

PRAY EVERY DAY July 16, 2023 Resource

Praying the Psalms: Psalm 25

The Bible in a Year with KUMC

This plan is available at KUMC and on the church website. This plan can be started at any time.

Small Group or personal study

- What was your furthest moment from God this week?
- What was your closest moment to God this week?
- Read Genesis 25:19-34
- When Isaac and Rebekah were barren after twenty years and still eager to be part of God's covenant with Abraham and Isaac, Isaac prayed to God for Rebekah. When we are part of God's grace in the world, the grace and promise come through God's power and not merely our own efforts. Isaac turned to God in prayer for God's promise to be realized in the world.
 - Rebekah also prayed to the LORD when the twins wrestled in her womb to her great discomfort. Rebekah prayed to the LORD and it was Rebekah who the LORD spoke to in this passage about God's plan for her children. We have those words from the LORD to Rebekah because someone wrote them down. What struggle in your life, family, church, or community would make you say "This is unbearable?" Like Rebekah, cast that struggle on the LORD for God's direction and write down what God speaks to you in prayer, scripture, and what God brings into your life.
 - The LORD's words to Rebekah reveal God's surprising grace. God brings favor to the one who was second born, last place, grasping at heels, birthrights, and blessings – namely Jacob. God is not afraid to upset our social order or traditions, such as the special honor for the firstborn son in antiquity, to reveal the grace and ways of God. Notice in the story of Esau and Jacob that God's decision to favor the younger creates conflict through people holding onto that tradition from Isaac, Esau, and Laban. It was similar when Jesus coming to save sinners resulted in conflict within religious leaders who would have preferred Jesus to focus on them. Which younger, second place, or last place people might Jesus be reaching out to today?
 - Jacob loved Esau for obvious reasons as the firstborn, a hunter, and expert and preparing tasty food. Rebekah loved the younger for less obvious reasons, in fact the text does not explain her reasons. It may come from God's revealing that God would bless the younger, so that Rebekah decided to join in God's mystery of lifting up the lower one and helping the first one to serve the last. Who might God be calling you to raise up in love and grace who seems to be sitting in last place?

Wrestling with God for 40 Days in Prayer (July 16-August 24)

In prayer consider these questions each day and journal in your notebook.

- Where is the hope for our congregation?
- Lord, what are your plans for us now?
- How can our congregation discover what Christ is up to in our neighborhood and how can we hitch on to what Christ is doing?
- What part of your mission, Jesus, have you assigned to our congregation?
- How can we stop doing some of the things we have been doing so we can start doing some of the things God wants us to do?

- What are some appropriate goals and mission strategies for us in this moment?
- What sort of pastoral leadership is required now to keep up with Christ as he strides into his future?

Spend time in silence

Prayer for others and yourself

The Lord's Prayer

Share the Love of Jesus because It's All about Relationships

How will you or how did you share the love of Jesus with neighbor today with no strings attached?

A Prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas, 13th Century

Give us, O Lord, steadfast hearts, which no unworthy thought can drag downward, unconquered hearts, which no tribulation can wear out, upright hearts, which no unworthy purpose may tempt aside. Bestow upon us also, O Lord our God, understanding to know you, diligence to seek you, wisdom to find you, and a faithfulness that may finally embrace you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Praying the Psalms: Psalm 119:105-112