

# PRAYERPOINTS

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS: A PRAYING PEOPLE IMPACTING A LOST WORLD

## Praying for **Tokyo, Japan**

**TO FEEL THE PULSE** of Tokyo, Japan, one simply has to go to the Shibuya District and watch thousands scramble to push through one of the world's largest crosswalks in front of Shibuya Station. Fashion, the high-tech industry, and night life draw young Japanese to this busy shopping district. Tokyo, home to 35 million people, is considered by many to

be the largest metropolitan area in the world.



Shibuya Station, Tokyo, Japan

Very few Japanese express a real need for religion or a relationship with God.

Located on Japan's Honshu Island, Tokyo is the hub for Japan's banking, transportation, publishing, and broadcasting industries. The city is also the nation's cultural center, showcasing both traditional art forms such as kabuki drama and Western forms such as symphonies and pop music.

Shinto and Buddhism are the traditional religions of the Japanese, but most have no true religious affiliation and do not believe in a Creator God or Buddha. While traditional beliefs continue to shape the Japanese culture, very few Japanese express a real need for religion or a relationship with God. Less than .05 percent of the 127 million Japanese are born-again Christians, making the Japanese the largest unreached people group in the world.



**But the Lord is faithful; He will strengthen and guard you from the evil one. (2 Thessalonians 3:3, HCSB)**

**1 EAST ASIAN PEOPLES.** The Japanese live in constant fear of earthquakes. Seismologists say that it is not a matter of if, but when the next massive earthquake will strike. Ask the Lord to help the people of Japan honor the Lord above them rather than fear the ground beneath them.

**2 NGONI OF TANZANIA.** Nearly all Ngoni people grow their own food. If they don't farm, they don't eat. The work begins in November and ends this month. Pray that the Ngoni will look beyond the end of the harvest, and seek to know the Creator and Sustainer of all life.

**3 GURAGE OF ETHIOPIA.** Work on translation of the New Testament into the local language is ongoing. Pray for the translators to have diligence, a sense of urgency, and freedom from fear. Pray that God will protect them and their families.

**4 EAST ASIAN PEOPLES.** Most Japanese have never heard the gospel explained in terms that make sense to them. Pray that all will have the chance to hear so that they may understand and can put their trust in Jesus Christ.



Bread distribution for the homeless

**5 CENTRAL ASIAN MUSLIMS OF MOSCOW, RUSSIA.** Pray for a strong core of Central Asian believers in Moscow who have a vision for reaching their fellow Central Asians. Pray for their protection, their maturation in the faith, and the provision of their needs.

**6 JAMMU, INDIA.** One pastor has a vision of starting a small chicken farm to provide income while allowing him to do full-time ministry. Pray that the Lord will guide him in the process and bless his efforts to share this idea with other pastors in the area.

**7 EAST ASIAN PEOPLES.** Tokyo is the home of Japan's emperor. He is revered by many. Pray for the citizens of this strategic city to know the one who is King of kings and Lord of lords, to offer to Him the allegiance of their hearts, and to worship Him above all earthly authority.

**8 HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM.** The continued, rapid growth of Internet usage and mobile devices ensures that every household in Ho Chi Minh City can eventually be reached through online media. Pray for the development of materials that can be distributed to mobile devices.

**9 MALTESE OF MALTA.** Team Malta's vision is to see a growing group of disciples in every Maltese village. Pray for discipleship and training efforts, asking that Maltese believers will be equipped and encouraged to facilitate Bible studies that multiply and grow exponentially.

**10 EAST ASIAN PEOPLES.** Cry out for 127 million Japanese people in 47 million households to turn to the Savior while there is still time! Pray

that the "Land of the Rising Sun" will become the land of the Risen Son.

**11 DEAF PEOPLES.** Workers in West Africa regularly visit a Deaf social center to share God's stories. The Deaf often respond by saying that Muslims and Catholics serve the same God. Pray that God will break through the barriers so that the gospel can be shared and understood.

**12 NU OF COLOMBIA.** Two men who have been in training for leadership in the newly formed Nu church recently confessed to moral failure. Pray that God will work through this difficult circumstance and that He will be glorified through it.

**13 EAST ASIAN PEOPLES.** Pray that the present generation of Japanese pastors and missionaries will reap an abundant harvest from seeds they are sowing as well as from those sown throughout decades of Christian witness.

**14 LAST FRONTIER.** Intercede for three new believers from a Last Frontier people group. They received some training and have returned to their hometowns. Pray that God will help them to be strong and to produce much fruit among their families and neighbors.

**15 PEOPLES OF NORTHERN ZAMBIA.** Pray for "the 3 Chi's"—Chilanga, Chipeta, and Chipikoso—in the Isoka District. The Word of God is spreading throughout these villages. Pray for the salvation of many, and pray for believers to share all that they are learning about Jesus.

**16 EAST ASIAN PEOPLES.** Japanese Christians need encouragement to be faithful. They are a very small minority in a group-oriented society, making it a challenge to stand up for their faith. Pray that they will be both unwavering and bold in their witness.

**17 HIJAZI SAUDI ARABS OF SAUDI ARABIA.** Life outside the big cities of Saudi Arabia goes on much as it did before oil was discovered and the economy changed. Pray that the people living in these villages will find radio, television, and Internet resources that will lead them to Jesus.



Crafts with tsunami survivors

**18 MOUNTAIN SHEPHERDS OF CENTRAL ASIA.** Alif\* and Firuza\* came to know the Lord as their Savior several years ago. Neither has been baptized. Pray that they will come to realize that baptism is something the Lord calls all of His children to do in obedience.

**19 EAST ASIAN PEOPLES.** Most Japanese have never owned a Bible or had a Christian friend. How can they hear if nobody tells them? Pray that each one will meet the Father through His Word and the witness of His children.

**20 SOUTH ASIANS OF CANADA.** Pastor Cal's\* church near downtown Toronto, Ontario, sits across the street from a large mosque. He desires to train his congregation to reach the Muslims in their community. Pray for their efforts, and ask the Holy Spirit to prepare many hearts to hear the gospel.

**21 SOUTHEAST ASIAN PEOPLES.** One Southeast Asian island has three urban centers with million-plus populations and hardly any infrastructure. Reaching these sprawling urban centers with the gospel is a formidable challenge. Ask the Holy Spirit to break down barriers that are impeding the progress of the gospel.

**22 EAST ASIAN PEOPLES.** It is a real challenge to reach businessmen in Japan. They are busy, focused, and see little need for faith in someone other than themselves. Pray that the Lord will raise up a generation of men who walk in the way, the truth and the life.

**23 EUROPEAN PEOPLES.** Norway is one of the

wealthiest countries in the world and, historically, has a religious background. But most Norwegians have little to no interest in religion. Pray that the Spirit will help the people to see their need for a relationship with Jesus.

**24 DEAF PEOPLES.** At the recent baptism of Honey\*, a Thai Deaf woman, another church member's daughter made a profession of faith. She was also baptized and is now following the Lord wholeheartedly. Praise the Lord for working in the hearts of the Deaf in Southeast Asia!

**25 EAST ASIAN PEOPLES.** 1941 was the year Japan entered into war with America. Last year, 1,941 salvation decisions were made during the three-day Franklin Graham crusade, "Celebration of Love." Pray that effective follow-up on each decision will result in fruit for the kingdom.

**26 PA OF COLOMBIA.** More than 150 families have been contacted through the soccer club that began last year in the Pa people ministry. Pray for the follow-up visits, asking that these times of sharing the gospel stories and visitation will lead to more Pa believers.

**27 LAST FRONTIER.** Life is very difficult for the believers among one Last Frontier people group. Many of them are very afraid to tell their spouses and children of their faith. Ask God to encourage, strengthen, and help them to be a great light in a very dark place.

**28 EAST ASIAN PEOPLES.** Pray that millions of Tokyo's people will encounter God in such a way that their resistant hearts will be melted by His love and grace and they will fall before Him in adoration and praise.

**29 MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE.** A local Baptist pastor and his wife opened a Christian school in the city of Maputo in January 2016. They prayed for 50 to 60 students, and they have 75! Pray that the gospel will be evident to the students, their families, and all who encounter the school.

**30 SOMALI MINORITIES OF THE HORN OF AFRICA.** Oftentimes, it is easier for someone who lives in a similar culture to empathize with a people group and understand best how to articulate truth. Ask God to raise up near-culture believers who have a passion to see Somali minorities come to faith.

**31 EAST ASIAN PEOPLES.** Many Japanese Christians are shy and reluctant to share their faith. Ask God to give them a holy boldness to share the gospel with urgency and passion.



*Small group with the homeless*

## Homelessness in Japan

**HOMELESSNESS IS A GROWING ISSUE** in Japan as a result of the financial troubles of the past decade. Taka came to faith and was baptized four years ago when he found himself without a job, a family, and almost his life.

Today, Taka is grateful to the Lord for his job as an apartment manager and he is no longer homeless, but he still comes to Sidewalk Chapel, Mobile Church, and Bible studies in the park. He is now being trained as a disciple and a leader among the homeless. This past Thanksgiving, Taka told a worker, "I am thankful I was homeless. Had I not been, I wouldn't have been open, and I might have not met Jesus!"

The homeless in Japan are meeting Christ. Former Buddhist priests, cult members, the hurting, and the helpless are all finding hope. Breaking the vicious cycle, men and women are finding new life, restoration, and recovery because of God's grace. Pray for Taka as he shares his story and ministers to the homeless. Pray that many will find a "home" in Christ.

## Recovery continues in northern Japan

**JAPAN WAS LITERALLY SHAKEN** to her ancient core by a 9.0-magnitude earthquake and ensuing 30-foot tsunami on March 11, 2011. The devastation it wreaked, along with the threat of radiation from the Fukushima nuclear power plants, led both the Emperor and the Prime Minister to call it Japan's worst crisis since World War II.

The force of the quake was so strong that it moved the entire island of Honshu eight feet to the east. Coastline maps had to be redrawn. Over 16,000 lives were swept into eternity without Christ, and 3,000 are still missing.

Two missionary couples moved to the area to plant their lives and offer soul care. Broken spirits and spiritual bondage among the survivors continue. Physical living conditions improve for those moving from temporary housing to permanent apartments, but those resettling once again face isolation and loneliness as they leave the community they have come to know. Pray that they will discover true community in Christ.



*Scrapbooking with tsunami survivors*

*\*Name changed*

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