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CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST

Thailand Mid-year Trip: Elephants and Encouragement

It has definitely been a crazy past few months. Towards the beginning of February our team set out for Thailand for some time off and for a staff conference. We joined a few hundred other missionaries in Chiang Mai for a refreshing time of teaching, coaching, worship and fellowship. Our team was met by a coaching couple from the States who were able to counsel



us over the week. They were able to give us new direction and focus in our efforts on campus. In addition, they were able to make several insightful observations about our team that set us up for how to better minister to and love each other as we serve together in a foreign country.

As the team co-leader (Jess is the other leader), my ministry has been a bit different than I had thought it would be this year. A large part of my job has been to shepherd my team. I have had to not only to train them and equip them to do effective ministry on campus, but I've also had to learn how to give them all of myself and to care for them on an emotional level. It has been a bit unexpected but has become a part of my job that I have really grown to love.

As we live together and work together, we have understandably become

very close. We are family over here. Pray that the Lord will use our relationships with each other as a witness to the Japanese, many of whom have no close friends. I pray that the Lord will use us in students' lives to show them the incredible reality of the Lord's perfect redeeming love.



Left, we ride a boat to our island in southern Thailand. Above, Emily and I take a ride on an elephant during our day off in Chiang Mai.

Snowboarding with Jesus

Less than a week after arriving back from our trip to Thailand, we joined the Japanese staff and students for their annual ski camp. Christian students and non-Christian students alike joined us for two days of snowboarding and three nights of testimonies and teaching.

The goal of our ministry is to always be staff-coached and student-led. That is why I was so encouraged by the two young student leaders who really took charge and led all of our group times at the camp. You can see them to the right, **Daichi** (who is only a freshman!) and junior **Yumi**. Each of them took time to share their personal testimonies with the group and became extremely vulnerable about their own real struggles



with their faith. It is amazing to see the way the Lord is raising up such young leaders here in a country that is so spiritually dark. Please pray that they will continue to grow and be used by the Lord.

My buddy **Bun** was also able to join us on the trip. I know it was a good time for him to connect with other Christian students. It was a blessing for me and my team to also get to know the Japanese staff better. Undoubtedly an impact was made on the non-believers who joined us. Wary of us at first, by the end of the trip they didn't want to leave. Please pray specifically for **Maki** and **Mizue**, that God would continue to use things like the ski camp to reveal His plan for salvation to them.

The Near and Distant Future

My team and I need your prayers! The Japanese students will be returning from their 2 month spring break on April 2nd. We are launching a new campus strategy in which our team is fully integrated with the Japanese staff here. This is an exciting change for us, but it is also a nerve-racking one. Please pray that it would be a smooth transition. We are busy planning and praying for it now.

I have many big decisions coming up in my life, decisions that I do not want to take lightly. I would love for you to all commit to praying for me and my future over this next month especially. What will I do when I return from Japan this summer? Will I join staff? Will I come back to serve in Japan? Will I join a campus ministry back in the States? Where? Missouri? Texas? California? Will the Lord have me do something entirely different? I really don't know now, but I have confi-

dence God will tell me in his perfect timing. Please join me in praying that the He will make His will clear so that I can be obedient and faithful. Thank you!

Joe

Please Pray that...

- God would lead me in my future
- We would see success as the new Japanese school year starts in April!