

No distractions

by Susie Pek, global director

A new year is upon us! For many, it's a time to dream, plan and start fresh. We're gifted with 365 new days – each one full of opportunity. It's exciting to imagine finally bringing long-desired projects to life. But as we know, excitement alone isn't enough. Success requires purpose, planning, consistency, discipline and – perhaps most importantly – focus.

Lately, the theme of *focus* has been on my heart. Thoughts keep echoing in my mind: “We need to be fully present in what we're doing.” “We must be careful not to get involved in matters that, although relevant, will distract us from our purpose.” “Watch out for distractions!”

It's so easy to lose focus. One simple example: We pick up our phone to send an important message, then pause to check social media – just for a minute – and suddenly forget why we picked up the phone in the first place! That's just one small way we all experience moments of distraction ... and maybe more often than we'd like to admit.

In this context, I find inspiration in the life of Nehemiah. When he heard about the destruction of Jerusalem's walls, he wept, mourned, fasted and prayed to God. A city without walls was vulnerable, and Nehemiah longed to restore it because he knew what it meant to his people. After seeking the Lord's direction, he developed a strategy and got to work. With focus and determination, he faced opposition – enemies who tried everything to stop the rebuilding. But Nehemiah kept his eyes on the Lord, knowing that only in God's strength could he succeed. And so he pressed on.

In Nehemiah 4:14 we read: **“Don't be afraid of them. Remember that the Lord is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.”** The challenges were real and intimidating, yet they weren't enough to derail the mission. Later, in Nehemiah 6:15-16, we read: **“So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days. When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.”**

Nehemiah understood that the work could only be done in the Lord's strength. He also knew his role in the mission – he didn't get distracted, didn't take on new responsibilities and stayed clear about what God had called him to do. His clarity and focus were essential to the outcome.

As we step into this new year, after hearing from the Lord about the projects we're meant to pursue, let's hold onto one key truth: Our eyes must remain fixed on the Lord and his leading. Even minor distractions can lead to major detours and unfulfilled plans.

I wish you a beautiful, meaningful and grace-filled new year – one in which your eyes remain fixed on the One who keeps us from falling and guides our every step. “I keep my eyes always on the LORD. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken” (Ps. 16:8).

JANUARY 2026 Prayer for women in Asia

1. We rejoice that *Women of Hope* in the Hazaragi language began airing in **Afghanistan** in October 2025. Bring hope and healing, Lord. (John 17:3)
2. Father, as the people of **Cambodia** face high unemployment and low wages, may you guide and provide ways for them to care for their families. (Ps. 9:18)
3. God, as Christians in **China** face discouragement, limited resources and societal pressures, increase their ability to stand strong and trust in you to care for them. (2 Cor. 4:8-9)
4. Lord, enable the women of rural Karnataka, **India**, to find jobs and care for their families. Many of their husbands are addicted to alcohol and online gambling. (Isa. 41:10)
5. God, give your great wisdom to leaders in **Indonesia** to judge fairly and govern justly. May freedom of expression within the law be protected. (Prov. 31:9)
6. May believers influence those around them by imitating the life of Christ so that the gospel will spread throughout **Japan** and many will be saved. (Acts 2:40-47)
7. Father, may **South Korea's** next generation stand firm in their faith as they personally experience you in their lives. May they bring joy to your heart! (Eph. 5:15-16)
8. God, grant single mothers in **Mongolia** the wisdom, love and peace to lead their families. May their children walk in your ways and grow under your protection. (Prov. 22:6)
9. Lord, heal the divisions in **Nepal's** churches that are weakening believers' faith, especially the faith of women and children. May your love and truth bring restoration. (Rom. 15:5-6)
10. Father, we pray for spiritual growth of the women in a newly established group in **Pakistan**. May they together hear your Word, fellowship and pray for one another. (Col. 1:9-10)
11. God, bring justice, safety and healing to women in **Papua New Guinea** facing domestic and tribal violence. Transform communities to honor women's dignity. (Ps. 34:18)
12. Lord, strengthen and provide for the Maho **Sri Lankan** women listeners who have a strong faith in Christ despite their husbands abandoning them. (2 Cor. 9:8)
13. As rural women in **Timor-Leste** face high maternal mortality, may mobile clinics, respectful maternal care and health infrastructure increase for them. (Ps. 121:7-8)
14. Bring protection and deliverance, Lord, for women at risk of trafficking and exploitation in **Vietnam**. Guide communities in prevention strategies. (Ps. 20:1)
15. God, may the people and leaders of **Cambodia** look to you for peace, security and resolution to the ongoing border conflict inflicting such distress. (Eccles. 4:4)
16. As mothers in **Indonesia** balance work and family responsibilities, Father, help them come to you and find their strength and rest in your presence. (Matt. 11:28)
17. Lord, may local **Japanese** churches engage with foreigners and partner with foreign-language churches in evangelism to further God's kingdom. (Deut. 10:17-19)
18. God, help the children of **North Korean** defectors who now live in South Korea to successfully integrate into society and reach their full potential. (Lev. 19:34)
19. Lord, may **Mongolian** Christian women be united in love and support for one another as they do your work and serve as strong pillars in the church. (1 Cor. 12:12-13)
20. Holy God, soften the hearts of unreached women in **Nepal** who are hesitant to hear the gospel. Open their eyes as you draw them unto yourself. (Eph. 1:18)
21. Lord, raise up strong community vigilance to protect women and girls at risk of trafficking and sexual exploitation in **Papua New Guinea**. (Ps. 46:1)
22. May communities in **Timor-Leste** be set free from harmful patriarchal practices that silence women. God, may women be treated with dignity. (Gal. 3:28)
23. Father, provide safe births, skilled care and health access to the Hmong women in remote **Vietnam** who experience high maternal mortality rates. (Ps. 32:7)
24. Lord, you value the informal work that many **Indonesian** women are engaged in. May they be compensated fairly and shown dignity for their labor. (1 Tim. 5:18)
25. May the gospel reach those in **Japan** who are experiencing financial hardship, spiritual distress and meaninglessness so that they will find joy, peace and hope in Jesus. (Rom. 15:10-13)
26. Lord, may the more than 1 million foreign workers residing in **South Korea** receive fair treatment for their labor and have opportunities to encounter Jesus. (Lev. 19:13)
27. Father, may **Mongolian** women find well-being and wholeness through relationship with you as you fill their hearts with your peace, joy and hope. (John 14:27)
28. Lord, bring back to yourself young women in **Nepal** who are being influenced by worldly values. May they turn to you and embrace your truth. (Rom. 12:2)
29. Protect the lives, God, of women in **Papua New Guinea** who are falsely accused of sorcery. Break cycles of fear and patriarchy, and bring justice and peace to vulnerable communities. (Ps. 82:3)
30. Lord, may safe spaces be created in **Timor-Leste** so that survivors of violence can find protection, healing and hope as they also receive compassionate care and justice. (Ps. 9:9)
31. Father, equip women in **Vietnam** with wisdom, courage and opportunity to flourish in leadership, politics and the economy. (Prov. 31:25)