

January 2009



Dear **equipper conference 2008** supporters,

Theme: "peace x piece Becoming Peacemakers"

"And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness." James 3:18

Praise the name of the Lord.

I would like to wish you a happy New Year, and report on equipper conference 2008 (ec 08) that we had all been praying about. First started as a place to encourage and equip (as written in Eph. 4:12) Japanese Christians who found Jesus overseas as they return to Japan, ec was held for the ninth time this time. As always, God poured out His blessings. I would like to thank each and every one of you who supported ec 08 in anyway.

Hailing from the US, Japan, Canada, Australia, China and Italy, a total of 350 attendees (including those who couldn't stay for the entire duration) joined us. Among them, 60 came from Japan. One-third of the attendees came to the conference for the first time. Also, I felt that something distinctive of this year's conference was the number of attendees who were saved in 2008 and had just begun their life as a Christian.

Our speakers were Rev. Mikio Yokoyama from Japan (Uchinada Bible Church), Ms. Hiroko Yamashita (Central Asia), and Rev. Nobuyuki Uchimura (Chiesa Protestante Giappone di Milano) from Italy. Through Rev. Yokoyama's breaking down of the Scriptures and inductive Bible study in small group settings, we studied the entire book of James. It was a great opportunity for young Christians to draw closer to Scripture, and learn how to read their Bibles. What all speakers had in common in their messages were the love of Jesus through the cross, repentance, being transformed into the likeness of Jesus, and by going through that process, "becoming peacemakers," just like our theme. I am sure that God spoke and revealed to each of us differently, but we all decided to take a step forward towards something specific and left ec 08 with determination. I would appreciate it if you could continue to pray for us and our walks.

This year's "peace" theme gave us a great opportunity to look at missionary work. We set up a Missions Booth and introduced various opportunities. Also, we connected live with Japan for the New Year's countdown, and by showing videos of Japanese ministries in Europe and Singapore, we were able to see the works of God within the Japanese people and take the opportunity to pray for each other. I look forward to even bigger works of God that the attendees will experience.

Below are some comments from our attendees:

"I was able to prepare myself emotionally for going back to Japan."

"I made up my mind to witness to my family."

"Until now, I was like a closet-Christian, but from now on, I want people to see me and think it's great to be a Christian."

"I was able to tear down the wall I chose to build in respect to Japan, and was able to get over it."

"I felt the importance of spreading the gospel. Also, I had never felt God's big love this passionately before. Christian brothers and sisters who shared my problems encouraged me."

Again, thank you so much for praying about ec 08, contributing in many different forms, and for your encouragement. This year, ec will take a break while InterVarsity's Urbana Missions Conference (where JCFN was first established) will be going on. We are hoping next time will be the end of 2010. Please pray that a director and staff will be raised up. I pray that God's works be expanded through each and every one of you, and may He bless you abundantly.

In Christ,
equipper conference 2008 director Chihiro Nakamura



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