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Dear Friends,

After years of exposure to Christianity, Akane has finally fully trusted in Jesus and learned to communicate why. A couple weeks ago, Adriana (a second year intern) contacted me looking for back up as Akane learned to share her testimony in Japanese. She had already helped Akane think through the questions of what her life was like before, during, and after coming to know Christ. I just got to be there for the final practice and touch ups. It was absolutely impactful for me to hear her whole story.

Akane shared about some tough circumstances that led to her to a Catholic high school. There she first rubbed shoulders with followers of Jesus. She was moved by their kindness but thought she herself couldn't believe. She was so interested, however, that she decided to enter Sophia University, a Catholic school, and continue to study theology. Throughout this time, she found it difficult to open up to people and truly be herself. Essentially, she just always catered to what others wanted and didn't even know her own preferences. After coming to Tokyo, she met members of our summer mission teams and got connected with us and another Christian group on campus, KGK. After numerous encounters with Christians, Bible studies, and sessions of question asking, last year Akane believed in Jesus as her Savior. Earlier this month, when she went home for her coming of age ceremony (age 20) her friends from elementary school noticed a change in her. They said she seemed so much more lively and cheerful. She attributes this change to the freedom Christ has given her.

After hearing her testimony, we talked about how she can share her story with classmates and friends. Somehow though, something seemed off, and I wasn't able to really convey how her experience of trusting in Jesus can impact others. Eventually I prayed, which seemed to help slightly. But more resolution came at our next weekly meeting where we talked as a group about how each student can help reach his or her campus. Akane shared that we can't lose sight of the reason we're inviting others. I followed up with her at dinner saying it was good timing she had just written her own amazing story of how God changed her. She mentioned that she sometimes gets asked why and what she believes. I told Akane that is the perfect opportunity to share her testimony and help others experience the same change, and it finally all clicked! Please pray for her and others (all of us believers in Japan) as we take advantage of every opportunity to share the hope we have!

In Christ,

Christina

Please join me in praying for~

- ❖ Akane, Marina, Megumiko, and Risako to continue growing closer to Jesus and sharing Him with others
- ❖ Valentine's Day baking parties (2/11 and 2/13) to be good fellowship and outreach
- ❖ Students exploring the Bible or interested in starting (Natsuki, Erika, Maiko, Chie, and others)