

52

Prayers
for My
Grandchild

Steve & Annie
CHAPMAN



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*To our treasures, who
joined our family in this order:*

Lily Anne

Josephine Tish

Sylvia Grace

Nathalie Margaret

Williamson George

*We also extend this dedication to any
grands and great-grands who might come later.*

Acknowledgments

We'd like to say thank-you to...

- *our children and their spouses* for providing the joy of the grandchildren who have blessed our home.
- *our parents* who taught us that the role of a parent is to leave a good legacy while a grandparent leaves good memories.
- *our grandchildren* for the way they make our hearts smile.
- *the Harvest House Publishers staff* for inviting us to make public the hopes and prayers we have for our grandchildren.
- *Ed and Sharon Ditto* for the use of their beautiful and peace-filled cabin in the hills of Tennessee where much of this book was written.

A Grandparent's Prayer

*Thank You, Lord, I've seen my children's children,
Heaven's love in flesh and bone.
Oh, how sweet it is to hear them laughing
Where it's been quiet far too long.*

*Lord, I pray for these treasures
You have given to my years.
Until they meet You in forever
Take their hand and keep them near.*

*Lord, I pray when they get older
And my name comes to their minds,
May it be the one thing they remember—
They saw Your blessed face in mine.¹*

A Note from Steve and Annie

Annie and I are musicians who travel the United States sharing the importance of faith and family. When our son, Nathan, and daughter, Heidi, were very young, they traveled with us. On one trip to the state of Texas, we stopped in to see some friends who lived in Houston. While we visited in their kitchen, Nathan, who was around five years old at the time, found his way to the backyard and began to explore the premises.

As we enjoyed the conversation with our friends, I could see Nathan through the kitchen window. I felt relieved that he was free of the confines of our van and could stretch his little legs. Suddenly I saw something that made me nearly choke on my ice water. I jumped up abruptly and ran to the back door. I had to get to my little boy!

Without knowing what pain lurked in the dome-shaped mound just a foot or two from him, Nathan was approaching a nest of fire ants. To him, the sandy mound looked like a small mountain of fun to play in. To me, it looked like major trouble.

I opened the door of the house and ran toward Nathan. At the last second before he reached for the pile of dirt, I scooped up my little guy and headed to the patio. If I'd waited just a few more ticks of the clock, Nathan would have been covered with angry ants that would have inflicted the kind of pain no one wants to suffer.

Recently Annie and I talked about the incident and what terrible pain our son could have experienced in that Texas backyard all those years ago. It still makes us shudder to imagine the amount of poisonous venom that would have been injected into his tender skin. We're utterly grateful that one of us was there for him and saw the impending danger he faced so disaster could be avoided.

Today, we have grandchildren who are, so to speak, exploring the

backyard of today's world. From the vantage point of our "window of life experience," we recognize many of the dangers that threaten them. While we're not their parents, we're aware that we have the God-ordained privilege of being watchful in prayer over our grandchildren by going to Him on behalf of their spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being.

We're glad you're joining us on this enjoyable and important journey. These prayers are products of our sincere desire that our grandchildren (and yours!) will "in all respects... prosper and be in good health, just as [their] soul prospers" (3 John 2). We hope you'll pray these powerful, biblically based words over your grandchildren for a long time.

Before we get started in praying for our grandchildren, we hope you'll unite with us as we pray...

Grandparents' Prayer

As grandparents, we humbly and fully submit ourselves to You, heavenly Father. We ask You to create in us clean hearts and renew a right spirit within us. Give us clean hands and pure hearts so when we approach Your throne on behalf of our grandchildren, we'll find Your mercy and grace in time of need. Please grant us the strength to throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles us. Help us daily fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.

We come near to You because You promised You would come near to us. It's wonderful to be close to You. We've made You, sovereign Lord, our refuge. And we'll tell our grandchildren of Your deeds.

On our own, we're unworthy of Your listening ear, but You tell us that in our weakness Your power is made perfect and we're made stronger in You. Not by our might nor by our power is this done, but by Your Spirit.

Father, we trust in You with all our hearts and do not depend on our own understanding, but we'll seek Your will in all we do. We pray that You'll show us which paths to take. Only as we follow You and depend on Your strength will we be in the best position to bring our grandchildren to You in prayer.

We know You're able to do for our grandchildren far more abundantly than all we could ask or even think about. We're relying on Your power at work within us and within them.

We praise You, God. We won't forget Your benefits. Thank You for forgiving our sins through Your Son, Jesus Christ. You heal our diseases and redeem our lives from the pit. You crown us with love and compassion. We're grateful that You're compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in love. You require clean hands and a pure heart, and we find comfort knowing that with Your cleansing and refining fire at work within us, we can stand before You.

Thank You for hearing and answering our prayers.

In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Psalm 51:10; Psalm 24:3-4; Hebrews 4:16; Hebrews 12:1-2;
Hebrews 12:2; James 4:8; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Zechariah 4:6;
Proverbs 3:5-6; Ephesians 3:20-21; Psalm 103:1-8; Psalm 24:4;
Hebrews 10:19-22

Discovering Jesus

I pray that my grandchildren
will make wise choices.

A New Option

Our days are made up of a series of choices. We choose if and when to get out of bed in the morning...or afternoon. We choose to put on clothes, or perhaps it's a day when we choose to stay in our jammies. Our choice. We choose what and how much we're going to eat for breakfast. When we reach for the doughnut with the chocolate sprinkles and wash it down with 24 ounces of Red Bull, we're choosing what kind of health we want and what our appearance will be like in a year.

We choose to go to work or goof off. We do our work or don't do our work. Throughout the day we encounter choice after choice...until it's time to go to bed—and that's another choice. The amount of sleep we get helps determine what the next day will be like.

While many of our choices may seem relatively unimportant, there are some that have generational and even eternal consequences. I (Annie) am thinking about one choice in particular that was made by Steve's parents that forever changed the Chapman spiritual family tree.

P.J. and Lillian Chapman made a lot of choices in their young lives. As a dating couple, they frequented juke joints and honky-tonks on the weekends. They chose to jitterbug their evenings away at the Ritzy Ray, a local nightlife magnet on the outskirts of their little town. Before long, they chose to elope. Eventually, they chose to settle down and have a family—a daughter and a son.

P.J. and Lillian were exploring ideas for bettering their struggling

financial situation, when Lillian came up with an idea. She decided she needed to get more education so she could qualify for better-paying work. But what interrupted her plan resulted in an even more important and lasting choice.

Many years later, their son, Steve, a songwriter and musician, enlisted the help of his friend Dana Bacon to create a song that explains what happened that fateful day way back in 1949. Steve and I shared this song with our grandchildren, and we continue to share it with our audiences (and you) as an encouragement.

I Didn't Make It Down to Logan

From the last house in the hollow,
Up on Godby Branch,
She walked out the dirt road
On her way to take a chance
That night school down in Logan
Seemed like the only way.
They needed more to feed a family
Than just a taxi driver's pay.

Her young husband kept the baby;
She'd be back at ten.
But it was quarter past eleven
When she came walkin' in.
He said, "How'd things go at class tonight?"
She said, "I don't know...
Before I made it to the bus stop,
Jesus saved my soul."

"I heard singin' comin' from the church on the hill,
Sweetest sound I ever heard...breakin' down my will.
I could feel it—the Spirit—callin' out to me.
Now I believe...and that's why
I didn't make it down to Logan tonight."

He said, “I know you’d make a good nurse,
But did you change your mind?
We could really use the money
To help us make it through these times.
And, girl, it sure sounds crazy
To hear you say you’re born again.”
She said, “If you’ll just go there with me,
I know you’ll understand.”

It was only two nights later,
he went with her down that road.
And when my mama tells the story—
the part I love the most...

“I heard singin’ comin’ from the church on the hill,
Sweetest sound I ever heard...breakin’ down my will.
I could feel it—the Spirit—callin’ out to me.
Now I believe...and that’s why
I didn’t make it down to Logan tonight.”²

When we sing this song at concerts, Steve always adds one line at the end: “Now *I* believe—and that’s why she didn’t make it down to Logan that night.” It’s his way of testifying that due to his mother’s choice all those years ago, he too eventually decided to give his life to the Lord.

I want our grandchildren to know that every choice has significance, but there’s one that is far more important because of its eternal impact. For that reason I pray...

For My Grandchildren

Dear Lord, I know that my grandchildren will face many choices in their lives. Of all the decisions they make, first and foremost, I pray that, like Lillian and P.J. Chapman, they'll choose to follow and serve You, the one true God. May they declare as Joshua did, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

I pray they will choose faith—strong faith in You with no doubting. And in those times when they're tempted to waver in their resolve to trust You because they're being tossed about by the winds and waves of change, I pray they'll stand steadfast and sure in their devotion to You.

Help my grandchildren listen to godly advice and refuse to walk in the ways of fools who trust their own hearts and lean on their own understanding. Remind them to acknowledge You in all their ways and that You will make their paths straight. I thank You for guiding them so they'll make wise decisions.

Please keep my grandchildren's minds alert and fully sober so they'll set their hopes on the grace that is found in Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. I pray they'll choose to not conform to evil desires but, as Your children, will live holy in You.

And, Father, I want my grandchildren to make choices that will benefit the coming generations and make it easier for their grandchildren to walk in Your truth.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Joshua 24:15; James 1:6-8; Proverbs 12:15; Proverbs 3:5-6;
1 Peter 1:13-15

Calling God “Daddy”

I pray that my grandchildren
will always know how much
God enjoys hearing them call His name.

“Pa-ah”

We’re not quite sure how it happened, but when our first grandchild got old enough to give us names, Annie became DeDe and I became PaPa. Neither of us have the slightest idea where our titles came from, but at least they’re easy to say. And Annie decided that DeDe was just fine since it sounded a little younger than “Grannie Annie.”

Though PaPa was easy to say, I was a little surprised when the pronunciation of it became a bit of a challenge for one of our granddaughters when she started forming words. For several weeks I was just “Pa.” Then she caught on from the other grandkids that my name had two syllables. That’s when I became “Pa-ah.” There was such warmth and affection in the way she addressed me, and each time I heard her say it she had my complete attention.

I wondered, *Is this how our heavenly Father feels when He hears one of His children calling out His name? Is that why He listens to our prayers and grants our requests? Like I enjoy hearing “Pa-ah,” surely He must love to hear His name spoken by His children when we say, “Abba... Father... Papa!”*

Eventually my granddaughter learned to say PaPa, but as long as I live I’ll remember how much I liked hearing “Pa-ah.” The memory will always remind me to pray that all of my grandkids understand how much God enjoys hearing the sound of their voices when they say His name.

For My Grandchildren

Heavenly Father, thank You that You've given me access to Your holy presence through the finished work of Your Son, Jesus, on the cross. I'm humbled that You allow me to come into Your presence, bringing my praises and petitions to You. Oh, how grateful I am, Abba Father, that You've granted Your children the honor of calling You "Daddy"! You are indeed the Creator of all humankind. I stand in awe of Your mighty power. You adopt into Your family only those who surrender their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our direct and only way to You. I pray each of my grandchildren will come into a relationship with You that is intimate and loving. I pray they'll always see You as their loving heavenly Daddy and know they are always welcome to come and eat at Your table.

I pray in Jesus' name, amen.

Hebrews 10:19; Ephesians 3:11-12; Galatians 3:26; Romans 8:15;
Mark 14:36; Romans 9:4-8; Isaiah 40:28-31; John 14:21

Escaping Sin

I pray my grandchildren will be
fully committed to Jesus in a personal,
intimate relationship.

Bob and Me

It was a decision that all the family was excited about. Well, everyone but me (Annie). Past experience had taught me that what starts out as a total family commitment can quickly turn into my sole responsibility. Pushing my reservations aside, I agreed that a dog could be added to the family fold. Calls were made, and a time was set. Steve and the children would drive to the location where a fluffy puppy would become part of the Chapman lineage. They eagerly shared all the details when they returned with the new wriggly little Chapman.

There were several black-and-white canines from which to choose. As they played with one another, rolling and tumbling, they seemed unaware of the three sets of eyes glued to their every move. Then, from the back of the wire-cage kennel, one little pup locked eyes with the leader of the outside pack. Steve watched as the puppy—the one that would soon be named Bob—moved to the front of the cage. *Yes*, Steve thought, *this will be the one we'll share our lives with*.

The small dog may have thought he'd chosen his new family, but, of course, it was Steve who invited him into our world.

I identify with “Bob the dog” in a way. At one time, we were both locked in cages, unable to free ourselves. Bob's cage was made of heavy-gauge, steel wire. Mine was made out of the heaviness of sin and shame. Steve went looking for Bob and found him. God came looking for me.

Bob's part was to look to Steve; my part was to look to God. Bob found a home that lasted 12 years until he passed away. My home with the Lord will last my lifetime on earth and then for eternity.

How I long for our grandchildren to be found by God. How I long for them to look to Him for their salvation and freedom. I hope they'll spend the rest of their time on earth and then eternity with the Master of their souls. With this in mind, I pray...

For My Grandchildren

God, with a grateful heart I bring my grandchildren to Your throne of grace. Oh how merciful of You to provide salvation as a free gift and allow us to be part of Your family. Without the loving sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and His glorious resurrection from the dead, we would be without hope. I pray my grandchildren will come to know Jesus in an intimate way and grow in His likeness each day.

You've given us a commandment that we love one another, even as You loved us. I pray my grandkids will live in such a way that the world will know they are *Your* children because of the great love they have for others.

Remind my grandchildren to set their hearts on things above, where You, Lord Jesus, are seated at the right hand of the Father. I pray they will know that righteousness comes through faith in You alone. I want my grandchildren to truly know and grow more and more in love with You each day.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Hebrews 4:16; John 13:34; 1 Corinthians 9:24-25; Colossians 3:1-2; Ephesians 2:8-9; Philippians 3:7-10

Resting in Tranquility

I pray my grandchildren will
learn the value of resting.

At Grandma's House

My grandchildren love to hear stories about my childhood. One of the fondest memories I (Annie) have shared is about spending five glorious days each summer at my Grandma Eckard's house. The very thought of it today takes my mind back to a time when life, at least for a little while, was tranquil and, best of all, restful.

At Grandma Eckard's house I got to be the "only child" since all her children were raised. This was a special treat because at home I was the fourth of six children living with my parents in a small, four-room house. As far as I was concerned, having my own room and a bed to myself was equivalent to staying in a five-star hotel. It didn't matter that my resort retreat was an aging, two-story, clapboard house in desperate need of a fresh coat of paint.

At Grandma's house there were no chores for me to do. I didn't have to help with milking the cows, slopping the hogs, feeding the chickens, or taking care of my two younger sisters. In fact, there was nothing for me to do. It was a vacation consisting of rocking and talking on the front porch with Grandma. At her house I learned how sweet rest can be.

My two bachelor uncles who lived with Grandma made my vacation even more special. Uncle Raymond would go to town and bring back snacks and treats I never had at home: soda pop, M&M candies,

doughnuts, and canned potted meat. I looked forward to those few days from one year to the next.

There were amenities lacking at Grandma's house that might have posed a problem for some children. I didn't mind that she had no electricity, no running water, no indoor plumbing, no toys, no swing sets, and, of course, no television or other modern technical trinkets that my grandchildren use for entertainment and recreation. I can't even remember having a ball to play with. All I remember is sitting on the front porch and listening as Grandma talked.

I knew how to get the conversation started. All I had to say was, "Grandma, tell me about your brothers and sisters when you were growing up." Although I'd heard most of the stories many times, I never tired of hearing them, and it seemed that she never tired of telling them. Recounting the events allowed her to revisit the people she missed and still loved dearly.

A faraway look would come to her eyes as she spoke. She would look straight ahead as though she were seeing a time that still existed—and all that was missing was her presence there. She would cry when she talked about the day her little brother Granvella asked his mom for a piece of chicken she was frying. He was told he'd have to wait until it finished cooking. Before the chicken was ready, the little boy was dead of the dreaded scarlet fever. Oh how Grandma grieved that Granvella didn't get to eat one last piece of chicken. Sad stories like these, as well as others that were more lighthearted, were told on that old front porch. For a little while I got to live those times with Grandma.

Grandma Eckard's house was only two miles from where my parents lived, but when I was there it felt like I was a million miles away. Even now I feel that faraway feeling that was due to my perspective as a child. I also realize that it was likely Grandma had things she could have...should have...been doing instead of sitting with me, but she sat with me and focused on my visit. In fact, I don't recall ever seeing my grandmother that she didn't have an apron on, so I know she constantly worked. Yet, somehow she made time to sit with me. What a great example she was as a grandmother. Even though she never met her great-great-grandchildren who now come to my house, they have

her to thank each time I invite them to my back porch so we can spend time together.

Though my grandkids don't live on an extremely busy dairy farm like I did, their lives are abuzz with homeschooling, church activities, ballet, and music lessons. There are plenty of interests to steal their attention and keep them from resting. My hope is that they will learn at my house what I learned at my Grandma Eckard's house—to sit for a while and rest and listen. That's why I pray...

For My Grandchildren

Father, in these crazy days filled with actions and distractions of every kind, I pray You will help my grandchildren understand the value of rest. Even though productivity is nearly worshiped in our world today, I ask You to help them not succumb to the deceptions that they are what they do and that their value is found in what they accomplish.

Please help them understand that they were designed by You to need rest. After all, You created this magnificent universe and then rested from Your labors. There remains a rest for Your people. The ones who have entered Your rest also rest from their works as You did Yours. Help my grandchildren see the importance of stepping aside and embracing the blessing of inactivity.

Even as You, Lord Jesus, found it necessary to get away by Yourself to a place of quiet and repose, guide my grandchildren to a peaceful, alone place where they can rest from the toils and stresses of their day. Help them seek rest for their hearts and souls. May they come to You when they're weary and heavy-laden from troubles. You've promised to provide rest for their souls. I hope they'll take up Your yoke and learn from You because You are gentle and humble in heart. In You they will find rest because Your yoke is an easy one and Your burden isn't too heavy.

Please lead my grandchildren to the cool, green pastures of Your presence, where they can rest by the still waters and be restored. And it's all right with me if those still waters are found on my back porch.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Genesis 2:2; Hebrews 4:9-11; Mark 6:31; Matthew 11:28-30;
Psalm 23