

(Genesis) Genesis 33 Introduction

by J. Vernon McGee

The sermon explores Jacob's transformation from a man of the flesh to a man of faith, highlighting the struggle between the old and new nature and the need to yield to God.

Duration: 5:35

Topics: "Spiritual Struggle", "Gods Grace"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the struggle between the old nature and the new nature in believers. He emphasizes that the old nature, characterized by the flesh, cannot please God. The preacher uses the example of Jacob, who initially refused to surrender to God but eventually yielded after God touched his thigh. He compares Jacob's journey to the apostle Paul's experience of trying to live the Christian life in his own strength and failing. The preacher concludes by highlighting the need for believers to rely on God's strength and grace to live a life of faith.

Transcript

Now today, friends, as we come to this 33rd chapter of the book of Genesis, we're following along in the life of this man Jacob. Now, last time we saw what we call the high point in his life, and that high point was that he met God. God went after him.

That night we're told a man wrestled with him, and the man did the wrestling, not Jacob. He's not looking for another fight. He's got enough trouble on his hands.

He has Uncle Laban back of him and Brother Esau ahead of him, and the last time he saw both of them, they were breathing out threatenings against him. And this man Jacob is not in a position to take on someone else. And therefore, the man took the initiative.

He was the aggressor. As we said, it was the pre-incarnate Christ. Now, if you'll notice how God dealt with him, how the Lord dealt with him.

This man Jacob refused to give in at first. That's typical of him. And he knew a few holds.

He thought that after a while he'd be able to overcome. He found out he couldn't overcome, but he would not surrender. And so what did God do? Well, absolutely, God in a moment with His superior strength could have pinned his shoulders down, but may I say to you, He wouldn't have pinned His will down.

It's like that little boy I told you about. His mama made him sit in a corner in his room, and after a while she heard a noise in there, and she said to him, Willie, are you sitting down? And he said, yes, I'm sitting down, but I'm standing up on the inside of me. And old Jacob would have been standing up on the inside of him.

He wasn't ready to yield. And notice how God did it. He touched the hollow of his thigh, just a touch of the finger of God, and this man becomes helpless.

But you see, God's not pinning His shoulders down. This man keeps on with him, and Jacob holds on to him. The man says, let me go.

And Jacob said, no, I want your blessing. He's now clinging to God. The struggling and striving is over.

And from here on, I think you're going to find a man not in a moment's notice change, because psychologists tells you today that these habits we form, they set up certain synaptical connections in our nervous system, and we do things by habit. We're creatures of habit. And this man will lapse back in his ways many times.

But I want to tell you, we begin to see something in the man now, and before we're through with him, while we find that he is a real man of God. Actually, we see him at home and in the land of Haran. He's a man of the flesh.

And then here at Peniel, at the brook Jabbok, he's fighting. And now after this and on down into Egypt, especially, he's a man of faith. First, a man of the flesh, a man that's fighting, struggling, and then a man of the faith.

Now, that's the apostle Paul. There were three periods in his life. He was converted, and then he thought he could live the Christian life.

And that's where I made my mistake. When I became a Christian, I frankly thought I could live the Christian life. After all, Vernon McGee didn't need any help.

I could do it as easy. But I didn't do it. That was the hard part.

And that is the part where you will recall that Paul had his problem. What I would not do, I continue to do. And he found out that there was not only no good in the old nature, but there was no strength or power in the new nature.

And finally, we hear him crying out in Romans 7, verse 24, O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And then something happened. I thank God. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

And it's through Him that you'll have to do all your thanking, because that's where your help is going to come, through Him. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. And that's the way that it is with all of us.

We have that old nature, and it can't do anything that will please God. In fact, Paul went on to say that it was an enmity against God. They that are in the flesh, Paul said, cannot please God.

Romans 8.8. You cannot please God in the flesh. And it's not until you and I yield to Him. And yield means it's an act of the will of a regenerated person yielding to God.

What a picture that we have here. And all of these things happened unto these for examples unto us. Now we are going to follow Jacob from here on.

And something happens in the 33rd chapter. Almost think we've met a new man. To tell the truth, we have met a new man.

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