



Despite the earthquake and transportation obstacles, more than 100 gathered for CHANGE in Tokyo (3/14-3/17)



At CHANGE: Masks are normally worn for protection against germs or pollen. This time it was for radiation.



New role (at CRASH) with old friends (Erin Kawaye, OMF and Roy Toma, CCC)



Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed, says the Lord who has compassion on you. Isaiah 54:10

Praying at Student Impact (Japan Campus Crusade for Christ's) CHANGE conference

Jessica Joy's Japan Journal

2011.03.29

March 11, 2011. A day that began like any other. Little did I know my life was about to change.

The week preceding March 11 had been packed with graduation activities, CHANGE conference (Japan Campus Crusade for Christ's national student conference) preparation and significant conversations with pre-Christians and new Christian students. At that point, I was thinking I had better do an update before our conference

because I had so much to share with you. And I knew I would have more to share with you after CHANGE. I was right. I just didn't know how right I was...

On March 11th, around 2:45 pm, I was having a Japanese lesson with my teacher when we both felt the ground tremble beneath us. Initially, I didn't think anything of it, but my teacher, who already fears earthquakes began to panic. When I realized the quake wasn't stopping and only getting stronger, I also began to fear. We tried exiting the

building (we were on the fourth floor) but for some reason my teacher froze and ducked in the hallway and didn't (or couldn't?) move. Even though I knew buildings in Japan were built to withstand quakes, the recent New Zealand quake images flashed through my mind and I wondered what we would do if the building collapsed. I convinced my teacher (and two others who had joined us) to exit down the emergency stairs. We got out safely, but that was just the beginning...

Quote taken from Mariko's (pictured right) facebook note on 3/13. She's a freshman at ICU where she's one of the few Christians on her campus. Her whole note can be read on my blog.

"im not afraid of earthquakes nor death because im ready to go to heaven! dont wanna leave non-christian friends though. so i want my non christian friends to know that Jesus is the only way to Heaven! ... people are confirming their family or friends' safe, but i felt that we christians should confirm family and friends' salvation. i ask God that today would be the day of salvation of the lost in the disaster not only in tohoku or japan but also in this world."



Triple disaster

Even though the earthquake was a frightening experience, what we felt in Tokyo was *nothing* compared to what was felt in the Tohoku region. The 9.0 magnitude earthquake triggered a tsunami that washed away homes, schools, churches and lives. 27,000 are dead or missing. That's more than 20 times the human toll in Hurricane Katrina.

At the same time there was damage to a nuclear plant in Fukushima causing a radiation scare which is being monitored to this day. The nuclear crisis is now the number one reason why so many have evacuated not just Fukushima, but also Japan.

Why I'm Staying

80% of international students have returned to their home countries because of the radiation scare. For me that meant saying a lot of sudden "good-byes" to my classmates and friends via phone, e-mail or facebook. Some have asked if I'm leaving.

I'm not. I don't blame anyone for leaving and think it's the wise and right choice for many. For me though, I'm not married (yet). I don't have kids. My parents and Tien are concerned but supportive. And right now is THE best time to be in Japan for the sake of the gospel. I'm with the people I love and have invested so much of my life into over the past several years and by staying and helping with the relief effort (and *not* hoarding resources), my Japanese friends around me know I really am standing by them. Literally.

My former neighbors, a Japanese family, and I have gotten especially close since the earthquake - sharing food, drinks, toilet paper and deep

conversations. I can see already how this tragedy is really an opportunity. An opportunity to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way.

What we can do

The saying, "dekiru koto" ("what we can do") is heard and seen everywhere in Tokyo right now. As we daily see images and hear stories of those in Tohoku, everyone wants to do their part to help.

As Christians, we can do so much. Christians around the world are interceding on behalf of Japan in prayer and are giving time, money and resources to help. Right now what the survivors need most though is hope. And we know that hope, the kind of hope that lasts beyond this life as we know it, is only found in Jesus.

CHANGE

Our Student Impact students have really grasped the vision that NOW is the time for revival in Japan. The time to make their own personal relationships right with Jesus and the time to introduce their friends, family and neighbors to their Savior. Our CHANGE conference (March 14-17) couldn't have come at a more perfect time. At the conference we prayed fervently, had amazing times of worship, were challenged by the Word and students learned how to share their faith and do follow-up with new believers. Already, two of our Tokyo students came back from conference, shared with their friends and two of them accepted Christ! Also, since the day after CHANGE ended, our students and staff have gathered every morning to pray and do devotions. Now is truly a sweet time to be in Japan. Your prayers and partnership are truly making a difference! Thank you so much for standing with me!

*In Christ,
Jonica*

Prayer Corner

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14

1. Revival in Japan

The body of Christ all around the world and church in Japan has unified in an unprecedented way. Pray that this disaster will spark a revival in Japan as we come together, pray, and seek God's will. Pray that many will come to know Jesus.

2. Tohoku Region

Hearing about the unspeakable suffering just 150 miles north of where I live breaks my heart. Please pray for those in the Tohoku region who have lost so much.

3. Relief efforts

JCCC (aka Student Impact) is beginning to send out relief teams (our first team left yesterday, 3/28) to Sendai. CRASH a JCCC partnership organization and where I've been volunteering full-time (6 days/wk, 10-11 hrs/day) is partnering with Christians around the world to help out with the relief effort as well (www.crashjapan.com). Please pray for organization, unity and wisdom.

4. New believers

Shoko (Saya's friend) and Shirayanag (Mariko's friend) prayed to receive Christ this past week! Shoko's been involved in FREE and Shirayanag is an ICU student. Please pray for their faith to take root so they can build an unshakable foundation on Christ. Continue to pray for Ayu (became a Christian in late January) who's soaking everything up. Meeting with her has been my greatest joy.

5. Personally

Please pray for balance and wisdom as I work with CRASH and JCCC. I want to do everything, but can't (especially while I have this cold!). I'm VERY grateful my dad will be coming next week (4/4-4/19) to help me out. Even though we'll be busy, pray that we can have quality time together.