

July 2020

“My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways...” - Isaiah 55:8-9

What began as a plan to come to Japan for two and a half months to come along side Pastor Glenn at Calvary Chapel Iwakuni has ended up being a five month blessing. We have thoroughly enjoyed our time serving with the family here, but the time has come to step back out and return to the Philippines. Our flight, which has been canceled or changed 10 times over the past 3 months, looks set to depart in 3 days on Saturday, July 4.



Please be praying for us as we prepare to step out and begin church planting in Bacolod. During our time here in Japan we have been working on getting things ready for when arrive. Our website (thehincheys.com) and Facebook page (facebook.com/pastordavidhinchey) are prepared to reach out to the community. Jen has also been in contact with the creators of My Father's World home school curriculum. The public schools in the Philippines have said they will not reopen until a vaccine has been created for the virus. What that means is every child in the Philippines will have to be home schooled in the coming year. Jen is hoping to work with My Fathers World to set up online classes to reach out to families both in Himamaylan and Bacolod with a Bible based curriculum. I am excited to see how the Lord might use these tools as we desire to share the Good News in a new city!

To close out our time in Japan I asked Pastor Glenn to share his thoughts on what the Lord has done over the past few months: *It began as a simple conversation over lunch while attending the annual Calvary Chapel Senior Pastor and Leader's Conference in Costa Mesa.*



Pastor David was asking about the ministry in Iwakuni, Japan and about our story. He asked about our sending church, what kind of support we had, how things worked for us in regard to accountability and encouragement from the sending church. Then he asked a question about whether or not our sending church sent out anyone to come alongside the work in Iwakuni, to assist in various ministry responsibilities, and to get some time out on the mission field, something like an internship or training program. Honestly, the question seemed more like a dream. The church we were sent out of was pretty much in the same situation we were in.

You see, our church body is primarily made up of U.S. military personnel and their families. The church body is constantly changing as families come and go; most only staying 2-3 years with us. By God's grace we'd love on them as best we could, train them up in the Lord as He directed, and then, just when things would be going really well, Uncle Sam would send them off again to their next duty station.

PHILIPPINES



The thought of our sending church sending us someone to come alongside the ministry and assist in some sort of internship program just wasn't a very plausible thing. Their body was rotating and changing just as much as ours. The limited number of homegrown disciples that weren't on Uncle Sam's orders were either already heavily involved in the ministry there, or not at a place where they could up and leave for a season to come assist us.

And so, my simple answer to Pastor David at the time was "No, we don't have anything like that nor is it a realistic possibility." And that was the end of it. Nearly two years past and we continued to do our best with whatever the Lord provided. But things began to get more and more challenging. By God's grace the ministry was growing and with the growth came the need for more help, consistent help, that we could count on to not just serve on Sunday mornings but throughout the week with a lot of the behind the scenes ministry that goes on. I never forgot about Pastor David's question about whether or not we had a church that could send us some interns or who would be interested in sending disciples for further "on the job training" in the mission field.

And so, some two years after that simple conversation over lunch, I reached back out to Pastor David. I reminded him of that question he had



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asked and unassumingly inquired if he thought the Barn would be interested in being that kind of church for us; if he knew of anyone that would be interested in coming out to Iwakuni, Japan to help us in the ministry God was leading us in. In no time, Pastor David rattled off several names of people he thought would jump at the chance to come alongside the ministry here. First he sent us Zulema Armijo. That worked out so well that we eventually brought her out on a missionary visa to serve full time on our staff as a Children's Ministry Director. Then He sent us Handel Rondael. After that, it was Caleb and Shannon Pragle. Then we had Cannon Byrd. God sent us just the right people and just the right time.

Then in February of this year, Pastor David and his family decided to make their way to Iwakuni in route to their final destination in the Philippines. The plan was they would come to Iwakuni and serve with us for 2.5 months and then continue on their way to the Philippines to start church planting in the city of Bacolod. Then COVID-19 happened; a global pandemic that closed down nearly all international travel. The Hinchey's plan of being in Iwakuni for 2.5 months was all of a sudden surrounded with tons of uncertainty, and many unanswered questions. What we thought was going to be a quick 2.5 months of ministry and showing them around Japan, turned into 5 months or re-working how we did our entire ministry.





I think of the account of young Esther who was visited by her Uncle Mordecai and was asked the simple question, “Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Est. 4:14b) Though we had no idea what God was doing, God was in perfect control of it all. God sent us the perfect man to help us continue to minister to the body despite the fact that the body was not permitted to meet in person. With Pastor David helping to lead the way we were able to go from having no video recording whatsoever, to not only filming and recording the service but also streaming our service live via Facebook all in one week’s time. Soon after getting us up and running on Facebook live, our website server went down and Pastor David was there to troubleshoot our website problems and within a few weeks had rebuilt our entire website and got us up and running on a new server actually saving the church a lot of money in the process. While the body was unable to meet at the church for 2.5 months, Pastor David partnered together with our ministry team to help lead the way in a number of much needed renovations within the church.

His leadership ability was something that gave us the confidence to do things we probably never would have had the gumption to do on our own. He helped us put together not only a new video system for our church services but was also able to help us install a completely new sound system for the church. And in between all of this, Pastor David was teaching all of our mid-week services and hosting several special teaching seminars on such topics ranging from The Origins of the Bible, Original Languages, and the Holy Trinity. To say that Pastor David was a helpful part of all that has happened here over the last few months would be a gross understatement. He has been a God send and I can’t imagine what we would have done if not for the Lord sending him to us “for such a time as this”.

I am so glad that God’s ways and thoughts are not our ways and thoughts. What began as a simple lunch conversation turned into something I thought could never happen. The internship program has been a huge blessing to the body in ways only the Lord could have orchestrated. We thought Pastor David would come for 2.5 months and simply help out with a few things while we tried to glean what we could from him. But God had something far greater in mind. His ways and thoughts were on something much higher and for that we give all the praise, honor, and glory to Him for all that He has done through Pastor David and his time here in Iwakuni. God knows what He is doing; His timing is perfect, His provision is abundant, His grace is immeasurable. To God be all the glory!

- Pastor Glenn Phipps
Calvary Chapel Iwakuni, Japan

