

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday September 15, 2019. "Little Things: Jacob and Esau".

I Intro.

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work thru from the message this past Sunday. Whether you were able to attend the worship service or not, this devotional is free-standing and you can still use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. Take as long as you need to dive into this material and feel free to share it.

II Recap.

Sunday was the second in our "*little things*" series. We're looking at those compromises and shortcuts we take because we 'major in the minors', (there are all sorts of cliches about this tendency), and either get distracted from the life path we were on. Or we get bogged down in unimportant things, and miss the more significant meaningful things.

Last Sunday we talked about how this happens in our spiritual life, and therefore how the church often acts. Since the church actually is the people. (Remember that hand thing right?). And because we can drift and make the "*little things*" more important than they were intended to be, we'll create this huge monstrosity of a structure that Jesus said would crush and drive people away more than it would draw them to God.

There were some strong words from Jesus, and if you read them seriously, they should still be working on you now.

III Sunday.

This Sunday's message, was a bit more personal, and about our every day walking around life. The warning was when we choose the less important "*little things*" over the more important things, it derails our life. The story used is a pretty familiar one, so before we dive into that, we'll wrestle a bit with getting bogged down in our own "*little things*".

How do you struggle with sometimes elevating "*little things*" to more important than they deserve to be?

What causes ALL of us to drift towards the "*little things*"?

What are a couple of "*little things*" that tend to lure and trap you?

The scripture was the beginning of the long and drawn out story of Jacob and Esau found in **Genesis 25:24-34**. Go ahead and read this, and we'll talk about some of the elements and the process of being drawn into the "*little things*".

What jumped out to you about this story?

Did you see anything new or different you hadn't seen before?

Did you notice anything specific about this story that shed light on how we get sucked into the "*little things*"?

Kal presented kind of a process, not necessarily step by step, but elements that often make up how we can just slide into elevating “*little things*” to be more important than they should be.

1. Famished. (vss. 24-29).

First thing we notice is what Esau had done, and this activity had brought him to a specific state of being. He was famished.

FAMISHED- empty, weary, weak with, desperate.

What does it mean to live life in such a way that you are always operating, living, out of famished?

What does living from famished do to our ability to keep our priorities straight?

There is an intentional way of life, knowing how we’re designed, created, to protect us from living from empty to empty. Famished is this thing that happens to us, when we don’t care for ourselves properly.

And we make ourselves open, susceptible to falling for the “*little things*”. When we neglect, don’t appropriately feed these desires, we move ourselves to an unhealthy state of being famished.

And no; good, healthy, better, (next week), decision is EVER made out of famished.

Want to set yourself up for being a victim to the “*little things*”. Live out of famished!!

2. Quick. (vs. 30).

Esau’s first mistake was to be so not self-aware. He let himself get to famished, empty, desperate, weak with. The second was letting famished short-circuit thinking thru things thoroughly. In famished there’s not this place of careful, thoughtful consideration. In famished it’s now... “*What is the quick fix, the immediate?*”

QUICK- impatient, hasty, instinctual response, ‘quick to anger’.

A state of famished, empty, desperate, has caused us to now look for the quick hurried, not well thought thru, response. Quick rarely differentiates between little and important. It rarely helps us be wise about our decision making. And it’s in this place, little looks just as good, just as important.

3. I am about to die, what does this big important thing really mean to me? (vss. 31-32).

What happens when you allow a “*little thing*” to become an essential thing?

Important things are devalued.

Things you said you would never do, maybe even promised you wouldn’t do, now become an option because we devalue the important things. All of your values get flipped, turned upside down. WHY? Because of appetites. My body and mind has physical, social, emotional, desires, cravings. Allowing myself to get in a famished state impairs my judgment. I’m so not aware of my inner self, so I just let myself be tossed around by my impulses. And the whole world, and possibly even people we hang with, are eager and willing to help us give up more important things for the “*little things*”. Here we see Esau diminishing something that was the most valuable thing of that day.

And because Esau let himself get to a place of emptiness, something that valuable, important, was pushed out by a “*little thing*”.

4. Swore an oath. (vs. 33).

There's always an out and often we miss it. Once you take that first step of compromise, it's hard to pull out of that slide. Rarely did someone who gave up the important things in life for the *"little things"* do it all at once. It's a series of smaller, less noticeable decisions, that you had several chances to get out of your choices, but you continue on that path. It's a slow fade...and then all of a sudden.

Jacob wouldn't have made him swear an oath if this was less important. If this were just a simple, and innocent, act Jacob could have just made the trade. And this should have been a warning sign to Esau. Jacob, as deceitful as he was, was almost giving him an out.

"Are you sure you want to do this?"

"This is a really big deal, and you're going to regret this and even you know it".

But we know deep down, early on, in our "famished" place, making ill advised "quick" decisions, we're going down a bad path. And we miss the opportunities to course correct.

5. Despised, showed contempt, for the important things. (vs. 34).

You satisfy, lift up the *"little thing"*, and diminishes the more important thing. Not only do you diminish the more important things, but you find ways to rationalize and justify why that more important thing isn't really all that important. And deep down we know when it happens. Peter knew this as he was denying Jesus. He knew it in the moment.

There's this inner response when we trade something important, meaningful, that matters, has eternal significance, for something unimportant. A *"little thing"*. When you try to satisfy a natural God-given need, desire, appetite, with something less than what God intended it to be you just feel it.

Esau traded his birthright, something really significant, an important/better thing, for a *"little thing"* ... bowl of beans. And in his compromise he convinced himself that the important thing really wasn't.

IV Challenge.

These are some truths we can pull from this passage that show us signs we can recognize to help us avoid giving up a more important thing for a lesser *"little thing"*. And many of us have traded something meaningful for our own bowl of beans. We ruined a relationship, our credit, success, our future, and even our relationship with God. And we're living in the consequences of those choices. But even if we're in the midst of living for *"little things"* it's not too late. Esau did eventually have a good life. And even if it wasn't the life God wanted for him, or he could have had, God's grace still allowed Esau to experience restoration and resurrection.

There is salvation, wisdom, guidance, community and all the strength you need to help you begin to let go of those *"little things"*, put them in the *"little things"* box, and begin to make those things that matter, the more important things in your life.

So, one question.

What is that ONE better thing you can do right now to begin to walk in that direction?