



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

November 10, 2019

Mahanaim

Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you. – Genesis 28:15

Jacob was a conniver, not a confronter. He had no problem tricking or deceiving people to gain advantage, but he feared direct conflict. That's why he'd spent twenty years far from home, to avoid open conflict with his brother Esau, who planned to kill him.

After decades on the run, in obedience to God Jacob finally headed home to the Promised Land—where Esau lived. His decision didn't entirely change his nature—he was still self-reliant and pessimistic—but it did forever change his relationship with the LORD. He was learning to live and receive God's blessings by faith.

Soon, news about his estranged brother tested his faith nearly to breaking. As Jacob approached home, he learned that Esau was coming his way—accompanied by 400 men. Apparently Esau was still upset.

Then Jacob's obedient faith revealed an astounding truth. There were more things in heaven and on earth than he'd ever dreamed. Just as he prepared to cross into Canaan, *the angels of God met him* (Genesis 32:1b), so he named that place *Mahanaim*, "Two Camps." God was opening Jacob's eyes to the reality that heaven is active here on earth, and heavenly reality is what matters most.

The name *Mahanaim* acknowledged the fact that God and the heavenly realm were directly involved in Jacob's daily life on earth—in Canaan where he was going as well as in Haran where he'd left. Jacob was learning to live in light of these "two camps"—the earthly and the heavenly. And so, the first thing Jacob did—after taking protective measures for his family—was to pray (Genesis 32:9-12).

Jacob's prayer gives us a good idea of what healthy prayer looks like. First, he reminded God that he was walking in obedience. *O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good'* (32:9b). For once, Jacob wasn't in trouble of his own making. Obedience had led to his current predicament.

Yet Jacob's prayer was not demanding. He confessed his unworthiness. *I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant* (32:10a). Drawing closer to God was setting Jacob free to see and confess his sin.

Then, Jacob recalled God's past blessings. *For with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps.* Recognizing God's hand of blessing opens our eyes to see Him at work in our lives.

Jacob then brought to God his direct and honest request. *Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children* (32:11). Request is the essence of prayer and something God repeatedly encourages and even commands. *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God* (Philippians 4:6b). Or, as James flatly states, *You do not have, because you do not ask* (James 4:2b).

Finally, Jacob reminded God of His promise to him. *But you said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude* (32:12).

Like Jacob, the praying Christian lives at the intersection of heaven and earth and sees God meeting needs in response to specific prayers. And we expect the LORD to act, because He's promised to act. And God always keeps His promises.

To the praise of His glory.

Prayer for Our Call as a Church

“As we look to the future, let us focus on Christ as we serve one another. In Him is forgiveness, healing, wisdom, and strength. We can only make progress as we yield to the Spirit and allow God to lead the way.”

In Him,
The Northpoint Elders

Let's pray together about NL Moore's Recommendations for our Church:

1. “Place a pause on the Senior Pastor search. It is clear, Northpoint is not yet ready to call their next pastor. The congregation needs to take steps to mend, rebuild trust, and prepare for what's next.”
 - Ask God to build His character into us as individuals and as a body. I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-3).
2. “Hire a full-time interim to work ... alongside Pastor Tony, the staff, and elders. Pastor Tony is doing an excellent job, but Northpoint needs more.”
 - Ask God to lead us to a man who can shape our character by instruction and example. Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us (Titus 2:7-8).
3. “Northpoint needs to be pastored—address spiritually unhealthy behaviors and attitudes. Northpoint Church wants to be taught, but it needs to be pastored. People believe they are spiritually and Biblically mature, but the evidence of the body-life would suggest otherwise. Northpoint needs an infusion of humility, kindness, and love.”
 - Pray that we will demonstrate Christ's love in our relationships with one another. And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God (Philippians 1:9-11).
4. “Increase the number of elders and implement term limits. Fresh perspectives and energy are needed in this group.”
 - Ask God to raise up elders who hold themselves accountable to God and will make themselves accountable to our church body. Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you (Hebrews 13:17).
5. “Pray. When one part of the Body of Christ is hurting, the others need to come to its aid (Philippians 2:4). Sharing our burdens (Galatians 6:2) and encouraging one another (1st Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 3:13) is God's way.”
 - Ask God to humble us before Him so that we earnestly seek Him, His power, and His understanding through prayer. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working (James 5:16).

Prayer for Our Leaders

Pray for God's blessings on our leaders, so they can lead us to accomplish His purpose for us.
Pray for ...

1. **Our Pastors and Directors:** Scott Williams, Tony Chute, Taylor Mendoza, Terilyn Brown, Geoff Grant, and Marti Wiegman.
2. **Our Lay Elders:** Tim East, Steve Flood, Mark Kiker, Vinoj Zechariah, and new elders who will soon come onto the board.
3. **Our Church Staff:** Michelle Balga, Bob Brown, Chelsae Grant, Carolee Jefferson, Amber McEwen, Tamene Menna, Mark Norland, Corie Saunders, and Teri Vaughn.

Pray in particular for Scott and Kim Williams and Geoff and Chelsae Grant and their families as they follow Christ to where He is leading them.