

GOD'S GRACE, OUR FLAWS

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob • Exodus 3:15

Part 3

JACOB

***Anything we love more than we love God is an idol in our heart.
However fiercely we pursue them, idols will always elude us.
We can never get hold of our idols, but God gives Himself fully to us.***

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3 things we can learn from the way God deals with Jacob...

1. IDOLS will always elude us. In other words; WORLDLY pursuits will always leave us dis-satisfied and naturally end with negative repercussions.
2. After we've been left disappointed by one idol, our nature usually causes us to PURSUE ANOTHER IDOL .
3. Though Jacob chased idol after idol, which included stealing the "first born's" blessing from his older brother and even WRESTLED with God all night until God finally BLESSED him. (Gen. 22:19 & Gen. 24:52)

Read GENESIS 32

So Jacob fears his brother Esau and sends gifts to him, wrestles with God Himself and God changes Jacob's name to Israel.

In the end, Jacob is given the name "Israel", which means He struggles with God or May God prevail, he and gets blessed, while the "man" refuses to give his own name.

Jacob does what we all must do. He confronts his failures, his weaknesses, his sins, all the things that are hurting him... and faces God. Jacob wrestled with God all night. It was an exhausting struggle that left him crippled. It was only after he came to grips with God and ceased his struggling, realizing that he could not go on without Him, that he received God's blessing (Genesis 32:29).

What we learn from this remarkable incident in the life of Jacob is that our lives are never meant to be easy. This is especially true when we take it upon ourselves to wrestle with God and His will for our lives. We also learn that as Christians, despite our trials and tribulations, our strivings in this life are never devoid of God's presence, and His blessing inevitably follows the struggle, which can sometimes be messy and chaotic. Real growth experiences always involve struggle and pain.

Jacob's wrestling with God at the Jabbok that dark night reminds us of this truth: though we may fight God and His will for us, in truth, God is so very good. As believers in Christ, we may well struggle with Him through the loneliness of night, but by daybreak His blessing will come.

Q1: Why was Jacob wrestling with God? What was the conflict?

Q2: Has an idol ever failed you or left you disappointed or dissatisfied? Did you begin the equally unfulfilling pursuit of another idol? If so, what did you learn from this experience?

Q3: Is there anything now that you might be making more important than your pursuit of growing closer to God?

Q4: How did Jacob wrestle with God and win?

Q5: What is the importance of realizing that when Jacob wrestled with God, Jacob won?

Q6: What does this tell you about God's love for you and His commitment to transform you?

Personal Reflection:

When you pray this week, ask God for forgiveness for the times you put something or someone else above Him. Ask for the power to choose daily to follow Him. Thank Him for making Himself fully available to you through Jesus Christ and His commitment to transform you.