



bits from bob....

Prayer that Trusts a Faithful God
September 21, 2020

My grandchildren and I recently read a book that is a compilation of stories based on the memories of my aunts and uncles—the story centers on my maternal grandparents. We were especially interested as we read about the experience of the family during the Spanish flu in 1919.

Life, especially during COVID-19, has plenty of uncertainties and questions about the future. I find refuge in God and in the belief that he has a plan and a purpose for his children. No external force can thwart God's purpose for me, nor God's purpose for you. During the pandemic, many Christians have come again and again to Joshua 1:6-9 where God prescribes strength and courage three times, coupled with obedience to the Law. God culminates his message to Joshua with a reminder of the promise of his presence with his people. Joshua and the Israelites were about to take on a daunting endeavor. They could have retreated into the known world of wandering in circles through the wilderness. God's voice and promise propelled the nation through the challenges ahead of them and into their destiny.

In prayer, a biblical theme I turn to again and again is God's faithfulness. The one who promised is faithful. Faithful God has a plan, even when we are asking, "What does the future hold for me, my family, the church, and the mission work God has given us?" I know that God is with us. Only we can deter his plan for our lives. But having strength and courage, obeying without question, and being assured of his presence is not easy.

As the church seeks to move ahead, surrounded by social unrest, uncertainty, and COVID-19, God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. God opens doors that no one can close. God is faithful. Should we not find assurance in the truth that God is in control? We cannot change what God has already decided. Some outcomes we cannot change. But we can pray for strength and faithfulness in these times of tremendous illness and death. We can pray for the things that break our hearts, knowing that they also break the heart of God.

I want to pray in a way that reflects my trust in my faithful God. Today's prayer, seeking to seek faithful God during these times, comes from my family history—both my physical family and my spiritual family.

"Dear God, help me find certainty in the midst of uncertainty. Help me see you and your plan more clearly when life's realities are blurring my vision. Help me not to get in your way. Give me strength, courage, vision, and confidence to do your will when it is easier to sit and wait.

"Thank you for being faithful to who you are, to what you have promised, to your eternal purpose. Soothe my fearful heart, give stability in the midst of instability, control what I cannot control. My heart breaks for the condition of the world, for the multiplied hurts and heartaches many suffer daily. Make me your instrument to accomplish your purpose. Help my heart be more and more in tune with your heart.

"In Jesus' name, Amen."