

# Global Report

July / August 2011

Everyone in the world ... in the Word

## God Transforms Lives in Tsunami-Torn Japan

By Hideko Sorimachi  
Higashikurume CBSI Class, Tokyo

Life will never be the same for us after a massive earthquake and tsunami hit northeast Japan on March 11. As the world knows, these cataclysmic events caused extensive and severe damage, killed and injured many and disrupted people's lives in widespread areas.

In His goodness, God has allowed our CBSI class to keep running each week during these months, and most members have been involved in volunteer work, directly or indirectly, through various disaster-relief organizations.

Things that many people in Japan have looked to and counted on for security and safety have crumbled. They cannot trust even the air they breathe or the firmness of the ground on which they walk. Through our lessons on the *Gospel of Luke*, which started last September, many of our class members have come to know personally the One who dearly loves us and who died and rose to give us new life.

Kumiko, a caring and community-oriented woman, once thought of Christianity as a Western religion with no relevance to her life. One day a friend invited her to visit a café at a Christian church. She accepted the invitation simply for socialization, but being in that place was an eye-opening experience, and last fall Kumiko began to attend worship services there. She also became involved in CBSI. God's truth came into her life then, and at the same time it penetrated the hearts of her son, Tomoya, and her husband, Toshio. Kumiko and Tomoya were baptized at Easter time this year, and ever since this sacrament took place, Toshio has been attending the church.

So praise God! His transforming power is continuing to be

See **Japan**, continued on page 2



*An elevated cross signifies hope in a God of love to people in bleak landscapes where earthly homes, businesses and cities have been shattered. The sign behind the cross reads, "We believe in revival. Here is a special hope. We love this land."*



*Kumiko, left, resisted Christianity until a friend invited her for tea in a church café. Then Christ became real to her—and to her husband Toshio, middle, and their son Tomoya. Mother and son were baptized on Easter Sunday.*

# Our Lord's Ministry Leaps Borders to Kindle Faith in Europe

**W**hen the Lord of heaven makes a move, no boundary line on Earth can contain Him. This truth underlies a trend in CBSI: surprising multinational links giving birth to classes, and Europe is a shining example.

Last year a Peruvian woman boarded a plane in Lima, bound for Madrid, Spain, carrying CBSI lessons in a carry-on bag. While visiting her daughter there, she spoke to a number of people — including the pastor of her daughter's church — of the joys of Scripture study within caring communities of the kind that CBSI provides.

The clergyman and church members, including immigrants from South and Central America, caught the vision. As a result, in November, three ministry representatives — Calebs Bob and Pam Leibrock, Grace Wort, Area Regional Director for Western Europe, and CBSI class member Hector, a Bolivian living in England — trained 14 women in class formation.

These ladies now lead CBSI classes involving more than 100 women in the Spanish capital.

Their enjoyment of Bible study prompted class leaders to ask about a children's ministry, and in May this

year a team from the CBSI Children & Youth Ministry in Mexico flew across the Atlantic to train leaders for a children's class launch this fall.

See **Europe**, *continued on page 3*



*The team of Mexican Children & Youth Ministry (C&Y) trainers poses with Calebs Bob Leibrock, left, and Pam Leibrock, right. Mexico C&Y trainers Diana de Rojas, blond woman wearing red, and Elizabeth Jimenez, wearing a black sweater in the front row, were pleased to share the joy of C&Y with people in a similar culture in Spain.*

## **Japan**, *continued from page 1*

felt in the home of a new believer, and by extension in her community.

Three years ago Eiko, a mother of two, was expecting a third child, but it died before being born. One day she sensed that the baby had no heartbeat. In coming days, as she waited for the surgical procedure that would remove the deceased child from her body, she carried a deep feeling of guilt.

Feeling as if the child was somehow leading her, she ventured forth from her home and took courage to step into the sanctuary of a church she had often passed by. It was the day before a funeral service; the room was beautifully decorated with flowers.

God revealed Himself to Eiko in a special way that day, and she accepted the invitation of Christ stated in Matthew 11:28. *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."* Weekly now, by God's



*Eiko holds a son of hope and promise.*

grace, Eiko sits in a nursery room, listening to the CBSI lecture with her

two-year-old son, born to her after losing the other baby.

Eiko's enthusiasm for studying God's Word uplifts the hearts of our class leaders and prompts us to pray fervently about starting a CBSI Children & Youth Ministry in the near future. We know the importance of more moms experiencing in-depth Bible study themselves and investing in it for coming generations.

So praise God again! He has comforted a grieving mother, drawn her into life-changing faith, fulfilled her longing for another child, given hope for salvation to her whole family and is planting the seed of His truth in our community for times to come.

Now, as perhaps never before, is the time for us to make the presence, the love and the light of the living Jesus clear to those who do not yet know Him in this country.



**Community Bible Study International**

790 Stout Road, Colorado Springs, CO, 80921-3802

Community Bible Study is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

The Global Report is published bimonthly and is distributed free of charge.

Your contributions are welcome to help offset the expenses in providing this publication.





Left: These children, singing during worship at the Madrid church that hosted CBSI training in May, will be in a Children & Youth Ministry class beginning in September.

Europe, continued from page 2

## A Remarkable Moment

This was something new in CBSI. A strong national ministry in one country looked beyond its borders and planned, financed and implemented an outreach to another country, offering the gift of CBSI to a spiritually needy culture. (Spain has Europe's highest suicide rate.) This fulfilled our ministry vision in a wonderful way.

God seems to be targeting Europe, where millions are indifferent to the gospel, for a spiritual awakening. Following the first-ever conference of national CBSI leaders to include Eastern and Western European countries, held in May in Budapest and attended by 35 leaders, a new dynamic seems to be emerging, according to CBSI's Europe Director Glenn Collard. "Synergy is energy," he says. "It is as if God is taking the spiritual DNA and value we hold as a ministry — to raise up nations and impact cultures for Christ — and multiplying its effectiveness and potential in new ways."

## Connecting in Christ

"The C&Y training in Madrid was exciting for the Mexico group. "While we live half a world away from Spain, we instantly felt at home with Peruvian missionaries working with the church in Madrid as well as with believers there, including immigrants from South and Central America," says Diana de Rojas of CBSI Mexico. "It was a joy to see these people's

Below: A Sunday school teacher at a church in Madrid, who received CBSI training in May, poses with three immigrant children in her care.



love for and dedication to the next generation of young people in Spain.

"On our first night, before we began in any way, a Peruvian woman working with children in the church referred to us as an answer to prayer. 'The CBSI Children & Youth Ministry is exactly what we have been praying for, and we know it is from the Lord,' she said. As we proceeded, we saw that the Holy Spirit had paved the way in these precious believers' hearts. Seeing



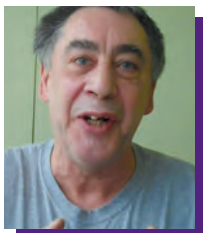
Antillean Remond, left, a CBSI class member in the Netherlands, above, enjoys discussing Scripture with people from his culture, reflecting seriously on the gift of salvation in Christ and laughing and teasing in a caring community.

CBSI's potential as a spiritual growth resource, with whole families coming together for Bible study, the church committed to establishing a full CBSI class by September."

Spain is hard spiritual soil: "Children and young people face daunting opposition in schools and elsewhere if they admit to being Christians or even show interest in biblical faith," Diana says. "We were encouraged, however, by the nucleus of believers in this church and by those of faith who have moved to Spain from Latin countries, setting aside nationalism, displaying graciousness and love for the Spanish people. While their toil is laborious and the fruit slow in coming, the Lord has swung a door open for CBSI."

## Life Change in Christ

Meanwhile, as always, God is transforming lives elsewhere in Europe. To Remond, born in Dutch Antilles and now a CBSI class member in the Netherlands, Bible study is a beneficial pleasure: "Eighteen of us with Antillean background meet on Friday nights," he says. "Normally I'm exhausted then, but CBSI discussions keep me awake. It is amazing how people are involved now instead of sitting lazily in their chairs expecting the pastor to feed them all the food! It is a happy scene. We love to tease each other and at the same time grow in our knowledge of the Word and our Lord Jesus Christ."



CBSI has drawn me closer to Jesus, especially in studying Mark's Gospel. It helps you dig deep and get much needed spiritual meat. I was part of a false religion for 30 years. I now have spiritual freedom!

—Ian, England



I like CBSI because it gives me discipline and good reflection on the Word of God. We have been reading about flaws in God's people, including Judah, who abused his daughter-in-law and yet, is named in the genealogy of Jesus. I found that fascinating to discuss with my good friends in the group.

—John, England

# Italians' Resurrection of Interest in God's Word

**I**n Italy, where it is estimated that evangelical Christians make up no more than one percent of the population, one morning last spring, in Catalina, Italy, a young woman went the distance spiritually during her CBSI class, asking Jesus into her heart, and three other class members were baptized on Easter Sunday. According to Calebs Jan and Dal Theisman, Italy has few resources for Bible study or spiritual growth, so people are grateful to have CBSI: "Having the studies in their language is essential since most do not speak English," says Jan. "They are hungry for God's Word, so they do the lessons studiously and are tasting and seeing that God is good!"

In their latest visit to the country, Jan and Dal felt people's deepening kinship with CBSI. "As we left, they hugged us sweetly with tears on their faces," says Jan. "We had seen God work in wonderful ways. With investing in kingdom work, lives have been changed, and eternity is in the hearts of new believers. God has given us the blessed

privilege written of in Psalm 96:3:  
*"Declare His glory among the nations,  
 His marvelous deeds among all peoples."*

*Jan and Dal Theisman are the  
 CBSI Calebs to Italy.*



*Caleb Jan Theisman, left, poses with class members in Catalina, Italy. Conchita, wearing black, has accepted Christ as her Savior, and others in the group were baptized on Easter Sunday.*

**YES** I WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT THE MINISTRY OF CBS INTERNATIONAL.



You may donate online by credit card at [www.cbsinternational.org](http://www.cbsinternational.org). Click Donate to CBSI Online located on the home page below "Giving Online." Enter the dollar amount and select one of the CBS International funds. In the Special Instructions box, indicate any specific Caleb or country.

You may also set up an Electronic Funds Transfer from a checking or savings account. You may request the authorization form by contacting [finance@communitybiblestudy.org](mailto:finance@communitybiblestudy.org) or by calling 800-826-4181 x449.

- I will continue to lift the ministry of CBS International in prayer.
- Enclosed is a gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_. Please make checks payable to Community Bible Study.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail checks to:  
 Community Bible Study  
 790 Stout Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Thank you for your contribution, which is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. No goods or services were received in consideration for this gift. Contributions designated to active, restricted funds will be used for that purpose, and consideration will be given to indicated preferences, if any; however, all gifts are accepted with the understanding that Community Bible Study retains complete discretion and control over the use of donated funds. We thank God for you and appreciate your support.

