

ESAKIS IN OSAKA



Koji serving Christmas pasta lunch at low-income children center in Osaka with church

Upcoming Prayer Needs

- From April Koji will preach regularly in three churches: Osaka Mustard Seed Church (bilingual), Nagoya Nisshin and Otobashi Church (tying up to visits to see Asako).
- From April Osaka Church members' small group meeting, plus the two monthly seeker studies at our apartment
- February through summer Teacher of coaching and listening skills for Japanese elders
- January and beyond Pre-Marital Coaching for couples (below) from Osaka church



A Star is Born's, "Shallow"

The song is winning awards for being a delicate but gritty duet for two people yearning for a deeper connection. What if the lyrics included a reflection on the difference between false repentance and true repentance?

Tell me something' girl. Are you searchin' for excuses in this modern world? "I'm sorry, but I've got an excuse that usually works."

Tell me somethin' boy. Are you tryin' to fill that void with quick fixes? "I said I'm sorry...so are we done here?"

People, who are disinterested in taking responsibility, talk like that. The words are not the currency of repentance. They are word walls that hinder change, and for the apologizer it is *hard keepin' it so hard core*.

The alternative is to face legitimate shame and truth.

I'll tell you somethin': "I'm tired of my modern world excuses. How did I hurt you?" "I want deeper insight to fill that void. Please hang in there with me."

This is true repentance and it feels like dying and diving *into the deep end*. It feels like death because it is dying to self, but Godly sorrow will cleanse and not crush. Christ's outrageous love and provision are there to cover us and sustain us. We pray that God will help us to be fearless in this life long pursuit, and keep us far from the shallow world of false repentance.

Based on Beyond Duct Tape by Shari Thomas and Tami Resch

Asako

Here she is in a dragon headlock on New Year's Day: A tradition for good fortune. Koji's mother, Asako, has lived in a retirement home for a year. It is not ideal but it is safe, however we pray for better choices in 2019. 2018 called for a lot of cleanup and repair work to her apartment/coffee house. Pray for a good rental.

