

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

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Kwan
Quarterly



Updates from Ray and Shelley Kwan



"The church is (Jesus') voice in the world announcing the good news about God, calling men everywhere to repent and inviting them to enter the kingdom. Every individual in the church shares this responsibility. We are called to witness. Are we doing it?"

- Eric Liddell, *Scottish athlete turned missionary to China who inspired Chariots of Fire*

Konnichiwa!

Dear Family and Friends,

The heat and humidity have subsided – hooray for the blessings of fall! We pray that you are well and want to again thank you for your ongoing prayers, support, and encouragement as we begin our second year in Osaka, Japan.

INTRODUCING MASANOBU SILAS KWAN!

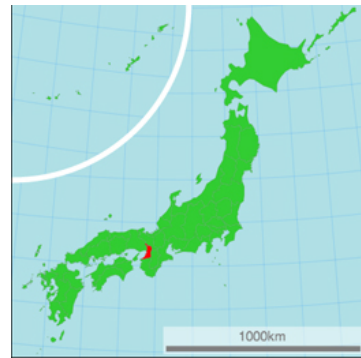
As you may have seen from our Facebook posts, baby Masanobu Silas Kwan was born on July 26 at 12:20 p.m., 18 inches long and 5.4 pounds. (More info about his name is in the “Did You Know” section below.) Our little guy has grown a lot since then! By God’s grace, we are learning to know, love, and serve him, as well as grow in grace and love for each other. Please pray for us as we, like many of you, are on this journey of parenthood!

CHILDREN'S OUTREACH

The week after Masanobu was born, Ray became busier as the Immanuel Bible Church mission team from Santa Monica came to assist Hatta Nishi Church with the annual Joyful Kids outreach program. 25 kids from the church and community heard Bible stories, sang songs, did crafts, and learned English. Please pray that these kids would come to know and love the Lord, and that they and others might continue to come to Sunday School and another children’s outreach event this coming Saturday.

A CHARGE TO FATHERS

On August 16, Ray had the opportunity to preach during the Sunday service at Hatta Nishi Church. He chose a topic that had been on his mind recently – biblical fatherhood. Feedback from many people seemed to indicate that it was well received. Praise God for His word, living and active, that brings conviction, repentance, faith, and life!



Osaka, Japan

Highlights



Masanobu brings us much joy!



Introducing this year's Japan missions team from IBC.



IBC Meals on Wheels Japan.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS VISIT

We were blessed to see many familiar faces from home this past quarter! After the IBC missions team left, Shelley's sister came for a couple of weeks to help out while Shelley recovered from her C-section. Some friends from IBC also stopped by in August, and Ray's parents and younger brother visited in September. We are thankful for the time we were able to spend with each of them. We also look forward to seeing many of you when we visit the United States in December, Lord-willing.

SCHOOL BEGINS

Ray began his second year of language school this week. He is going solo now while Shelley takes care of Masanobu at home. Please pray that Ray will make the most of his time left at school and that Shelley will be able to retain the Japanese she learned up until this point and continue studying informally. Please also pray for opportunities to share Christ wherever we may be.

Like the transforming colors of fall, this has been a season of change for us. We are excited about all that the Lord is doing and look forward to continuing to learn, grow, and share the love of Christ here in Japan!

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



Ray preaching at Hatta Nishi Church with Pastor Doi translating.



Hatta Nishi ladies brought lunch over to our home during Shelley's sister's visit.



Sharing a meal with Shelley's sister, friends from IBC, and one of the Hatta Nishi church members.



With Ray's parents and

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!

younger brother at a local *okonomiyaki* restaurant.

Click to make an online gift now

Book Review: *Theology of Culture in a Japanese Context*

By Atsuyoshi Fujiwara

Review by Ray

This book was originally written as a PhD dissertation for the University of Durham, where James D.G. Dunn has taught for many years. Since there aren't very many works out there on Japanese Christian theology written in English by native Japanese scholars who studied in the West, I decided to give it a go.

Not an Easy Read

First of all, I must say that the book is pretty dense and hard to read if you're not used to reading theology and philosophy. Much of the book is an analysis of the thinking of various western theologians who have done work on Christianity and culture (e.g. H. Richard and Reinhold Niebuhr, Yoder, Barth, Tillich, and Hauerwas) and some Japanese theologians as well (e.g. Uchimura, Kitamori, and Ohki). I read the Kindle version, but it runs 416 pages in print so it's not a short and easy read, even if you ignore all the footnotes.

Insight About History

I derived two main benefits from reading this book.

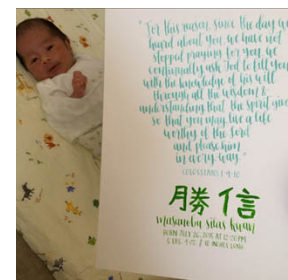
PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Japanese Learning: For Ray as he continues with school and for Shelley as she continues learning Japanese informally.

2. Children: That those who came to Joyful Kids and the ones who come to another outreach event this Saturday, October 10 would come to know and love the Lord.

3. Family: That we would grow in the grace and love of Jesus through our marriage and as parents.

Did You Know?



First, by far the most valuable aspect of the book in my opinion is it is fairly thorough and well-organized history of Christianity in Japan. Fujiwara divides the history of Christianity in Japan into three periods: 1) 16th and 17th century Catholic missions, 2) 1859-1945 which was the end of Japanese isolation to the end of WWII, and 3) 1945-1985 which was the period when Japan rose to become a leading economic power. Within this outline, Fujiwara gives a great amount of insight and detail on the history of Christianity in Japan.

Influences on Japanese Christian Thought

The second main benefit is exposure to the main influences on Japanese Christian thought. Honestly, I had not studied any of the thinkers mentioned in this book very much if at all. Most of them are outside of my theological camp, so it was good for me to be exposed to these other perspectives. Despite coming from a different camp, I found the writer's conclusions to be refreshingly sensible and middle-of-the-road. I don't necessarily agree with him on all his points or even his approach for that matter (which was much more philosophical than exegetical), but I was pleased to find out that there are Japanese theologians out there who don't go to the extremes (complete separatism from the culture or embracing culture without spirituality) but recognize the importance of simultaneously holding on to orthodoxy while engaging the culture.

Concluding Thoughts

I was disappointed in one thing regarding the book. I was hoping that the writer would give concrete examples on how his view would flesh itself out in Japan. However, he never gets around to practical theology. Perhaps he will deal with that in a later book someday. For now, I can recommend this book as a concise but thorough history of Christianity in Japan

Japanese names can be written using various *kanji* (Chinese characters), each with a different meaning. Masanobu's name comes from the characters "to win" and "faith" for the meaning "victorious faith."



Hospital stays following the birth of a baby are longer in Japan than in the U.S. and often are stricter about visitors. Shelley was in the hospital for one week, and only immediate family (including Ray) could be there during visiting hours (2-9 p.m.).



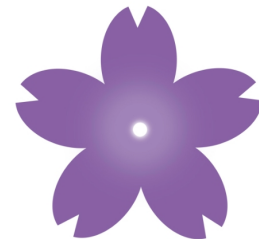
Japanese parents save their child's umbilical cord in a wooden box and give it to them when they move out or get married.

and a good introduction to Japanese Christian theology to those who don't mind reading something a little more dense.

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