Summary
The Japanese and Christianity: A Complex Relation

Since the mid-sixteenth century, Christianity has been notably active in Japan, and yet Japan is one of the least-evangelized nations in the world. As indicated in this book's various statistical sources, the percentage of Christians in Japan is between 1.40 and 1.54 percent. Hence, the central question of this dissertation is this: “What are the main factors why Christianity has not yet succeeded in Japan?” The following paragraphs offer a summary of each chapter in this book.

Introduction (Ch. 1)
Chapter one lays out the framework of the research. Here the central research question is described, and the central hypothesis is outlined. This chapter gives an overview of various factors such as the societal, cultural, historical, missiological, and political dimensions of Christianity in Japan. Furthermore, terms such as “Christianity” and “Japanese culture” are specified; thus, chapter one offers clear explanations of what is meant by these terms used throughout the book. Chapter one functions as a foundation for all subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

Historical Factors (Ch. 2)
Chapter two provides a historical review of Christianity in Japan. This chapter briefly presents the entrance of Roman Catholicism into Japan from the late-sixteenth century onward and the persecution of that faith during the Tokugawa (Edo) Period (1603–1868). The history of Protestantism in Japan is also briefly
outlined in chapter two, and Christianity’s re-entry into the country during the Meiji period (1868–1912) is discussed. In addition, this chapter describes in brief the post-World War II period and its relationship to Christianity. This chapter is necessary in order to understand the context of later chapters, especially chapters five and seven.

*Worldview Factors (Ch. 3)*

Chapter three discusses the possible areas of conflict between the Japanese and Western Christian worldviews. Here the cultural and religious aspects of the Japanese worldview are discussed. Concepts such as *wa* or harmony, *Uchi-Soto* (inner-outer groups), *Giri* (social reciprocity), *Honne* (inner convictions, feelings), *Tatemae* (an opinion or action influenced by social norms), and *Amae* (dependence on the benevolence of others) are described and related to the main question of this dissertation.

Further, in chapter three some religious views of the Japanese are discussed. It outlines the ways in which these contradict Western Christian views. Here the concepts such as *kami* (god or gods), *mushukyo* (non-religious), and the concept of harmony between the existing religions, i.e., Buddhism, Shinto, and Confucianism, are described.

*Theological Factors (Ch. 4)*

The clash between the Japanese worldview and that of Western Christianity has engendered a theological conflict. Chapter four discusses some of the theological topics such as sin, life after death, ancestor veneration, and the exclusiveness of Christ from a Japanese cultural and religious perspective. Here the theological
concepts are examined from more or less an evangelical view within the Japanese religious context. Also in this chapter, Sekundo Chansu Ron (Second Chance Theory), or salvation for the deceased, is discussed.

**Missiological Factors (Ch. 5)**

Chapter five focuses on missiological factors associated with the attempt to Christianize Japan. Here the manner in which Christianity was introduced to the Japanese people throughout history is discussed. Some approaches to proselytizing collided with aspects of Japanese culture and even with the moral and social commitments of some native Japanese Christian thinkers. One answer to the question of why Christianity has not yet succeeded in Japan might be related to the manner in which Western missionaries throughout history have presented it to the Japanese.

This chapter is divided into three major parts: the first two are brief descriptions of Christian missions, both Catholic and Protestant. The third part discusses three possible errors committed by Western missionaries in Japan throughout history; these are related to: (1) a Eurocentric approach; (2) a lack of consideration for cultural context; and (3) denominational competitiveness. These are also discussed in this chapter.

**Societal Factors (Ch. 6)**

Chapter six describes several societal factors that may have contributed to the fact that Christianity is not widely practiced in Japan. It discusses social factors such as social status, family obligations, and neighborhood duties, along with occupational and educational participation of most Japanese people. This chapter
describes why the average Japanese person may not have enough time and space to fully participate in a committed Christian life that demands intensive involvement.

**Political Factors (Ch. 7)**

Chapter seven offers some crucial new insights into the role that politics has played in the development of Christianity in Japan. This chapter portrays that Western Christianity and its accompanying political views have often, intentionally or otherwise, worked together so that Christianity is not widely believed and practiced in Japan. Many of the objections that Japanese people make to Christianity relate to Western aggression, war, and violence. Chapter seven therefore examines the connections between politics, militarism, Christianity, and Japanese culture in relation to the central question of this research, as mentioned above.

**Christianity's Contribution to Japan (Ch. 8)**

Chapter eight describes some of the positive contributions Christianity has made to Japanese culture and society. It discusses four major areas of influence: education, social justice, theology, and intellectual life. Here the position that native Christian artists and human rights activists have acquired in Japanese culture and society is briefly discussed. In doing this, chapter eight presents a more balanced view of Christianity in Japan by considering not only the conflicting factors in its reception but also the positive influence it has had on Japanese culture and society.
Final Reflections (Ch. 9)

Based on what has been presented in previous chapters, chapter nine offers final remarks and conclusions concerning Christianity’s lack of quantitative success in Japan. In purely numerical terms, Christianity has not been successful in Japan. This is simply a reality. However, in the end, success understood in purely quantitative terms may not count for more than influence-oriented success.