

Small group questions: Jacob wrestles with God – Genesis 32-33

Welcome/starter – a couple of ideas:

1. Do you know the meaning of your name? Or why you got the name you did?
2. Describe a meeting that you dreaded – how did it turn out?

Outline of talk:

Jacob caught between a rock and a hard place

Jacob prays but goes into action overdrive

Jacob is finally alone – and God answers his prayer through a wrestling match

The pivotal question- the honest answer

Jacob faces pain and suffering- but clings to God

God's blessing

Genesis 32 v 1-21

1. What might Jacob learn from seeing the angels of God in verse 1?
2. What are the elements in Jacob's prayer of help? What principles can we draw from it for our own prayers?
3. What was the purpose of sending on the various herds of animals to Esau?
4. How have people tried to "buy" your favour? Being brutally honest, how do you try and "buy" the favour of others?

Genesis 32 v 22-31

5. Why was it important for Jacob to be alone?
6. God begins to answer his prayer by sending a man to wrestle with him – what does this tell us about how God answers our prayers?
7. Jacob had to be honest about who he was - what stops us from being honest with ourselves about who we really are?
8. Why did Jacob want to know the man's name (trying to control God or to understand him?) How do we try and control God?
9. In what ways did God bless Jacob? Why did He change Jacob's name?
10. After this encounter with God, Jacob had a permanent limp - what sort of "limp" can we have after an encounter with God? If appropriate can you share your limp? How has this changed you?
11. How did Jacob's character change as shown by his encounter with Esau in chapter 33? (humility replaces arrogance, courage replaces cowardice, enmity gives way to reconciliation)

Worship – some ideas – I suggest you have the worship time after the study as it flows out of the passage:

1. Brain storm together the names God has given us. Perhaps write them out on a piece of paper as a reminder. Spend time praising God for our new identify in Christ.
2. Meditate on a passage like 1 Peter 2: 9-10.