



THE MANSELLS

YOUR VOICE IN JAPAN SINCE 1983



Dear Praying Friends,

January 2006

Did you know that the first time that God is called 'good' in His Word was clear back in I Chronicles? (16:34) It doesn't surprise you probably that David is the one that used those words especially because this verse is the same as the ones in Psalms---"O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." Different events in our lives and the lives of others around us have taken challenging turns since we last wrote you but we praise God that **He Is Good** and He knows what is best for each and every one of His children, no matter what he or she may be going through.

The New Year events and family gatherings always tends to keep our believers away an extended amount of time in the first month of the year. But we praise God that we have had contact with them personally, by phone, or by email every week and Lord willing at least three of them will all be back with us this coming Sunday (29th). As we look back over the past year we have seen so much growth in all of them ... and even more than that, an excitement at gathering together to study God's Word and disappointment when something keeps them away. **All of our ladies have elderly parents** or in laws who are ailing in one degree or another. Please join us in prayer for them to have wisdom and help during this time of watching over their unsaved loved ones. Mrs. Sonoda's mother IS saved but her father is not: she feels that he may be close, though.

We had another **one-step breakthrough in getting to know one of the husbands of our ladies**. Men are the hardest to reach in many cultures but we sometimes wonder if Japan may not be one of the hardest. Some of you may remember when we reported that Mr. Shimizu, a high school English teacher, who is a member but in a different city right now working, was once told by his principal that he 'was no longer Japanese' because he refused to go out drinking with them. A couple weeks ago his father just entered into eternity unsaved. After returning to their home, Mr. Shimizu's elder sister called and was furious because he refused to accept one of the good luck charms from the Buddhist funeral of his father. Japanese are highly superstitious--for example--

Don't cut your fingernails at night, or you won't be able to be with your parents when they die. If you see a hearse, you should hide your thumbs inside your fists, or the same things will happen. Don't whistle at night or snakes will come. When you see a spider in the morning, it's good luck, and so very many more. On top of the superstitions there is the group mentality in almost everything they do-- 'WA' means harmony and is important for truly understanding the uniqueness of Japanese culture. Maintaining 'WA' within one's environment is very important to the Japanese. Moreover, this need extends into all reaches of life—within the family, at the workplace, at school, and even among strangers. So it is not surprising that to become a child of God; an individual of many differences, in many cases cannot be tolerated by those around you, so you are rejected.

So we are very happy when we get a chance to break down, so to speak, an unseen barrier with one of our men contacts, especially a husband of one of our ladies. **Mr. & Mrs. Tokumaru** were in town on business on Monday and stopped by here shortly before noon (they live about 20 min. away). He has never been in our home before so we were thankful that he accepted the invitation to come in and they ended up staying for lunch! What a blessing to in a small way have this man find out that we 'don't bite' and to also see Mrs. Tokumaru talk about God and the services unashamedly with her husband there. **Pray for our ladies' husbands and the need to still break down barriers as well as their salvation!**

Since 1993, **First Baptist Church in Laurel, Montana** has served faithfully as our home sending and servicing church. They have done an exemplary job in this ministry to us for the Lord's sake and we are very thankful to God for them. In late November of 2005 we were informed by Pastor Widdis, that as of January 2006, we would need to find another home sending church to be the base for our ministry here in Japan. As we sought God's will in this, we made inquiries with **Parkdale Baptist Church of Gastonia, North Carolina** where our oldest son Richard pastors, to be a **temporary** home church in order to give us time to seek God's will for a new home sending and servicing local church.

The pastor and members of Parkdale are familiar and supportive of the ministry here and prayerfully took on the task we requested of them. We already had a short six week reporting furlough scheduled on the east coast this March. While in the US, we trust to be able to secure a permanent home church situation. The people of Parkdale Baptist have expressed great interest in becoming that home church and we will consider them as well as others that have expressed interest in helping this ministry in this way. We ask you to pray for wisdom and direction for us and these churches that the Lord's perfect will in this decision be revealed clearly. (temporary information is listed below)

Lastly, we ask that you would **pray for Vicki** as she prepares for a 3 days ladies' retreat with Lighthouse Baptist Church in Zama, Japan (near Yokohama) right before we go back to the States. She will be speaking three times and Ken will be reporting on the work of Teshio the following Sunday (dates of retreat and reporting time: Feb. 23-25, 26th).

Serving Christ Together,

Ken and Vicki Mansell

Just A Prayer At Night – your evening is our daytime