



Sermon Series: Navigating Family Conflict

To be used with Session 3: Isaac and Rebekah: Family Favorites

Sermon Title Possibilities: Faithfulness in Family Relationships

Scripture: Genesis 25:24-28; 27:5-13

Connection with Unit Theme: This sermon complements the Bible study “Navigating Family Conflict.” It shows us how to love our family members without favoritism. When the Lord Jesus exhorts us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and mind (Matt. 22:37), and to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31), this applies especially to those who are in our families.

Introduction: To give us some context for these two passages, permit me to give us some analytical outlines of Genesis chapter 25 and 27. Genesis 25 can be outlined as such: The Death of Abraham v.1-10; The Descendants of Ishmael v.11-18; The Descendants of Isaac v.19-26; and The Deceptiveness of Jacob v.27-34. Genesis 27 can be outlined as such: The Desire in Isaac v.1-5; The Dysfunction in Rebekah v.6-17; The Deception in Jacob v.18-27; The Declaration of Blessing v.28-29; The Disappointment of Esau v.30-40; The Darkness in Esau v.41; and The Directions from Rebekah v.42-46. Our passage encourages us to acknowledge differences in the family, avoid difference-making in the family, and abhor deception in the family.

1. Acknowledge Differences in the Family (Gen. 25: 24-27)

What I want us to see first is that these twins were different. Esau came out red and hairy and Jacob came out reaching and not hairy. When they grew up, Esau was a man of the field, but Jacob was a homebody. These men represent all of humanity. We all are different from one another. The people in our families are different, and we are all unique because God made us this way. Let us learn to accept our family members for who they are and love them the way they are. After all, to love God is to love others (1 John 4:20-21).

2. Avoid Difference-Making in the Family (Gen. 25:28)

This verse gives us the root problem of this dysfunctional family. The text says, “Isaac loved Esau because he had a taste for wild game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.” The mother and father had favorites in the family. The family is no place for favoritism. When it comes to

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our children, though we may have to train them differently we must treat them the same (Prov. 22:6). We must nurture each of the (Eph. 6:4) and disciple each of them (Deut. 6:4-9).

3. Abhor Deception in the Family (Gen. 27:5-13)

We should acknowledge differences and avoid difference-making in our families, but we must also abhor deception. We see deception on a high level in Genesis 27. Rebekah overhears Isaac promising to bless Esau once he brings him a meal. She then misleads Jacob to go bring her two goats so she can make his father's favorite meal. When Jacob tells his mother that Esau is hairy and he is smooth, his mother tells him to bring the goats and let her handle the rest. So, Jacob deceives his dying father and steals his brother's blessing. The lesson for us is to avoid deception all together. The Lord hates lying, cheating, and defaming of others (Prov. 6:16-19). The Scriptures challenges us to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15,25).

Conclusion: How can we be faithful in our family relationships? We must acknowledge differences in the members of the family. We must avoid making differences in the family. Don't show favoritism and we must abhor deception in the family. We should love our family members too much to deceive them. We must seek the Lord to help us be faithful in our family relationships.

Author Bio

Reginald D. Taylor is a graduate of Crichton College, Union University, Capital Seminary, and is currently pursuing the Ph.D. degree at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the senior Pastor of The Rock Church and Assistant Professor/Director of Urban Theological Studies at MCUTS @ Union University in Memphis TN. He and his wife Dr. Tarra R. Taylor has one son—Reginald D. Taylor II—and three grandchildren Micah, Yara, and Aviyah.

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