

> Kazuaki Kato '99



Mr. Kazuaki Kato '99 is a mentor to many college students in his role as Assistant Dean of Men and Assistant Professor in biblical Greek, theology, and philosophy at Word of Life Bible Institute, which is situated among the Adirondack Mountains in beautiful Schroon Lake, New York. Mr. Kato's family has long been associated with Word of Life, so his role there is a continuation of a family tradition, but it is also much more. He treasures the role because he can bless others as he was blessed in his college years when a godly mentor helped him as he struggled through life's deep issues.

Kazuaki was raised in two very different cultures. He was born in Tokyo, Japan, and lived there until his family relocated to New York when he was two. They relocated again to Washington Crossing, Pennsylvania, when his father, Yoshito, was named National Director of Word of Life Japan. Kazu then attended Lower Bucks Christian Academy, where he became immersed in American culture and acquainted with many PBU faculty members. In 1983, the Kato family returned to Japan to serve the Lord. Nine years later, however, Kazu returned to the States for his college education, first at Word of Life Bible Institute, then at PBU.

His first year at PBU was a difficult time as Kazu wrestled with deep questions concerning life, faith, and truth. Dr. John Master, a PBU Bible professor, reached out to Kazu, and soon the two men established weekly meetings to discuss these issues. A deep and lasting friendship developed, and Kazu credits the time spent with Dr. Master as what helped him develop spiritually and instilled the zeal to live his life by God's grace. This passion also led Kazu to explore a unique academic experience at Jerusalem University College in Jerusalem, Israel.

The University is part of a consortium of colleges associated with Jerusalem University College, so PBU students can study there for a semester and transfer the credits to PBU. Kazu embraced the opportunity to

A L U M N I Profile



experience the richness of the land, the culture, and the history of the world of the Bible on site as well as the peoples, cultures, religions, and history of the modern Middle East. Upon completing his studies there, Kazu continued his exploration of other cultures by traveling to 16 European countries, praying all the while for God to reveal His will.

Kazu returned to the States and enrolled at Capital Bible Seminary, to test the validity of the biblical truths he had learned. He earned an M.Div. as well as a Th.M., completing his studies in 2004. Kazu then accepted a position at Word of Life Bible Institute and began to simultaneously prepare for a life of service on the mission field.

He is affiliated with Fellowship International Mission (FIM) in Allentown, PA, preparing for the mission field in the city of his birth at the church his grandfather, Masayoshi Kato, founded. FIM offers missionaries flexibility to seize opportunities to present the gospel message without strict reliance on the organization's board of directors. Rather, the missionary is guided by his own sending church, mission statement, and goals. As a result, FIM missionaries, supported by General Director Dr.

Stephen Wilt '68, are involved in a wide range of ministries directly linked to the establishing of churches and the training of church leaders.

Kazu knows well the challenges he and his wife, Amy, will face as they seek to spread the gospel in Tokyo, but they view it as their life's calling. The Japanese are generally not open to the idea of religion because they've fallen victim to various cult teachings over the years. They are reluctant to explore new value systems, especially Christianity, about which they are especially skeptical due to its message of exclusivity. The challenge of spreading the gospel is compounded by the mistakes of western missionaries who have preceded them, attempting to reach the Japanese people without first understanding their culture. Kazu believes he will be able to strike the delicate balance between eastern culture and a biblical worldview and hopes that, by teaching the gospel in their native Japanese and within the parameters of the culture, he will gradually be able to help people understand their need for Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

To this noble end, Kazuaki has claimed Philippians 2:13: "For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (NASB).