



# prayer *life!*

## Weekly Prayer Focus

November 3, 2019

### My God: The Dawning of Faith

*I see that your father does not regard me with favor as he did before. But the God of my father has been with me. You know that I have served your father with all my strength, yet your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times. But God did not permit him to harm me. –Genesis 31:5-7*

*If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been on my side, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God saw my affliction and the labor of my hands and rebuked you last night.” –Genesis 31:42*

The most dangerous place to be is two steps ahead of God. That’s the place where Jacob spent much of his early life: at home when he tricked his brother out of his birthright and deceived his father to get his blessing; at Bethel, where he turned the LORD’s promise into a deal that he could control; and in Haran, as he took on Laban’s deception with his own craftiness.

After twenty exasperating years of striving to make a living, Jacob finally came to a place where God could make Himself known to him. Decades of contending for an advantage over his father-in-law had exasperated his self-confidence. At the same time though, Jacob was learning to see God’s hand quietly blessing him day after day. Jacob’s unenviable life was revealing the undeniable truth that he was truly enriched, because God was with him.

So Jacob came to the place where he could hear the voice of the One who called him before he had ever been born. *I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me. Now arise, go out from this land and return to the land of your kindred (Genesis 30:13).* It was time for Jacob to return home—back to the land God had promised him—and take his wives and children with him.

But along with their vast riches, Jacob’s family had picked up some baggage. Rachel, the most beautiful and least Jehovah-centered of his wives, grabbed her father’s idols to take with her. Yes, she knew the LORD’s blessing. God had given her Joseph after years of being unable to bear children. But Rachel wasn’t taking any chances. Part of her still clung to her dysfunctional family and trusted in their false gods.

Idols are things we create when our possessions possess us. Laban’s idols were mere possessions masquerading as gods. These “gods” that seemed so precious to their owner had no power and provided no help, but they created quite a stir in Laban’s family. They got stolen, whisked away, hidden, and sat on. They nearly sparked a family feud, even though they offered no real advantage.

Laban caught up with Jacob as he reentered Canaan, and immediately laid claim to everything he had—his wives and children and flocks and herds. But Laban’s fury was as impotent as his gods, because the LORD had warned Laban not to touch the man He had chosen. Jacob was protected.

Faith was beginning to dawn in the heart and home of Jacob. The vagabond patriarch. In Jacob’s story, rest in God’s active provision stands in stark contrast with conflict to gain possessions. At first, Jacob strove to possess until he learned trust the LORD to provide for Him—a lesson Laban never learned.

The life of prayer keeps God’s children in the place of His provision and protection. It teaches us to receive all we need from His hand and to see His active presence in our lives. But prayer also connects us to the big picture.

The Almighty God holds darkness at bay and directs world events according to His plan. And He works His sovereign plan through His Church—through us—a body of individuals He has chosen to bless and use, just like He did with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And Jesus promised that He would build His Church, *and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18).*

To the praise of God’s glory.

## Prayer for Our Call as a Church

*Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever.*  
—Psalm 125:1

Ask God to unite us as a body around His call on us as a church. Ask for our body to develop a vision of ...

- **Who God is** *Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable* (Isaiah 40:28).
- **Who we are as His people:** *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession* (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:9a).
- **The work He has called us to do:** *that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light* (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:9b).
- **The world He loves and want to reach:** *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life* (John 3:16).

## 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, Mike Russell, Vinoj Zechariah, and new elders who will soon come onto the board.
3. **Our Church Staff:** Michelle Balga, Bob Brown, Andria Brucks, 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 the move forward into the future plans where God is leading them.

## Praise Record

Note when and how God answers your prayers. It will help you to see that He really is paying attention.

Date	Request	Date	Answer

*And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*  
—Philippians 4:19