

2017 Summer Japan STM

June 23 – 30

Tokyo, Japan



This STM will be an evangelistic outreach on the western side of Tokyo, near the famous Kichijoji station/shopping/park and International Christian University. We will most likely be staying either in a youth hostel (bunk room style) or a reasonable hotel. Thus, we will have beds, bath, and wifi. Getting around in Tokyo means using the rail/subway system, which can be very complicated and which is expensive. There is an app available that will calculate both the cost and best combination of stops to go from here to there (*Japan Transit Planner*). We will be on our own for food as well, and there are many great options nearly everywhere.

Japan has been a very difficult culture for outreach since the first missionaries arrived. Some believe that was St. Francis Xavier (Christian Jesuit), who landed in Kyushu in 1549. He called Japanese Buddhism “an invention of the devil.” Others contend evidence of Nestorian missionaries in Japan by way of India, China and Korea in 199 C.E.. Regardless, we know that the Japanese have so eagerly embraced everything Western — from fads, philosophies, baseball, and science. Why not Christianity? One explanation comes from Minoru Okuyama, former director of the Missionary Training Center in Japan. In 2010, he told a global missions conference, “*Japanese make much of human relationships – more than the truth. Consequently we can say that as for Japanese, one of the most important things is harmony; in Japanese, ‘Wa.’*” The Japanese, said Okuyama, “*are afraid of disturbing human relationships of their families or neighborhood even though they know Christianity is best.*” He added, “*[T]hose who harm the harmony are bad, whether they are right or not has been beside the question.*” The West is absolutist, its God embodying absolute power, absolute righteousness, absolute wisdom, absolute truth. Nothing like that exists in Japan.

Thus, evangelism in Japan must be done on a relational basis, with care given to honor family who hold traditional Japanese beliefs, whilst sharing the Truth of Christ via the significance of relationship ‘wa’ with God. We will tailor our gospel approach accordingly, while pursuing every opportunity to share the gospel with those we encounter during the trip.



The local church plant is built from this mentality, and they are making inroads to a kid’s school, Share House residents, shop keepers, and others they’ve befriended. We will seek to complement those friendships with new ones, seeking open doors for the Good News that can be cultivated and explored by the local team. We may pursue other outreach opportunities or events as well.

There are several places to see for tourism, and we will likely choose one or two during our stay, with the hope of joining Japanese that we meet for those events.

In-country cost per person: \$200 Room, \$200 rail/subway, & \$200 food for **\$600 total**. Airfare from the eastern U.S.: ~**\$1400**. Thus, the total trip cost is estimated at **\$2000**.