

Small Group Leaders - January 14th

This Weeks Memory Verse: Genesis 28:15

"I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go...I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Lesson: A Story of God's Changing Power

Jacob led a life of deception and self-gratification. Because of this, he was running and hiding most of his life from his brother Esau, and later, from his father-in-law Laban. In desperation, he turned to God. Finally in Genesis 32:22-30 he is confronted and has to wrestle with God. As a result, he is changed forever. Even his name is changed to Israel. Most of us wrestle with God and spend a lifetime running from our own deceptions. We run from what God has planned with our lives. This week as you read about Jacob, ask the Lord to help you apply the principles of his life to your own life.

1. What does the story of Jacob's life reveal to you about God?

To me it is another story of God keeping eternal His promise. He is pursuing Jacob, using both crisis and confrontation to bring him to his knees. But even as He wrestles with Jacob, He is gentle and caring, not hurting him but restoring him and preparing him. God does just enough to change him into a man God can use. And He blesses Jacob's life.

2. How have you "wrestled" with God in your life?

This is personal for each of us but for me, through many years of my life, I found myself rejecting His calling, running from Him, ignoring Him, and using my own deception to keep me from pursuing His call. But finally God got a hold of me, He used people to confront me and He changed me forever. He led me, prepared me, and convinced me that He is all I need and today He has brought me to the ministry I currently embrace.

3. How did God change you forever through that confrontation with Him?

For me, God has helped me learn to trust and depend upon Him in all my needs. It has made me a man of prayer knowing that by my own power, I cannot please God. But through Christ working in me, I can bear fruit that lasts.

4. What issues might you still need to wrestle with the Lord over? What is stopping you?

Give people time to bring up battles they face. Be prepared to pray immediately should someone be struggling. You don't have to have the answers. Just turn to God for help and He is waiting.

Daily Reading: Jacobs Life

Day 1 –Genesis 25:19-34, 27:1-40 Jacob & Esau

Day 2 –Genesis 27:41 – 28:22 Jacob & Laban, Jacobs Dream

Day 3 – Genesis 29:1- 30:43 Rachel, Leah and Jacob's Children

Day 4 – Genesis 31:1 - 55 Jacob Flees, Laban Pursues

Day 5 – Genesis 32:1- 33:20 Jacob wrestles with God and Meets Esau