

A New Year, A New Book

It's a new day – and a whole new year! The beginning of a year can be compared to a book with 365 blank pages. What are the stories that this book will tell? I wonder if everyone's Chapter 1 is filled with plans and New Year's resolutions. I imagine some dreams will make it into one of the chapters as well.

New beginnings are inspiring. We look to the future with expectation. We dare to dream about the new stories we will be sharing some months from now. What will our books be about? Adventure? Romance? Or maybe it will contain a little of the focused intensity of a good short story? I guess we'll find out as God writes daily history and thereby writes his story in and through us.

Regardless of the genre, our books will be about real life. That's one of my favorite kinds. The plots are not predictable. They are filled with challenges, twists, some action, adventure, a little romance, and even some suspense! The best part is to know that we are not alone. We have a great Editor who guides us through it all.

While we are aware that our book writing will involve aspects we have absolutely no control of, we also know we'll very actively participate in its process. I am reminded of Ephesians 5:15, which says: "Be very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise." As the protagonists of our plot, we need to give special attention to two areas: our hearts and our minds!

As in a war story, our minds are our great battlefields. It's there where our references, our outlook on life, the way we process information, and the way we understand people and situations lie. In addition, our thoughts have a direct impact on our emotions. Our thoughts are capable of evoking different feelings. So, it's important that we ask ourselves: What is the quality of our thoughts? Philippians 4:8 presents us with a wonderful checklist. "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is

admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things."

A sound mind will help us navigate the challenges that the year's narratives will bring. God's word is an infinite source of wisdom. It helps us in a very practical way in our daily lives, therefore "let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts." (Col. 3:16). A mind aligned with the Lord's is a healthy, happy and wise. It's ready for spiritual battle.

Our hearts are as important as our minds. Jesus said that it is from within the heart that all evils come. It is there that we hold grudges, welcome anxiety, nurture evil desires. "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it" (Prov. 4:23). It is also there that we conceal our greatest passions and loves which will drive all whole life. There's no better way to protect our hearts than to "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5).

When our minds and hearts are surrendered to the Lord, our outlook on life, on people and on the world changes. We have his perspective. His Word is our guidance for daily living, we cast our anxieties on him, we present our requests to him, and finally, we live entirely for him. I pray that our "books" for 2024 feature his story of redemption whatever the genre.

Thank you for praying with us so that stories of hope and redemption can be written in the lives of thousands and thousands of women around the world and across generations.

In our Savior's love,



Susie Pek
Global Director for TWR Women of Hope

JANUARY 2024 Prayers for Europe

1. God, may abused women in Albania have courage to denounce their abusers. Bring healing and hope in Jesus to these women. (Ps. 130:7)
2. Lord, give inspiration to Anja as she produces the TWR Women of Hope program *Rise and Shine* in Belgium. (Matt. 10:20)
3. Father God, we pray that the *Women of Hope* program in the Croatian language would be relevant and deeply touching in women's hearts. (Ps. 119:105)
4. Father, we ask that you see, be near and rescue the women in Denmark who live under slave-like circumstances, are exploited and live in fear of violence. (Gen. 16:13)
5. Lord, give wisdom to refugee women in Europe as they navigate relationships with men in their lives while exploring possibilities that were not open to women in the old countries. (Ps. 32:8)
6. We pray that people of Greenland who have lost loved ones to suicide would come to you for healing, Father, and find peace of mind instead of longing for death themselves. (Matt. 11:28)
7. Lord, we ask that Finnish women who feel distress and pressure as they compare themselves with others on social media would find their true worth in Jesus Christ. (Prov. 3:15)
8. Lord, give the needed tools and resources to organizations working with girls and families, such as the poor and many from Bulgaria and Romania, who are at risk of falling victim to human trafficking. (2 Cor. 9:8)
9. Heavenly Father, we ask that you protect the women in France from those who harass them sexually. (Ps. 116:6)
10. God, inspire Stephanie Neeb, the new ERF and TWR Women of Hope prayer movement coordinator in Germany, with creative ideas to make the ministry known to more intercessors and donors. (Ps. 34:1)
11. Lord, free women from prostitution in the Netherlands and help the organizations who reach out to them to bring both encouragement and the gospel message. (Gal. 5:1)
12. Father, restore the lost dignity and true identity in Christ to girls and women in Macedonia who have been treated as inferior beings. (Rom. 8:14-17)
13. Through their lives and godly example, Lord, give Christian mothers in Norway strength and boldness to share Jesus daily with their children. (Titus 2:7)
14. God, we pray for improved medical care in Poland, including the ability to perform brain-cancer surgery. Many Polish patients cannot go abroad for this expensive treatment. (Ps. 40:7)
15. Violence, divorce, abuse and pornography increasingly affect Portuguese families. Lord, bring your restoration to these families in need. (Jer. 17:14)
16. Lord, reveal yourself to young people in Romania; may their hearts be open to love you. Set them free from drugs and addictions and restore their lives. (Ps. 18:16)
17. Father, reveal yourself to every person who responds to the programs our North Caucasus team produces. May these listeners come to know you as our team ministers truth, comfort and support to them. (Rom. 15:13)
18. God, we ask that you open doors for studio construction for our Serbian team as they seek to change women's lives through impactful content creation. (Eph. 3:20)
19. Lord, we pray for the passage of law against human trafficking in Spain to protect the many girls and women in slavery and sexual exploitation. (Ps. 103:6)
20. Father, we pray for the children in Swedish schools who struggle with their identity; open their eyes to see themselves as God does. (Mark 8:25)
21. Protect and strengthen the TWR Ukraine team members, Lord, who remain in Ukraine to serve and bless their people. May the message of hope in Jesus continue to be broadcast and reach many women online. (Isa. 40:31)
22. Heavenly Father, bring unity in the Albanian church so that the members work together to reach their country for Christ. (1 Cor. 1:10)
23. God, bless the work of our Croatian coordinator, Hana, and her team as they help prostitutes and addicts find freedom at the Zagreb drop-in center. (Prov. 14:21)
24. Lord, strengthen marriages in the Faroe Islands so that love, respect and care characterize their relationships. Protect them from Satan's attacks. (1 Peter 4:8)
25. We pray for the development and provision for our Serbian team's ministry among Romani women. Lord, may the Romani recognize their worth in your eyes. (Jer. 29:11)
26. We pray for the creation of a support system in Norway for women who choose to keep their babies despite unwanted pregnancies. (Gal. 6:2)
27. Jesus Christ, you alone are Lord. Please reveal this truth to the Polish people so that they worship only you. (Phil. 2:9-11)
28. With mental health declining significantly in Portugal since the pandemic, Lord, may people have more access to medical care, a greater awareness of illness and less shame in asking for help. (Phil. 4:6-7)
29. Strengthen the faith of Romanian Christian mothers, Lord, and hear their prayers for the salvation of all in their homes. (1 Pet. 3:1-6)
30. Father, be a refuge for young women in Spain. May they be protected from gang rape and delivered from violence. (2 Sam. 22:3-4)
31. Father, bless our Ukrainian sister who, in the midst of war, continues to translate the prayer calendar into Russian for Ukraine, Russia and Central Asia. (Jer. 17:7-8)