

Hard Lessons

May 29, 2011

Oakbrook Community Church (PCA)

Genesis 29:1-30; Hebrews 12:3-17

Pastor Mark W. Turner

God uses circumstances to shape His people

- Contrast chp 29 w/ chp 24: prayer vs. non-prayer
- God was working 1) promise in 28:15; 2) behold - dramatic surprise; 3) God was watching whole time 29:31
- Jacob thinks he is the arranger of circumstances
“God uses circumstances to break our dependence on the flesh and shape us into the image of Christ”

App: Do you spend more time praying, knowing and acknowledging God or scheming and arranging your circumstances?

God uses consequences to shape His people

- Laban's generous offer (15) may not be so generous
- Jacob's flight left him having to work for bride
- God allows 'poetic justice': the deceiver gets deceived (25)

God uses challenging people to shape His people

- God ordains our neighbors, spouse, children, boss, co-workers, etc.
- God even uses 'challenging people' in His plan

God uses time to shape His people

- What was to be a 'few days' turns into 20 years!
- God's timetable is often long: Joseph in jail (Gen 39:19-23); Israel 400 yrs in slavery; Moses 40 yrs tending sheep, 40 yrs wandering in desert
- God has an eternal perspective — His refining is usually not “instant”

God uses continuous grace to shape His people

- Grace is not earned or deserved
- God's grace is despite our sin and only because of Christ's holiness, not ours — so stop trying to earn grace and live in grace

Lessons:

- Acknowledge & see God in the daily events of YOUR life!
Heb 5:8; “This is the Stuff”
- Submit to God and live a cross-examined life
Stop denying sin and blaming others...
Confess sin and embrace God's grace that overcomes your sin
- Don't flee from challenging people in your life
Ask God to shape you into His image through others & circumstances
- Thank God continually for His Grace despite your sin!
Live in His grace. Heb 12:3-17

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