

PRAYER REQUESTS

1. God worked in the hearts the Nishiyama family and is still working through them to spread the gospel. Please pray for Munehisa, one of Hideki Nishiyama's sons, and for his wife and their children who do not yet recognize the saving power of the cross of Christ!
2. Please pray for the necessary funds and network of people who make the Bible available to millions of Christians without a Bible in various countries throughout Asia.
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, make new contacts and visit with family and friends.

JAPANORAMA - SOCIETIES & CLUBS

Japanese people love to belong to societies or clubs. They even have a Bald Men's Club!

We found that believers formed societies as soon as a number of them trusted the Lord. In the various hospitals we worked in, new converts started societies, such as the Holy Heart Society, Holy Light Society, Pure Fountain Society and The Heavenly Bliss Society. These societies helped new believers to publicly indicate their commitment and be encouraged by Christian fellowship.

Asking others to join their society was less abrupt than asking them to believe in what most Japanese considered at that time to be 'The American God'. After new comers joined, they were drawn into conversations that lead them into the ways of God.

When the converts left the hospital, they became members of the Friends of Jesus, Sheep Society or the Branches of the Vine Society, which was often the first step to joining their local church.



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NAILING A CROSS TO HIS HOUSE

"I just cannot wait for the day when I can get home to nail a wooden cross to the top of my house!" Mr. Hideki Nishiyama told us way back in 1960. "I want all the people in the village to know that I am a Christian!"

He was quite excited when the day finally arrived for him to leave the hospital. A large number of the 'Holy Heart Society' believers came to send their leader off with prayer into the world. As the taxi slowly pulled away they sang, 'God be with you until we meet again'.



Hideki Nishiyama

Everybody at home was glad to see Hideki. He also received a letter from the bank where he had worked, extending him a hearty welcome and inviting him to start work again. Everything seemed to fall into place, until he mentioned his vision of placing a large cross on their house. His family thought that a wooden cross on top of their house was an outrageous idea! They all stared at him in silence. He then realized that before he could do anything that drastic, he had to lead his family to Christ. However long it took, he first had to convince them that, **God demonstrated His own love toward them, that while they were yet sinners, Christ died on the cross for them.** (Romans 5:8)

Before going to hospital, Hideki had worshipped myriads of gods out of fear. He himself had taught his family to revere these gods. Convincing them otherwise was easier said than done. While hospitalized, he had put his trust in a God who said: **Perfect love casts out fear** (1 John 4:18). His wife and children could not understand his changed behavior and decided that a strange spirit had taken possession of him. They treated him with caution and wondered what madness he could be up to next!

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Before he was hospitalized, he had keenly worshipped Buddha at their family altar. Even while his health was fading, he rose every morning at 5 am, waking up the whole family by loudly ringing the bell at the altar, so that they could study the sutras of Buddha. Now, instead of that, he insisted on reading the Bible to them!

No matter how hard Hideki tried, his family continued to look at him with raised eyebrows and could not comprehend his new way of life. What shocked them even more was that he prayed that they should become like him! The atmosphere was heavy with tension and misunderstanding.

Feeling like an outcast in his home, Hideki was at a loss as to what he should do. After much thought and prayer he decided to start a weekly home meeting, hoping his family and neighbors would attend and get to know God. Neil and Peggy Verwey were invited to the first cottage meeting held in his house one evening. No one attended! When they arrived, the children greeted them in a friendly way and then excused themselves. Hideki's wife pottered around in the kitchen and just came in occasionally to top up the small cups with hot green tea. With a lonely Hideki, they proceeded with the meeting and encouraged him with the verse: **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household** (Acts 16:31).

Week after week, month after month and year after year, he

continued with the weekly meetings by himself, sometimes with one or two neighbors attending. His wife and children remained suspicious and antagonistic.

After six years of prayer and humbly revealing the love of Christ to his family without preaching at them, God broke through in their lives. His wife was the first to confess her wrong-doing and then three of their children, Kayoko, Hideharu and Kyoko, found God one after the other. Hideki was jubilant!

Opposition melted away as the morning mist and Mr. Nishiyama, with the help of his family, who came to understand the meaning of the cross, helped to nail a cross high up against their house, so that others might see it and be drawn to God.

Hideki went to be with the Lord in 1982, but there are now fourth generation Christians in his family! At a recent family gathering, 23 of them were followers of Christ. Because the Cross was the center of Mr. Nishiyama's philosophy of life, we trust that his family will be blessed for generations to come!

*At the cross, at the cross,
where I first saw the light,
And the burden of my heart
rolled away,
It was there by faith
I received my sight,
And now I am happy all the day! □*

UPDATE - BIBLES



We do praise the Lord for the many faithful prayers and contributions towards our ministry in Bibles and Literature. Japan Mission is working in cooperation with the New Life League and other individuals and organizations to make millions of Bibles available for distribution in Japan, China and other countries in Asia.

We recently received news of the desperate need for Bibles in Cambodia. One survey showed that 12% of the pastors did not have a Bible, and only 21% of the Christians had Bibles! Many new Christians find it virtually impossible to get a copy of the Bible! Persecution, poverty, slow translation work and the lack of efficient printing methods have been great problems to overcome. The New Testament will now soon be ready for mass distribution in that country. Praise the Lord!

Bill Cook has been sponsored by Japan Mission for many years. He lives in a strategic location in Thailand, which enables him to reach out to most of the surrounding countries where Christians are often persecuted. He works with a network of Christians and leads teams of people to carry large quantities of Bibles into the remote parts of Cambodia, Burma, Laos and Vietnam. There have been times when he has been threatened and feared for his life. This work can be quite dangerous.

Please pray for the provision of funds and protection for the network of people involved in distributing the Scriptures among many countries in Asia. Please feel free to designate your gifts for 'Bibles' and we will make sure that it is used in the country where the need is the greatest at that time.