

Japan Mission Report

Osaka, Japan

November 10–19, 2025

California Missions Initiative Partnership

Why Japan?

- 125 million people
- Less than 1% evangelical believers
- Tokyo: largest concentration of lostness in history
- Japan is open to missionaries
- Teams bring energy, partnership, and m_____

1. Vision and Strategy

IMB Japan Team Vision

All believers in Japan abiding in Christ, living in community, proclaiming the gospel, multiplying disciples, and planting healthy churches.

IMB Japan Team Mission

Every believer a maturing disciple. Every disciple a disciple-maker.
Healthy, multiplying, sending churches.

What Teams Do

- Prayer walking
- Mapping unreached areas
- English cafés & Bible studies
- Evangelism & relationship building
- Supporting church plants
- Building long-term partnerships

Long-Term Goal

Direct partnerships between U.S. churches and Japanese c_____

- Ask: “How can we bless you this year?”
- VBS, gospel choirs, English outreach, evangelism teams

2. Japanese Worldview

Japan at a Glance

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 98% ethnically Japanese▪ Highly urban (90% in cities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Aging p_____▪ Declining birthrate▪ Strong group identity
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Religious Landscape

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 79% Shinto▪ 69% Buddhist▪ Ancestor worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Confucian & Taoist influences▪ Atheism taught in schools▪ Shrines & temples everywhere
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Honor–Shame Culture

Western worldview: guilt–innocence

Japanese worldview: honor–shame

Honor–Shame Culture

Key question: “What keeps h_____?”

- Group identity
- Avoiding conflict
- Indirect communication
- Hone (true feelings) vs. tatemae (public face)

The Weight of Batsu

Batsu: a permanent “mark” for m_____

- Hard to move on from failure
- Creates pressure to conform
- Deep fear of causing shame

Wa: The Value of Harmony

Wa = harmony, peace

Beautiful when motivated by love

Challenging when motivated by f_____

Impacts:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Evangelism▪ Discipleship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Church life▪ Family relationships
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Barriers to the Gospel

- Truth must feel “Japanese”
- Group experience > individual experience
- Cultural “peace” hides internal distress
- Media skepticism
- Christianity seen as W_____

3. Contextualization

Why Contextualize?

- Jesus came down the m_____ to us
- We must enter the worldview of the people
- Speak to their questions, fears, hopes
- Share the gospel in a way they can hear

Three Functions of Contextualization

1. Aligns us with Jesus' ministry on Earth
2. Connects the gospel to their lived narrative
3. Removes cultural barriers to understanding

Luke 15 as a Bridge Three parables → three Japanese h_____ needs

1. Lost Sheep — Life vs. Death
2. Lost Coin — Value & Purpose
3. Lost Sons — Relationship & Belonging

Lost Sheep: Life

- Japanese try to fix the inside using outside things
- Genesis 2:7 — God breathes life from the inside out
- True life comes from the Shepherd

the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. Genesis 2:7

Lost Coin: Value

- Japanese struggle with identity & w_____
- A coin never loses value
- Value is restored when God “picks us up”

Lost Sons: Relationship

- Japan's loneliness crisis
- Hikikomori (shut-ins)
- Gospel restores relationship with God and o_____

4. Six Core Missionary Tasks

Six Core Missionary Tasks

1. Entry
2. Evangelism
3. Discipleship
4. Healthy Church Formation
5. Leadership Development
6. Exit (local ownership)

Why These Six?

- Rooted in the Book of Acts
- Provides a common language for m_____
- Ensures healthy, reproducible ministry
- Focuses on long-term sustainability

What This Means for Us

- We join a long-term strategy
- Our short-term work multiplies missionary efforts
- We support Japanese believers
- We help build healthy, sending c_____

How Our Church Can Continue

- Pray for missionaries
- Pray for Japanese churches
- Consider future teams
- Build long-term partnerships
- Support ongoing work

Key: multiplication, churches, population, harmony, mistakes, fear, Western, mountain, heart, worth, others, missionaries churches