

Updates from Ray and Shelley Kwan - please add us to your safe senders list. Thank you!

[View this email in your browser](#)

Kwan
Quarterly



Updates from Ray and Shelley Kwan



At a Japanese community center Christmas party

"Now the Church is a missionary body, and we must recapture this notion that the whole Church is a part of this witness to the Gospel and its truth and its message."

- Martin Lloyd-Jones, *pastor*

Konnichiwa!

Dear Family and Friends,

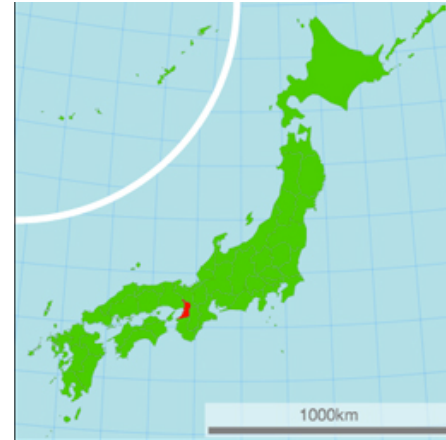
Happy New Year! We thank the Lord for your continued interest in and support of His church in Japan! Here are a few highlights from this past season:

TIME IN THE STATES

In October, we went back to the U.S. a little earlier than planned to attend Ray's older brother's wedding in Sacramento. Our hearts were refreshed to see many of you during our packed time in L.A., San Diego, and Northern CA. We appreciate everyone who made the effort to see us and apologize that we were not able to spend time with more of you.

PROCLAIM CONFERENCE

Three days after arriving back in Japan, Ray flew to Tokyo for the annual Proclaim Conference sponsored by Japan Bible Academy (Ray is currently a staff member). This was a great opportunity to connect with like-minded Christians from all over Japan and study the Word in Japanese. We were pleased that several young people from our church and a neighboring church made time to attend!



Osaka, Japan

Highlights



Celebrating Ray's older brother's wedding with family in Sacramento.

TRANSITION TO MINISTRY

Thank you for praying for a smooth transition from school to ministry! Since November, Ray has been meeting with Doi sensei every week, and his responsibilities at Hatta Nishi church have been increasing. He assists in the children's Sunday School and performs Sunday morning welcome desk duties. He also participated in Christmas outreach events and attended his first Japanese funeral (quite a cultural learning experience!). He preached (with translation) on "Knowing God" in December and will preach again in March.

LANGUAGE CLUBS

Ray continues to participate in different Japanese language clubs throughout the city almost every day of the week. In addition to building fluency and cultural competence, he enjoys the opportunity to engage people in spiritual conversations. One thing that surprised him was how often people assume he is either Mormon or a Jehovah's Witness when he tells them that he is a Christian. This experience underscores the need for the true gospel to be shared in Japan.

HOME FELLOWSHIP

Now that Ray is done with school and Masanobu has dropped his morning nap, we have been more intentional about practicing hospitality and getting to know Hatta Nishi members outside of church on Sundays. Shelley and Masanobu have also had a few play dates, both with believers and unbelievers. We also enjoyed an encouraging time



Meeting friends in Northern CA in October.



Celebrating holidays in advance with Shelley's family in Los Angeles.

meeting with Japanese friends who live abroad and were home for the holidays.

It is tempting for us to measure ourselves by what we have learned or not learned, or how busy we are. Yet, God calls us to be faithful and to trust in Him, not ourselves. Please pray that we would trust in God's grace and be faithful with the life He has entrusted us with!

By His grace,

Ray, Shelley, and Masanobu Kwan

WOULD YOU CONSIDER FINANCIAL PARTNERSHIP?

Thank you for making it possible for us to serve the Lord in Japan! Would you please prayerfully consider partnering with us financially on a regular basis?

For those interested in giving online or using a credit card, here's an easy way for you to do that on the IBC website: <http://www.ibcbible.org/missions/kwan-missions/>

Thank you for your consideration!

My Via Dolorosa: Along the Trails of Japanese Imperialism in Asia



A few Hatta Nishi members with the Proclaim Conference speakers.



Ray preached about knowing God in December.

By Takamitsu Muraoka

Available in Japanese and English

This is not a book on missiology per se, but I (Ray) found a lot of value in it as a missionary in Japan. I came across it while looking for books on Amazon about biblical Hebrew and Greek in Japanese. I first came across the author's name when I was taking Hebrew Exegesis in seminary. He revised and translated (from French to English) a fairly well known Hebrew grammar book that I occasionally use as a reference. I made a mental note of his name because I thought that maybe someday I would utilize one of his works if I ever made it to Japan. Now here I am in Japan, utilizing one of his works.

About the Author

My Via Dolorosa is basically a travel diary of Dr. Muraoka's short-term trips to Asia to teach biblical languages at various Bible schools. He was born and raised in Japan but has spent most of his life in Christian academia in the West (the UK, Australia, and the Netherlands). Since retiring in 2003, he has traveled to Asia almost every year. The countries include China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand. If you know your Japanese history, you would notice that these are all places that were under Japanese occupation (at least in part) before WWII. The primary motive behind Dr. Muraoka's travels is, as a Japanese citizen and in his



Christmas with Hatta Nishi members and friends.



Hatta Nishi Christmas service.

own way, to make amends for the atrocities that his country committed.

Issues to Ponder

The best thing about this book is that it causes the reader to think about important issues that he or she might not normally think about. Such issues include:

- To what degree does God associate me with the nation I am a part of, and what are the implications of that?
- What responsibility does an individual have with respect to his or her nation's sins from a biblical perspective?
- Should America/Americans/an American missionary apologize for the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki?
- How can knowledge of a country's history be used for effective evangelism/ministry?

This is just a small sample of the questions that reading Dr. Muraoka's book raises.

Thoughts and Recommendations

I don't think this book is for everyone. It's not a theology, a devotional, or



With Japanese friends from Izumisano.

[Click to make an online gift now](#)

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Faithfulness: That we would be faithful in every aspect of life - personally, in ministry, and with family.

2. Effective Communication: That we would continue to develop in our language and cultural fluency.

3. Maturity of Japanese Churches: That Japanese

even a history book. It's an autobiography. I would recommend it mainly to people who are specifically interested in reading a Christian's perspective on Japan's war crimes. However, to everyone I would recommend studying the way God views and treats nations as a whole in the Bible to learn about some of the issues raised in this book.

Christians would grow in their understanding and love for Christ and His word.

Did You Know?



The Japanese emperor's birthday is a holiday and it changes when the emperor changes.



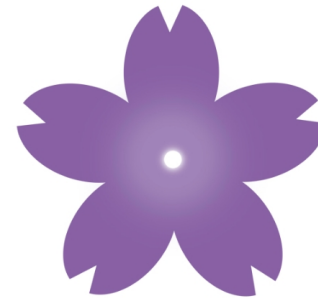
Car dealers loan bikes as well as cars. This is a bike that Ray used while our car was undergoing a mandatory inspection.

To support the Kwans in Japan long-term:

- Give online via PayPal or credit card at www.ibcbible.org
- Make checks payable to **IBC**. Write "IBC Missions - Japan - Kwans" in the memo line and send to:

IBC Missions - Japan - Kwans
Immanuel Bible Church

1254 19th St.
Santa Monica, CA 90404



Copyright © 2017 Ray and Shelley Kwan, All rights reserved.
You are receiving this email because you opted in to receive our updates.

Our mailing address is:

Ray and Shelley Kwan
Bien Court 4B, 3 Cho 292-3
Otori Higashimachi
Sakai City, Nishi-ku, Osaka 593-8324
Japan

[Add us to your address book](#)

To support us, go to <http://www.ibcbible.org/missions/kwan-missions/>

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

MailChimp.