

THE heartbeat

*I will give you a new heart
and put a new spirit in you;
I will remove from you
your heart of stone and
give you a heart of flesh.*

Ezekiel 36:26

BRINGING HOPE TO WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD & ACROSS THE GENERATIONS // VOL 22 NO 3



Do not be **anxious**
about anything,
but in everything by
prayer and supplication
with thanksgiving
let your requests be
made known to God.
And the **peace of God**,
which surpasses all
understanding, will guard
your hearts and your
minds in Christ Jesus.

- PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

thankfulness = transformed lives

What does it mean to be thankful?

Some definitions include the idea of feeling or expressing gratitude that stems from being conscious of gifts. What hinders us from being thankful? Sometimes simply not being conscious of God's blessings and instead having our focus on something else. Among the most common distractions? Selfishness, doubts and fear can get in the way of gratefulness.

Read Philippians 4:6-7 above. Fear and gratitude can't occupy the same space for long. Being grateful can change your perspective, focus your attention on hope and bring you back to the foundation of God's truth.

Sara's experience is a testimony to the impact of gratitude. She's been ill for most of her life, and her husband sought treatment for her.

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Japan needs Women of Hope



It's hard to imagine a more modern, prosperous country than 21st century Japan. The population of over 126 million people is technologically advanced, well-educated and wide open to global media influences.

That's why many of us are so surprised to learn that this population is among the two or three largest people groups in the world still unreached by the gospel. Less than half a percent of the people are evangelical Christians, and the growth rate among them is declining, according to information from the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism. There are relatively few churches, and most are small and have aging leadership.

Many Japanese people don't even understand the religions that dominate their culture, reports The Evangelical Alliance Mission, and religion of any kind just doesn't play a big role in their lives. But TEAM points to evidence that materialism and humanism aren't providing the hope people need. The suicide rate is one of the highest in the world. Issues surrounding sexual promiscuity, homosexuality and transgenderism are on the rise. Concerns have been raised about an emerging social phenomenon affecting hundreds of thousands of people who isolate themselves at home.

In recent years, TWR has observed that the notoriously closed doors of Japan seem to be tentatively opening to the gospel.

The 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami not only caused serious physical damage to the country but also unsettled residents' worldviews and gave them new respect for the radio stations that had kept them informed throughout the disaster.

TWR leaders were pleasantly surprised when local FM stations were now ready to change course and accept religious programming. TWR Asia established a team that recruited Japanese pastors, trained them in broadcasting fundamentals and got their recorded messages on the air. Church teams from abroad have visited Japan to encourage local believers and distribute gospel tracts and materials promoting the broadcasts.

But there are no Japanese-language *Women of Hope* programs available to introduce into this more open environment ... yet. That needs to change, giving Japanese women access to the same life lessons and soul lessons that have touched the hearts of women in Eastern Europe, in Africa and across the Middle East.

TWR Women of Hope desires to translate its programs and provide them to women in Japan. Through

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

– GALATIANS 6:9

media, small-group interaction and leadership development, we hope to educate, encourage and equip women to pray, listen, learn, grow and give – in Japan just as we do in scores of other countries around the world!

You can help. Join us in praying for the women of Japan. Pray for them to recognize that their feelings of hopelessness, isolation and despair have answers that can be found in Jesus. Pray that learning resources will be available for those seeking truth. And please pray for funding for those resources, asking the Lord if he has a role for you to play in bringing hope to Japan.

He spent a vast portion of his lifetime earnings seeking a cure for her by way of traditional medicine and the spirit world. None of these things worked. Her husband passed away, leaving her depressed, frustrated, isolated, lonely and unable to care for herself financially or physically.

One day she was listening to the radio when she heard a song on the *Women of Hope* program. It caught her attention. She began to listen to the music and later the program. It became her frequent companion during lonely days.

She met some of the TWR staff in her area and was invited to church. She started attending church meetings and events with her new friends. As they started praying for her, she began to have peace in her heart.

Sara's gratefulness for her relationship with God and with her new "family" began to overcome the loneliness, frustration and hopelessness she felt. She wrote to *Women of Hope*: "I have been cured from my illness because of your prayers, and after listening to the programs, I have full peace in my heart. I am very grateful to God and to TWR for restoring my life through the *Women of Hope* program."

God changed Sara's life from an existence marked by illness, fear and loneliness to one filled with healing, peace and gratitude! And we're thankful that he allowed TWR Women of Hope to play a part in that transformation.

We are thankful for transformed lives

"I have been listening to your programs for a long time with my family. I enjoy it a lot."

"I listen to your programs regularly with my wife."

"I have been listening to your programs for almost a year and a half, and they are really good. I am also attending a church regularly. Please keep my family in your prayers."

"I come from a different faith, but I heard your programs, and they are really nice."

"Then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve. ... But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

- JOSHUA 24:15





Be the one!

By Dr. Peggy Banks // Global Ministry Director, TWR Women of Hope

I love the idea that a thankful life is a transformed life. In this Heartbeat, we share several stories of women who have been transformed because of the healing power of God. In the stories, we see great thankfulness and gratitude.

It creates some questions in my heart: What does God's transforming power look like in our daily lives? Is it possible that God can transform our thoughts and attitudes every day? How has your life been transformed in the past few months?

Recently, I have committed to daily surrender my wants and desires to the Lord. In the process, I have found that I'm more grateful for the little things and for his everlasting love and mercy. I don't ever want to miss being grateful for the things that God does in my life each day.

As I am confronted with his goodness each day, I want to be like the Samaritan we read about in Luke 17:11-19 who was healed and made the decision to come back to Jesus to say thank you. He was the only one out of the 10 lepers who were healed that day to come back "praising God with a loud voice." How about us? When was the last time you fell

Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks.

– LUKE 17:15-16

down before the Lord praising God for his healing power in your life?

Jesus looks at this man and wonders where the other nine are. Here is my challenge for you and me today: Let's be like the one who came back to say thank you. I mean, really – here are 10 guys walking along the road together, their skin is leprous, it changes, becomes totally clean, so their lives are now healed and transformed. And only one of them notices and thinks to come back and say thank you to Jesus?

Yet I know I can be just like the other nine when I don't return to Jesus to

praise him because he has healed me of pride, jealousy and fear – just to name a few of the things I call "leprosy of the heart." Leprosy of the skin is very visible, and many people are disgusted by the sight of it and run when exposed to it. But what would happen if our own leprosy of the heart were exposed each day? What if it were exposed that we are often jealous of others' gifts and seek to take from those who have what we want.

Every day we have the chance to surrender our own diseases of the heart to the Lord and cry out to him, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us" (Luke 17:13). Then when he has cleansed us of our anger, pride and covetous hearts, let us be the ones to "turn back and praise God with a loud voice" (Luke 17:15-16).

My final questions for all of us are these: How has God revealed his love and healing in our lives? Have you experienced a physical or emotional healing in the last month? Stop right now to say thank you, praising God with a loud voice and falling down at his feet in love and gratitude. Let's be the thankful ones!



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**WOMEN
OF HOPE**
twrwomenofhope.org

VISION

To bring hope in Jesus to women around the world and across generations.

MISSION

To educate, encourage and equip women to pray, listen, learn, grow and give through media, small-group interaction and leadership development.

Connecting women's hearts to each other and to God, TWR Women of Hope has built a global prayer movement and media outreach that address unique physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

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