



Japan Journal

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Updating You on the Benekes' Ministry to Students in Kobe

Dear Friends,

"It was the most eventful two weeks of my life." That's how one Japanese student described her experience to us during this year's **Taiwan Mission**. While Jungshin and I were at home waiting for Lela's arrival, **9 students and 2 staff from Kobe** traveled to share Christ's love with college students in **Hualien City** from **September 3rd-17th**.

For most of the Japanese students, it was their first time participating in an overseas mission. For a few of them, it was even their first time leaving Japan! But in spite of the language and cultural barriers, God used them to introduce many new Taiwanese students to Jesus.

During Freshman Orientation, they were able to make contact with almost 95% (!) of incoming students through spiritual interest surveys. After classes started, they engaged students on campus in spiritual conversations. At the end of their stay, they also hosted a large outreach event called **"Japan Night."** In two weeks, **the team was able to share the gospel with 78 people, and 20 of those people prayed with them to receive Christ.** Praise God!

The Taiwan Mission was also a great opportunity for our students to grow in their relationships with God and each other. Twice a day they gathered to read the Bible, worship, and pray together. Students were so encouraged by that time that they decided to start doing it on their own campus. **This semester, 5-6 of them have been meeting every morning to have devotions together.** They and their community have been growing a ton as a result.

Sharing the gospel with strangers overseas is one thing, but sharing it with friends at home can be just as difficult. To equip our students, we hosted our yearly **Evangelism Training** on **11/13-14**. Students learned how to use a simple evangelistic tool called the *Four Spiritual Laws* to share their faith with confidence. Those who went through the training last year helped to teach the newcomers. **In all, we had 14 students participate, 7 of them for the first time.**

At the end of the training, we went to Kobe University



Talking with students during Freshman Orientation at **Taiwan Mission (9/3-17)**



Teaching how to use the *Four Spiritual Laws* at **Evangelism Training (11/13)**



Enjoying some much needed R&R at the **Nunobiki Herb Garden (11/3)**

to apply what we learned. It was about the worst day you could have possibly picked for an outreach: cold, windy, and raining. But despite the bad weather, **everyone was able to have good spiritual conversations and went home smiling and encouraged.** For some of them, it was their first time to share their faith like that with another person.

That's what's been happening with ministry recently. On the home front, thank you for praying for our transition to parenthood! **We expected life to change once Lela was born, but I don't think anything can really prepare you for how much it changes.** We don't sleep as much as we used to, and Lela's constant need for attention keeps us on call 24/7 (especially Jungshin). It can be exhausting.

Thankfully, we've gotten a lot of help from family and church friends, and I've been able to rearrange my schedule so I spend more time at home. I'm still not very good at balancing family and my ministry responsibilities, but I'm learning, and I'm grateful I can be there to support Jungshin through this physically demanding season of motherhood.

Lela turned 2 months old on 11/19. She coos and smiles at us a lot these days, and she just started rolling onto her side. She's long and skinny, like Daddy. Last week, we took her to get her U.S. birth certificate, SSN, and passport. This week, she starts her immunizations. She's finally sleeping longer at night, which makes Mommy very happy.

We're looking forward to a break over the holidays, but until then, there's still lots of ministry to be done! Christmas is only a month away, and it's truly the best time to share Christ in Japan all year. **We'll be hosting outreach events on 12/11 (Christmas Party) and 18 (Christmas Worship), and I'll be sharing a gospel message on 12/11.** Last year we had two new students attend these events who became Christians, so please pray that would happen this year, too!

As always, thank you so much again for your prayers and partnership! We never could have survived these last two months without them. God bless you and your family, and have a very Happy Thanksgiving! Yours in Christ,

Ryan & Jungshin



Both of our families came to visit us soon after Lela was born (9/26-10/12)



Lela is two months old! Every week brings us new joys and challenges

PRAISES & PRAYERS

- *Praise* God for students' spiritual growth through the **Taiwan Mission and Evangelism Training!**
- *Pray* for Lela's good health, growth, and a regular sleeping schedule.
- *Pray* we could prioritize and grow in our relationships with God and one another, even in this busy season.
- *Pray* for Christmas outreach events: **Party (12/11) and Worship (12/18).** I will give a gospel message on **12/11.**

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