

## JAPANORAMA

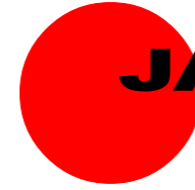
Northern Japan recently had its harshest winter in two decades. It was particularly difficult for the elderly. Mr. Nakajima who was 89 and a recent widower, died after falling into a well while trying to clear piles of snow from his yard. Mrs. Hasegawa, an 80-year-old widow living alone, became trapped in the snow while attempting to board up her windows and froze to death.

For generations, Japanese families practised the time-honored tradition of caring for grandparents under one roof. But that tradition has faded. Many households now consist of elderly people living without their extended families. With the Japanese boasting the world's longest average life span of 82.2 years, the resources needed for elderly care have reached record levels.

Please pray, that we might be able to teach them, more than calling on anyone else, to call on God for help!

***Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.*** (Ps 50:15)

If we call on God in our old age, He will not desert us!



## JAPAN MISSION

"Call unto Me, and I will answer thee" - Jer. 33:3

July / August 2007

### GOD USES DIRTY LAUNDRY

After God gloriously saved Mr. Shigeo Masuda, his great burden was to see his family come to know the Lord. His conscience bothered him because he had treated them so badly in the past. He spent many restless nights in hospital, haunted by the angry face of his wife and the hatred in the eyes of his eldest son. When he fell sick and had to enter hospital, they were glad to see him leave and decided never to visit him!



*Mr. Masuda*

It grieved him day and night that he was estranged from his family. He knew that his wife hated him intensely for his sordid past of partying and womanizing. He was desperate to put things right with his family. What made things more difficult was that his wife influenced their three children to despise him.

Every day he wrote a long letter to his wife, telling her that he had changed and pleaded with her to follow the Savior. She had heard his stories of 'turning over a new leaf' before, but it never lasted for long. She never even bothered to respond to his pleas for forgiveness.

One ray of light was that when he wrote to his mother, she was very responsive and soon took his Savior as her own. She burned the idols that she had previously worshipped. With his wife, however he made no progress. He arranged for a few weeks leave from hospital to clear things up on his desk at work, and to spend time at home in order to reach out to his alienated family.

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With much prayer and trembling, Shigeo went home to humble himself. When he arrived, the whole family stared at him with disgust. From the moment he entered the front door, his wife started to berate him for his self-indulgent life-style. In the past, it would have been an open invitation to fight, but now it was an opportunity for him to act as a follower of Christ. He saw the unwashed dishes piled up in the kitchen. Instead of retaliating, he dropped his bag in the entrance and silently started to wash them. His wife and children stared at him in speechless surprise.

The next day, when he arrived home from work, his wife, right in front of the children, again started to accuse him for his waywardness. Again he asked her to forgive him and bowed down low before her and the children – something they had never witnessed before. Mrs. Masuda could not believe her eyes, when he picked up a bundle of dirty clothes and started washing them. He had never done laundry in his home before! After a week of such godly conduct, Mrs. Masuda was desperate to find the reason for her husband's dramatic change and came to consult with us.

"My husband is so different that I am confused," she confessed. "His letters from the hospital told me of

his conversion, but I could not believe that a person could change so radically. At first I thought that he was just trying to wipe the slate clean, but now I am more and more convinced that his God has brought about a major change in his life!" As she told the story of Mr. Masuda's conduct, we were filled with joy, but she was still very perplexed.

"I would also like to serve this God, but I would like to do so in secret, without my husband knowing," Mrs. Masuda told us. We explained to her that she would only be effective if she confessed her sins before God and asked her husband also to forgive her for her unloving behavior. After a few hours of counseling, much prayer and tears, we sent her home to humble herself before her husband.

It was late when she returned home and friends were there visiting, so she said nothing. The next day she still lacked the courage to do so. On the third day she could bear it no longer and burst into tears, asking him to forgive her for her horrible attitude.

"Our home became like heaven itself!" Mr. Masuda later told us with tears in his eyes. From then on, a new relationship was established and love reigned in their home! □

## STAFF UPDATE - ROBERT MACKENZIE

Robert Mackenzie came to Japan from Northern Ireland in August 2006. He is working with the Japan Mission as an English Evangelism teacher and interacts with many students, friends and contacts each month. He genuinely cares about people and loves to make friends.



*Robert Mackenzie*

Each conversational English class ends with a Bible Time, and is frequently followed by a time of discussion and a cup of tea. This often presents a wonderful opportunity for the teacher, minister and believers to witness and learn about the struggles faced by many of the students.

Robert has had numerous occasions to share his testimony of how God healed his broken family and heart. Many of the Japanese are moved by his honest and intensely personal story. God has used this to speak to their hearts and minds.

Robert is also very interested in Christian apologetics and finds it a challenge when students ask many questions about his faith. Robert says, "To be used by the Lord God in this way is an honor! Please pray that I will continue to be used by Him and that I can shine brightly in this land, with a brightness that can only come from the Lord!"

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## PRAYER REQUESTS

1. Mr. Masuda is now 90 years old. His wife died a number of years ago and so did his eldest son. Please pray for Mr. Masuda and many others who were saved through the work of the Mission, who desire to be effective witnesses and faithful to the end.
2. Please pray for discernment and wisdom for Robert Mackenzie as he eagerly shares the Gospel wherever opportunities present themselves.
3. Please pray for the strength and protection of various Japan Mission staff members who return to their respective countries during the month of August in order to take meetings, report back to supporters and make new contacts.