

# SMALL GROUPS

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Spring Semester - Week 3

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*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) Did you feel like your parents showed favouritism in your home as you were growing up? Did you have it easier, or harder than your siblings?
- b) Have you ever been physically stuck somewhere? How did you get 'unstuck'?

#### PASSAGE AND DISCUSSION

##### Read Genesis 25:19-34

- a) What stands out to you upon first reading of this passage?
- b) Read **v20** and **v26**. How long did Isaac and Rebekah struggle with barrenness? How does this passage change, when we know the timeline?
- c) Read **v21**. When Isaac and Rebekah were unable to conceive, their default was to pray. What would you say your default is, when you find yourself in difficulties?
- d) Read **v22**. What is it that Rebekah cries out to God? When is one time in your life that you cried out to God in this way? Did you ever receive an answer to that question?
- e) Read **v23**. What is God's answer to Rebekah's question? What does God answer this way? How does God's answer contribute to the struggles to follow?
- f) How does the birth of Jacob and Esau reflect God's promise to Abraham regarding descendants as numerous as the stars in **Genesis 26:4**?
- g) What do the names Jacob and Esau mean (look it up)? How do they foreshadow God's plan for their life?
- h) Read **v28**. How does Rebekah's favouritism toward Jacob and Isaac's favouritism toward Esau contribute to the family dynamics and conflicts in this passage?

- i) In what ways does Esau's attitude toward his birthright contrast with Jacob's desire for it, and what does this reveal about their values and priorities?
- j) Read **Hebrews 12:14-17**. How does the author of Hebrews describe Esau's actions in selling his birthright? Often we place the blame for this event solely on Jacob's opportunistic craftiness. But, what role does Esau play in the sin of this family?
- k) Esau is the natural heir who God has placed in Abraham's line by birth order, and through whom God would theoretically have blessed the nations. However, Esau doesn't grasp the importance or significance of his birthright, he despises it and ultimately gives it away. Do you think it's possible to settle for less than what God could do with your life, if you did not despise His plan, but participated in it willingly and joyfully?
- l) As a consequence of the fall, Jacob and Esau will be divided from each other. Sin puts brother against brother, family against family. In what ways do we already see God's words to Rebekah in **v23**, coming true in verses **27-34**?
- m) As a result of the fall, our sin causes division in families. We see in **v23** that God foretold that there would be conflict between Jacob and Esau and division would result. What is a Christian worldview of family, how are we called to treat one another even though we are all so different from our family members? How can this be a witness to the world? How does the world see family?

### **TAKE IT HOME (OPTIONAL IDEAS FOR RESPONSE THIS WEEK)**

- a) Reflect and pray, asking God to reveal to you the areas in which you are stuck right now. Ask God to lift you out of the pit (Psalm 40), and set you free.
- b) If you have a difficult relationship with a family member, consider encouraging them this week (text, email, card, etc.). You can also do this with family members that you are on good terms with.

### **OPTIONAL IDEAS FOR PRAYER TIME**

- a) Pray for each other's areas of "stuckness".
- b) Pray for the Thailand Missions Team as they prepare to go and serve on mission.