


**Kwan**  *Quarterly*

*Updates from Ray and Shelley Kwan*



**Konnichiwa!**

*Dear Family and Friends,*

Hello! As we are in the midst of typhoon season, we thank the Lord for your faithful prayers and ongoing support! As many of you may know, in early September Japan was hit by the biggest typhoon in 25 years. In Osaka, we experienced disruptions in transportation (Kansai Airport closed, trains were suspended), power, and water; saw uprooted trees, and were sobered by the many damaged businesses and homes. On Sunday, there was another typhoon which affected people in southwestern Japan. We are thankful for God's great protection and reminder that He alone is our stronghold, and we pray that many would cling to Him as the source of life and salvation.

Here are some more updates:

**JOYFUL KIDS**

In August, a team from Immanuel Bible Church (IBC, our home church in Santa Monica) came to help with the annual Joyful Kids VBS children's program and to fellowship and encourage Hatta Nishi members. Praise God for their sacrifice and dedication, as well as that of the Hatta Nishi members who spent countless hours preparing lessons, crafts, refreshments, and activities for this gospel-sharing opportunity.

**ENGLISH CLASSES**

Ray continues to teach three English classes at Hatta Nishi church as an outreach as well as an opportunity to practice teaching in Japanese. Please continue to pray for wisdom and clear communication for Ray as he leads the classes; faithfulness of the church members in planting and watering seeds of faith; and for the salvation of unbelievers may attend the classes.

**PLAY DATES**

Recently, Shelley and Masanobu have been having play dates with a mom and her daughter (same age as Masanobu) whose husband grew up at Hatta Nishi, left for a while, and recently joined Ray's English class. The family lives in our town and has been coming to church fairly consistently. Please pray for this mom who is interested in learning more about the Bible and for Shelley to speak with wisdom and grace.

**CONFERENCES**

**"Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God."**  
- Corrie Ten Boom



Osaka, Japan

**Highlights**



On July 12, we celebrated our tenth wedding anniversary!



We celebrated Masanobu's third birthday with some Hatta Nishi friends.

At the end of September, Ray was in Sendai for a Japan Bible Academy (JBA) seminar featuring Dr. Bruce Ware. In July, Ray and a few Hatta Nishi members traveled to Nagoya to hear Dr. Paul Tripp speak at a Christ Bible Institute (CBI) Conference. Praise God for a great time of fellowship and teaching, and for upholding Shelley and Masanobu when they were at home.

#### UPCOMING TRAVELS

On October 2-17 (this week!), Shelley and Masanobu will be in Los Angeles to spend some time with family. While the trip was planned several months ago, by God's gracious provision they will be in LA just in time to help Shelley's sister take care of their mom (who has dementia) while their father flies to Hong Kong for their grandmother's memorial service. Please pray for strength and comfort for Shelley's family.

All three of us will be going to Tokyo for the Japan Bible Academy Proclaim Conference from November 22-24. Please pray for safe travels, humble hearts to receive God's word, and encouraging fellowship.

#### FUTURE DIRECTION

In 2014, we came to Osaka with a five-year agreement for ministry training at Hatta Nishi church. In September, two of our pastors from IBC flew out to Japan to meet with us and with Hatta Nishi leadership to discuss our future ministry options in Japan. Please be in prayer for us as we explore opportunities and consider where God may be leading us in 2019.

We are grateful to the Lord for His kindness to us in Christ Jesus and appreciate your ongoing support of God's work in Japan!

By His grace,

Ray, Shelley, and Masanobu Kwan

#### PARTNERSHIP AND SUPPORT

We thank God for your partnership in making disciples in Japan!

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/>

We appreciate your support!

### Book Review: Missions: How the Local Church Goes Global

Andy Johnson (Associate Pastor at Capitol Hill Baptist Church)

Reflections by Ray

*Missions: How the Local Church Goes Global* is the tenth book (there have been 11 so far) in the 9Marks: Building Healthy Churches series of books. If you are familiar with 9Marks you would know that it is a very helpful ministry that produces a lot of great material on (yes, you guessed it) building healthy churches. The ministry is headed up by Mark Dever who serves as the senior pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington DC.

I will just start out by saying that this is a very good "entry level" book on missions. One of the things I really appreciate about the books in the 9Marks: Building Healthy Churches series is that they are all very easy to understand and concisely written. However, at the same time, they are deep and solid theologically. *Missions* is no different.

#### Four Basic Principles and How to Apply Them

Besides the introduction, the book has seven chapters. The first chapter is about the biblical foundation for missions. In this chapter, the author gives us four basic principles that are the foundation of biblical missions: 1) the mission of missions is primarily spiritual, 2) the mission belongs to God, is for His glory, and is on His terms, 3) God gave the mission to the local church, and 4) the Bible tells us all we must know to faithfully fulfill God's mission (pp.28-29). The rest of the book is built upon these four principles.

The second chapter is about how missions must center on the teaching of the gospel. When the author refers to "missions" he means "the unique deliberate gospel mission of the church to make disciples of all the nations" (pp.34-35). In the third chapter, the author gives some basic principles on supporting and sending missionaries based on 3 John 1-8. More specifically, these principles pertain to how to evaluate a missionary candidate and what are the various means a local church can use to support a missionary.

#### Red Flags

In the fourth chapter, appropriately entitled "Getting the House in Order," the author addresses some common



Masanobu participated in his first Joyful Kids VBS.



The IBC missions team with some Hatta Nishi members.



Masanobu playing with a friend in our town.



Ray preached again in August.



IBC Pastors Nam and Gary visited Japan in September to discuss our future direction with Hatta Nishi leadership.

incorrect perspectives on missions. For example, sometimes there is such an overemphasis on numbers (e.g. conversions, churches planted, etc.) that the missionary's work resembles "spiritual abortions more than births" (pp.67-68). He also points out some red flags to look for when choosing which missionaries to support. For example, if the missionary is offended when asked about his or her theology (p.65) or asked about what he or she did the past month (p.66) those are definite red flags. The fifth chapter deals with principles to apply in the partnership between the church and the missionary. Here is a summary of those principles. The partnership must be: 1) servant-minded, 2) pastor-led, 3) relationship-based, 4) commitment-centered, 5) congregation-wide, and 6) long-term focused.

### Short-Term and Alternative Missions

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The last two chapters might be the most interesting chapters for most of you. In chapter six, the author takes a close look at short-term missions. He is not against short-term missions but does believe that "our short-term trips can be more about us and our experiences than about encouraging gospel work and glorifying God" (p.89). In this chapter, the author provides 10 points that everyone participating in short-term missions should think about before going on a trip. In chapter seven, the author gives three alternatives to traditional missions to consider. These three alternatives are 1) reaching the nations at home, 2) reaching the nations through international expatriate churches, and 3) reaching the nations through your job.

### Final Thoughts

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*Missions* is a great little book (128 pages) that I would recommend to anyone who is interested in learning about the foundational and practical issues involved in missions. I would especially recommend it to the leadership of any church. If you are an elder, you should be aware of and carefully think through the issues raised in this book. Andy Johnson has contributed a very biblical and easy to read volume to the Christian conversation on missions and I hope that the Lord will use it to shape the thinking of believers for many generations to come.



Masanobu with his beloved Mommy and Me teachers, Tomoko-sensei and Motoka-sensei.



Ray with pastor Makito Matsuda of Oasis Chapel, speaker Dr. Bruce Ware, and Dr. Daisuke Okada at a JBA Conference in Sendai.



Masanobu enjoyed passing out gifts to seniors for a Keiro No Hi (Respect for the Aged Day) outreach event at Hatta Nishi.

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

#### PRAYER REQUESTS:

- 1. Church Growth in Japan:** For Christ-exalting churches to multiply and for individual members to grow in righteousness, faithfulness, and humility
- 2. Clear Communication:** That we would communicate effectively as we plant and water seeds of faith, trusting God for growth
- 3. Future Direction:** For wisdom and guidance as we explore future ministry opportunities in Japan

Did You Know?



Typhoons in Japan are distinguished by a number, not a name. This photo was taken after Typhoon #21 (a.k.a. Typhoon Jebi).



In Japan, you can hull your own rice using a public rice hulling machine available at home improvement stores.

To support the Kwans in Japan long-term:

- Give online via PayPal or credit card at [www.ibcbible.org](http://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

