

We're Out of Here

My Story

1. Looking back over your notes, what did you find most helpful, challenging, or interesting in this week's teaching? Was there anything you've never heard before or something that made you think differently?
2. Starting next week, we're taking a short break from Genesis as we begin our four-week Christmas message series. Thinking of everything we've covered in the first 31 chapters of Genesis, what have you learned? How is God ministering to you and showing His love to you in this series? How is God challenging you in this series?
3. When we hear the story of Jacob, Laban, and his family, we see a lot of family dysfunction and drama. Can you relate at all? If you answered yes, why?
4. What is righteous anger? How does righteous anger differ from "regular anger"? Are there only two types of anger – righteous anger and unrighteous anger? Can you think of a time when you experienced righteous anger? What happened?
5. What does it mean to "sin in your anger"? How is sinning in your anger related to whether the anger is righteous or unrighteous?
6. What is integrity? Who is a person or people you know who exhibit(s) integrity? What characteristics make them a person of integrity? Do you consider yourself to be someone with integrity?

Digging Deeper

Read through these guiding scriptures and answer the corresponding questions.

Read Genesis 31, Romans 8:28, Jeremiah 5:21-24, Daniel 6:26, Luke 12:14-16, and Philippians 2:12-13

1. Thinking of everything we've learned about Jacob, can you see any changes in him as his story moves along?
2. What does God tell Jacob in verse 3? Does anything about this statement stand out to you? Why is that important?
3. What does this account tell you about God?

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4. What does it tell you about people?
5. Laban hadn't come to terms with the fact that his daughters had grown up and become adults with their own lives and needed to make their own decisions. Have you ever experienced this in your own family? Either as the parent or as the child? What do you think God would say to you about this tendency?
6. Laban had trouble with wanting to control things in his life and in his family. How do you think his view of God influenced this character trait? Is your view of God big enough to allow you to let go of control?
7. How does God intervene even though relationships between people are messy? What does Romans 8:28 say about this?
8. Laban told Jacob in Genesis 3:29 that he had the power to harm Jacob. What does God say about who we should fear and why?

Bringing It Home

1. How did God work within the dysfunction present in this family in Genesis 31? How has God, or do you think God can work within the dysfunction in your family? Have you asked God to act in your family? Have you persevered in asking God to act in your family? Have you asked others to be praying with you in this?
2. An idol is anything in which we find our worth or value that is NOT God Almighty. The Bible tells us repeatedly to ask God to search our hearts (i.e., Psalm 26, Psalm 139, Jeremiah 17, etc.). The Bible also tells us repeatedly that one of the biggest dangers to us is idolatry - God hates idolatry because idolatry is us putting our faith in someone or something other than Him (i.e., 1 Corinthians 10, 1 John 5, Colossians 3, Psalm 16, etc.). Take some time to ask God to search your heart. Ask Him to point out anything or anyone you put your value, worth, and faith in other than God. Is God revealing anything to you?
3. Chris said if you have a god who can be stolen, you don't have much of a god. If you identified an idol in the previous question, can it be stolen or taken away? Read Romans 8:31-39. Can the Almighty God (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) be taken away or stolen from followers of Christ?
4. Chris also told us that Godly parents guard their families from negative influences. What negative influences do you see coming against your family?

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5. What are you doing to protect your family from these influences? How are you choosing to live in the truth and grace given to us in Christ to protect against those negative influences? How are you choosing to stand up against those negative influences?
6. In Genesis 31, Jacob expressed righteous anger. We see other instances of righteous anger throughout the Bible. The challenge is that we often tend to believe that our anger is righteous even when it isn't. How can you know when your anger is righteous? Do you have a check on your anger to distinguish between unrighteous and righteous anger?
7. Chris said if someone else talked to your spouse or kids the way you do when you get angry, would you be OK with it? What's your answer? How about if someone talked to YOU the way you often talk to your spouse, your kids, and/or someone else important in your life – would you be OK with that?
8. Spend time asking God first, then ask the people who know you best – are you an angry person? Do you struggle with unrighteous anger?
9. How can you be sure that when you have a righteous anger, it is being used for a productive and Godly purpose? For instance, it is consistent with Biblical principles and can be righteous to be angry over the murder of innocent lives; however, if you just take that anger and continually feed it by watching or listening to the same sources saying the same things without taking productive action consistent with Biblical values, you can easily fall into sinning in your anger (even though it started as righteous anger). Do you struggle with this? What can you do to harness righteous anger into Biblical, Godly action?
10. There's another side to this - while the Bible very clearly tells us that we are not to sin in our anger (that's unrighteous anger), we are also called to stand for what's right even when it's counter cultural, and that is often accompanied or preceded by a righteous anger. Do you struggle with standing for what's right? Do you tend to please people even when doing so makes you compromise on what you know is right? What can you do to be bolder and more courageous in standing for what's right?
11. Integrity gives you the ability to stand your ground. Do you believe that statement? Do you struggle with this? Why? What are you going to do about that?

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12. Pride keeps us from what matters most in our life. Pride separated Laban from his daughters and grandchildren. How has pride impacted your life? How good are you at humbling yourself and apologizing when you've played a part in something that's wrong?
13. The concept that God opposes the proud but favors (or gives grace) to the humble is found throughout the Bible (i.e., Proverbs 3:34, James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5, etc.). When you read these verses, what comes to mind? What will you do with what God tells us in these verses?
14. Leave a legacy of God, not greed. Jesus tells us in Matthew 6 that "where your treasure is, there your heart will also be." What is your treasure? Where is your heart? Do the people you love most know what you treasure? Are you satisfied with where your heart is?
15. Would you consider yourself to be generous or greedy? Why do you answer this way? Where do you think you can be more generous? What will you do with that?
16. Spend some time with God with each of the concepts Chris discussed that negatively impact our lives and our walk with God: the negative influences affecting you and your family, righteous vs. unrighteous anger, people pleasing that compromises our willingness to stand for what is right, integrity, pride, and greed. What is God telling you as you think and pray around each of these concepts? If God is calling you to make a change in your life, what specifically are you going to do about that?
17. Have you confessed your sins to God and invited Jesus into your life as your Lord and Savior? If not, what's keeping you from doing that? If something is holding you back, will you make a commitment today to discuss any doubts with a prayer team member, pastor, church staff member, or other Christian?
18. Think about this and share your answers to the below questions in your Life Group. These personal testimonies are amazing ways of encouraging each other. Make this a way to celebrate the Life Group semester together. If you are a follower of Jesus, how has following Jesus changed your life? How has God grown or ministered to you in your Life Group this semester?
19. As you wrap up the semester in your Life Group, be sure to spend some time praying together - thanking God for His faithfulness and how He is moving in your life and your group. Pray for each other as your group breaks until the Winter Life Group Semester starts. If God has identified something that He wants you to surrender to Him in the questions above, ask your Life Group to pray with and for you in this.