



Inspire

Just Be... Focused!

Focused in the New Year

For many the beginning of a New Year comes with the tradition of making New Year's Resolutions. I gave up making New Year Resolutions years ago. What is the point? I would have all these grand intentions, and before the first month is done (31 days) I have already failed. Years ago, my very wise mother taught me to choose a theme verse for the year. Since I was a senior in High School (1991) after Thanksgiving, I begin to pray about a verse that the Lord is wanting me to choose for the next year. By the time January 1 rolls around, I have picked a verse to be my theme for the New Year.

For 2020, my theme was "Identity" in 2020, and my verse was Isaiah 64:8, **Yet, you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.** I had no idea by choosing that verse last January, that God was going to remind me almost daily that I am not God—He is, and I am nothing but clay in His hands. 2020 definitely taught me I need to be moldable and soft, and allow God to work in my life, to shape me into who He wants me to be.

We are at the beginning of a New Year—12 new months and 365 days of new possibilities. The year 2020 took us all by surprise—nothing went as we had planned. All my plans, goals and expectations for 2020 were thrown out the window by March, not by my choosing, but just because life circumstances that were thrown at all of us. If you are like me, as the months of COVID wore on, the world around me distracted me and I lost my focus.

My desire for 2021 is to be focused on the Jesus and not the circumstances that surround me. My theme for 2021 is "Focused on the Son in 2021" and my theme verse is one of my favorite passages in the Bible: **Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witness, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.** (Hebrews 12:1-2) No matter what goes on in this world, I am choosing to focus on Him!

INSPIRATIONAL IDEAS from the Territory

Anaheim, CA started a Boundless Craft Club (virtually). For a monthly fee, the craft materials are mailed (some as far away as Montana and Minnesota) and Captain Allison Struck leads you through the craft on Facebook.

Anchorage, AK is studying a book called "Preaching the Gospel to Yourself" which helps them to focus in their inner-life relationship with Christ.

Angoon, AK studied, "Me, Myself and Lies: What to Say When You Talk to Yourself" by Jennifer Rothschild.

Antelope Valley, CA held a paint night via Facebook live. Not only did women participate, but also their husbands and kids.

Bellflower, CA have offered workshops on mental health care, taught by a Home League member who is a family therapist.

Coos Bay, OR participated in a local Pregnancy center "baby shower" and also had a kitchen shower for the corps kitchen.

El Cajon, CA ladies have been busy writing cards. They have written over 500 personalized cards to first-responders.

Sitka, AK is going to be doing a virtual fashion show to raise money for the Territorial Women's Project.

The Dalles, OR ladies made care kits for fire evacuees, removed the out-of-date canned goods and restocked the corps pantry, and deep cleaned the chapel (it had been being used for a variety of additional purposes).

Commissioner Colleen Riley—Territorial President of Women's Ministries

Colonel Donna Igleheart—Territorial Secretary for Women's Ministries

Major Beth Desplancke—Territorial Women's Ministries Program Secretary

Be sure to check out our website for more resources: <https://usw-womensministries.org/>

31 Days of Focus in January

Spend the month of January looking in God's Word, reading about vision and where our focus should be.

1. 1 Samuel 16:1-13
2. 2 Kings 6:8-22
3. Psalm 25:1-22
4. Psalm 63:1-11
5. Psalm 101:1-8
6. Psalm 119:17-24
7. Psalm 119:33-40
8. Psalm 121:1-8
9. Psalm 123:1-4
10. Psalm 141:1-10
11. Psalm 146:1-10
12. Proverbs 4:18-27
13. Isaiah 26:1-12
14. Matthew 9:27-38
15. Matthew 20:29-34
16. Mark 8:22-26
17. Luke 4:14-22
18. John 9:1-23
19. John 9:24-41
20. John 12:37-50
21. Acts 9:1-19
22. Acts 26:9-18
23. Romans 8:1-8
24. 2 Corinthians 4:1-6
25. 2 Corinthians 4:7-18
26. Ephesians 1:15-22
27. Philippians 3:9-14
28. Colossians 3:1-4
29. Hebrews 11:1-6
30. Hebrews 11:7-16
31. Hebrews 12:1-3

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- Hebrews 12:2 -

heartlight.org

Fixing Our Eyes on Him Through the Word

The best way to fix your eyes on Jesus is to spend time daily in His Word. Many Christians make the goal of reading the Bible all the way through in one year. If that is a goal for you, great! Committing to the entire Bible in a year sound challenging, here are some other ideas for you to help you focus on Him by reading the Word.

- Our goal as Christians is to become like Jesus. The best way to do this is to know Jesus. We get to know Jesus by reading the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). By reading 3 chapters a day, you can read all 4 gospels in a month. Do this each month for a year and you will really know Jesus better. Three chapters a day feels like too much? Then read 2 chapters a day and you will end up reading the Gospels 6 times this year. Still too much? By reading one chapter a day, you will read through the Gospels 4 times this year.
- Commit to memorizing Scripture this year. If you find memorizing a challenge, commit to memorize 1 verse a month—by the end of the year you will have hidden in your heart 12 verses. Perhaps choose a passage of Scripture, such as Ephesians 1:3-14. Think you can memorize more than that? 26 verses is a verse every 2 weeks; 52 verses is a verse every week. Psalm 89 has 52 verses!
- Proverbs has 31 chapters. Read a chapter of Proverbs each day that corresponds with the day of the month (on the 1st you read chapter 1).
- If you read 5 Psalms a day, you can read the entire book of Psalms in one month. If that is too much—read 1 Psalm a day, and you will read all 150 chapters every five months.
- Choose a theme word for the year and do a topical study of that word all year long.

Whatever you choose to do, do something. Commit to spending time in God's Word on a daily basis. If you get behind, pick up where you left off and keep going. Lysa TerKeurst writes, "Nothing done with the focus on God is ever a waste of time." How are you going to focus on Him in this coming year?

