

# Land of the Risen Son

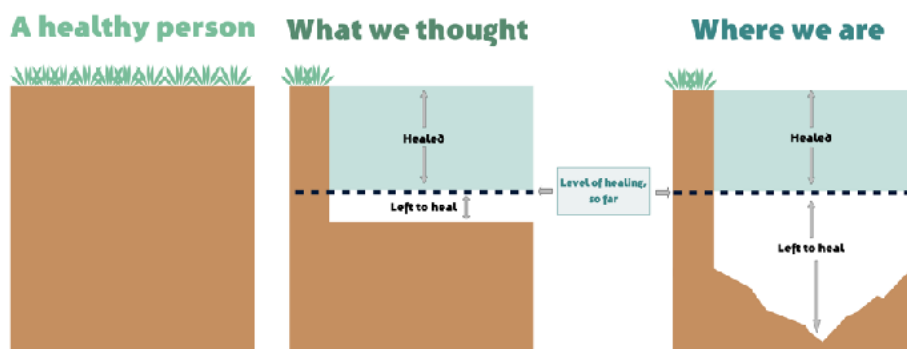
## イエス・キリストは日本を愛する

(Jesus loves Japan)

We would like to begin this letter by telling you how much we appreciate you, our partners. Some of you know that at the beginning of May, I received a concussion. Your Facebook messages of love and concern encouraged and uplifted us in ways you couldn't possibly have known then, but that you may get a glimpse of in this letter. Thank you.

### A New Realization

During our time with our former organization, Peter and I experienced severe trauma. In the past couple of months, that trauma has been re-aggravated. We've realized that our wounds run much deeper than we originally thought:



When we've experienced trauma, deeper wounds are healed last. This graph is the reverse of a way a hole is usually filled, to illustrate this reality.

With the re-aggravation, carrying out ministry in Okinawa has been gruelling over the past three months; we don't have the emotional resources to pour into the people we love and care for.

Through this time, we've been going through counselling remotely. However, we've been advised by our therapist that it would be best for us to return to Canada for a few months in order to receive the most promising treatments for our situation. They can only be applied in-person, so we've now bumped up against the limitations of remote counselling.

At the beginning of June, we will be returning to Canada for 3 months of intensive therapy. We believe this will ensure longevity in our future ministry, and once more make available the emotional capacity we need to do our jobs well.

During our time back, we will be unable to meet individually with you, our partners. Unfortunately, because of the nature of the trauma, we don't have the emotional ability to sustain many relationships at the moment. That being said, we do plan to spend time with our families.

Due to restrictions on our Japanese visas and taxes, we'll have to wait a bit longer before our next visit to Canada. We're planning to come back for a regular furlough, complete with meeting with you, at the beginning of 2021.

### Embracing Joy

Though this time of emotional upheaval has been arduous, we can't help marvelling at another reality that co-exists along with our suffering. Just before the trauma was re-aggravated, I started teaching a new series in our English-language worship services. It was on the fruit of the Spirit. I'd already preached the sermon on love, and by the time our lives were turned upside down, I was due to preach the one on joy.

That was probably the hardest sermon I've ever had to prepare. I had to force myself through the process of preliminary research, and then to start writing. It was agony. Then something happened. The writing got easier and easier. Words and ideas seemed to gush out of me. They were profound and basic at the same time. I took joy in remembering the joy that I'd experienced earlier, even in the midst of suffering and evil. I took joy in remembering the methods I'd used then to spiritually survive and even thrive in the midst of horrendous circumstances. Somehow, that sermon ended up being both the hardest and easiest I'd ever written.

**“THERE'S A REASON THIS HAS COME UP NOW. YOU NEED TO DEAL WITH THIS NOW.”**

– Brian Albrecht, the president of GOM

That is the beauty and paradox of joy.

Joy is not an emotion, fickle and elusive. It's a choice. If we have the courage to embrace it, a joy-filled reality can be ours. That sermon prepared us with the ability to reframe our present suffering within the context of joy. We've been learning again to "fix [our] eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of [our] faith." (Hebrews 12:2)

It doesn't mean that these experiences aren't still agonizing. But God is once more expanding our souls to be bigger than our pain.

## Questions & Answers

### Q: Why has this come up now?

We don't know. We knew there was trauma before, and went to therapy for it. However we now recognize our wounds go much deeper than either we or the therapists previously realized. We initially thought we would postpone dealing with this until the fall, since this would be more convenient for our schedule. However after limping along in ministry for three months, we realized we needed to move up our schedule and deal with this soon. As Brian Albrecht, the president of GOM, said, "There's a reason this has come up now. You need to deal with this now." So, we are.

### Q: How have GOM and Seaside Chapel reacted to the news?

We've been overwhelmed with their support. The president of our organization offered to give us up to one year of paid medical leave should we need it. Higa sensei likewise is very affirming and encouraging. We have attached a note from him to this newsletter. We are so thankful for having such supportive people behind us.

### Q: What will treatment look like?

We have scheduled a rigorous regimen of in-office therapy. This will include not only talk therapy sessions, but also supplementary techniques medically proven to be useful for treating people in situations like ours. In-office sessions will be supplemented with at-home exercises to help us process the things that have happened. When we return to Okinawa, we will continue remote therapy.

### Q: Are Peter's health problems tied to this trauma?

There's a strong correlation between certain trauma milestones and the emergence of Peter's health problems. We hope that dealing with the underlying psychological injuries will enable Peter to complete physical healing quickly and thoroughly.

### Q: Will I get to see you when you're back in Canada?

Unfortunately, at the moment we don't have the emotional capital for relationships. That's why we're coming back to Canada from Japan to deal with this. We want to be the people God made us to be, and we believe that investing in healing now will mean many more years of fruitful ministry in the future. We sincerely hope that we won't be hurting or offending anyone in this. We're looking forward to seeing you in 2021.

### Q: How can I help?

We would deeply appreciate your prayers, for both ourselves and our immediate families. There is much of our experience that we have not shared with them, and they will be learning and processing a lot of new and painful information.

## Contact Information

### Thank You!

Thank you for your interest in our work. We send out newsletters every two months. If at any point you decide that you don't want to receive them anymore, just write or email us.

### Correspondence can be sent to:



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