

As you read this entry, please pray for the people in it, and whatever is put on your heart. But here are some bulleted requests as well. Of course, the most important thing we want is that we and they may know the God-Man and his way.

Success of the preschool in His eyes
Church membership and attendance
More divine appointments with needy people
Health
Discipline

Some cool things to report! The preschool still just has one full time student and a couple of part timers, but those we have are doing very well and the parents are happy. We haven't even had any visits or materialized interest in the last couple of months though. The name of this entry comes from the nickname our full time student has given me. Just about every day without fail, I am referred to as Jesse-baby-farting noise, even in her prayers which we have her do for us twice a day.

I recently moved to my own place, which was a lot of fun (the place, not the move itself :)). It's sort of the first place I've ever had totally on my own. Americans might think the size laughable, but it's perfect for me, someone that likes the compact, efficient and such. It's 14.5 sq meters, with a single room, a single burner and sink, and a bathtub and toilet. It's exciting to have it, and to be in a new part of town. I've already started to get to know some of the locals including a bike repairman and grocer. It's kind of a downer to think that I didn't even come with much, but even here on mission I had so much stuff to move. I'm definitely a proponent of traveling light in life.

I've been helping with middle school soccer, and the end of the year tournament is tomorrow. It's been a lot of fun, and a reminder of the stressful adolescent years. Comments like "You don't know how I feel!", "Careful (with him) you're a grown man!", and the casual snub to an emphatic "are you ready for the game tomorrow?" communicated by a shrug and immediate dislocation from the conversation, have been a fun yet Spirit-fruit building exercise. I hope to share my testimony with them at some point. The men's soccer team I had been practicing with asked me to join, which required more commitment, or to stop coming since it's a team rule. I couldn't sacrifice the extra time, so I gave up on it. However, the coach runs an English speaking soccer camp on Thursdays, which I volunteered for. The other day after going, I got to tell my testimony to a player that stayed late.

By the way, my computer recently kind of fried itself, so I may be less in touch until I find a solution.

Now for one of my favorite parts of this Jesus life; miracles.

A friend I've been spending a lot of time with has a girlfriend that has never been to church. After basketball, against my better judgment because it was late, asked if they wanted to go to a local diner. Eventually she started talking about how she had seen ghosts, which opened up the spiritual dialog. I asked if I could pray for her for it, and if she had any other requests. She said her back was hurting, to which I almost replied, "great!" I prayed for her, and asked if she felt anything. She said my hand was warm and the area where I touched the pain had left! Those who know me might know my hands are almost always colder than any other part on anyone's body, so that alone was a miracle :). I prayed for the rest of it and she said it got better. I got to tell her the message after. She kept commenting on her back and saying, "I'm so gullible".

Another friend took me to a soccer game downtown where I met a bunch of international students around the age of 20-21 that are far far from God (please pray). Two of them escorted me to the station, where I saw a young man with crutches. I asked to pray for him and he accepted. After his eyes were

teared up, and he said it felt really good. He had no pain, so he couldn't tell if it left, but was totally absorbed by the prayer and the moment. He told me he knew about Christianity through "crump dancing" which I know as a hard hitting SoCal hip-hop dance style, but I guess some one used it as a ministry tool! That allowed me to tell the other two about God as well, when they sheepishly asked what I was doing.

Then this. Probably the coolest healing I have seen so far apart from my own, because of the person's reaction. There was a maybe 13 year old girl at a local shopping center who was wearing some sort of elongated white wrap under her knee, but she disappeared. Then I saw her sitting down at a bench right next to me a few minutes later! I went up and asked her if I could pray. She asked, can God really heal me? I said, definitely, I don't always see it, but of course. After I prayed, she said thank you, but that was it. Until I asked her to move on it. It's like a small step of faith for the person to move around, or test their injured area after prayer, and often the person can't tell until they do that. When she did that, she gave a reaction like she had won the lottery! Sugoi!!! Sugoi!!! Itami wa hounto ni nakunatta!! Kamisama wa saiko! (Wow wow the pain is really gone! God is awesome!). We talked to her for a bit about church and who God is, and then took off. She didn't stop expressing how amazed she was the entire time we were there. It was even more amazing, because being a disturbance, loud, etc in Japanese culture is a total no no, but she didn't care.

We went to the zoo recently and I found another young man with crutches who I approached and asked the same question to. Suddenly I realized he was with about 10-15 friends, which of course then made it immediately more exciting. I told them all how God had healed me, and although it sounded weird, Jesus was real and could heal him. I prayed for him, but he was very uneasy the whole time, and had told me there was no pain to begin with. But it was an awesome scene to see all those young Japanese boys listening intently to what I said. Thank God my Japanese is good enough now to communicate important things like that. Later however, I found another young man who got healed. He was just with his parents, and had an ankle problem that he said felt better after the prayer. There was a sincere look in his face too, of surprise and thankfulness.

One of our part time students' mother that I had prayed for and had been healed of an ankle problem, told me that it kept coming back. She is very connected to the spirit realm, and said she would feel like some sort of evil was biting her at night. I got excited to pray for that, and in the next visit (which was a week or two later since she had been busy) she said the evil never came back. Woo-woo!

Then there was a man who didn't get healed, but really touched me. Almost all older men have been against the idea of our God and prayer, but one man not only accepted, he was kind and left quite an impression on me. He was advanced in years, and had a leg support. He told me that he had a stroke, but when I asked to pray for him he said something like, oh please! Shall we sit down over there? Yet he explained to me that he was a Buddhist. He called his wife over and said, "wait, he's going to pray for me!" He asked if I were Christian, and just smiled at me. After I prayed for him, he looked me dead in the eye for a few seconds, said thank you, and shook my hand. I gave him a short message, and he took off, but not without impacting me with his kindness.

I also want to lastly report on a guy who came to turn my gas on in my new place. He looked about my age. I felt like I needed to share God with him, and decided when he was about to leave to bring it up. So when that happened, I told him, before you go, I want you to know that God really loves you, and has great plans for your life. Now this is what I tell just about everyone that I get a chance to pray for or ask to pray for, but even if they accept the blessing, I don't usually get too much of a response. But as if I were someone with special knowledge and a connection to God that maybe others around him didn't have, he in a very sober, inquisitive, and low voice responded "What is it? (the plan)" I was surprised by his reaction, and responded "Only God knows, but you were born into this world for a good reason." I didn't know what to say after that, but he stared at me for about 10-15 seconds with a contemplative look on his face slightly nodding, before saying thank you and slowly leaving. I was really moved by how

a few poorly accented words, in what could seem the wrong situation, from a total stranger, made him respond.

There are many people who I ask to pray for and say no, but that still allows me to give them a quick word about God before they walk away, and God gives a special warmth inside as a result. Please don't ever feel impeded to sharing with someone the greatest thing of all!

I've been learning that one thing that seems constant in the Christian walk, is a struggle to live out the immediate callings every day, still finding Christ as the goal and prize. I have a tendency to somehow have created two realms, one where I strive to live out my faith and the Name in all of life's demands, and the other where I try to get in alignment with Him. I know that there is no divorcing anything we do from the ultimate goal of pursuing Christ, but it can appear that way. That, and that all our answers are found in Him. We can pray for something and make physical effort, but everything seems to be answered as a result of looking at Christ, and not the subject itself.

Today's testimony is not a salvation testimony, but of a good work of God through a seemingly strange circumstance. A friend of mine was once living here in Japan with a Chinese man, that himself was a pretty peculiar fellow, often dressing like Yakuza and with long braided hair. Living together, they would often hear a knocking on their wall, but didn't know why. One day, a man appeared at their door as my friend opened it. He had a scowl on his face and a pair of bonefide nun chucks in his hands! He asked if my friend wanted to fight, but my friend (somehow not too jostled by the scene) kindly invited him in to talk, and offered him tea. The nun chuck wielding man didn't expect the friendly invitation and it caught him off guard. They began to talk, one thing led to another, and the man ended up accepting Jesus that day. He explained later that he was hearing a constant tapping on his wall, and thought it was them. He brought them a fruit basket from Jerusalem the next day! GBY

