

Land of the Risen Son

イエス・キリストは日本を愛する

(Jesus loves Japan)

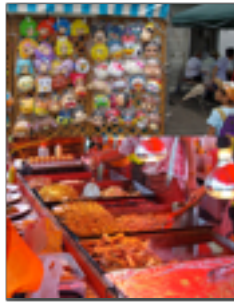
Interesting Facts

Itoman Hare Festival...

Itoman is a fishing town. Each year it has a festival of thanksgiving for the fruits of the sea. This festival also commemorates the end of rainy season.

Vendors (see right)

There were many people attending, and so there were lots of vendors and foods. My friend bought some street cheesecake. Kids had masks, swords and toys. It was like being at the Canadian National Exhibition!



The Kannukase Race (see right)

In this boat race, contestants row around a course. There's a loud bang and everyone jumps out of the boat, flipping it over in the water. They then flip it upright, jump back in, and start to bail out the water as they complete the course. This is unique to Itoman!



Update: On the Road to Japan (Peter & Valerie Limmer)

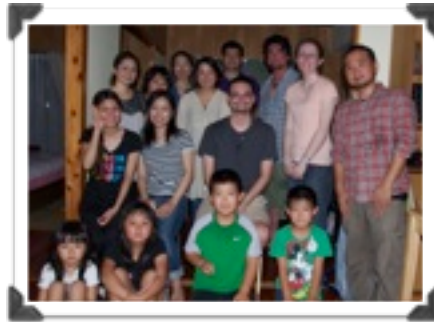
Decisions & Baptisms

In Japan, the decision to be baptized is very important. There have been so many people who have accepted Christ at one point, only to fall away from Him later, that baptism is seen as a more firm commitment to follow Jesus, and is celebrated with the same joy and vigor as North American Christians would celebrate a person making the initial decision to follow Christ. After a few months of attending ESL classes, one of Peter's students, Helen, has decided to rededicate her life to Christ and be baptized.

In Peter's ESL class, which wrapped up at the end of May, most of the non-Christians were men. This is really special in Japanese culture, where women typically make up the bulk of the Christian community. Peter has been developing deeper relationships, with several of the men reaching out socially to him and expressing a desire to become friends outside of the classroom. Another ESL student, Grant, has also now decided to follow Jesus and be baptized. He has been coming out to church since Christmas, and has been internalizing many of Jesus' teachings.

...and Relationships!

Meanwhile, my ministry has also been thriving. In Japanese culture, having a person into your home is already a pretty big leap; having people unexpectedly drop



Val had a surprise birthday party on June 16th!

by and willing to come in is completely counter-cultural, yet this has been happening. Last month one lady, Irene, came over to visit. She began talking about how hard it must be for me to go through such a long recovery process. I said, "Yes, but there is also great joy in knowing that God is with me, and teaching me many important lessons." She visibly started at the word "joy" and asked me to repeat myself. We ended up having a really great discussion about how God can use even our suffering for good.

We have continued having Charles and Chelsea over for visits regularly. They usually come with Chelsea's sister, Karin. Charles and Chelsea's daughter, and Karin's two daughters also come. In May when they visited, they brought a new little girl, Jill, who is also Karin's daughter. We don't know what's wrong, but Jill rarely goes outside of her house, not even to

school. We all ended up having a fun time, and after the visit, Chelsea told me that Jill said to her, "I want go to Valerie's house again because dishes were so yummy." We felt very honoured indeed that Jill wanted to come again, and this month she did!

On June 16, my birthday, I had a wonderful surprise. Peter had gone out for the evening, but came back saying he'd forgotten something, and that I needed to come and see it. There, standing in our doorway, were fifteen of our Japanese friends and former ESL students! They had arranged a surprise birthday party for me, complete with cake, ice cream, and presents! It was an absolutely wonderful time. I haven't smiled so much since our wedding day, and by the end of the night my cheeks hurt.

My body continues to heal. I've tried some preliminary experiments with the physiotherapist in sitting, and have concluded that I'm not quite ready for this yet. He currently has me working on some new exercises, which mean that I need a little more rest, but we are glad to see increasing flexibility and capability as I progress.

All names have been changed to protect the privacy of the people we've mentioned.

1. How's Val Doing?

We are happy to report that Val is no longer in pain, as long as she doesn't push herself past her current capabilities. She still has limitations on what she can do, and is currently most limited by a sensitivity to vibration (which means that vibration is currently destructive to her recovery process) and the inability to sit. In physiotherapy Val is working towards resolving these limitations.

Because of these factors we are unable to travel. It has been told to us that the problem is likely either an irritated disk in the extreme lower back, or a broken tail bone. Both these issues use the same physiotherapy exercises for healing. The prognosis is complete recovery.

2. What medical help is Val getting?

Val's abilities have been steadily increasing with the help of a top physiotherapist at the Canadian Back Institute and a doctor at International Health Management (also known as the Missionary Health Institute), both located in Toronto. We liaise with them via phone and the internet. The physiotherapist that we are working with is regularly monitoring Val's health 1-3 times a week, depending on her progress. Progress is slow but he and we are very pleased with it.

3. When will you return to Canada?

At this point since Valerie cannot travel, we do not yet have an ETA on our arrival back in Canada. Much as we would like to know how much longer we will have to wait, we can't rush Val's body in healing. We are waiting for her to recover some more before we try to put a date on our flight.

4. What are the next steps?

Currently we are waiting on God to direct our next steps. We feel that we have a responsibility to God, to you our partners, and to the Japanese church to finish our term if possible. We will be able to do this if God opens a door to a new organization. If God opens a new door, we will walk through it and continue to minister with and to the Japanese for the remainder of our 3 years here.

However, if God does not open the door to a new organization we will return to Canada when Val is able. We will likely move back to the greater Toronto area and live there as we wait on God for what we are to do next. It is possible that we may go to Bible school to get further training, to provide us with the tools for future ministry.

5. Will the finances I donate go to you?

Asian Access has provided a verbal commitment that any funds earmarked for us will be used for us during this time. If that changes we will be sure to let all of you know immediately.

6. Are you still employed by Asian Access?

In order to keep our Japanese visas alive, it is necessary for us to remain technically under the employ of Asian Access until Val's body can safely undergo the 15-hour plane flight home. However, they plan to release all ties with us when we land in Canada.

7. How do you feel about this decision?

We are greatly disappointed that we may not be able to finish our commitment to work with the Japanese here in Okinawa. However we recognize that God has given Asian Access authority in this situation and they have chosen to end our ministry prematurely. We also know that God is sovereign and He is continuing to work in our lives and for us. While this has been, and still is, a trying time for us we are confident that God will walk us through it. He has continued to show Himself faithful, and has greatly used all of your words of encouragement.



Valerie's Birthday Cake... it literally reads "Bareri-"



Val blowing out her candles!

Contact Information

Thank You

Thank you for your interest in our work. We plan to send out newsletters every two months. If at any point you decide that you don't want to receive them anymore, just email us (japan@peterandvalerie.com).



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