

# Family Guide

Japan



“Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance,  
and the very ends of the earth as Your possession.”

— Psalm 2:8, New American Standard Bible 1995



# A One-Year Prayer ADVENTURE!

Using this handy family guide, we will travel to a faraway country every month, learn about its people and culture and pray for them. We will focus on a different least-reached country in every guide. There are 12 family guides covering 12 countries this year—one for every month.

Why do we call these countries “least reached”? Many of the people in these countries have never heard about Jesus, or it’s difficult for them to hear about Him. Even though you won’t get on a plane to each country, when you pray, you join our adventure—our mission to make a difference in the lives of the people in each country.

The best part is you’ll always know what to pray for. This family guide gives you a prayer request for every day of the week. Moms, dads and kids everywhere will be praying for the same thing together too. Let’s get started by learning about this month’s country.

# WELCOME TO Japan!



Missionaries (people who travel to other countries to share their beliefs) first landed in Japan in 1568. Christianity was banned from 1603 to 1868 but survived as an underground movement. That means Christians continued to meet in secret. Sadly, only a small number of Japanese people today consider themselves followers of Jesus.



Japan is made up of over 6,500 islands and is located in the Pacific Ocean, in the Ring of Fire, an area known for its many earthquakes and active volcanoes. About 70% of Japan's land mass is forest with majestic mountains. Japan's many cities are surrounded by these spectacular views.

# Fun Facts About Japan



Picture yourself walking into a Japanese inn that was started in 705 AD. For more than 1,300 years it has been owned by 52 generations of the same family! Nishiyama Onsen Keiunkan is the oldest hotel in the world, according to Guinness World Records.



Japan's average life expectancy (about how long most people live) is 85 years old, making Japan the country in the world with the third longest life expectancy.



The first capsule hotel was started in Osaka, Japan, 45 years ago. These unique hotels are made up of small, bed-sized sleeping pods often arranged in rows and stacked on top of each other.



Can you imagine living on a small island where there are more cats than people? Tashirojima, a small island off the coast of Japan, has four times more cats than people.



Did you know that baseball is the number one sport in eight countries including Japan?

# Ready to pray for the people of Japan?

As of May 2024, Japan's Steel Dragon is the longest roller coaster in the world at 8,133 feet. Would you ride it? I wouldn't. Maybe getting stuck on one for hours as a teenager left a lasting impression. The rest of my family loves roller coasters: the anticipation, the thrill, the speed—sometimes the unknown—creates a fun experience for them.

Real life ups and downs, twists and turns or the unknown can create stress, fear or anxiety in our lives. Is something going on in your life that's making you feel scared or anxious?

I find that focusing on the Lord, especially by thinking about how awesome He is (praising Him) or taking time to list the many things I'm thankful for can break through my swirling emotions. Consider being old fashioned and write these verses on notecards, or simply on a note in your phone so you can pull them out when your life starts to twist and turn. As you stop to praise Him and thank Him, let the presence of God bring you peace.

*"He said, 'Lord, you are the God of our ancestors. You are the God in heaven. You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. You have power and strength. No one can stand against You.'"*

— 2 Chronicles 20:6, International Children's Bible

*"Do not worry about anything. But pray and ask God for everything you need. And when you pray, always give thanks. And God's peace will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. The peace that God gives is so great that we cannot understand it."*

— Philippians 4:6-7, ICB

Japan has a small number of Christ followers. May our daily prayers cause God to help Japanese people understand who the Lord Jesus is. May they come to know His incredible love, that He chose to die for them and rise again so they can have purpose and joy and a forever home with Him in heaven.

Your Prayer Partner,

Lucinda

Please email me, or have a parent email me, if you have any questions or want to share what you are learning about prayer. I'd love to hear from you! This is my email address: [prayer@jesusfilm.org](mailto:prayer@jesusfilm.org)



# WEEK 1 REQUESTS



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*“People everywhere will remember  
and will turn to the Lord.  
All the families of the nations  
will worship Him.  
This is because the Lord is King.  
He rules the nations.”*

– Psalm 22:27-28, ICB



## Day 1

Pray for Japanese people to make friends with followers of Jesus, so that through friendship they can learn who Jesus really is and what it means to follow Him.

## Day 2

There are hardly any Japanese people who think of Jesus as the one living and true God. Pray for Japanese people to realize that Jesus is both living and the only true way to God.

## Day 3

In all of Japan there are very few pastors of Christian churches, and most of them are over the age 60. Pray that God would soon provide a new generation of younger church leaders to lead Japanese Christians wisely.

## Day 4

Pray for the young people of Japan to see Jesus as trustworthy—someone they can place their hopes in for the future. Pray God would use them in big ways to help change the world.

## Day 5

Pray for those in Japan who are sad and feel hopeless. Ask God to encourage them and bring them a good friend to talk to.

## Day 6

Pray for Japanese people to be drawn to God in the midst of the challenges they face. May they discover Jesus’ beautiful promise in Matthew 11:28-30: *“Come to Me, all of you who are tired and have heavy loads. I will give you rest. Accept My work and learn from Me. I am gentle and humble in spirit. And you will find rest for your souls. The work that I ask you to accept is easy. The load I give you to carry is not heavy”* (ICB).

## Day 7

God made human beings to worship Him, but gave them a choice to follow Him or not. Every human being has a place in their heart that only the God of the Bible can fill, though they might not know it yet. Pray for Japanese to hear the message of Jesus and choose to follow Him, so that they can worship Him now and forever.

# Week 1 Activity: Tea Coloring Page



# WEEK 2 REQUESTS



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*“He is the one who makes the mountains.  
He creates the wind.  
He makes His thoughts known to man.  
He changes the dawn into darkness.  
He walks over the mountains of the earth.  
His name is the Lord God of heaven’s armies.”*

– Amos 4:13, ICB



## Day 8

There is a type of art that is very popular in Japan called manga. It’s often used in Japanese comic books. Pray for Christians to create manga art and books that are centered around the message of Jesus so that many readers can learn about Jesus through manga.

## Day 9

Pray for entire families to come to know Jesus as their Savior. Pray for parents and kids to have loving, healthy relationships, even when disagreements come up. Pray that their love for each other and for God will help them work through their problems.

## Day 10

Students from Japan sometimes go to another country for their college studies. Pray for Japanese students who study in other countries to hear the message of Jesus while they’re away and invite Him into their hearts.

## Day 11

Pray for Japanese people to come across truthful Jesus-focused messages on their phones.

## Day 12

For some people in Japan, life is really hard. Some find it difficult to buy even the necessary things. Some have little hope for a better life. Pray for churches, neighbors and Japan’s leaders to look for these families and provide the help they need.

## Day 13

Pray the verse below for every Christian in Japan.

*“Do not worry about anything. But pray and ask God for everything you need. And when you pray, always give thanks. And God’s peace will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. The peace that God gives is so great that we cannot understand it.”*

– Philippians 4:6-7, ICB

## Day 14

Christian workers are working on a movie about the life of Jesus. They want it to have just the right words and look to show Jesus just as He is and share His message in the best way. Pray that as people watch the movie when it comes out Jesus would help them discover that His gospel truth is more wonderful than anything they have known. May they put their faith in Him and learn to walk in His ways.

## Week 2 Activity: Tracing John 14:6 in Japanese

イエスはトマスに言われました。「いいですか。わたしが道です。そして真理でもあり、いのちでもあります。わたしを通らなければ、だれ一人、父のところへは行けません。

ヨハネの福音書 14:6 Japanese Living Bible

*Jesus answered, "I am the way. And I am the truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me."*  
— John 14:6, ICB

# WEEK 3 REQUESTS



*“Then I looked, and there was a great number of people. There were so many people that no one could count them. They were from every nation, tribe, people, and language of the earth. ...*

– Revelation 7:9, ICB



## □ Day 15

Many men in Japan have jobs that make it necessary for them to live in the cities where they work, far from their families. It can be hard for families to live apart, but leaning on Jesus can bring comfort and strength while they are away. Pray for whole families—moms, dads and kids—to follow Jesus and walk in His ways.

## □ Day 16

Anyone who genuinely asks Jesus to be their Savior is part of God’s big family. Pray for Japanese Christians to reach out in friendship and love to other members of God’s family in their city and country, so they can work together to bring the message of Jesus to those who haven’t heard it.

## □ Day 17

God made all people, starting with Adam and Eve. He made it so groups of people in different countries could each have unique ways of life, like the language they speak, the music they create, their customs and traditions, and unique physical features like skin color or hair color. He made the groups different from each other on purpose, and they are beautiful to God. Pray that people everywhere, including Japan, appreciate these differences, see all people as beautiful, and treat everyone with respect.

## □ Day 18

Many people in Japan are hardly open to hearing or reading about the gospel. They think it’s not for them. But it is! Pray that their hearts will become open to the message of Jesus.

## □ Day 19

Working hard at school is really important, but in Japan some kids feel a lot of pressure to do well in school. Pray that Japanese families will help their children not feel pressured as they complete their schoolwork and work toward a future career.

## □ Day 20

Taking time to thank God is an important part of prayer. We show God how grateful we are when we spend time telling Him what we are thankful for. Let’s pray that the Christians in Japan would be thankful to God like it says in these verses in the book of Psalms.

*“Thank the Lord because He is good. His love continues forever. ... You are my God, and I will thank You. You are my God, and I will praise Your greatness. Thank the Lord because He is good. His love continues forever.”* – Psalm 118:1, 28–29, ICB

## □ Day 21

Only one person on Earth has ever been perfect, never making mistakes or bad choices: Jesus. We humans can’t be perfect, no matter how hard we try. We need a perfect Savior who forgives us when we mess up and sin. Jesus loved us and willingly came to die for our mess-ups (sins). If we accept Jesus’ gift of forgiveness for all of our mess-ups—past, present and future—we can become God’s friend forever! Pray that all Japanese people realize they can’t be perfect but can choose to be forgiven.

## Week 3 Activity: Japan Word Search

R S L O Y W P R A Y E R Z O I  
I N B K A E F L D X K A V W U  
R I N G O F F I R E U Z S A P  
V D Z R G W Y G W H S Z T T P  
E O D A H S S I K X S M E A B  
N H D Y V B Z C K N J H E J A  
D Z W N S C X Z S Q Q R L E S  
I L E A S T R E A C H E D S E  
N R M E G K T I X Y X Z R U B  
G L W C A P S U L E G K A S A  
Z L N B O D B D Q J S D G M L  
I S L A N D K T Q Q A B O R L  
I J G R F Z J Q J P O P N U P  
P T M I S S I O N A R Y A B Q  
K R C V O L C A N O J S A N L

### WORD LIST:

BASEBALL

JAPAN

MISSIONARY

STEEL DRAGON

CAPSULE

JESUS

PRAYER

VENDING

ISLAND

LEAST REACHED

RING OF FIRE

VOLCANO

# WEEK 4 REQUESTS



*“The Father has loved us so much! He loved us so much that we are called children of God. And we really are His children. ...”*

– 1 John 3:1, ICB



## □ Day 22

In any challenging situation, people who walk with God have His Spirit’s power to be godly examples of kindness, peace, patience and love. Pray Jesus’ followers in Japan will grow to love one another no matter what and show people around them that the God of the Bible is full of goodness and loves them too.

## □ Day 23

Some young people in Japan choose to spend almost all of their time alone instead of with other people, even their families. This can lead to them feeling isolated and extremely sad. Pray for God to give them a Christian mentor or friend who can help them grow and discover the purpose Jesus gives to all who follow Him.

## □ Day 24

Many Japanese people love sports. Christian churches use sports to talk to people who might not believe in Jesus yet and invite them into their community, where they can learn more about Him. Pray that people will come with hearts ready to know Jesus when they hear about His love.

## □ Day 25

Many Japanese do not approve of people who become followers of Jesus because it is different from what everyone else believes. Social harmony and group agreement are very important in Japanese society. Pray that God’s Spirit provides comfort and peace to those who face rejection or disapproval from their families and communities.

## □ Day 26

Moms and dads love their children, but they would probably say taking care of them is a hard job. Moms and dads also love their own parents, and sometimes they have to take care of them too. In Japan, the parents of moms and dads could even live with them and their children. Pray for Japanese moms and dads who have the hard job of taking care of their kids and their parents.

## □ Day 27

Pray that Christian gatherings in Japan would follow Paul’s instructions from the Bible verse below.

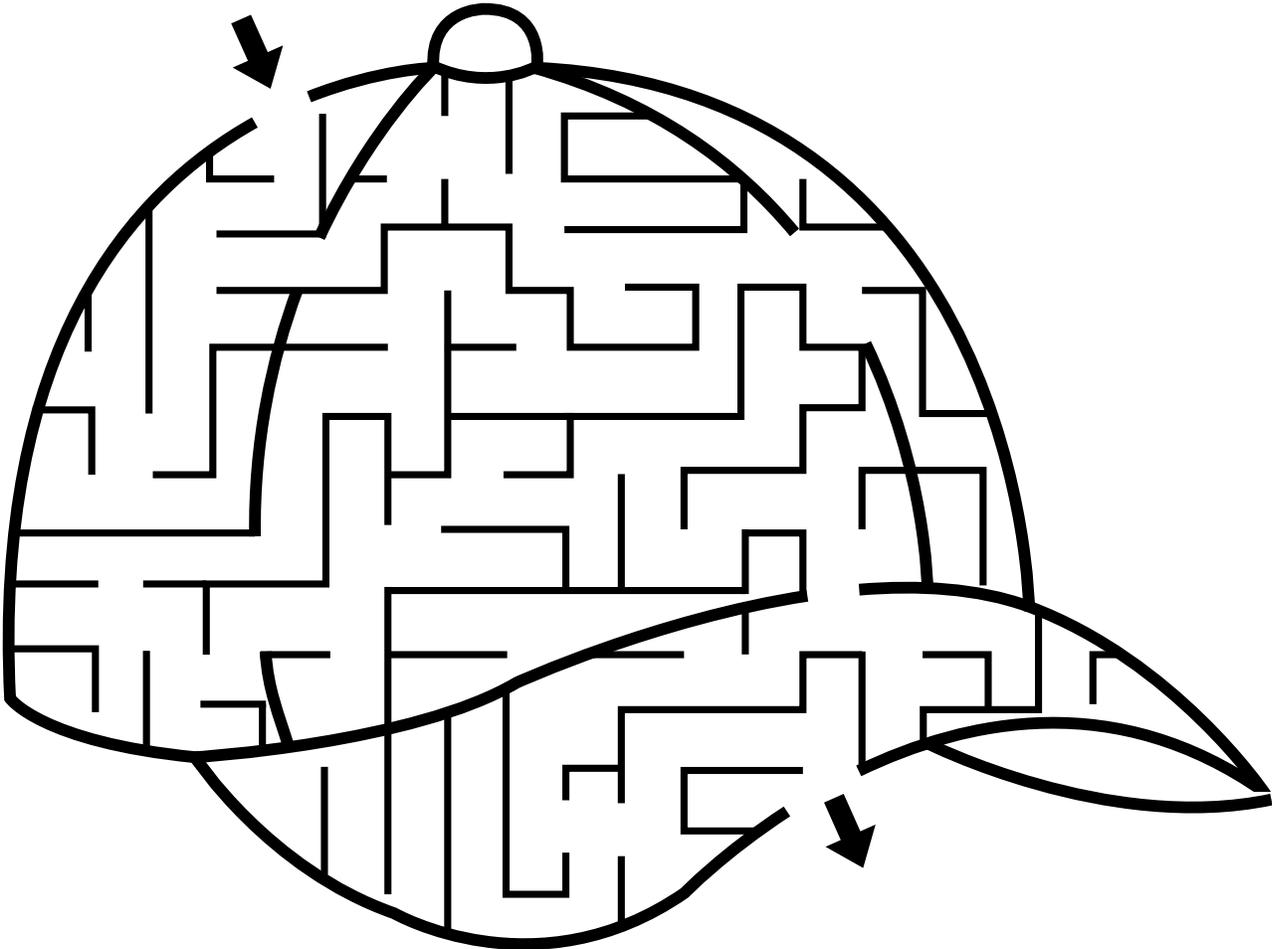
*“Let the teaching of Christ live in you richly. Use all wisdom to teach and strengthen each other. Sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”*

– Colossians 3:16, ICB

## □ Day 28

Sometimes conflicts (arguments or disagreements) happen between Christians. We can share our different opinions respectfully, but God wants more from us. He wants us to cooperate with one another to get His work done. The Holy Spirit, who lives inside God’s people, can help believers work through problems with each other. Pray that Japanese Christians will ask the Spirit to help them solve conflicts and peacefully work together to honor our heavenly Father.

**Week 4 Activity: Baseball Hat Maze**



# WEEK 5 REQUESTS



## □ Day 29

Without a sail to catch the wind, a sailboat sits in the water, going nowhere. That's the way many Japanese young people feel—like they're drifting, with no purpose for their life. They don't know that having Jesus and His Spirit as their friend and guide is just what their hearts are looking for. Pray that Japan's young people will soon hear the message of Jesus and invite Him into their lives.

## □ Day 30

Christian groups from other countries come to Japan and work alongside Japanese Christian churches. Ask God to show them the best way to connect with people who don't yet know Jesus.

## □ Day 31

Lord Jesus, we thank You for giving us a chance to pray for Japan each day this month. We believe You will continue Your work there until everyone has heard clearly about Jesus and been invited to follow Him. Someday we'll see how You answered our prayers. May heaven be filled with Japanese people who started to follow Jesus in part due to our prayers this month. We give You all honor and praise.

# Resources

- ▶ Joshua Project has a tremendous amount of information about every country. This link will take you to information about Japan:  
[joshuaproject.net/countries/JA](http://joshuaproject.net/countries/JA)
- ▶ Prayercast has great prayer videos:  
[prayercast.com/prayer-topic/japan](http://prayercast.com/prayer-topic/japan)
- ▶ A great way to help someone learn more about Jesus is to share the *JESUS* film in their heart language. We have the film in over 2,000 languages on our website:  
[jesusfilm.org/watch/jesus.html/english](http://jesusfilm.org/watch/jesus.html/english)
- ▶ We also have multiple other films and short films available:  
[jesusfilm.org/watch](http://jesusfilm.org/watch)
- ▶ For more Jesus Film Project® prayer resources—including access to each month’s family prayer guide—visit the prayer page on the Jesus Film Project website:  
[jesusfilm.org/pray](http://jesusfilm.org/pray)



The Jesus Film Project app is completely free and available on iOS and Android devices. Get the app now and start watching and sharing a huge library of Jesus-centered films.



This family guide is part of For the Least Reached: A Year of Prayer—a one-year prayer initiative created by Jesus Film Project. It's a great way for families to pray together for countries and people in the world who still don't know love, hope and forgiveness in Jesus. A new family guide is available every month.

Learn more at [jesusfilm.org/pray](https://jesusfilm.org/pray).



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