

“Jacob – A Relationship with God is Established” Gen. 28,32,35

Open: Story

- Prior to this point, Jacob meeting God at Bethel, there is no evidence that Jacob has a **personal** relationship with God. Jacob’s knowledge of who God is, is based solely on his parent’s experience.
 - God introduces Himself to Jacob and **promises** blessings to Jacob if Jacob will follow Him. **Gen. 28:11-17**
 - Jacob **promises** to step out by faith and trust God for provisions and blessings in life. **Gen. 28:20-22**
- **NOTE:** *God gave Jacob both a spiritual and a physical promise of blessing. Jacob allowed the physical blessing to increase his faith to the point of being able to claim the spiritual blessings God had prepared for him. Often God wets our appetite for spiritual things through physical avenues.*
- God puts Jacob’s faith to the test by calling him to leave a **place** of prosperity and return home (a place of potential contention.) **Gen. 31:1-7; 11-14**
 - No monetary gain can replace the blessings of a personal relationship with God.
 - Approximately 30 years after Jacob leaves home.
 - He has worked the 14 years for his father-in-law to be able to marry Rachel.
 - He has had 12 new additions born to his family.
 - Jacob’s relationship with God became **personal** when his desire to know God personally increased. **Gen. 32:24-30**
 - Jacobs **personal** relationship with God is renewed when he returns to the **place** of his commitment to God. **Gen. 35:1-3**
- **NOTE:** *Jacob’s heart had grown cold and indifferent. He had allowed the tangible gods of this world to replace his faith in God. Just as at the beginning, of Jacobs life, God reaches out and calls Jacob to return to the lifestyle that would allow God to bless him.*

Tran: App.

- A relationship with God is a **personal** choice that is made individually. Others can impart knowledge about who God is; but getting to know God is done on a personal level.
 - There needs to come a point in everyone’s life that they go from knowing God vicariously (substitutionally) to personally.
- There will come a point in everyone’s relationship with God when God calls you to increase your **faith** by calling you to increase your **obedience**.
 - A personal relationship with God can only continue to grow when one is willing to go from *learning* about who God is to *doing* what God has instructed. The journey of faith of the previous generation is not enough for the next generation.
- A personal relationship will only stay fresh and real when one is willing to **examine** one’s life and remove things that have caused an individual to grow astray from God.
 - It is human nature to grow cold in your relationship with God, which is why it is important to occasionally revisit your place of commitment and surrender to God.

I. Choose to follow God wherever He leads you. (Be willing to do what’s best for children by teaching them to follow God....Jacob & Rebekah vs Laban .)

- **Lk. 14:26-27** “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. [27] And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”
- A. God led Jacob away from **family** and **friends** into the wilderness; but because Jacob followed, he was introduced to God, and we find the beginning of his relationship with God. **Gen. 28:5, 11-22**
- i. Often God leads us away from family to increase our dependance and our realization of our need of Him in our life. (It was not until Jacob’s relationship with God was improved that we find his relationship with his family improving.)
 - ii. God has unique blessings and more of the same blessings available to each of his children. (Each is made with a unique purpose for God.)
 - iii. To receive all that God has available for you, He must be the priority on your life.

- B. God led Jacob away from a place of economic **comfort**; but because Jacob followed, God was able to prove Himself to Jacob in a greater way. **Gen. 31:3-17**
- i. Often God must get us away from a place of plenty to renew our desire for a relationship with Him. **Gen. 32:24-28**
 - ii. God does not want the blessings He intended to strengthen our faith; to become an excuse for a lack of faith.
 - a. Often, as in Jacob's case, we replace a dependance on God with a dependance on the things that have been a direct result our dependance on God.
 - b. Too often Christians make the blessings of God a god in their life; to the point they will not follow God, when He is trying to lead them to a place of greater blessings
- C. God led Jacob to return to the place of **surrender**; and because Jacob followed his lifestyle was cleaned up which allowed God to bless him in a greater way. **Gen. 35:1-15**
- o Often, God must remind us to return to a place of surrender because we have grown cold and indifferent in our relationship with God.

II. Develop a *desire* to get to know God personally. (Teach your children they get close to God the same way they get close to you. Don't be stingy with your child's affection, improve their capacity to love you by teaching them to love God.)

- **Desire** – A longing, to eagerly crave, or a perpetual appetite that cannot be satisfied with anything else.
 - o **Prov 18:1** *“Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom.”*
 - **Gen. 32:26** *“And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.”*
- A. The desire to know God personally is increased through an increased desire of **reading** the Word of God. **Ps. 119:131** *“The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple. [131] I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.”*
- **Rom.10:17** *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”*
- B. The desire to know God personally is increased through an increase desire of **attending** the House of God. **Ps. 63:1-2** *“O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; [2] To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.”*
- **Is. 44:2-4** *“Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. [3] For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: [4] And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses.”*
- C. The desire to know God personally is increased through an increase of desire in **doing** the work of God. **Col. 1:9-10** *“For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; [10] That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;”*
- We need to spend more time doing what we know than we do spending time seeking for the answers to questions we do not know.

III. Guard yourself from growing cold and indifferent in your relationship with God; but when you do, seek God's face, and ask God to give you a tender heart.

- Jacob had grown comfortable and therefore he grew cold and indifferent towards the blessings of God. This caused his eyes to be turned to the gods of this world. **Gen. 35:1-4**
 - **Hosea 10:12-13** *“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you. [13] Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men.”*
- A. Stay in recognition of who **you** are. **Ps. 51:1-12**
 - i. Guard yourself from getting to the point where you fail to recognize sin in your own life.
 - ii. Guard yourself from getting so proud you neglect to keep a clean slate with God.
- B. Stay in recognition of who **God** is. **Is. 40:25-28** *“To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. [26] Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth. [27] Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? [28] Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.”*
- Guard yourself from becoming so familiar with the things of God you lose your awe of who God is.
- C. Stay in recognition of what God has done for you, and what he wants to through you if you remain **humble** and **obedient**. **Ps. 81:10-16** *“I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. [11] But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. [12] So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels. [13] Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! [14] I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. [15] The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever. [16] He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.”*
 - i. Don't become satisfied with past blessing, remain obedient so God can continue to bless you.
 - ii. Guard yourself from forgetting what God has done for you. **Ps. 40:4-5** *“Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. [5] Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.”*

Hosea 10:12

“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.”

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1. What did Jacob name the place he first met God. **Bethel**
 2. Develop a **??????** to develop an appetite with God. **Appetite**.
 3. Be willing to **??????** follow God wherever He leads you? **Follow**.
 4. Guard yourself from growing cold and indifferent in your relationship with God but why you do **??????** Gods face and ask him to give you a tender heart. **Seek**
 5. Jacobs personal relationship with God is renewed when he **?????** to the place of his commitment to God. **Returns**