



## THE MANSELLS

### YOUR VOICE IN JAPAN SINCE 1983



Dear Praying Friends,

July 2007

**Pro 28:20 A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.**

The primary interpretation of this verse is concerning finances but can be applied to life ministries also. God's timing and means of blessing may not be according to our thinking or expectation. One may miss the abundant blessings mentioned in this verse because we desire much faster or bigger results and prosperity in our lives or ministries. Pray that we would continue to faithfully and patiently do the ministry and work that God has placed before us, not looking on the "wealth of ministry" that we may hear or see in other ministries in other countries, but rejoice in the blessings of faithfulness.

Several opportunities have come to us to 'continue' the work that has been done in the past. With the Japanese one has to be so ready to keep on giving the Gospel sometimes over and over in small amounts; many times leaving them with one question to ponder and then we pray for later opportunities to follow up on that thought. Culturally most Japanese never do something straight on--they make requests through another 3rd party or they ask for something but in a very round about way. We have learned by example and by experience we need to always be forthright and of course, truthful; but sometimes there are situations when we know we must just leave the subject as is. Over a several year period, we have had basically just a once a year chance to continue witnessing to a young lady by the name of **Remi**. She will be a college senior at a college in eastern Canada and was just home for a short time. We have known her since she was around 13 and because of her interest in English we became involved in her life to some degree or another. Since she went to college we usually just see her for one evening in the whole year! She says she faithfully practices her Buddhism every day and is quite content and happy. "Happy" was the term we concentrated this past week on while witnessing to her when she came for supper before returning to Canada. We asked her what she thought the difference was between happiness and joy! She said she thought they were pretty close in meaning. We then explained that we felt happiness was based on experiences and could come and go, but joy was a peace with happiness that never left no matter what the circumstances, including through very difficult times. We explained John 3:16 and God's love for us through His Son, Jesus Christ and that by believing in Him and having him save us from our sins we had joy in our lives because He was with us all the time--in good times and in rough times. Pray for Remi as she contemplates these thoughts in the months ahead and that God would lead a Christian Canadian to her on campus to share more with her. One of the areas of faithfulness that encourages us in our work here, is that we are STILL here for even those we see only once a year. Thank YOU for helping us stay here for people like Remi. Without your encouragement, prayers, and support we could not do that.

Sometimes our ministry is with others who are around only for a period of time whether Japanese or foreign. Another young lady we would like you to remember some time is **Karen**. Karen has been a Rumoi county (our county) Assistant Language Teacher for English classes. We have had a few opportunities to share the Gospel with her, again leaving her with a thought to ponder until we met again. In the past month, we had her in our home overnight twice! This week she left for a trip before returning to America after completing her three year term here. Although we didn't get to lead her to the

Lord, we are trusting Him to carry on His plan for her life through others that come her way. She wrote in our guest book that we had given her much to think about. May she only think about eternity in Heaven or Hell and about the One who loves her so much He gave His life for her.

**Mrs. Ishiyama** has been a contact and friend for 20 plus years. She is our age, married (her husband works in a business that keeps him away all the time), has two grown unmarried sons (one at home helping with the local gas station business) and lives with her father-in-law as well. She is the head of the gas station business and only has one day off a week (Saturday). We have always tried our best to keep in contact and show we care if we have a chance to do nothing else, praying for an opportunity to do more, having witnessed to her in the past when there were more opportunities to get with her. She accepted an invitation to come over for tea today and was here for about an hour just catching up on family news. Vicki was able to share just a little of the joys Christ brings but mainly wanted to regain contact again on this 'first' visit. We pray for more opportunities with her, her son and father-in-law. Also remember to pray for our believer, Mrs. Sonoda, who has taken Mrs. Ishiyama on as a concentrated 'project' to reach with the Gospel. Mrs. Sonoda has also spent two different parts of Saturdays recently with Mrs. Ishiyama and feels as though she is gaining Mrs. Ishiyama's trust and knowledge that Mrs. Sonoda also cares for her. Mrs. Ishiyama does not have a lot of happiness in her life, let alone joy so we pray that her heart will be open to the Author of true joy!

A season of great spiritual pressure is again almost upon us. But let us first ask prayer for **Mrs. Sonoda** who we just mentioned. Although some of you will read this after the 29th (tomorrow) has come and gone, we appreciate those that can, to uphold her in prayer. Tomorrow (29th) is a major anniversary of when her mother-in-law passed away. Up until now the special death anniversary ceremonies that Japanese hold, have been held at temples and she has not had to do much with them except be prepared to feed and take care of relatives that come. This time the event will be held in the home with the Buddhist priest coming to the home. All day today (28th) she has been cooking foods and preparing for the company that will gather tomorrow. We want to uphold her in prayer not only for physical health but for spiritual wisdom and strength against the demons that will be called upon during this ceremony in the home.

This season of extra pressure for **Japanese Christians is called "obon"**. This is one time of year (middle of August here in Teshio) when they believe their ancestors may return to their ancestral homes. There is also a ritual that can be gone through to help relieve their dead ancestor's pain and anguish in their version of hell. When these are completed and they can rejoice, they do it through a special 'bon odori' or ritual dance. This celebration usually goes on for about 2 days in Teshio but varies in the homes themselves. When many Japanese believers are not in complete Christian families there is much pressures to participate in activities they shouldn't; and even if they don't, the spiritual warfare going on is very great. We know our believers would appreciate intercessory prayer for them during this time as well as for us missionaries and pastors who stand against it.

*Thank you for your prayers for us and for those in our ministry. We need your intercessory prayer every day.*

Serving Christ Together,

*Ken and Vicki Mansell*

*Just A Prayer At Night – your evening is our daytime*