

FIRST things FIRST

Daily Devotionals

October 13-19, 2025

Devotions are prepared for you to use in your Quiet Time with the Lord and are designed to prepare you for the sermon next Sunday.

Monday, Oct. 13 **Wrestling in the Dark**

Scripture: Psalm 13:1-2

Jacob's life was full of struggle — with his brother Esau, with his father-in-law Laban, and ultimately with himself. But on that dark night by the river, his struggle took on a new depth. Left alone, he wrestled with God until daybreak. Faith isn't always about easy answers. There are seasons when we cry out like the psalmist, "How long, Lord?" It's in those long nights of waiting and wrestling that God does His deepest work in us. The night may be dark, but it is also holy, for God meets us there. When have you felt like you were wrestling with God — over unanswered prayers, pain, or uncertainty? What did that struggle reveal about your faith?

Prayer: Lord, when I wrestle in the dark and feel alone, remind me that You are near.

Tuesday, Oct. 14 **The Blessing in the Struggle**

Scripture: Romans 5:3-4

Jacob was desperate. He knew that his future, his family, and his identity depended on this moment. He wouldn't let go until he received a blessing. That moment reveals something powerful: blessings often come not in comfort, but in struggle. Paul reminds us that God can use suffering to build perseverance, character, and hope. In other words, God's blessings are not always wrapped in ease; sometimes, they come in the form of endurance. The very place where we want to give up may be the place where God wants to bless us. Are you holding onto God in a season where you feel tired or discouraged? Can you see how God might be forming something deeper in you? When trials come, instead of asking "Why me?", try asking, "What are You teaching me, Lord?"

Prayer: God, give me faith to cling to You when life is difficult.

Wednesday, Oct. 15 **A New Name**

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:17

Names carried deep meaning in biblical times. "Jacob" meant "the deceiver," a reminder of his past mistakes and manipulations. But God gave him a new name — "Israel," which means "one who struggles with God." His new name reflected not perfection, but perseverance. In Christ, we are given new names and new identities. We are no longer defined by our failures or our past. We are forgiven, redeemed, and made new. Transformation doesn't erase our history; it redefines it through grace. What old "names" have you carried — labels from others or from your own guilt? What new name might God be speaking over you?

Prayer: Lord, thank You for giving me a new name and a new beginning.

Thursday Oct. 16 **The Limp That Reminds Us**

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 12:9

Jacob walked away from his encounter with God limping — forever changed. His limp was a reminder that he had been touched by God. Sometimes God leaves marks on our lives that remind us of His presence and grace. Paul understood this when he wrote that God's strength is made perfect in weakness. The limp, the scar, or the struggle is not a sign of defeat but of encounter. It tells a story — that we have wrestled, survived, and been transformed. What "limps" or weaknesses do you carry that God has used to shape your faith? How have they reminded you of His grace?

Prayer: Gracious God, help me to see my scars and weaknesses not as shame, but as signs of Your power and love at work in me.

Friday, Oct. 17 **Meeting God Face to Face**

Scripture: Exodus 33:14-15

Jacob named the place Peniel, meaning "the face of God." He realized that in the moment of his deepest struggle, God had drawn near. That's often how God meets us — not when we feel strong and secure, but when we're desperate and alone. Moses later heard God promise, "My presence will go with you." That same assurance is given to us. In the moments when we least expect it, when we're wrestling with fears or regrets, God shows up — not to harm us, but to bless and lead us. Set aside time to seek God's face — not just His help, but His presence.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for meeting me face to face with mercy instead of judgment.

Saturday, Oct. 18 **The Dawn After the Struggle**

Scripture: Psalm 30:5

After a long night of wrestling, the sun rose on Jacob. The struggle was real, the pain was deep, but morning came — and he walked forward blessed and changed. Our lives also move through nights of fear, grief, or uncertainty. But God promises that no night lasts forever. Even if we limp into the light, we do so with renewed faith. The sun rising over Peniel is a reminder that after every dark night of the soul, God brings light, hope, and new beginnings. Where do you need God to bring morning light into your life? What dark season are you ready to leave behind?

Prayer: Thank You, Lord, that no night lasts forever.

Sunday, Oct. 19 **Wrestling with God**

Worship at 10:00am

Genesis 32:22-31

by Pastor Clint Phillips