

Mission & Friendship

Sharing Friendship & Christ With Japanese People



Christianity is a relationship not a religion. Andy and I try hard to communicate that truth in Japan. The image most people have is that becoming a Christian means entering a church building, adhering to their list of rules, and giving lots of your hard earned Yen.

In order to communicate that Christianity is a dynamic relationship with our living Creator, we ourselves have to have a dynamic relationship with God. We then have to have loving relationships around us. We are praying constantly for God to lead us to people whose hearts He is preparing to hear and respond to Him. Nobuko was such a person.

One month after arriving in Japan we met Nobuko who came to our church for a special concert. I spoke with her briefly and gave her my business card. Two months later she called and asked me to disciple her!

Nobuko, a single Christian gal, fell away from God and had been dating a non-believer for 3 years. We met together at Starbucks. Over green tea frappachinos we began looking at what God had to say about dating and marriage.

It was exciting to see Nobuko invite other friends to our Bible time. Nobuko joined our church plant at the very beginning and became a KEY person in “filling up the house” for various outreach events.

Nobuko began a study with her friend Yuka and eventually Emi. We entered into a weekly Bible Study and into a relationship with one another and our God. We laughed, cried, and looked together directly at what God’s word said about life. Whenever God’s word answered a question or problem, Emi would say, “BINGO!” Our times together became a series of “BINGO’s!”

Yuka, shared one night how she looks forward to coming to the study because she feels such peace when she is with us. What fun to show her the truth from Matthew 18:20, “For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst.” We told her that the peace she felt was the presence of God in our midst and His Spirit in each of our lives.

Nobuko, Yuka and Emi are walking in their own relationships with God. At times they still have many outward behaviors that I’d like them to change. But giving them a religion, a list of do’s and don’ts, isn’t the answer. Christianity is a personal relationship with a living God who is at work in their hearts, changing them from the inside out and teaching them along the way how to walk daily with Him.

I’ll never forget the day Nobuko told me she broke up with her non-Christian boyfriend. She is now seeking God’s plan for her life in full-time ministry. Please pray that Nobuko will hear God as He leads her each day. Pray that Nobuko, Emi and Yuka will continue to align their lives with God’s word as they grow in their relationship with Him and impact others around them.

Lorna Gilbert



MEET NOBUKO

“Now I can say with confidence that if I don’t abide in Jesus, I can’t bear any fruit.”



Shu wo sanbi shimasu! This sentence means “Praise the Lord” in Japanese. I’m Nobuko. It’s such a privilege for me to share my testimony with you. Right now I’m teaching at a Junior and Senior High School. I’m a typical Japanese workaholic (wake up at 6:00 am and get home at about 10:00 pm every day).

My life as a teacher has been such a challenge. It’s been 8 years and this has been the hardest time in my life. I haven’t been able to find a mature Christian person and have felt isolated all the time. Though I love my students, some of the teachers give me a hard time. I have lost confidence in what I have been doing. I started this job with faith in Jesus but little by little I got used to doing things my own way. I separated from God. I was too busy to have a personal relationship with Him.



My soul was wandering in the darkness apart from Jesus. I wanted to go back to Him, but I didn’t know how. I was so lonely spiritually and exhausted physically. At school I couldn’t be a good witness and that inferior feeling made me more depressed. When I was the most depressed, I met Lorna. I believe that God sent her just for me. We had Bible studies together, had spiritual chats at Starbucks coffee, I joined the church they started last May, I broke up with my non-Christian boyfriend, and I’m taking “master life” class. I also attended Urbana 03.

Now I am encouraged and get guidance and healing in my relationship with Lorna and Andy. I found the way back to Jesus. To fix my eyes on Jesus and think of Him gives me such a comfort and peace. Now I can say with confidence that if I don’t abide in Jesus, I can’t bear any fruit. He made a way out of the impossible situation in my life just like He made one for Israel where there was a huge river. Brothers and sisters in Christ, I want you to know He is at work even in Japan!



“For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.” (Psalm 84:10) I have made up my mind to follow Jesus the rest of my life. I also want you to know how much I appreciate your faith by sending Lorna and Andy to Japan, and all of your prayers that are such an encouragement for us. God bless you!

Nobuko