

Jacob

by Don Courville

The sermon highlights Jacob's life as a testament to God's grace and the transformative power of prayer.

Duration: 55:51

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Genesis 32:24-28, Luke 11:1-4

Topics: "Jacob"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of not giving up in the face of challenges. He uses the story of Jacob wrestling with an angel as an example of perseverance. The preacher highlights that Jacob's strength was weakened during the struggle, but he clung on and refused to give up. Through this experience, Jacob's testimony and character were transformed, showing the power of God's grace in his life. The sermon also touches on the concept of God's authority and the need for submission to His will.

Transcript

Turn in your Bibles to Genesis chapter 32. Genesis 32. We've been doing a study on the life of Christ covering doctrine.

And we had a couple more sections to go. And I'm throwing in an extra one on what was listed. And it comes out of meditating in the book of Genesis on the life of Jacob.

Preparing for, just preparing a series on prayer. Looking at his life to draw some prayer principles from his life. And there's some powerful principles there.

I don't know if I'll bring any of them out today except one. Which is probably the key, a key one. And in this study on the life of Jacob I began to see the practicality of the life of Christ involved with us.

And especially in the light of Jesus Christ as our shepherd. We've been looking at these areas of Christ as we've gone through the doctrinal study. Looking at his incarnation, his names and titles.

We looked at his eternity and pre-existence. His deity and both him as God and man. And his emptying of himself.

And we still have to do his sinlessness. And I think Isaiah is going to do that one of these Sundays. Maybe next Sunday if he's around.

His future kingdom. And Christ in Revelation 4 and 5. And then there was one more, the defeat of Satan or the crushing of him. But I thought it would be good to do a little study on Christ as our shepherd.

And to bring it out to how he works with us in a personal way. And look at it in the life of Jacob. I can't think of anything else in the Bible that would probably describe me more than Jacob.

And maybe you. I don't know. He really was quite a wild sheep at times.

But the amazing thing in his life was his struggle. His hardship. And his making it to the cross.

And then actually that was probably not the biggest test in his life. I was thinking about that this morning. About how when he lost Joseph, that was probably the deepest trial in his life.

I mean he's in a rock in a hard spot between Laban and Esau. But later on, God was just preparing him. And I was thinking about this also.

How over the years we've listened to godly men share with us. And in the revival ministry there are some really powerful men out there. And some of them even getting up close to 90 or in their 90s.

And how they are continually learning and bringing out truths that they're learning. And this is the life of Jacob. He was continually learning and growing and growing in grace.

He may have been a little rough at start, but so was I. And so that should encourage us to be patient with each other. Let's pray. Now Father as we prepare for this time this day.

To just meet with you and look at you in the life of Christ. And see how your life met with a man. How you met with a man called Jacob.

A struggler, a wrassler, a conniver, a schemer. But your man. And I pray that today you would take and show us as we go through this doctrinal study.

Studying about you. That it would be very practical. And that it would also encourage us in our walk with you.

That there's at least one thing you want out of us. And you wanted that out of Jacob. And if we can get that one thing.

We can make it through about anything. Thank you now in Jesus name. Amen.

I didn't bring an outline. I sat down one day and made an outline. Of the life of Jacob.

And I traced him through and I wrote it. And I thought I might go through all of it. But it's probably a good thing.

It would take some time. But then I figured out how many verses and chapters his life involved. And roughly, if I had it correctly.

And I'm not the greatest in math. It was approximately 40% of the book of Genesis. And that sort of staggered me.

I said, wow. That much about his life. It must have been pretty important.

And not only that. Jacob's mentioned more than Abraham. In the Bible.

And you get on in there. It's the reference a lot of times to the God of Jacob. And so let's see if God can teach us some things.

This is designed to be some prayer principles. From the life of Jacob primarily. But I won't be digging in and dragging out a lot of those principles today.

It would be good to go through the whole scheme of the outline of his life. But I think we're pretty familiar. So we won't do that.

And just to start off with this statement. Abel was a shepherd. Right? The lamb died for the shepherd.

And then just right away, what happened? The shepherd had to die because of the lamb. And you come all the way through the Scriptures. You've got all these references to sheep and shepherds.

Who was a good shepherd? Jesus. In John 10. We went through the book of John.

I think it was last year. Hebrews. He's the great shepherd.

1320. And that was John 10. He's a good shepherd.

And 1 Peter 5.4. He's the chief shepherd. And Psalms 23. As Samuel read our Scripture this morning.

He is my shepherd. Now we're going to look at Jacob in the life of Christ and having Christ as his shepherd. The amazing thing sometimes about sheep.

They do not recognize the value of their shepherd. And sometimes they just forget all about their shepherd being there. I remember going elk hunting out in Wyoming a number of years ago.

And we're on our way to go into northern Colorado. And we're going out across Wyoming down in the interstate. And I see a man standing out on a rock with a yellow poncho like a statue.

And I've often wondered. Maybe that really was a statue. But he was watching his sheep.

He's watching his sheep. I've never forgot that statue, that picture in my mind of watching his sheep. That's my shepherd.

He's watching me. And I need lots of watching. I don't know about you.

Now Jacob also was a type of Christ in some ways. He exhibited the responsibility of a shepherd in watching the sheep of Laban for 20 years. He was very responsible with what he did.

And he said, I bear the loss to Laban as he went through. These things happen. I bear the loss.

And also I lost none. I lost none. And so he was also classified as endurance, the endurance of the shepherd.

Day, drought, night, frost, and all of that. He bared the loss and went through endurance. The work of the shepherd guarded him.

He was faithful. And he cared for the sheep. When he met Esau and Esau said, come on with me.

He said, no, we can't do that. If we overdrive them one day, you know, they just can't handle that. And so he did have a lot of good things about him.

Now, many other shepherds in the Bible, Joseph was a shepherd, Moses, David, and they were shepherds. So we come back to Christ as our shepherd. Matthew 18, 12, there is the seeking shepherd just for one sheep.

The shepherd would go after him. And a rancher would go after one calf. That's because that's their life.

And somebody might say, oh, wow, it's not worth it just to go after one little lamb or whatever. No. One little calf, no.

It's his life. It's not just one little lamb. It may be hundreds that come from that one little lamb.

So one little lamb is valuable. You as a little lamb are valuable. And Jesus cares for you.

There's something else in here. You know, the shepherds were watching over their flock by night. And that's the love of the shepherd.

Malachi. Jesus comes. God comes to them.

And He says, I love you. And there's an interesting passage. He said, I have loved you.

And they're saying, how did you love us? And what's all this? All this stuff happening to you. But He's moving in on them because He loves them. And sometimes we may think, well, God doesn't care about me.

But God does care about you. And if we get like a sheep off someplace we shouldn't be, He cares and shows His care and brings His presence even closer. And He said, Esau have I hated and Jacob have I loved.

I've loved you. Now, this is 1,500 years of history about when this is being recorded. Esau had proved himself unlovable.

Esau had proved himself and his line, his seed, basically, is a line and a seed that had no desire for God. And God knew that. That's why He said Jacob needed to take the birthright and Jacob needed to come along and take the leadership because He knew that Jacob was going to have some desire.

Now, that doesn't, it shouldn't bother us about that. And if you study it, you understand all of that, that God does love all people. But what really bothers me in this is not so much that He hated Esau, but why did He love Jacob? Why does He love me? That should amaze us.

And, wow, I should be hated, but God loves us. Now, here's a study, basically, on how the shepherd loves sheep. And we're going to jump into it.

And I'm probably going to slip through some things pretty fast because I've got a lot of things and I don't know, sometimes I get bogged down on some things. So, I'm going to start off with this. What was it that this angel that wrestled with Jacob was after? You know, Jacob's got himself in trouble.

He's had all this history behind him and he's got himself in trouble by stealing the birthright and then he stole the blessing of Esau and got Esau really upset and so he had to leave home and he followed his

mother two times. She said, listen to me. And the second time, he's already in a lot of trouble.

He shouldn't have listened again. And so, each time he stole something that he shouldn't have stole, God had even promised that he'd give it to him. So, he ends up having to run out there and he ran back to the relatives back there and was with Laban, picked up a couple of wives, one too many, and had a lot of different things happen and had a family develop out of that and ended up, God blessed him.

The grace of God was on his life the whole time. Did he deserve it? Did you deserve it? No, but God's grace was there the whole time. He was a rascal.

Just like, you know, he's a type of the flesh at this point. Just operating in the flesh. A child of God that just hasn't learned the power of God.

And that's what God's after. To bring him into the position to where he says, listen, you don't have to be a Jacob all your life. I didn't design you to be a Jacob.

I designed you to be an Israel. And so, we're going to go through this thing. He's after something in him.

And he's after something in us. And the neat thing is you go to the back of his life, the end of the life, when he gets back with Joseph and the brethren all come together, there's some really neat things in his life showing the power of God on his life. I mean, he came into the presence of Pharaoh.

When he came into the presence of Pharaoh, he was the predominant, powerful one. Not Pharaoh. Isn't that interesting? He blessed Pharaoh.

The greater blesses the lesser. So, this did work. What God was after.

Alright, some neat things there. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head. I think it's like Saul of Tarsus.

When Jesus met him coming down the road, and he's just mad, like Jeremiah said, mad upon his idols. He's burning and churning for Damascus to kill these Christians. And when he met Jesus, all of a sudden, you know, he got blinded.

Who art thou? And he says, I'm Jesus. You could have seen the smoke turning, coming in. And the wheels are going, oh, oh, oh, oh.

Yes, Lord! And all of a sudden, I believe, when he heard that Joseph was alive, he kind of figured out that a lot of the things that had happened in his life, the loss of Joseph had a reason. And then he worshipped when he saw the wisdom of God that he had to take Him. And all these things in there.

Okay, that's for a little bit of background. There's an interesting verse in the Bible that says, the lame take the prey. The lame take the prey.

Look at all those in the New Testament that were lame. They got blessed. The prey being the blessing.

The lame take the prey. How many of you feel like that you are lame? You know? You just don't feel adequate. You go to talk to an unsaved person.

You don't feel adequate. You don't feel qualified. You don't feel like you've got the capacity to be the parent that you're doing in the position or whatever.

Praise God you don't feel adequate. That makes you pray. We'll go into some prayer principles here, but that's one of the greatest ones that God can bless us with is a sense of inadequacy.

Because those that don't have a sense of inadequacy don't pray. The reason people don't pray is because they don't believe it works. And so they don't do it.

Just very simple. I was reading G. Campbell Morgan on this prayer book. You know these prayer books? I give out all these.

You ought to read that one. And I read a little bit this morning. And I mean, wow, this guy's a toser.

Going through there, he's talking about deep things in there. I had to sit it down. Wow, I can't even hardly follow this stuff.

It's good and deep. Alright, so, let's jump into it now. His life, his testimony up to chapter 32.

Let me just run it over. Jacob, oh yes, I know Jacob. He's a schemer.

He's selfish. He's fearful. He's been lonely out there because he had to run from home.

Lonely from mom. Dad. All those years.

Whose fault was it? Suffering. Hardship. But, there's the grace of God on his life.

His testimony was not that great. There was a testimony then after he met this angel and rested with him. His testimony changed.

He has changed. And that's what we're going to get into next. So this is the setting.

Laban is behind him now. He's already dealt with Laban. He's had three deals with Laban.

And the final deal, the third deal, they made an agreement. It's best for them not to see each other anymore. They just didn't get along too good.

And Jacob, they were both two of a kind. And Laban, from the very start, he saw dollar signs wherever he saw. And he realized that he was blessed because of Jacob.

But in the end, Jacob just kept getting blessed and walked off with everything. And Laban tried to get it. He came to him and said, these are my daughters, these are my grandchildren, everything's mine.

But it really wasn't. But he had to parse. Okay, now, Laban's behind him.

Esau is before him. He's sent to tell him, tell Esau I'm coming. So news comes back, yeah, Esau's glad to hear you're coming.

And he's coming to see you. And he's got 400 men with him. Oh, no! I thought I got rid of my problems with Laban.

But do I have something coming with Esau? There's a day you've got to meet your Esau. And all of these things are designed to propel us into a life of perpetual, powerful, prevailing prayer. Alright, let's see where we go here.

So that's the setting. The significance now of chapter 32 of Genesis is this. He is going to meet God.

Now, we know the setting. We've got that going. In 32 and verse 1, Jacob went on his way and the angels of God met him.

And when Jacob saw them, he said, this is God's host. And he called the name of that place Mahanaim. And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau, his brother, into the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall you speak unto my lord Esau, thy servant Jacob, saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban. I've been there long enough. I have sojourned with Laban and stayed there until now.

And I have oxen and asses, flocks and menservants, and woman servants, and I have sent to tell my Lord that I may find grace in thy sight. He had good intentions. He hopes to get some things made straight.

And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed, and he divided the people that was with him and the camels into two bands. Verse 8, And said, If Esau come to the one company and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

And Jacob said, By the way, you see, this is the old Jacob. Always got a plan. Try to work things out, the best thing for him.

Doesn't matter so much as long as he gets what's best for him. And Jacob said, O God of my father, now this is not the first time he's had some communication with God. Basically, I think he's coming into his third time.

Because when he left, when he left home, he had the meeting with God. And then when he left Laban, and so he's had some contact with God. And we may mention that before.

Now notice his prayer. And Jacob said, O God of my father, Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saith unto me, Return into thy country. Remember God? You told me it's time to leave Laban.

This was your idea. And to thy kindred. And also, it was just good.

It was a three-way deal. Laban said, it's good for you to get out of here. Jabin said, it's good for me to get out of here.

And God says, it's time for you to get out of there too. To thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee. I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant.

For with my staff I passed over this Jordan. He recognized God's grace in his life. And now I am become two bands.

Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me and the mother with the children. And I personally believe Esau had that intention in mind. I don't believe he brought four hundred men just to help him come.

But he had evil intentions. He had been burning for all these years of what Jacob had done against him. Okay.

And thou saidst, notice, he's based on the Word, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude. And that was it. He prayed and he rested in God, didn't he? And he just banked on God.

Or was it his prayer and more scheming? Well, let's just see. And he lodged there that same night and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother, two hundred she-goats and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty milched camels with their colts, forty kine and ten bulls, twenty she-asses and ten foals. And he delivered them into the hand of his servants every drove by themselves, and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space between drove and drove.

He'd had a psychology class somewhere, I guess. He was hoping to sort of cool Esau down. And he commanded the foremost saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? And whither goest thou? And whose are these before thee? Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's.

It is a present sent unto my lord Esau. And, behold, also he is behind us. And so he commanded, He the second and the third and all that followed the drove, saying on this matter, Shall you speak unto Esau when you find him? And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us.

For he saith, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me. And afterward I will see his face, peradventure he will accept of me. So went the present over before him, and himself lodged that night in the company.

And he rose up that night and took his two wives and his two woman servants and his eleven sons and passed over the four jabok. You know what jabok means? Emptying. God is fixing to empty this old boy out.

He's fixing to get poured out. And he took them and sent them over the brook and sent over that he had. And Jacob was left alone.

Now we're going to get down into some things. So that's the setting. The significance now, he's fixing to meet somebody.

And here he goes. And Jacob was left alone. He's passed over jabok, this emptying, this running out.

And there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. Now I don't know how this happened. Brother Ron Dunn has a really neat message on this thing.

And he talks about Jacob sort of going along and then somebody jumps out and waylays him. Attacks him. And wrestle and they wrestle.

I don't know how it happened. It might have been something close to that. And here in 25 we go into it now.

And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh. And the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with him. And he said, the angel, let me go for the day breaketh.

And Jacob said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. Now do you see where this could go into some prayer principles? It really does. It's really good.

And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel. For as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

And Jacob asked him and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. I won't really go into this area of his name too much.

That's a whole exciting area. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel. For I have seen God face to face.

For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And as he passed over Peniel, the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh.

And to this day, because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, in the sinew that shrank. Now, I want to give you about four things about the significance of his meeting with God. And we're pretty familiar with this.

To go through all the background, it's got a lot of good stuff in it. But here's the first thing. In his meeting with God, when we meet with God, you will get blessed.

You'll get blessed. Every time. You'll get blessed.

You may not understand that what God's doing in your life, He's fixing to bless you. Because many times before we get the blessing, it looks like everything has fallen apart. This is not the road to blessing.

This is the road to total disaster. My life is ruined. And blah, blah, blah, blah.

And God says, are you done? You haven't even seen the end of the chapter yet. And you could be a Job or whatever. It didn't look like Job was getting blessed, did it? But Job's the same principle here.

Now, if you go back to verse 9 through 12, he's praying. It's a nice prayer, and he's praying the Word of God back. But in verse 13, he's back to scheming.

So he's really doing what we do. We pray and worry. Maybe I ought to just say, maybe you're saying, well, you've got a mouse in your pocket.

What's this we? I'm just assuming you might fail too. We pray and then we worry. Or we pray and we scheme, and this and that.

Now, he's going to get blessed. How is he going to get blessed? Let's look at this now. He's just met this angel who jumps out of the bushes, and this man, and wrestles with him.

He doesn't know who he's wrestling with. A highway robber. Who knows? Somebody on drugs.

He needs to get some money. But he's wrestling with him. At first, you don't know what's hit you.

But he's wrestling. He's realizing, I'm not winning this thing. And the one that's wrestling with him is not winning either.

When this angel jumped out and wrestled with him, he intended to prevail and pin him. But Jacob was strong. The old flesh is really strong.

Alright. How is he going to get blessed? Well, I've got these little things here. First of all, his problems have brought him face to face with God.

He'd been digging his own ditches. Hadn't he? You know. Laban didn't really start nothing.

And Esau didn't really start anything. But his just being there with Laban was problems because Laban was such a conniver himself. But number two, he's separated from his past.

It's behind him now. He's already got the deal set. They had the stones and they agreed that they wouldn't pass over to each other.

And so his past is behind him. Except for way back their past with Esau, he's fixing to catch up with his original past. So, he's separated though from Laban.

And here's the third thing I noticed. As he encounters this angel, he will receive power to face the future. Jacob, you're not ready to meet Esau.

You sure not. If you meet Esau in the strength of Jacob, guess who's going to win? Esau's going to eat your lunch because he's got 400 men with him. Do you see how God is continually drawing us to the point where we will learn to have prevailing prayer? He's not ready for that.

Now let's see. Okay. He will receive power to face the future.

To face this Esau. He's not ready yet. And number four, I've noticed this.

He will be delivered from his fears. In this encounter with this angel, he's going to be delivered from his fears. Now he's not going to realize it at first until he actually goes out and meets Esau in God's Esau form.

It takes a little bit of time for us to realize how much power is in our life as a Christian. This is why the devil hates us to be praying. Because if we're praying, the power of God is going to come out of our life and it comes not so much from our prayers, but from the fact that we've been in the presence of God.

And God's power and His presence has saturated us and comes out of our life. This is why just saying your prayers is not going to do anything. Oh God, bless Aunt Susie's toe, it sure hurts.

That's not praying. But if you get in there, Oh God, would you touch Aunt Susie's toe? She's going to get gangrene and lose her leg. It's the intensity of our prayer and the sincerity of our prayer that brings us into contact with God.

God's not impressed with cold, callous, cold as a cucumber prayers. And so this is why He's allowing Jacob. God works with our circumstances.

So He's just allowing Jacob to go along and be Jacob. And at a certain point, then God says that's enough. Everybody's sick of Jacob.

You've left nothing. And so let's change this Jacob into an Israel. And here he's going.

Okay, he's going to be delivered from his fears. And he doesn't even realize after his encounter with this angel how much power is in his life until as he moves on in his life. And that's an interesting study.

But this fifth one, I think hits it down to the heart. Jacob is going to be separated from his biggest problem. What's your biggest problem, Jacob? It's Esau.

Uh-uh. Jacob, your biggest problem is Jacob. And you can't have power with Esau until you have been conquered yourself.

And we're fixing to take care of this for you. And here he goes. So he's going to be separated from himself.

And he says, look at v. 11. Go back to v. 11. When he started off in v. 11.

Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother. When in reality it should have said, Deliver me from me. If God can get Jacob taken care of, then He can get to Esau.

And if God can get to the old Jacob in us, then He can take care of anything else. So many times we spend a lot of our time out here on the side issues dealing with this and that and that. And the real issue is the heart, has it been surrendered? The surrendered heart is the heart that produces a powerful testimony.

Powerful testimony in Jacob? Not too much. Afterwards, there's going to be the power of God on his life. We won't go into it.

But those prayer principles, those powerful prayer principles are seen in his life afterwards. So, first thing, he's going to be blessed. The second thing is this.

A, he'll be blessed. The first thing, he's going to be blessed. And the second is, he's going to have his confidence in himself completely destroyed.

And he's going to try one more time after he leaves there with his scheming and everything. Then he's going to see that God took care of Esau, but he's going to have his confidence in himself destroyed. Would you like me to describe self to you? You say, no, I don't really need you to describe self.

I live with self all the time. I know how he is, or she is, that lives inside of me. It's not very pleasant.

It's the one that gets upset. But here's evidences of the Jacob life. Number one evidence that's been demonstrated in Jacob's life, which is an evidence of not praying in power.

This, not waiting on God. Those that cannot wait on God do not know how to pray. Prayer is a business of waiting on God and waiting in the presence of God.

It's not a business of passivity, but it's a business of intensity, of waiting on God. And sometimes it's in silence, sometimes it's in agony, sometimes it's in crying, but it's always in the presence of God, waiting on God until you prevail. That's one evidence of not waiting on God.

Sarah, would you like to get up and give a testimony? How much trouble did you cause us? You influenced Abraham and he listened to you and we've got a whole war going on in our world. Yes, yes, yes. I should have waited on God and stuck to His promises.

What about King Saul? Couldn't wait till the prophet got there. We always get ourselves into trouble when we don't wait. Not waiting on God is a clear evidence of not praying.

And not praying is a clear evidence of no confidence in God. And not praying is more evidence of confidence in myself. And so, God has to destroy that in him.

Here's another evidence of trying to help God out. He'd already prevailed in prayer. He'd already been blessed.

He had his name changed. God said, you've got power with Me. You've got power with men.

And so then He takes off from him his powerful encounter with God and he's still scheming. Okay, you guys go first. He'd already won the victory.

But he didn't know how much he had in Christ. And the devil will whip you as long as he can get you to just think about yourself. Oh, you don't have any power.

But if you recognize your position in Christ, he's given a new position. Powerful. Pray! Why worry when you can pray? Here's the third thing.

Evidence of self. He's not waiting on God and trying to help God. And the third one is resisting God.

Resisting God. Stephen told them, you do always resist the Holy Spirit. Resisting God.

If we look back, say if your life covers 1,500,000 miles, how many of that 1,500,000 miles has the hills dragging you along? How many of those 1,500,000 miles you'll be walking with God in confidence and peace? I'm afraid we might not like how many miles we've got with our heels dragging. But he says, let's let it go. Listen to what someone said.

Self never discloses the intensity of its strength until all its fighting power is summoned in resistance as God closes in upon it. He's closing in on old Jacob. Same thing with old Saul of Tarsus.

He was closing in. And we put up our most resistance right down to the last. And it's crazy because God's just trying to bless us.

Now, let's go to a third major area. First was he's going to be blessed. He's going to have his confidence destroyed in this encounter with this angel.

And then, sadly, so to say, as it happens to many of us, he's just going to have to be crippled. He's just going to have to be broke. We can get the victory one way or the other.

We can get it easy or we can get it the hard way. So many of us are like, where'd it go? This nut. This Brazil nut.

We're just hard nuts to crack. That's what Jacob was. I told you I was a Jacob.

We're hard nuts to crack. And God's got to come along and, you know, alright, you can let me just take you apart my way, gently, or we can just take you apart like that. But we're going to take you apart and get to the nut inside.

Now, how's God been having to deal with you? Yeah. And God does get a bigger stick. Sometimes God has to deal with us that way.

He doesn't want to. Did you notice in the passage here, and when He saw that He prevailed not against Him, when this angel that's represented by the Lord Jesus Christ, I believe it's the Lord Jesus Christ in the pre-incarnate form, and when He saw that He prevailed not against Him, He touched the hollow of His thigh. And the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with Him.

And He said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. Jacob, even though he's crippled, is not going to let Him go, no matter what. There wrestled a man with Him until the breaking of the day.

And when He saw that He prevailed not against Him, He touched the hollow of His thigh. Would it have been a little bit easier if He would have just given up? I surrender all. You've got me.

Either way, He's going to get him. The hard way or the easy way. Now, he's crippled.

That word touched. The reason I brought this little baseball bat, which is designed by the Fire Protection Agency for breaking windows out so you can get out of your house, and Vicki won this last year at a deal we went to with my mom and dad. And so she had it laying there by the bed and I said, Don't break the window, just open it.

You'll cut yourself. It's not a good idea unless you've got a solid window that won't open. The word in the Hebrew, touched, the very first thing means to smite, to beat, to strike.

If somebody did that to your thigh and took, say, this bat to your thigh, it would damage you. Probably you wouldn't be able to walk. But there's another word that means just to touch.

They say that this strongest muscle in the body, horses can't hardly put it apart, but if you twist it, you can get it out. And somehow or another, God just touched him and twisted it and shrunk it. So here he goes.

Now he's walking with a limp. The rest of his life, Jacob will walk with a limp. But he's also going to walk with the power of God.

It seems like it might be a little easier to walk without the limp. But we have to have the limp if we won't surrender early. But either way, God's going to get him into being in a position of power.

Now, he kept wrestling with him and God's touch is always in our life a touch of authority. It's always a touch of authority. Remember when Miriam stepped out of line? God touched her with leprosy.

That was the authority of God stepping in saying, nope, no more. Many in the Bible had the touch of God's authority on them when they got out of line. Somebody looked at the prophet and said, go get him in his hands.

The touch of God's authority is coming upon him in power. What is God after? What is God after in you? What is He after? What does He want you to surrender? What is it you're holding on to? What is it you won't let go? Jacob was a tough nut. Alright.

Paul smote him with blindness. I believe he had trouble seeing the rest of his life. There's evidence in there.

Just the touch of authority. He'd gone too far. Nebuchadnezzar.

Touch of authority. I'm the king. Nobody's bigger and tougher than me.

The next day he wakes up and he gives orders for breakfast and he goes, moo. And God struck him with mad cow disease. The touch of God's authority on a life is powerful.

Now let's move on. So his strength is weakened as he wrestled. And here he goes.

Now we go to the fourth thing. Final thing. He is now clinging.

All he's got strength to do is just hang on. There's no way he's going to pin this man that he's wrestling with. But all he can do now is cling.

He's just locked in and resting on it. He doesn't have any strength left to try to pin us upon it. But now he's just clinging.

He's not going to let go. I will not let thee go except thou bless me. You know I think he realized something? That when that angel that he's wrestling with smote him on the thigh, that when he felt that, he said, whoa, this is more powerful than I am! This man, whatever he is, is powerful! I don't know what was going on in his mind, but now he's saying, would You bless me? Would You bless me? I want Your blessing.

Must have been an amazing evening there. Now he's clinging. He won't let go.

He won't let go until he gets a blessing. What changed him? I believe he's changed. Something happened to him.

What changed him? I think it was the touch. Because you see, an authoritative touch of God on our life, we always recognize it. Many of us have been touched by the chastening hand of God.

Whoa, I recognize what you're doing. And God gently comes in at first, and then if we don't respond a little bit harder, just like our children, you know, give you a little, alright, Johnny boy, and then pretty soon we have to go whoop, whoop, whoop. He just wouldn't listen.

You know? Until we get the will submitted. And if we never get the will submitted in the child, you've got a rebellious child. And that's what's wrong in our country and the whole world.

Alright, he's now clinging. He's got this touch. He recognizes something's happened.

Now here's some closing lessons. Number one, I believe he refused to give up because he recognized the authoritative touch of God on his life. And the Scripture says in verse 28, and he said, now notice 25, and when he saw that he prevailed not against Him, he touched the hollow of his thigh.

The angel, the Lord Jesus Christ, couldn't prevail against Him. Come down to 28. And the angel, this man he's wrestling with, the Lord Jesus Christ said, thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel, for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

The word prevail means overcome. The angel, this one he's wrestling with, says you have overcome me. You've won.

But in overcoming and wrestling it out and not letting go, the angel overcame him. Now let's see if I can take you down through something here. He surrendered at the point of the touch.

But he hung on. He was prevailing. He surrendered at the point of conquest.

At that point, I believe he was resting. He wasn't struggling anymore, he was just hanging on. He couldn't win.

He realized he got a hold of something bigger than him. Now let's keep on going down through here. J. Vernon McGee says he got the victory not by fighting, but by yielding.

But in his yielding, he didn't let go. And this is the idea in prevailing prayer. God wants us to get a hold of Him in such a degree that we will not let Him go until He blesses us.

And this is the difference between an intercessor and a prayer warrior. A prayer warrior will move into the area and fight and lay in there until God tells him to move off and do something else. He'll just keep on in there, and he may move over to another area.

But an intercessor will not quit until he prevails. Until he gets what he wants. What he knows that God wants.

An intercessor is what God wants us to be in praying. He wants us to learn to prevail. We know what God wants.

We know what's wrong. And we know that God has spoke to us and we're going to get with Him and we're going to wrestle and we're going to believe Him until we get it. There have been folks in this world that have believed God for revival in their areas.

And they would prevail for many long years. And they would know in their spirit when God had gave it to them, even before it came. This is what God wants us to learn from the life of Jacob.

To be overcomers. So he started out in humility. Verse 10 and 11.

He's there in desperation. In verse 13, he's standing on God's Word. In verse 28, he's ending up with power in his life.

Just quite a time there. Someone said the path of obedience is one of trials. Not my add to it, but if we'll stick it out, it will end in power in our life.

Here is the love of the chief shepherd for this little wild, woolly sheep. He was going to see Jacob through to the end. Just like he's going to do you and me.

He's going to see you through to the end. We may give up on him, but he's not going to give up on us. And this is what he wants us to be.

Overcomers. This is the love of the chief shepherd in its extreme. Moving to bring him out of himself into his identification with Christ.

And he left that mountain a powerful man. When I got saved, I didn't even know what happened to me. It just took years to get it figured out.

And this is the way it was with him. Now here's a sixth thing. These lessons.

Fifth one being there. Well, I didn't do that fifth one. He was told to return.

And I had a point on that. That when God told him to return in Genesis 31, 3, back in there. God was saying, Don't spend all your life with Laban.

There's not going to be any eternal spiritual fruit. Now here's a sixth thing. And this is moving in towards the end.

It was in his contact with this angel, fellowship with this angel that he found the secret of power. And what is that secret of power? What is that secret of prevailing? What was it that Jesus was after in his life? The secret was don't give up. Don't give up.

That's the heart of faith. It will not give up. If faith quits, it wasn't faith.

It was feelings. He would not give up. And so here we have the man Jacob.

And when the angel had Jacob, then Jacob had the angel. When God gets us, then we have Him. And we just refuse to let go.

There's a Bible passage that Jesus taught in the book of Luke, in chapter 11, that really goes along a lot with this. You remember the fellow that had a neighbor? And he says, I've got company. Would you give me three loaves of bread? We went over this the other night.

Because the disciples were wanting to know about prayer. They didn't ask Jesus, teach us how to pray. They said, Jesus, teach us to pray.

And you go, was it Luke 11? I think it was. You go to Luke 11. He teaches them to pray.

We've got all these how-tos. He said, we don't want the theory. We've seen you pray.

They've watched him pray. They've watched him pray in the night. And they watched the next day.

Demons getting cast out and all of this stuff. And they said, Lord Jesus, would you teach us to pray? And what did He teach them? He taught them the lesson of Jacob. And what's the lesson of Jacob? Don't give up.

That's all it is. That's the secret of power of God in your life. Is you don't give up.

Once you give up, you're looking at somebody else. But as long as you don't give up, you are clinging to the Lord. Don't ever give up.

Just don't ever give up. In the process of bringing out a butterfly, and I don't have one, he goes through the stage of being in the cocoon and growing. Going through the channel and coming out and then flying.

Which, and they're all important, but which is the most crucial for his survival as a butterfly? We all know going through the channel and struggling to get out. Don't look for a shortcut. Go through it.

Go through. Go through. Don't give up.

It's the power of prevailing prayer is you don't give up. You just never give up. God will come through.

There were two fathers going to a mission field. At least I know one of them was going through the mission field, but they both lost their sons. The first one who lost his sons got very bitter at God and gave up

everything.

Just gave up the faith and whatever. He was bitter against God. The next one, they were going to Russia, and they were candidating at a church, and after the church, the little boy ran out, ran in front of a car, and he got killed.

And somebody asked him, well, what's this mean? We're moving on. And they went on to the mission field, and they went to Russia. And they discovered something in Russia.

They're trying to have contact with the people, and all of a sudden, they made a discovery, a secret of power, of connection. And that was this, that the Russian people, because they've had so much suffering and so much sorrow, they identify with sorrow. And when he shared his story, they bonded.

And he connected. And there was power of connection. Oh yes, we understand you lost your son.

Oh! There's somebody else that lost his son. You know who it is. And he died for you.

There's power in prevailing prayer. There's power. So he had a new name.

He had a new character. He was reliable now. New nature.

Trusting. Not trusting Jacob anymore. A new title.

A prince. New power. With God and with men.

And you'll never have power with men until you have power with God. It's got to come first. And you can't do it without that prevailing prayer.

So, Jacob shows up the next morning. Rachel and Leah see him coming. Whoa! What happened to you? You look like you got beat up.

He says, I got blessed. I mean, he's all tore up and bruised and everything. I have been blessed.

It'll be worth it all. It'll be worth it all. He walked with God.

He walked with God and power from that night on. He had many more tests. Let's pray.

Before we go to songs, I just wonder if God has been knocking on your door. And in your spirit and in your heart, you've given up on something. And if the Lord isn't saying, don't give up on me.

I want you to prevail. I want you to be an overcomer. Right there.

We make the decision for victory. Dear Lord, thank you for not giving up on us. When you went into that garden of Gethsemane, you won the victory there.

And because you won the victory in the garden, you could get it at the cross. And so, Father, I think you're speaking to us. And you're telling us, get the victory in the closet.

So when we go out in the street, it's already been won. And just like Jacob, when he left his closet there with you that night, he had the power of God on his life and he didn't even realize it. But his Esau recognized it.

And so, Father, I just pray that you would take this message and burn into our hearts. That when we walk with you, you want us and you intend on us walking in power. And you know we've had many severe trials.

And we may have even more severe trials. But I pray that we never forget this message today. That if we're going to prevail and be overcomers, we must never give up.

Thank you, Father, for meeting with us. Minister to us as we worship you and listen to you. And continue to walk with you this day.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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