



## November 2018

Dear Praying Friends,

TIME. Its firm hold on me is unrelenting. It incessantly drags me along, regardless of my awareness of it, regardless of my willingness to be carried along by it. One day, I will be free from its chains. But while I longingly cast my eyes toward that freedom, I must consistently remind myself of the high value each moment provides, and the high cost of each moment wasted. I've been made aware of this reality often in my ministry, especially over the past few months. Lord, help me to redeem my time well.

### **WHEN LOVED ONES DRAW NEAR**

Because of the high cost associated with coming to Japan, it's not often that we get visitors. So when they do come, it's an honor for us. This is especially true when they are from our home church! Our pastor, his daughter, and two friends came to be with us for about a week, simply to spend time with us and encourage us in our ministry. Wow! If you have missionaries out of your church, I BEG you! Make the investment to send your pastor to see them every few years to encourage them. It is SO worth it! It will allow your pastor to pray more specifically for them, and it will so refresh the hearts of your missionaries!

### **WHEN LOVED ONES ARE APART**

Around the time our pastor was with us, we received news that Bethany's mother Judy had been taken to the hospital. Her condition grew worse each day, and the decision was made to send Bethany back to care for her, as she is the only child. Judy's condition continued to grow worse, and a week later, Bethany called to let me know that her mom might not make it, and to come to the States as soon as possible. When we arrived a few days later, Judy was in and out of ICU. MANY people prayed for her, and God has graciously and miraculously answered our prayers. While she isn't "out of the woods" yet, she is out of the hospital and recovering at home. Both of her kidneys are still not functioning and she is requiring dialysis three times a week, as well as constant care from Bethany. Please continue to pray for both Judy for healing, and for Bethany as she cares for her.

### **WHEN LOVED ONES GATHER TOGETHER**

For about a year, our church in Japan has been growing in their Biblical understanding of what it means to be an active, essential part of the body of Christ; that each member has been designed and prepared by God to be a critical, integral part of the body. Part of the evidence of their growth in this was revealed one Sunday afternoon during lunch. The church family was talking about how they could grow in loving others. (I stayed out of this conversation as much as I could to see where it would go.) The result of this conversation was "Friend Day," a day where they would fully focus on bringing their friends to church. I was so encouraged! So many of our church jumped in to take part in preparing for it. Friend Day was held on October 28, and we had five friends attend the service. One of the friends, a lady named Ai, was brought by Reiko, a faithful member of our church. On their way home, after hearing the Gospel, Ai san told Reiko that she was SO glad she came because she finally really understood what it meant to be a Christian! Pray for Ai san as we continue to follow up with her.

The need to care for Judy has also been, in God's providence, a chance for our church family to grow in their roles as active members. In our absence, two of the men are preaching, and many have volunteered to cover our responsibilities. Please pray for them as we have our Thanksgiving service coming up. While my mom is there now to care for the school, and dad will be arriving in Akigawa this week, my desire is that our church family will stay active in serving and growing.

Serving Him,  
The Carters to Japan