

# (Men Who Met God): Jacob Had an Encounter With God

by A.W. Tozer

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*God seeks us even when we are far from Him, and longing after God is the key to spiritual growth.*

**Duration:** 42:38

**Scripture:** Genesis 28:10-22, Exodus 3:1-6, Isaiah 6:1-8, Luke 2:25-32, John 8:56

**Topics:** "Jacob"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the character of Jacob from the Bible. He describes Jacob as a man with a streak of avarice and larceny. The preacher emphasizes the need to face the reality of Jacob's flaws instead of ignoring them. He also highlights the importance of having a spiritual experience with God, which goes beyond human comprehension and explanation. The sermon references the story of Jacob's encounter with God at Bethel, where he realizes the presence of God and the capability within humans to know Him.

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## Transcript

Genesis the 28th chapter, please. Verse ten and on was one of the most beautiful stories in the Old Testament. And Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran, and he lighted upon a certain place and carried there all night, because the sun was setting.

And he took the stones of that place and put them for his pillow, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father and the God of Isaac. In the land whereon thou liest, through thee will I give it, and through thy seed. Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, to the east, to the north, and to the south.

And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land. For I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid. He said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God.

This is the gate of heaven. Jacob rose up early in the morning and took the stone that he had put for his pillow, and set it for a pillow, and poured oil upon the top of it, and he called the name of that place Bethel. The name of that place was called Luz at the first.

And Jacob avowed a vow, saying, If God be with me, and will keep me in this way, that I go and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, and then shall the Lord be my God. And this stone which I have set for a pillow shall be God's house, and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee. Now I want to talk about Jacob, the son of Isaac and Rebekah, and the twin brother of Esau.

There is so much to be said about this colorful man, that I suppose that it would take ten sermons, but I shall try to do it in two. What I want to do is not to present a biography of Jacob, but to search out the one central factor of his life that is important to us now, and that factor was this, that Jacob had an encounter with Almighty God, the God of his father Abraham and Isaac. Now let's look at this man, Jacob, and notice that at the beginning, he was anything but a worthy character.

First place, his home life was unfortunate. Now this will shock some people. The woman back in Chicago does never think, forgive me because I said that the life of Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob's parents, was not a perfect one.

She said, how could it be possible because Rebekah was a type of the bride of Christ, therefore she must be perfect. Well, that's assuming something, and then refusing to see any other side but the one you've assumed. The truth is the home life of Jacob and Esau was unfortunate.

They were born into a divided home. Isaac and Rebekah never separated till they died. They took literally until death shall separate us.

But one thing that they overlooked, and that is that it's possible to be separated from your wife and live in the same house with her. And this man, Isaac, was separated from Rebekah, even though they never divorced and lived together and raised their two boys together and the neighbors never knew anything much was wrong. But the fact is they were divided in their hearts.

Rebekah had a habit of eavesdropping on the old man, her husband, when he was talking to one of the boys and then running to the other boy with it. Now that's no way for a husband and wife to do, and yet they did it. You will find if you read the story of Isaac and Rebekah that they were not getting on too well.

They didn't fight, they just didn't see eye to eye, and she was a little sneaky about it. And so to be reared in a home like that means, of course, that the disadvantage is so great that it's almost impossible to overcome. Therefore the umpire called strike one on Jacob.

Strike one. Then a second thing is that the parents showed favoritism. It's almost funny, it would be funny if it wasn't so tragic, that Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his savory meat.

Isaac loved the man Esau, his son, because Esau was a hunter and used to go out and get venison for it. Now that's a poor cause of love and a poor reason for loving anybody, but Isaac did. Isaac loved Esau because he did eat of his savory venison.

But Rebekah loved Jacob because Jacob was a plain man and dwelt in tents. He stayed with his mama, and she loved him because he thawed pottage. Now thawing pottage is an old-fashioned way of saying cooking stew.

And Jacob stayed around and thawed pottage, something that man shouldn't have been doing. He should have been out hunting with his brother, but he was home helping mama thaw pottage. Well now, alike the umpire called strike two on the man Jacob, and he's just about out.

Then there was a third thing about the man, and that is that his character showed weaknesses, moral flaws that were beyond the normal. He had an effeminate streak in him, as I've already pointed out. And the dear God in heaven, save us from an effeminate man or a masculine woman.

And this man was effeminate. Nowadays they would say that he had an Oedipus complex or a mother fixation. He was attached to his mother's apron string, was the old-fashioned way my grandmother had.

She hadn't read Freud, so she didn't know about Oedipus complexes. So she said, he's no good, he's attached to his mother's apron string. And this fellow Jacob never got the umbilical cord cut.

He still stayed with mama, even until he was way along up in middle life. And to be born a man by the accident of nature and then have a character, have a disposition that's feminine, is pretty bad. It's pretty bad.

I don't know how he kept from turning out to be a beatnik, because he had all the makings of it. And then Jacob had another thing wrong with him, and that was duplicity. I'm talking about the weaknesses of his character.

Duplicity was bordering on the perilous. That is, do you notice how he cheated his father and he cheated his father-in-law later on? He just cheated everybody that he could cheat the man Jacob. He was a crook.

You know, his name was Jacob, which means crooked. And they certainly named that boy. He was that kind of fellow, a supplanter.

And then Jacob had a streak of avarice in him, a streak of larceny, if you ask me, was in this man. Now, he's in the Bible all right, but you've got to be realistic, and when the Bible tells us about a man, we're not to close our eyes like the three monkeys on the shelf and see no evil and hear no evil and think no evil. We're going to have to face up to it.

Jacob was avaricious. You remember that when he was sobbing potage in there, he came in smelling of the field. He hadn't caught anything that day, and he was hungry.

He thought he was just literally starving to death, a very big, rough, hairy fellow. He wasn't going to die, but he was hungry. And he said to his brother, Give me a bowl of your stew.

And Jacob held it behind him and said, I'll do nothing of the kind. What'll you give me? Well, he said, About anything. I'm ready to die.

Well, he said, Would you give me your birthright? And he cheated his brother out of that birthright. Then later on, you'll remember that the man put garments, he put goat skin on his arms and sneaked around to his old blind father. His father felt his hands and said, I think the whole thing was kind of dumb.

I never did have much respect for Isaac. Now, to tell the truth, Isaac was the father of a great son. He became great later on, and he was the son of a great father.

But I never could see much in the fellow Isaac. The way he got way-corded, you know. Send somebody else out to look him up a wife.

I can't get interested in a fellow that couldn't even have the manhood to go out and get his own wife. And now he comes, the boy comes in, and he's got a sheepskin on his hands so that he'll seem hairy like his brother. Well, I don't excuse Jacob.

It was a sneaking, deceitful, dirty trick to pull on his blind father. But his father was so dumb that I'd rather forgive the boy on the grounds that anybody that dumb ought to have got cheated. I wouldn't want to do it.

The idea that he didn't know his own sons, he'd live with those boys and didn't know their voices. He didn't know their voices. He said, well, it does sound like Jacob's voice.

But he said, I'll admit, those are the hairy arms of Esau. So he stretched out his old, skinny arms and started to bless the wrong fellow. And he blessed him all the way through and never stopped to ask God to help him to get blessed.

Well, that's the kind of home the fellow Jacob came out of. And Jacob had a calculating, bargaining spirit, you know. Even when he had this great vision, he wasn't rid of it altogether.

He started bargaining with God and said, God, if you'll bless me, I'll tithe. It sounded like modern tracts. It pays to tithe, therefore I tithe.

Well, he had a calculating spirit. And then I noticed that he lacked common honor. Now, he didn't have common honor.

He ran along with that mother of his, who was something of a chief. He ran along with her and he pulled skullduggery, as I've said, on his father and on his twin, his own twin brother. He showed a spirit of disloyalty and faithlessness here.

And the umpire said, Strike three. And Jacob was out. The only thing Jacob could do morally, as far as any hope of God was concerned, was to go back and sit down because his home life was bad, his character was bad, and his parents showed favoritism and partiality and thus divided the home.

Rebecca loved Jacob and he saw, or Isaac loved Esau, and so they weren't together on it. Now, he came out of that kind of a home and, of course, he would have been voted the man least likely to get right with God because there was nothing in the fellow. Anybody that watched that slithery, sinuous, serpentine conduct of the man, he just said, There's no use.

The fellow's hopeless. But do you know God saw otherwise? And there's a deep mystery here and I don't claim to be able to understand it. I only know that we say so-and-so would make a good Christian, but we don't know how far we are off the track.

So-and-so may have all the characteristics of a gentleman and yet be a million miles from God and be perfectly satisfied with himself. He may stand for hours in front of the mirror and comb his, whatever you call it. I used to have one, but it's been so long that I forgot even what they call him anymore.

You have one, what do you call him? I don't know either. Anyhow, these things up in front here, we don't look at it right. We say he'd make a good Christian, but we would never have given our vote to Jacob if anybody had come along and said, you know this fellow Jacob, do you think he's all right? No, he's a tramp.

Do you think he'll get right with God not while he lives? Never. That man, he's hopeless. But you know God is a God who specializes in hopeless cases.

And there's a deep mystery here, I say, that I don't understand. Esau was far better as a prospect than Jacob was. There's nothing that Esau did that was very bad.

You'll notice he was a hunter and he smelled of the field and he was kind to his parents and he put up with Jacob, the chief. He did want to kill him, but he didn't go through with it. Later on, 20 years later, he went out with fire in his nostrils, but when he saw Jacob, he cooled off and put his arms around him and cried like a child.

So Esau was a pretty good fellow. He was a little rough, you know, but he was a good fellow. Jacob was a crooked fellow and between the two, if I'd had to live with one of them, I'd have chosen Esau.

If I'd have been living in the same house with Esau, I could have gone to bed and hung my pants on a nail and not worried about having somebody come in and steal my money in the night. But with Jacob, you weren't certain, you know. Jacob would pray and say, it's the dear Lord that sent me, and then go out and rob your pocket.

He was that kind of fellow, Esau was. But you know what? The fellow Jacob had something that Esau didn't have. And Esau had something that Jacob didn't have.

And that which Jacob had finally led him to God and that which Esau had finally damned him. Esau was morally better than Jacob and necessarily Jacob was morally worse than Esau. It figures.

But my brother Jacob had one thing Esau didn't have. He had a longing after God, a grave dissatisfaction. He belonged to the noble army of the discontented.

If you show me a discontented man, not discontented with the year of his car or the size of it, but discontented with himself inside. I have been greatly encouraged here over the last days for I have had people approach me after service and tell me of their deep spiritual yearning, their longing after God, their discontent. Once more I tell you, you ought to thank God with all your heart that you're a spiritually discontented man.

Most of the good people of the world are not discontented. They're compassionate and quite well satisfied with themselves. They are not bad.

They have no conscience to bother them, but they also have no longing after God. God had been trying to get a signal through to these boys, and Esau was so contented with himself that he didn't hear it. But Jacob the crook, Jacob the avaricious rascal, Jacob the father-cheater, Jacob hated himself for that thing.

He hated himself. He sinned and hated himself for sinning. And the result was that his eyes were looking at heavenward, and when the voice of God sounded over him, he heard it.

When the ladder was set up, he saw it. Jacob was deep in sin, but not so deep as what he felt the tug and the lift of another world. Esau wasn't so deep in sin, but Esau was satisfied with what he had, and that's the terrible thing about it.

It's the worst thing that can be said about Esau. He was spiritually self-satisfied, but that thing damned him. And all that I've said against Jacob passed away and became nothing when it was set over against the fact that this sinful man with a bad disposition yet hated himself and longed after God.

I don't care how far down a man is nor how low he is. If I know that there's a spark in him that's leaping up toward God, if deep is calling unto deep, and the little deep of the man is calling back to the deep which is God, I'm quite pleased and I believe in that person. That's why I'm not worried about how far a man has got, but I am greatly concerned about what direction he's headed.

I'm concerned whether he's aimed in the right way or not. I'm concerned about whether he is longing after God. Oh, that we must long after God, my brethren.

If we don't long after him, we'll remain right where we are. We'll settle down. Browning, the English poet, talked about a man like that.

He said, a finished and finite clod uncoupled by a spark. I think that's a terrible, damning epitaph. A finished and finite clod.

He's finite, that is, he's limited all around, and he's finished, he's done, they've marked him finished, there's nobody going to work on him anymore. And he's uncoupled by a spark. You know, the spark of God in a man couples him.

I don't mean that spark saves him, but that spark leads him to salvation. That spark of God in a man. Why is it that some good people never have it? They're nice people, nice to live around, but they never have that spark.

Why, some of the crookedest people and some of the most sinful people with bad dispositions and evil temperaments nevertheless are deeply coupled with a longing, a spark leaping up there after God. Finished and finite clod was Esau, and so he found no way to change his mind, though he sought it earnestly with tears. Later on, when it was too late, but Jacob, God was after Jacob, it was God trying to get through to the man Jacob.

So Jacob sets out here in the story that I have read, Jacob sets out for Haran. Now I suppose that the man, more heart sick, never began his journey. He had just seated his father, poor old blind father.

And he was on his way to his relatives in another country and never expected to see his father again. And indeed, I think he never did, if I recall, see his father again. And then Mama, to whom he had been so inordinately attached, Mama found that she had to get rid of the boy to keep the big boy from killing him.

The big hairy fellow with the red face had been cheated out of his birthright, and cheated well. She said, I'm going to kill my brother. And it was a normal thing to want to do.

Jacob deserved a good killing. And Esau was the man who should have done it because he had been the fellow who had been cheated. And when Mama saw that, Mama said, if I keep my baby with me, he'll be killed.

So she made up a lie and took the twint to her husband. And she threw herself across the bed and stomped. And she said, Isaac, Isaac.

He said, what's the matter, Mama? And she said, oh, I feel so bad about my boy. She said, if he marries one of these women of the, what did she call it, I've forgotten for the moment, said, if he marries one of them, I just never can stand it. And of course, when a woman starts to howl, you'll give her anything, you know.

You'll go out and get her a new anything. And so he said, all right. And he called in Jacob, called Jacob in.

And he never even rebuked the scoundrel, never rebuked him. You just cheated him by putting this stuff over his hands and going through all that monkey business. And still Jacob never, never rebuked him.

He said, you better go out of this country. He said, your mother feels bad about the possibility of your marrying one of these women socially below you. So you had better go back to where you came from, back to the land of Beersheva, or Haran, and get a wife there.

Now it was a sneaky way of getting Jacob out where he thought couldn't kill him. And Mama had that to do, you know. When you start something, brother, you start it.

The camel puts his nose in the tent. And pretty soon, he's in the tent humping all. And he gets the narrow edge of the wedge in, and then the whole wedge is in.

So when Jacob and his mother started going on this crooked piece of machinery, they were carried away with it. And he got up and left. He wasn't going after a wife.

He was going away to save his crooked hide. That's what he was leaving for. So Jacob set out.

And I say there never was a more miserable man. He was self-stricken because he had cheated his father. He was sick because he had to leave his mother.

And then he was going away from his home, and he was afraid, and he was uncertain. And Jacob was in a state of complete loneliness. Now, I've said this before, and I want to keep saying it here, that there's a lot you will never learn at a party.

And there's an awful lot of spirituality you will never learn with somebody else. You've got to have God all by yourself. You and God alone have to figure things out.

So if you've never learned or never experienced the depths of loneliness before God, chances are you're not in a position to have God do very much for you. We want to do things en masse, you know, in the block, by the company. It doesn't work that way.

All the great saints had to go to God alone. And God had to let this all work out to get Jacob by himself in a state of complete loneliness where all the spiritually great have had to be. And then God appears unto Jacob.

Now, Jacob wasn't seeking God, but God was seeking Jacob. I wrote a book 12 years ago, and by the grace of God it's still selling as well now as it did when I first wrote it. It's called The Pursuit of God.

A fellow discouraged me, said, don't call it The Pursuit of God. Nobody will read it. There's no name for it.

But those very words caught on. The idea that we must seek God, that we must rule him and pursue him and follow hard after him as the poet, the Old Testament said, caught on to a lot of human hearts. But you know, if I had the time, I could write another one and call it The God Pursuit of Man because before any man will pursue God, God must pursue the man.

Before any man will start to woo God, God must begin to woo the man. Always God must be previous. God must be there first.

And so God appeared to Jacob. And that was the reason for his discontent. That was the reason for the unrest in his heart and the aimless activity he was going through.

The eternal mystery had been overshadowing the man Jacob. He hadn't been bothering the man Esau. Some of you are satisfied because you are not uneasy, you are not disturbed.

A sermon or a song moves only the surface of your emotions. You can go home and look at a TV picture on up to midnight and then go to sleep, get up and eat a hearty breakfast and go to work untroubled by a spark. You're satisfied with yourself.

John Bunyan, the great dreamer, said this about a man in one of his sermons. He said, Some sinners believe that because they die in peace, therefore everything is all right with them. He said, No, that a sinner can live his lifetime in sin and then die with an untroubled conscience proves not how good he is but how hopelessly lost he is because if he were not hopelessly lost his conscience would bother him sometimes before the end.

Well, Jacob went to sleep and he took some stones and I've never been able to figure out what a man wants to take stones and make pillars out of them for. I could think of half a dozen things softer than that. But he took some stones and piled them up and leaned back against them and he'd never been away from his mother before.

He'd never been anywhere, you know. But now he was out there way off and he heard howling. He called it the way howling wilderness.

What was howling out there in the wilderness? The wind? No. No wind howling there. What was howling was wolves and bears.

And the man Jacob was scared. And he leaned back finally and went off to fitful sleep. And while he slept, a ladder stood on the earth and angels ascended and descended.

They didn't descend and then ascend. They'd been down there all the time. They ascended first and then came back down to see if Jacob was all right.

Their first motion was upward because they'd been down with the man Jacob. Now here is one of the most wonderful and most mysterious and most beautiful things that I know. That one of the most or least likely fellows, one of the crookedest fellows, a man that you couldn't say anything good about, is out in the wilderness, wasting the howling and sleeping against the stone under the wrath of his brother and the displeasure of his father on his way somewhere to keep from being killed.

And suddenly a ladder appears and stands up on the earth and its top reaches to heaven. The great unfolding mystery was there. God was there all the time and had been there all the time.

And when Jacob was back there sinning, God was patiently with him then. And when he cheated his father and lied to his old blind dad and he even used the name of God in his lie, Isaac said, How did you get it so soon? And he said, The Lord brought it to me, the sound rope. And yet God was with him patiently then.

Oh friend, if all that keeps you away from God is how bad you are, don't stay away because God's looking for people like you. He's looking for the people that look as if they weren't worth saving. And so Jacob awaked out of his sleep.

Jacob had a sudden awakening of the inner light. In olden times they used to call revivals awakening. And when the man was suddenly converted they said he had a spiritual awakening.

They couldn't have said it any better way for this was an awakening here. This man Jacob suddenly came awake. Now he was the son of Isaac and Isaac was the son of Abraham and Abraham was the father of the faithful, the one to whom the covenant was made so that Jacob had some kind of religious teaching in his life.

But as some of us, he went through that religious teaching and it never got a hold of him. This was Jacob's world, he said. This is my world.

And I want it and I want Esau's part of it too. And I want Dad's part of it. This is my world, he said and thought as he went away.

But now suddenly he sees that this is God's world after all and that's one thing that we must awaken to. This is God's world, brother. And not all the concrete on the pavement and not all the machines and machinery and technology and technocracy and all the rest can change it.

God made this world. Man has unmade it. But God made this world and this is God's world.

He's here and you've got God to deal with and you will have God to deal with. You'll have him to deal with sooner or later and you'd better make it sooner for your own soul's sake. This world was created by God.

It's supported by the word of his power. All things hold together in Christ and this is God's world. And God is in his world and we don't know it.

Jacob didn't say God came here. He said God is here. God is here.

This is the gate of heaven. God had been there all the time and Jacob didn't know it. He was unconscious of it.

And I say again that one of the most delicious and marvelous aspects of the spiritual experience we call conversion is the sudden awakening to the fact that we belong to God and God belongs to us and that we're his and he's ours and that this world is God's world. It doesn't belong to Uncle Sam or Great Britain or Russia. It's God's world and it belongs to him and he allows Uncle Sam and Britain and Russia to have a part of it while he's patiently waiting that he might save some.

But it's God's world. He sings in every bird and he whistles in every wind and he falls in every rain and he breathes in every sigh. God is here in his world and you've got God to deal with, my brother.

That's wonderful to me. That's just wonderful. I don't know how you feel.

But it's wonderful that I've got God to deal with and that God has been following me all this time. Following me. But somebody said, No, no, it can't be, it can't be.

You don't know me, Mr. Toter. I've lied to God a hundred times. I suppose Jacob lied a hundred and one at least.

Jacob was crooked and deceiving and avaricious and calculating and he lacked honor and he was disloyal and effeminate. He had everything wrong and yet God had been following Jacob around. The patient, loving God.

He's called the God of Jacob. You ever think of it? God actually called himself by the name of that man. That man, Jacob, he called himself by his name and he wasn't ashamed to say, I am Jacob's God.

Oh, he's the God of grace and he's the God of aggression and he's the God of patience. Well, how can it be that God comes and follows us and that he introduces this desire to be right? How is it God is doing this? I don't know. I only know there's something in us akin to God.

There must be. Now, that doesn't mean we're saved because except you repent and are born again you shall all likewise perish. Forget that.

But there's something. You see, two unlike things, totally unlike, could never get together. It would be impossible.

There must be something in the light a little bit like your eye or something in your eye a little bit like the light or you could never see. There must be something in your ear geared to the sounds of nature or you could never hear. So there must be something in you capable of knowing God.

I'd rather die and be carried from this platform than to lose the capability of knowing God. God put within us a capability and said if you will turn unto me and seek me with all your heart you shall find me because he'd been seeking us with all his heart before that. So the man Jacob now wakes, I say.

He wakes to shining knowledge. He wakes to the fact that God is there. But where do you and I find God? Well, I would tell you that Christ is a meeting place.

His name shall be called Immanuel which is God with us. Now, we know who the God is but who is the us? Us are the humans. Immanuel, God with us.

And now Christ is the manward side of God. I want you to hear me say this because I don't think anybody else has ever said it. But I want you to hear me say that Christ is the manward side of God.

You know they tell us that up here in space about, I've forgotten, 250,000 miles away there's a little thing we call the moon. It's a dead cinder. It hasn't any light in it nor any light in it and they tell me that it's knee deep in dust and the first Russian that gets over there is going to have to sneeze and get rid of the dust somehow.

That's the moon. And the moon is so geared on its axis with the sun and the earth that the earth never sees but one side of the moon. One side of the moon.

Because when the moon gets turned around then the earth is turned around. I don't know how they do it but they've got to work somehow. So you never see but one side of the moon.

You know, to use that for an illustration I might say that God in his great heaven has a side and it's the manward side. It's the only side we see. It's the side that's turned toward us.

And there's only one side of the moon turned toward the earth and there never can be any other way as long as the heavens and the earth continue to exist in their present relation and there is a manward side. God has one side turned to us and his name shall be called Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins. And the God who followed Jacob in the way-piling wilderness and the God who's following you and me has a manward side.

What there is in the other vast infinitude of the other side of God, I don't know. I don't know what lies out there for us to explore in the days to come and in the millenniums to come. But I know that if you look up just as we look up and see the same friendly face of the moon that our fathers saw, that Adam saw, that Abel saw, and Cain saw the night he killed Abel.

Just as we look up and see the same smiling, friendly face of the moon that Abraham saw when he came out of Ur of the Chaldees, that Jacob saw when he looked up in the way-piling wilderness. So when we look up we see the same face of God turned toward us. It is Jesus Christ our Lord.

And you know they know it back there. Abraham said, Jesus saw my day and was glad. And Moses prophesied concerning Jesus.

And David spake as man of the tongue of a ready writer. And Isaiah saw Jesus and Simeon knew who Jesus was. They knew that it was God turned manward.

Now all the experiences by which men met God, they all figure around Jesus Christ our Lord. Abraham, I preached about, had that sacrifice. Well, that was Jesus Christ.

Jacob had that ladder and that was Jesus Christ. Moses had the burning bush and that was Jesus Christ. Go through your Old Testament and you'll find it there.

The overarching mystery, the present, God is here. And he's trying to get a signal through. And the satisfied ones hear nothing but the discontented and the uneasy.

And the people with bothered consciences, no matter how deep in sin they might have been, they see something and they hear something. And they are the ones that will meet God after all. So Christ is the point where we experience God.

He that has seen me has seen the Father, said Jesus. He that has seen me has seen the Father. And the God that Moses could not see, lest he die, we can now see in the face of Jesus Christ.

But it's the same God and the same Lord Jesus and the same overarching mystery and the same wondrous presence that fills the universe, following bad boys around, following women around that are full of pride and every kind of envy, following us around, the dear God is following us around so that we might well write a book and call it God's Pursuit of Man, for God's been looking for you all this time, looking for you. He wants you to break through into a state of awareness. You notice Jacob came out into a, it says, Jacob awoke out of his sleep.

It was more than waking out of physical humbleness. It was a sudden awakening to the shining wonder of the knowledge of God in the face of Christ, even before his incarnation in the womb of the Virgin Mary.

Now, you never can comprehend this that I'm talking to you about.

I've said before, I repeat, our problem now is we can understand modern Christianity. There isn't anything you can't explain. We got a God made in our own image.

And because we've made him in our own image, we can explain him. And we can explain everything he's supposed to do. But the men who met God had spiritual experiences nobody could explain, much less themselves.

All they could do was adore. All they could do was rejoice. All they could do was to enjoy and thank God and obey God and come back for more and rejoice some more and go obey God some more.

Ah, this man Jacob, crooked old Jacob, mama's boy Jacob, avaricious crooked bargaining Jacob with his lack of honor and decency. But he had one saving thing, I repeat. He had a holy discontent.

In the depths of his heart, he wanted to know God, and God knew it. And God knew that nothing could keep him out if he wanted to know God bad enough. And Jacob did.

You may wonder why I choose Jacob when I'm talking about the great saints who met God. Ah, my friend, we find Jacob here at his worst, but we find him on his way to meet God and become best. Jacob the worst became Jacob the best, and Jacob the crooked supplanter became a prince with God and had his name changed to Israel.

So I want to encourage you tonight. Let not conscience make thee linger, because all the fitness God requires is to feel your need of him. Now, if you're not discontented, if you're satisfied as you are, then I don't know anything I can do.

I don't know anything anybody can do. There was nothing anybody could do for Esau. Nothing.

Jacob Esau was satisfied. He had no spiritual longing. He wanted to get his money back, and so he said, couldn't you bless me some more and give me something? But he found no way to change his mind, though he sought it earnestly with care.

But nowhere in the whole life of Esau was there any evidence of moral discontent or spiritual longing. It's the most precious treasure you have, my brother, is the spiritual longing that's in your heart. Even if you hold it in your heart along with every kind of duplicity and evil, it's still the most precious treasure that you've got.

Is there something in your heart that makes you long after God? Well, Jesus Christ calls you to himself. He calls you to start now, toward him. A journey for your heart, not a journey for your feet.

Start now. And the God of Jacob will be your refuge. The God of grace, the God of patience, the God of

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