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Newsletter / March 2011

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Prayer Requests

- We encourage you to pray fervently for the children of the world who are waiting for their families to find them.
- Pray for the people of Japan, and especially for the children newly orphaned as a result of the earthquake and its aftermath.
- Pray for the adopted children and their families, particularly as they go through the sometimes-painful process of getting to know each other and becoming a family.
- Pray for The Shepherd's Crook Ministries: that God would bless us financially and allow us to continue doing this important work in His name

From the Director

Last Friday, March 11, a disaster of massive proportions fell upon the nation of Japan. This small, densely populated country is about ninety percent of the size of California but has a population roughly three and a half times that of the Golden State. At about 2:45 in the afternoon, Japan-local time, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake was registered with its epicenter about thirty miles off the northeast coastline, near the city of Ishinomaki. This natural disaster in its own right was followed within some thirty minutes by a devastating tsunami, or tidal wave. Most of the world has been watching since then, in fascinated and shocked awe at the sheer magnitude of the destruction wrought by this “act of nature.” Compounding this horrific natural disaster is the ongoing crisis at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant. Even as I write this column, conditions at the power plant continue to deteriorate. All but fifty of the plant’s workers have been evacuated. Those fifty workers have remained behind in a last-ditch effort to keep the damaged reactors from disintegrating into a nuclear meltdown, knowing that they may well be sacrificing their lives in this effort.

I’m not going to discuss my thoughts about what role God played in the unfolding of this human tragedy. I have my opinions, based on my own understanding of God’s nature and His self-revelation through the Bible, but I recognize that different people come to different conclusions on this topic. The point on which I think we can all agree is that this is a catastrophe of epic proportions, and all Believers should be praying for the people of Japan and for those around the world who’ve been touched by this tragedy.

Many Christians will see in this disaster additional support for their conviction that we are witnessing the end times prophesied in the Scriptures. Again, I don’t intend to comment on that aspect of this situation, except to say that there have been numerous periods since Jesus Himself walked the earth in which natural disasters, wars, and human suffering have combined to paint a similar picture, and yet still the Lord tarries. We should continue to live as He admonished, prepared for His return at any moment, and yet doing the work He’s given us to do until it is done, or until He returns, or until we meet Him through our own death.

As one intimately involved in international adoptions, I see the potential in Japan’s disaster for many, many more children to become orphans. This, like so much else we’re seeing, is tragic. What makes it more so is the fact that adoptions from Japan are almost non-existent, and the laws in place are structured such that the adoption process is cumbersome, lengthy, and difficult. Over the past decade, the average number of adoptions from Japan to the U.S. is just under thirty-seven per year. (Contrast that with adoptions from China, which over the previous 10 years have averaged 5,454 per year.) What will become of the thousands of children likely to be orphaned by this disaster?

Please join me in praying. In addition to the overarching prayers on behalf of the people of Japan, pray for these new orphans. Pray that many Japanese families will come forward to provide permanent homes for them. Pray that God will lead the Japanese government to loosen their restrictions on intercountry adoption, to make it easier for needy children to be united with permanent families abroad, if there aren’t enough indigenous families available. Pray that God will raise up concerned Believers around the world, to come forward in response to the tremendous need for adoptive parents. And pray that God’s name would be glorified in and through this tragedy.

Soli Deo gloria!

Spotlight: Coupons-4-Causes

A recent trend among philanthropic folk has made it easier for people to donate money to the charity of their choice. A number of entities—including Capital One, Kroger, and GoodSearch/GoodShop—contribute funds to selected charities when people do such things as search the Web or make regular purchases for their families. We’re excited to say that we have just joined another such venture, called Coupons-4-Causes.

Coupons-4-Causes works similarly to GoodShop, in that a portion of your on-line purchases will be donated to TSC when you navigate to a store through their website. The average donation is approximately 4% of the total purchase price, or just over \$5.00. Like GoodSearch, Coupons-4-Causes offers coupons for a variety of stores, and the donation to TSC is taken from your purchase price, not added to it.

So, if you feel so inclined, please go to [their website](#), sign up for an account, and begin shopping for the things that you need to purchase, anyway. For more information about Coupons-4-Causes, see [their FAQ page](#). Thank you!

Completed Adoptions

The following children have come home to their adoptive families since TSC began in 2000. We include them as representatives of all of the children who have come home. Their faces provide just a glimpse into how significantly these lives are changed, as the children transition from the hopelessness and aloneness they once knew, to the comfort and security that come from belonging to a family. Thank you for helping us make these dreams realities, both for the adopted children and for their families.



Anna, in Ethiopia



Anna, at home in Georgia



Cade, in China



Cade, at home in Wisconsin



Kian, in China



Kian, at home in Wisconsin

The Shepherd's Crook Ministries | 513.889.2449

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