



# 5x5x5 Prayer: Five Minutes, Five Days, Five Topics



We invite you to pray for the people of Japan, for just five minutes a day, for five days, for FIVE STRATEGIC AREAS. Your prayers will open doors in powerful ways, encourage believers, release strongholds and bring great glory to God.

Out of a population of 126 million only 0.3 percent are evangelical Christians, making Japanese people the second largest unreached people group in the world. That population is, however, shrinking and births are at a record low. Japan is a place of great scenic beauty, advanced technology and apparent social harmony. But there are significant concerns beginning to be shared by society at large such as long working hours, a high suicide rate, bullying and hikikomori (social recluses).

Most Japanese identify as both Shinto and Buddhist. Many people have little problem practicing more than one religion, since they view each religion as beneficial in different ways at different times. In this context, preaching Christ as the only way of salvation is a huge challenge. Pray with us for spiritual breakthrough in Japan leading to vibrant churches where individuals, families and communities are transformed by God's love.

## The People of JAPAN

### Day One SPREADING THE GOSPEL

Most Japanese do not know a Christian and have little, if any, idea what the gospel is about. There is a real need for Japanese Christians and missionaries to be bold and creative in making Jesus known in their families, neighborhoods, workplaces and schools. New ways of evangelism are also needed to reach the next generation.

Lord, as we seek to see a vibrant church impacting every community, may your church in Japan at least double in size by 2030. In a culture that discourages standing out and being different, may Christians be bold to speak of Jesus and may many people come to know him.

Lord, may Christians understand how society and the younger generation is changing and be able to proclaim your gospel in a way which connects to people's hearts and is sensitive to the times.

Lord, we praise you for those involved in evangelism media ministry and pray that you will expand that work so that many can hear the gospel through social media. We pray for more creative ways to bring the gospel to those who have not yet heard.

### Day Two PLANTING CHURCHES

In Japan nearly 1,500 communities with populations of 3,000-50,000 have no church. There are also many social groups in large cities that are unreached. As the population of Japan is projected to halve by the year 2100, many regional towns could disappear. Wisdom is needed in deciding how to plant new churches that will thrive in this context.

Lord, please burden people to pray for and go to communities that have no church. Even though the Japanese church is small and often struggling, may it have faith to move forward in a spirit of mission and reach out to those areas where there is no Christian witness.

Lord, in bigger cities there are many different sub-cultures, especially among young people who feel that they don't fit into Japanese society. Help the church to be aware of these mission fields on their doorstep and give creative ideas for reaching out and planting churches.

Lord, we give thanks that a few seminaries are beginning to teach church planting as a specific skill. We pray this trend increases so that more churches can be planted, especially by Japanese workers.

### Day Three REVITALIZING CHURCHES

The average Japanese church now sees less than one baptism a year. With increasingly elderly congregations, the church needs to reach the next generation for Jesus in order to survive. Yet 30 percent of churches do not have any children's work.

Lord, encourage Japanese parents to train their children in the way they should go, that when they are older they will not depart from it (Prov. 22:6).

Lord, help the Japanese church to reach the next generation for Jesus. May the church find ways of worshipping where young people can find warm fellowship and experience joy.

Lord, bless the hi-b.a. organization it seeks to disciple high schoolers in the midst of their busyness with studies and school activities. Give wisdom as they seek new ways to reach these students in Japan.

Lord, as you bring more non-Japanese people to live and work in Japan, may the church be one which welcomes those who are already Christians and may these Christians bring encouragement and blessing to the churches.

## Day Four

### RAISING GOSPEL WORKERS

Nearly half of Japanese pastors are over 70 and only 10 percent are under 50. Thirty percent of churches have no pastor. Missionary numbers have also dropped 40 percent since 1997. There is an urgent need for more gospel workers and more lay ministry. Yet with long working hours and little free time, few Japanese are able to make room for much more than attending a worship service.

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Lord, in an increasingly self-centred age help Christians to have the desire to receive training for full-time and lay ministry. May pastors also have a passion to train and trust their members to be effective disciple makers.

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Lord, thank you for the various seminaries in Japan. We pray they equip their students well to bring the gospel to the next generation.

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Lord, may the staff with KGK (the national student fellowship movement) be equipped to stimulate more fruitful student evangelism and help raise up many more Japanese gospel workers.

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Lord, we join with OMF Japan's prayer goal for 200 workers by 2020. Please call many new workers to make disciples of the people in Japan and may they serve you joyfully and effectively.

*LORD, LISTEN!  
LORD, FORGIVE!  
LORD, HEAR AND ACT!  
FOR YOUR SAKE, MY GOD,  
DO NOT DELAY...*

*Daniel 9:19 (NIV)*

## Day Five

### MOBILIZING THE LOCAL CHURCH

As a whole, the Japanese church is declining and quite divided along denominational lines. It is easy to feel discouraged. May the church remember the Great Commission and be one that goes out to the whole world and tells the gospel to all people. The number of foreign residents in Japan is also increasing, presenting both a challenge and an opportunity.

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Lord, may each church be involved in its local community as salt and light, reaching out to the people in the area, especially in times of trouble or disaster when hearts may be more open.

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Lord, we praise you for areas where churches cooperate well to make Jesus known and pray for increasing cooperation in evangelism. May non-denominational organizations also receive the support and encouragement they need.

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Lord, we thank you for some creative ways of raising the profile of world mission. We pray that churches will take every opportunity to teach about mission and encourage believers to be involved.

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Lord, may the Japanese church be equipped to welcome those from other (especially Asian) countries living in Japan and share the love of Jesus with those who do not know him.

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## NEXT STEPS

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Is God drawing you to more focused prayer or involvement with the people of Japan? Consider additional ways to nurture God's love among these people.

**PRAY.** Partner with God's work in Japan through prayer. Visit [omf.org/japan](http://omf.org/japan) for more information about prayer resources for Japan.

**PARTNER.** Mobilizing your community to join God's work in Japan is a vital ministry. Will you encourage others to pray and serve?

**GO.** We're praying for 200 workers by 2020 – could you be one of them? There are short, mid and long term opportunities to be involved in making disciples in Japan through church planting, assisting Japanese churches, student work and youth outreach, as well as variety of support ministries. For more information visit [opportunities.omf.org](http://opportunities.omf.org).

What resonates in your heart? How do you want to get involved? Visit [omf.org/japan](http://omf.org/japan) for more information. Facebook: @OMFJapan  
Instagram: @omf\_japan.