

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!



Japan is an archipelago (the name for a group of islands) made up of over 6,800 islands, but people don't live on most of them. Mountains—including Mount Fuji in the Japanese Alps—cover close to 75% of Japan's landmass. Dense forests also cover 67% of Japan, leaving many of the country's 124 million residents to crowd large cities.



Fun Facts About Japan



During daily rush hour, some trains that carry travelers are so full that they hire people known as “pushers” to gently push the crowds together to fit more people inside. Pushers can squeeze 200 people into a train car built to hold 100!



There’s an apple-growing region in Japan that is known for its artistic apples. Farmers there grow a certain kind of apple, the Sekai Ichi variety, for example. They find the very best apples on each tree, then remove all others, so that they will grow sweeter and crisper and bigger, weighing as much as a pound. Customers will pay \$20 for a single apple and give it as a gift to their special person.



The country has vending machines that sell everything from hot ramen to live fishing bait, a strange blend of convenience and oddity.



Some Japanese farmers raise koi fish to look like living art. Can you imagine a fish so special that it costs over \$100,000? Farmers select the best koi with the features they want and breed the fish to produce offspring that have bright colors and unusual patterns. Koi fish can live as long as 70 years. In Japanese culture, they are a symbol of longevity and good fortune.



Japan’s population is shrinking because fewer babies are being born every year.

Ready to pray for the people of Japan?

What do you think about when you hear the word “prayer”? To pray means to talk with God, just like you talk with your parents or your friends. Take a moment and think about what prayer means to you.

Did you know there are different ways to pray? Here are some different types of prayer:

Asking God for something (for yourself or others)—most of the requests in this guide are prayers like this.

“We can come to God with no doubts. This means that when we ask God for things (and those things agree with what God wants for us), then God cares about what we say.”

— 1 John 5:14, International Children’s Bible

Thanking God for something specific

“Thank the Lord because He is good. His love continues forever.”

— 1 Chronicles 16:34, ICB

Praising God for who He is

“Lord, my God, I will praise You with all my heart. I will honor Your name forever.”

— Psalm 86:12, ICB

Confessing what we have done wrong

“But if we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins. We can trust God. He does what is right. He will make us clean from all the wrongs we have done.”

— 1 John 1:9, ICB

Listening to what He wants to say to you (especially when we ask for Him to guide us)

“But if any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. God is generous. He enjoys giving to all people, so God will give you wisdom.”

— James 1:5, ICB

Praying Scripture—We included one Scripture prayer per week in this guide.

When you pray, do you rely on just one or two of these types of prayer? It’s very easy to fall into that habit. Since prayer is simply talking with God, each kind of prayer is important. As you keep walking with God, try to pray each kind of prayer as you go about your day.

Throughout this guide, you’ll find a prayer request for each day of the month. This lets you pray for the needs that our ministry partners around the world have shared with us. What a privilege to join together, united in our desire to see God move in Japan for His glory and the furtherance of the gospel.

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!

prayer@jesusfilm.org



WEEK 1 REQUESTS



*"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 people to hear the message of Jesus and choose to follow Him, so that they can worship Him now and forever.

Week 1 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 2 REQUESTS



*"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 even 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.

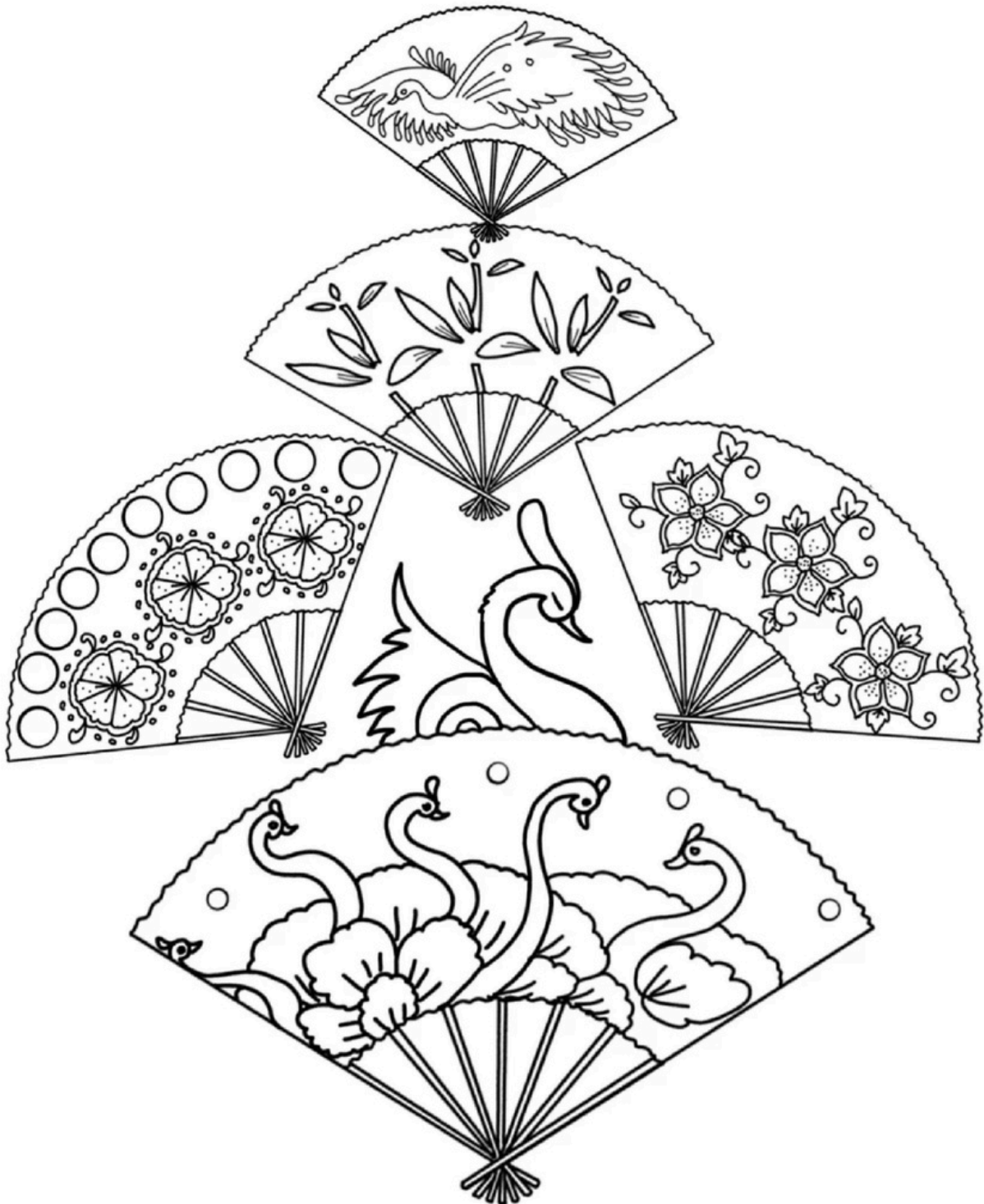
"Do not worry about anything. But pray and ask God for everything you need. And when you pray, always give thanks. And God's peace will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. The peace that God gives is so great that we cannot understand it."

— Philippians 4:6-7, ICB

□ Day 14

Christian workers recently updated a movie about the life of Jesus to use the everyday language of the people. They wanted it to have just the right words share Jesus' message in the best way. Pray that as people watch the movie, 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: Fan Coloring Page



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

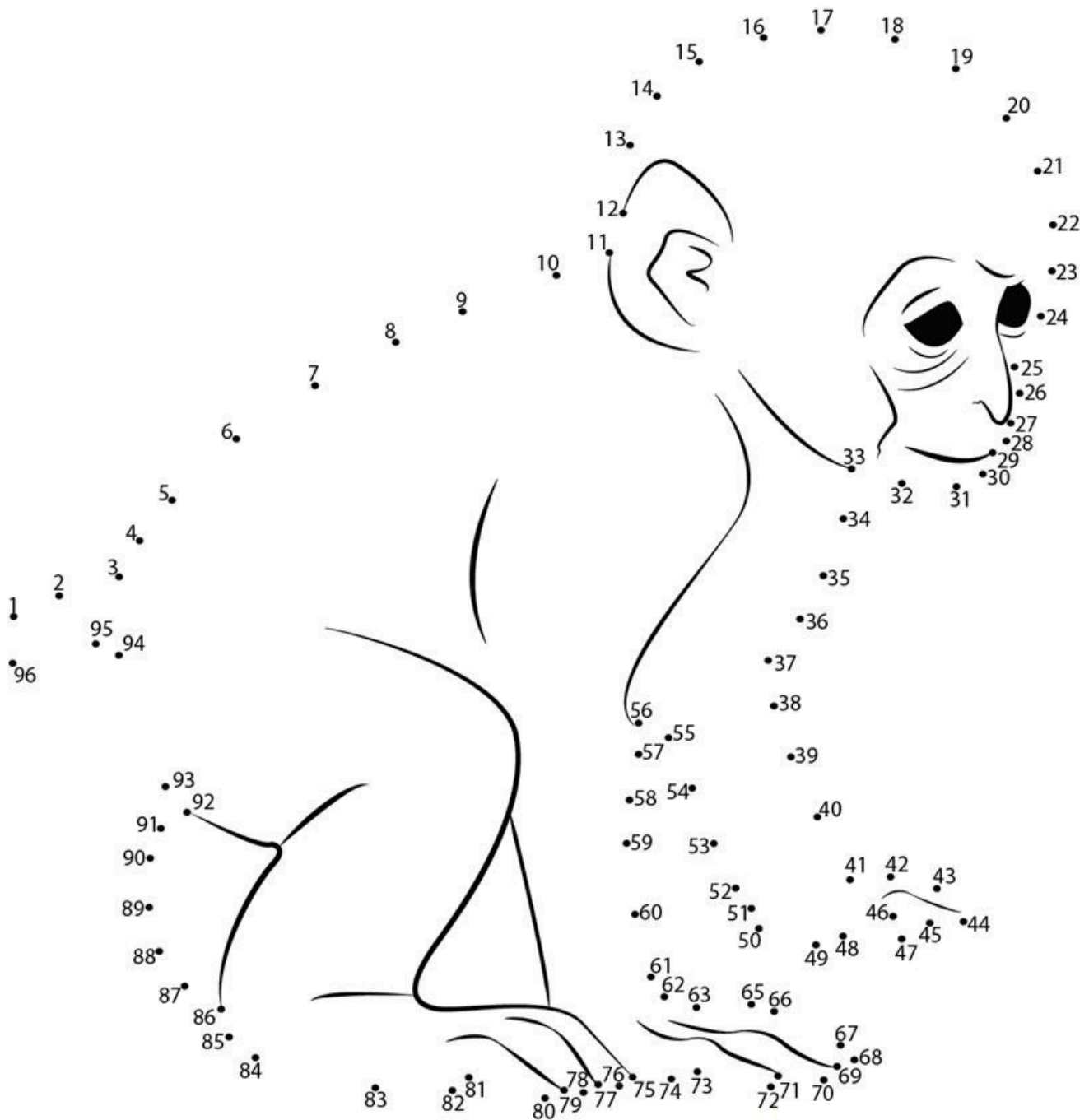
Taking time to thank God is an important part of prayer. We show God how grateful we are when we spend time telling Him what we are thankful for. Let’s pray that the Christians in Japan would be thankful to God like it says in these verses in the book of Psalms.

“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: Monkey Dot to Dot



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: Word Search

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

WORD LIST:

ARCHIPELAGO	FORTUNE	LISTENING	PRAISING
ARTISTIC	JAPAN	LONGEVITY	PUSHERS
ASKING	KOI	MOUNT FUJI	SEKAI ICHI
CONFESSING	LEAST REACHED	POPULATION	VENDING

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

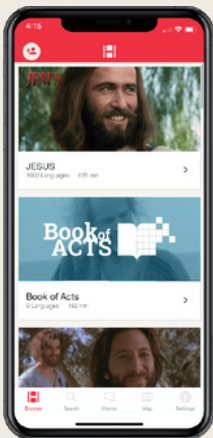
Christian groups from other countries come to Japan and work alongside Japanese Christian churches. Ask God to show them the best way to connect with people who don't yet know Jesus.

□ 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
- ▶ Prayercast has great prayer videos:
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 2,100 languages on our website:
jesusfilm.org/watch/jesus.html/english
- ▶ We also have multiple other films and short films available:
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



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.



First published: July 2025