

SMALL GROUPS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Spring Semester - Week 10

Remember, these questions are just tools for discussion. You don't need to 'get through them all'. Use the questions that are helpful, skip the ones that are not, and let the conversation flow naturally.

OPTIONAL ICEBREAKER(S)

- a) Have you ever been badly fooled by someone as a prank? What was that like?
- b) How would you feel and react if you were in Steve's position during the staged robbery in Belize? Why?

PASSAGE AND DISCUSSION

Read Genesis 29:1-30

- a) What stands out to you upon first reading these verses?
- b) Jacob, 'the deceiver,' received a taste of his own medicine, as shown by how Laban deceived him in this passage. What do you think this was like for Jacob? Do you think experiencing this kind of deceit firsthand changed Jacob? If yes, how so?
- c) Have you ever grown through an experience of 'getting a taste of your own medicine'? How did that affect you and perhaps change your perspective?
- d) How does the story of Jacob in Genesis 29 mirror the earlier story of Abraham's servant finding a wife for Isaac in Genesis 24? What are the key similarities and differences?
- e) Why do you think Jacob did not thank or praise God after meeting Rachel? How do we balance using our own skills and abilities with seeking God's guidance?
- f) How does God use the events of Jacob's life to change him? What does that teach us about the character of God?
- g) In what ways does the story of Jacob's deceit and subsequent hardships demonstrate God's faithfulness? How does this encourage you in your own faith journey?

- h) In what areas of your life do you tend to rely solely on your own abilities and strategies, telling God to "move aside"? How can you intentionally shift your posture to trust and submit to God's guidance in these areas?
- i) How should we interpret and apply to our lives passages of Scripture that include actions, attitudes, and cultural norms that are not biblical (such as deception and polygamy)? Discuss why the Bible includes passages such as these.
- j) Just as God did with Jacob, God can take the broken pieces of your life and He can work with the mess and bring redemption forth from it. What is the role of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ in our personal redemption stories? How does this apply to Jacob's life, and ours?

TAKE IT HOME (OPTIONAL IDEAS FOR RESPONSE THIS WEEK)

- a) When have you felt forgotten or trapped in a difficult circumstance? How can the story of Jacob's journey remind you of God's faithfulness and presence in your life, even when things seem bleak?

OPTIONAL IDEAS FOR PRAYER TIME

- a) Pray that God will highlight moments in your life this week when we can be reminded of His faithfulness, kindness, and presence.
- b) Pray for the man in prison in the Middle East (who was referenced near the end of the sermon). Pray that he will experience God's presence of peace.