

JOE CONGDON

Serving in Tokyo, Japan

May 19th, 2007

CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST

April Means “New School Year” in Japanese



Cherry blossoms adorn every park and sidewalk in Tokyo in April. This marks the beginning of the Japanese school year,

which has meant a new ministry strategy for me and my team. This past month all nine of us have been split up into four different campus teams and fully integrated among the Japanese staff. Together we have been working tirelessly to “catch” the new freshmen; to invite them to our events, our English lunches, and interna-



tional parties so that we might be able to build real, genuine friendships with them. We have been convinced

that the Lord most often uses a trusted friend to open the hearts of the Japanese. We have already had the opportunity to share the Gospel with many of our contacts

few months here in Tokyo. I want to lie to you all and say that the Lord is doing amazing things in the hearts of Japanese students. God is definitely moving, but not as I would like. The truth is that I am very discouraged and tired. It is hard to spend over a hundred hours on campus in one month and see little to no fruit from it.



English Lunch! A big part of our strategy to attract many of the freshmen on our 12 campuses.



Victor (Stinter from Singapore) and me hanging out with 3 guys from Sophia University. We've got a lot of contacts!



Masks are common in Japan. Here one of the teams battle the germs as they go on campus.



Student leaders, Yuko and Mako, present CCC to all the newcomers at a picnic.



from this new school year. None have yet to receive Christ, but we continue to grow in our relationships with them.

It has been a hard past



I've been getting closer with the guys from my church! These two shots are from an amazing retreat we took to the countryside last month.

I have been learning that God is still good even when he doesn't move as I would have Him. I have been learning the hard lesson of finding my satisfaction in the Lord Himself and not what He does for me. Thank you for praying for me. It is my only desire to remain faithful and obedient to the Gospel and to do the best job that I know how as I lead my team. We are following the Lord's lead as best we can, but if He doesn't move, then nothing will happen.

Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.

Proverbs 19:21

Resource Trip to Sapporo

Earlier this month, we took our team on a “launch week” to Sapporo (on the northernmost island in Japan) to try to start ministries on college campuses there. We were inspired to do this by a similar trip I took last year to schools in rural Missouri and Illinois. It was quite different in Japan but still a great experience.



This time around we went up to resource a new student ministry that has just been started by our friend Richard, who works with OMF. Richard has recently been put in charge of starting a student ministry all by himself! We went up there to give his



(left) Richard welcomes us at the airport. (above) Victor and Takuto, one of our contacts from Hokkaido Univ.



movement a jumpstart. I was encouraged by how hard my team worked about how much we were able to do in only four days on campus! We had a few outreach parties and were also able to leave Richard with a website and a few contacts. Please pray that the Lord would strengthen his hands as he continues laboring with students up there.



This is *miso ramen*, a specialty in Hokkaido. I love Japanese food, especially regional specialties like this!



Pastor Kaji and his wife welcomed us with open arms. We visited many churches in the area to connect with Christian college students there and get a feel for the city.



Time to go home...one last prayer with Richard in the airport before we go back to Tokyo.

Looking into the Future



Thank you for praying for me and my future. I have decided to apply to join long term staff with Campus Crusade for Christ. I'm excited to think I might get to work with students as a career!

It has been a long time since I have been back in the States and I feel very out of touch with all of you, my friends and family. I'll be back in Texas in early August. I look forward to connecting with you all this fall. I am predicting the transition to life back in the States to be a difficult one. Please pray that I would finish strong here and be prepared emotionally and spiritually for returning home. Thank you for contributing faithfully to



what the Lord is doing in Japan. It could not be accomplished without your prayers and gifts!

Joe

I'd love to hear from you!

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