

"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." Genesis 12:2-3

June 2, 2009

Dear Friends and Family,

This is Anna writing. Some of you know me and many of you probably have a picture of me on your fridge. Recently, I have been realizing and reminded of how blessed I am. While I was being thankful and amazed at how blessed I am, I thought of this newsletter. I thought of you, all the people who support our family, and again I was amazed. Then I realized that you know a lot about what my Dad is doing and where he goes, but you probably do not know much about me, other than that I am attending college. I would like to take this opportunity to give you a peak into my life.

Currently I am living with my Grandmother and attending community college in Oregon. I am trying to finish up a two year associates degree. My Aunt Kathy and Uncle Paul and my cousins live a block and a half away from my Grandmother's house. They are my family here and one of the major reasons I am so blessed.

Most of my time outside of school is spent with people, mostly international students. Eugene is a college town and many international students come and live here to study at the University of Oregon or at the community college that I am going to. There is a couple here named Beth and Dave Schenderlein that I hang out with a lot. I wish you could meet them because they are very dear to me.

Their ministry is loving and serving international students. Many students, especially from Japan, are more open to the gospel here in the United States than they may be back home. Beth and Dave regularly have students over for dinner in order to develop relationships with them, to love them and to serve their many needs. I was attracted to the way that they love these students. They love and serve people "with no strings attached." They do not give up and turn to other people if a person has no interest in God or Christianity. They just continue to love and serve.

I got involved in many of their activities because it was fun and I got to make friends. However, now I see things in a different light. I do not remember when or why, but I remember my Dad talking to about how, "*we are blessed to be a blessing.*" I am blessed to be a blessing. I do not have Christ because I am good or lucky. Jesus did not choose me over others because of anything I did. However, I am blessed to be a blessing. I am loved to love. I do not live in it everyday in the way I should, but I understand that I receive Christ's love so that I can love others.



When I started living here three years ago, I always thought people must think it is a little strange to see me, a barely 5 foot little girl, driving around in a minivan. I drove to school everyday in it thinking what a waste of space it was. But now I see that that is one of my blessings I have so that I can be a blessing to others. Since many international students do not have cars, I get to drive them to and from various events. This gives me the opportunity to meet people and talk with them while I am driving them around. That is a practical example of how I see God has blessed me to be a blessing.

Many of my friends here are Japanese and Koreans. I have become really good friends with some of these international students. I still keep in touch with a couple of them who have already returned to Japan. Now they are friends with my brothers and sister-in-laws, which is great.

I would like to share with you about one of my friends who is returning to Japan soon. His name is Kenji. I am not that close to him, but have occasionally hung out with him. He is returning to Japan permanently after this term after finishing the ESL (English as a Second Language) program and some other credit classes. I do not know the specific reasons why he is returning, but I know that he is very anxious and stressed out about it.

I did not realize it until recently, but for students to go back to Japan without "accomplishing" something is very shameful. He is returning to an unwelcoming group of friends and family and to an immense amount of pressure. I think he is searching for true friendship and love like everyone else. My prayer is that he will get connected with my brothers and experience the love and the life of Jesus through them. So I want to ask that you will also pray for him.

I get to meet and get to know many international students from all over the world (of course to varying different degrees). This year I have got to meet some students from Middle Eastern nations such as Syria, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. It is quite interesting and I am loving to be able to learn a little more about them and their countries. Even in the little interaction and short conversations that I have with people, I want to see Jesus overflow. I want to be a salt that makes people thirsty for Jesus.

Right now, I am blessed to live in this place with friends with family who love and support me trying to live with Him. I am almost finished with my associate's degree and am seeking God for the next steps in my life.

Initially I decided to come to Oregon to go to college at the very last minute. The reasons were sketchy, like my grades in high school were too low to get into the schools I wanted to go to. And

The future is uncertain for me at this moment, but in it all I see God guiding me all the way. And my desire is that I will stay close to Jesus to continue in His light.

Thank you for your faithful support and being a blessing to me.

May God Bless you All!

*Anna*