



Connect Discussion Guide

3.21.21 Message | Scott Bates | Genesis 32:22-32

God will do whatever it takes to protect his covenant.

Key Scriptures:

The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had. And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day.

When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered."

The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip. Therefore to this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh.

- Genesis 32:22-32

By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff.

- Hebrews 11:21

Message Highlights:

- Jacob's name meant "taking hold of the heel, supplanter, layer of snares." As we read his story in Genesis, Jacob definitely lived up to his name.
- Jacob tricked his brother and his father, stealing away his brother's birthright. Later in life, he tricked his father-in-law.
- Jacob had been unwilling or unable to trust God and God's plan. Because of this, Jacob would take matters into his own hands, leading to broken relationships with God and others.
- At Jacob's most vulnerable moment, God shows up. God engages with Jacob.
- God reminds Jacob who is in control, but also shows Jacob that he wants to bless him.
- God has a plan. He is willing to wrestle with you as long as it takes for you to trust Him and His plan.

Conversation Starter:

- Think back to the elementary age version of yourself; what did you want to be when you grew up? How similar or different does your life look now compared to that hope?

Discuss the Message:

1. Recount Jacob's plan for obtaining that which he desperately wanted, the birthright. How could Jacob's actions and motivations be categorized or described? How might his actions have instead looked if he had truly trusted God and his plan?
2. Esau sells his birthright in exchange for a bowl of stew; from our perspective, it is easy to see how foolish this trade is, however, can you think of a time when you traded a priceless gift for instant gratification? If given the chance, what scriptural advice would you offer Esau?
3. Have you ever been in a similar situation as Jacob, wrestling with God over your plans versus his? Do you tend to put your plan ahead of God's and take matters into your own hands? Talk about at least one new rhythm you could implement to practice the discipline of trusting God and his plan.
4. The truth is, God will not give up on you and he is willing to wrestle with you as long as it takes for you to trust him and his plan. Knowing God's patience and sovereignty, what might it look like to practice submission to God? How would this practice impact your patience and relationships with those closest to you?
5. Jacob displayed faith for promises unseen in Hebrews 11:21, "By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff." Though we now know God fulfilled the promises Jacob had not yet seen, how do you think that would have felt to trust God in this moment? What does Jacob's trust reveal about his relationship with God?

Pray:

Heavenly Father, you are a loving and generous God! Forgive us for the times we struggle against you, when we grasp for control instead of trusting you. Help us, by your Spirit, to resist any temptations to use deceit as a means to obtain that which you already want to bless us with by your grace. We trust that you want only what is best for us always. Help us to trust you for that and to receive it in faith, instead of fighting to take it and make it happen on our own. Thank you for not giving up on us when we have grappled with you. May we be known as those who have wrestled with you and have prevailed, because we have surrendered to your rule over our lives. Amen.