

WEEKLY PRAYER GUIDE – PRAYING THE NAMES OF JESUS

Jesus: Alpha and Omega
Week 9 – January 23, 2011
Prayer Focus: Clergy

I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

Revelation 1:11

The first and the last. Beginning and end. What comfort and encouragement to know that all begins in Jesus and all concludes in Jesus. For those in Christ, a life-length is spent in His power and presence. Each breath is embellished with supernatural power. Whether a life is of short or long duration, it begins with Jesus and ends with Him, God's precious and holy Son.

In the Christian walk of faith we encounter many people. Some with whom we share the walk are clergy. These unique people are called to shape and shepherd the beginning, middle, and ending of our faith journeys. Relationships with clergy change over the course of time. There are various reasons for this, which include changes in us, in them, relocation, illness, death, and various other significant life transitions. Jesus is inherent in these relationships. He is at the beginning of them and will be in them for always. Jesus links by His love and power our exchanges with others. The Holy Spirit inspires us with what we are to gain from our clergy, and inspires clergy as to what they are to gain from us.

We have something to give one another. Our walk of faith is one that is to lead us to become conformed more into the likeness of Jesus Christ. What we give of ourselves to one another aids that process. Some clergy sow more into our character and spiritual growth than others but we are wise to remember that Jesus is at the heart of relationships. What we become through one another is a result of the degree to which we follow Christ, obey His teachings in His Word, and respect the clergy who edify and nurture via the Holy Spirit.

Clergy need prayer. Clergy need encouragement. These persons called by Christ to minister the Gospel have a tall order. They are expected to be compassionate, wise, available, and prepared at any given moment for any given need. Impossible. Yet, many do their level best to live up to their call and respond to the needs of the flock they shepherd as well as minister to various sheep that happen to graze upon their land. They need the witness of Christians inside and outside of their flock to spur them on. At times they grow weak and lose heart. Clergy are human not super-human. Like those they shepherd, clergy rely heavily on the everlasting arms of Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega. That arm of Christ does not weaken nor shift. He who is Alpha and Omega is the power that carries the clergy and those who love them so.

Lord Jesus, Your Word blesses over and over again. It tells us for the first time and for many reminders that You are at the beginning of all matters and at the end. You are in relationships of every kind and duration shared with clergy members. How we praise You for Your precious presence among us. We pray for Your loving and guiding touch on members of clergy so they are invigorated in their walk of faith as they seek to give of themselves to encourage the faith of others. In Thee, Lord Jesus, Amen.

Weekly Faith Challenge - Contact a member of clergy who has touched your life in a meaningful and helpful way. Call, email, or handwrite a message of encouragement. Even if their help to you was some time ago and you already expressed gratitude, do it again. Let that person know that your walk with Jesus Christ has been favorably impacted by *their* walk with Jesus; because of their acts, your faith is stronger. And, dear reader, do not seek a response; lovingly let it go. Leave all expressions of gratitude for the Holy Spirit to guide and the Lord to measure.

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Jersey Shore Will Graham Celebration – May 20-22, 2011, Ocean Grove, NJ