian. I asked the class "What is a Christian?" At first several students responded with things like "a nice person, wears a cross, reads the bible, prays, goes to church." Most of these answers were coming from my Christian students and honestly, I was a little frustrated. They weren't bad things. Most of the



A COMMON IMAGE OF A CHRISTIAN

answers were good things that many Christians do. But none of the answers were directly related to the gospel.

Then one of my non-Christian students raised his hand. He

said "Isn't a Christian someone who believes Jesus is God and that he died for their sins?" I am pretty sure that the look of amazement on my face was pretty obvious. I had had several good conversations with this guy the previous few months. But I didn't know how much he remembered or that he was willing to be that direct in a public setting.

This guy hasn't become a Christian...yet. But he is definitely getting closer. Six months ago he didn't care about the gospel, he just wanted to learn English. Now we have great conversations about the Lord, and he is understanding.

QUIZ

HOW MUCH OF HONMEI-CHOKO DID ROBERT GET THIS YEAR ...

- A) 4
- B) 3
- C) 2
- D) 1
- E) 0

(ON A SIDE NOTE I REALLY WISH I COULD SEE ALL OF YOUR GUESSES ON THIS ONE)



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>My Friend Hudson</i>	2
<i>Urbana</i>	2
<i>Joel</i>	3
<i>Prayer Requests</i>	3
<i>Ministry Update</i>	3
<i>What's Next???</i>	4

My Friend Hudson

Discipling and being discipled is a vital part of our Christian life. Due to my location, and language ability it has been difficult to find a guy that has the time to disciple me on a regular basis. I have a wonderful supervisor who is willing, but lives 2 hours away. I also have a great Japanese pastor but my language is not to the point that we can easily talk about life issues.

Enter J. Hudson Taylor. For those of you who don't know, Hudson Taylor was a missionary to China in the 1800's. He has an excellent autobiography which I have been slowly reading through. His life and dedication to God are extremely challenging. At the same time he has real struggles with faith and motives that we can all relate with. Here is an example of one of the passages I was challenged by.

"I thought to myself 'When I get out to China, I shall have no claim on anyone or

anything; my only claim will be on God. How important, therefore, to learn before leaving England to move man, through God, by prayer alone."

I love the way he articulates that thought. My desire is to see men moved by God, and that happens through prayer. He has many other stories about how he prepared to become a missionary, and just how he grew as a Christian. Most of the book was written about times when he was my age or younger. It really feels like a guy walking ahead of me, teaching me how to do what God has called me to.

I would encourage all of you to read his biography if you have time. It will encourage you in your faith. I am also sure that it will challenge you to pray for and love the nations more.



**HUDSON TAYLOR
(AGE:21)**

THANK YOU TO
 EVERYONE WHO IS
 SUPPORTING THIS
 PROJECT BOTH
 FINANCIALLY AND
 THROUGH PRAYER,
 YOU REALLY ARE
 IMPACTING A CITY
 FOR CHRIST

Urbana



**THE ARENA FOR THE MAIN
SESSIONS (23,000 PEOPLE)**

Over the New Year holiday I had the opportunity to help represent Asian Access at the Urbana Missions Conference in St. Louis, Missouri. It is the largest student missions conference in the world. I have been one other time and that was when I was a student at TAMU.

This time around was a whirlwind trip. We all arrived in St. Louis, had a meeting, slept, and then spent 4 days speaking with university students about Japan. Our team consisted of missionaries currently in Japan, US office staff, Canadian office staff, and a few pre-

field missionaries.

The first thing I was impressed with was our staff's philosophy on the conference. Of course, our goal is to find new missionaries from the conference. Our goal is 10 new church planting associates from the conference. But in our training the stress was on ministering to the students who are at the conference.

It was stressed to us that the goal was to help the students figure out what God was leading them to do with the rest of their lives. Whether that is missions or working at a factory. The goal was to get to know the students, share a little about what we do in Japan, and then pray with the students for whatever their needs are, whether that is Japan related or not.

This philosophy made the conference a lot of fun. I had great conversations with guys every day.

There were people at Urbana in several stages of the proc-

ess of becoming missionaries. My favorite conversations were with guys who were in their last few years of college. One young man was praying about whether to be a doctor or do full time ministry in Japan. Another guy had ended up in Japan for the summer last year and had fallen in love with the people.

Since returning to Japan I have had the chance to correspond with one of these guys, and continue to pray for them. Please join us in praying that from our time at Urbana at least 10 new church planting associates will come to Japan.



OUR TEAM

Joel



JOEL

June of 2006.

For the last 2 weeks I have had a college student named Joel living with me. Joel is currently a Mechanical Engineering Student at Georgia Tech. During his second year of school he

began considering becoming a missionary in Japan in the future. As you can see from the picture, he is also a lot of fun.

Last year he came across the opportunity to intern with a Baptist Missionary for a year. So, he took a year off of college and has been in Japan since

The missionary he is working for is a friend of mine at a church a few hours away. Part of Joel's internship has been visiting other missionaries and observing church plants around Japan.

Our plant in Okuchi is the youngest church plant Norman (Joel's supervisor) knew about, so he asked me if Joel could observe and help for a few weeks.

Since arriving in Okuchi Joel has helped teach English, chapel times, find new contacts, taken part in our Okuchi worship service, and done pretty much anything else I have asked him to.

Please keep Joel in your prayers as he considers returning to Japan as a full time missionary. Also pray for him as he decides whether to continue as a mechanical engineering major, or switch schools and major in missions.

Prayer requests...

Personal

- That I would continue to grow daily in my relationship with God.
- For good relationships with guys my age, and healthy Christian community.
- For clear and healthy boundaries with all of my relationships with the opposite sex.
- Safe travel, I spend a lot of time in my car on mountain roads.
- Health, I have been healthy since the fall and please pray that I stay

that way.

- Language, I am getting better but still not where I need to be.

Ministry

- Healthy team dynamic in Okuchi.
- New English students
- Effective Chapel Time in English class.
- New relationships with men in Okuchi.
- That relationships

祈って下さい

we have in the community would transition from nice friendships, to relationships where we are sharing the gospel.

- Preparation for a summer team this year.
- That we would have fruit (new Christians)
- That we would continue to integrate into the community
- For a gospel choir the women I am working with are starting to reach out to the community.

ACCORDING TO
MICROSOFT I AM
SUPPOSED TO PUT
SOMETHING HERE
THAT WILL MAKE YOU
WANT TO READ ALL
THE ARTICLES.

Ministry Update

I have mixed emotions about Okuchi English classes lately. We have trouble getting students. Being a small farming town there is not a lot of practical use for English. But two of my students have recently started showing a lot of interest in the Gospel.

Minamata English is the opposite of Okuchi, more students than I know what to do with. My two most promising relationships are heading off to college next month which is difficult. I also have an adults' class meeting on Sunday nights. It is a lot of fun; most of the students are parents of friends of mine.

We are still having our Sunday Morning Okuchi Service. Most weeks are still just 3 of us, but we have occasional visitors.

"Love Letter" is a book written by a Korean missionary. It is a bilingual bible study that clearly presents the gospel. Recently I have been studying it with a few guys I know. I am also planning on implementing it as the curriculum for chapel time the next



ENGLISH STUDENTS

few months.

Basketball, Mr. Donuts and other things that I do in the community to meet people are going well. I have English students in both towns that have come from these places.

Overall I would say that ministry is going well but slow. I have a large number of relationships where I am regularly sharing the gospel. Many of my friends are showing interest in Jesus, and asking a lot of spiritual questions. My hope and prayer is that they will be able to trust Jesus with their lives.

UPDATE NEWSLETTER FROM ROBERT FLETCHER ADAIR

Robert Adair
c/o Minamata Fukuin Kristo Kyokai
Tsukinoura 248-12
Minamata-shi, Kumamoto-ken
Japan 867-0035

Phone: 090-7471-0290
Phone from America
81-90-7471-0290
E-mail: Robert@fatrobert.com

**CHECK OUT MY
BLOG
HTTP://
OKUCHIDENDO.BLO
GSPOT.COM**

***The LORD your God is in your midst,
A victorious warrior
He will exult over you with joy,
He will be quiet in His love,
He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.***

Zephaniah 3:17 (NASB)

What's Next???

Goal for the next month:

Take more pictures so that I have to use less clip-art...

I have more than a year left on my current term here in Japan, but it is definitely time to start thinking about the future. Right now the questions of “What is next?”, “Should I keep working in Japan?”, “Do I need to get a job and settle down somewhere?” are all racing around in my head.

I love what I do. I have never been more content that I am right now. My life is centered around trying to live out the gospel in a country that I love. I have the opportunity to get to know Japanese young people, pray with them, and share who Jesus is.

The Church plant is building momentum. Several young people are exploring who Jesus is. They are studying the bible, and having significant conversations with myself and my teammates. The flipside to that is that if the rate of growth does not increase drastically, we will not have a self-sufficient church a year from



WHAT I FEEL LIKE ON THE INSIDE

March. So that leaves me with a few options.

Option 1, I can return home next year, and pray that God continues the work here in Okuchi, and that a church is formed in the future.

Option 2, I explore the possibility of extending my stay with Asian Access. To continue working in the same setup I have now, and continue pressing on towards seeing this church planted.

Option 3, finish my term with Asian Access and look for a job here in Okuchi. Basically trying to continue the ministry here while assimilating more into the culture.

I currently have no desire to return to the states, or start a ministry project in a different location. I love God more than I did 2 years ago when I left. I love Japanese people more than I did when I came. I want to continue serving in Japan as long as God allows me to. But more than anything I want to know God’s will for my life, and to do it.

These are the real decisions I am facing right now, I am sharing all of this primarily, with the hope, that you will pray for me. Pray that I would follow where God is leading me and not just take the easy route.