

SERMON: GENESIS – WRESTLING WITH GOD (Genesis 32)

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As Jacob is running from his brother, he wrestles with God in the middle of the night. Have you ever felt like you were wrestling with God? Counterintuitively, our greatest struggles with God can lead to great growth in our strength and in our faith. God uses even our weaknesses to His glory, if we humble ourselves and cling to His strength.

“When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, ‘We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.’”

– Genesis 32:6

_____ did it come to this?

Genesis 27:41, Genesis 31:51-52, Gen 32:1-7

“Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, ‘The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob.’” – Genesis 27:41

The principle: **The more you watch out for _____
the _____ and emptier you’ll become.**

Jacob _____ with God.

Genesis 32:22-32, John 21:15-19

“So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak.”

– Genesis 32:24

What we learn from the struggle:

1. Our struggles _____ us.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

2. Our struggles _____ us.

Genesis 33:1-3, Rom 15:30

“He himself went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he approached his brother.” – Genesis 33:3

We are _____ through the struggle.

Genesis 33:1-16, Isaiah 53:4-6, 2 Cor 12:9

“But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.” – Isaiah 53:5



Questions for individual or group reflection:

What are you struggling with in life right now?

What have you done, or are doing, that may contribute to that?

Have you ever been at odds with another person, even a family member? How did it feel?

Discuss the principle: “The more you watch out for yourself, the lonelier and emptier you’ll become.”

Discuss its converse: “The more you give of yourself, the more connected and fuller your life will become.”

How is Jacob’s wrestling with God (Genesis 32:22-32) similar to Peter’s discussion with Jesus in John 21:15-19?

How is wrestling with God a metaphor for your struggles in life?

What may God be teaching you through your struggles?

How might He be wanting to change you through them?

Do you think you’re resisting God’s changes in your life?

Why might you still be wrestling Him? Are you perhaps waiting for a blessing from God?

If you’re waiting for God to bless you, what are you waiting for?

What greater purpose does God want to do through you that you may be delaying by wrestling with Him?

How can you move forward in strength by embracing your weakness? How is that a blessing?

Taking it home / Memory Verse:

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. – 2 Corinthians 12:9

GENESIS

WRESTLING WITH GOD



VETERANS DAY

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

GENESIS

WRESTLING WITH GOD

When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, “We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and **four hundred men are with him.**”

GENESIS 32:6

HOW did it come to this?

Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are near; **then I will kill my brother Jacob.**”

GENESIS 27:41

⁵¹ Laban also said to Jacob, “Here is this heap, and here is this pillar I have set up between you and me. ⁵² This heap is a witness, and this pillar is a witness, that **I will not go past** this heap to your side to harm you and that **you will not go past** this heap and pillar to my side to harm me.”

GENESIS 31:51-52

...four hundred men are with him.

GENESIS 32:26

²² That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok.

²³ After he had **sent them across** the stream, he sent over **all his possessions**.

GENESIS 32:22-23

The principle: The more you watch out for yourself, the lonelier and emptier you'll become.

Jacob WRESTLES with God.

So Jacob was left alone, and a man **wrestled** with him till daybreak.

GENESIS 32:24

“wrestled” – *aqob* – “Jacob”



When the man saw that he **could not overpower him**, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man.

GENESIS 32:25

When the man saw that he could not overpower him, **he touched the socket of Jacob's hip** so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man.

GENESIS 32:25

Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go **unless you bless me.**”

GENESIS 32:26





Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go **unless you bless me.**”

GENESIS 32:26

27 The man asked him, “What is your name?”
“Jacob,” he answered. 28 Then the man said,
“Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel,
because you have struggled with God and with
humans and have overcome.”

GENESIS 32:27-28

What we learn from the struggle:

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1. Our struggles TEACH us.

I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9

What we learn from the struggle:

1. Our struggles TEACH us.
2. Our struggles CHANGE us.

¹ Jacob looked up and there was Esau, coming with his four hundred men; so he divided the children among Leah, Rachel and the two female servants. ² He put the female servants and their children in front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph in the rear.

GENESIS 32:1-3

“He himself went on ahead and **bowed down to the ground seven times** as he approached his brother.”

GENESIS 33:3

“But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; **he threw his arms around his neck** and kissed him. And **they wept.**”

GENESIS 33:3

We are **BLESSED** through the struggle.



Surely He took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered Him stricken by God, smitten by Him, and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and **by His wounds we are healed...**

ISAIAH 53:4-6

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