

Talk About It

Small Group Discussion Guide

God Encounters

Wrestling with God

June 22/25, 2023

Start Talking

Share about a time you felt blessed by God after a season of struggle.

Main Idea

Pastor Jackson talked about Jacob's encounter with God as he wrestled with Him in the night. He shared the importance of being persistent in our struggle and having a submissive spirit to Christ in the midst of it.

Jacob was blessed after this encounter and was given a new name. This name signified a transformation within Jacob that then affected all of God's people! It is often through our wrestling and/or struggles that God will bless us and transform us.

Personalize It

1. Read Genesis 32:22-31. Jacob was patient and persistent in his wrestling. What did this allow him to then ask for? What was the response to this request? (verse 28). Where have you seen breakthroughs and answers in your life?
2. Read 2 Corinthians 7:5-6. When we are tempted to give up, we need to do our best to be persistent in spending time with God and others. During your struggles, how persistent are you to do the above two things? Share a time when you were not persistent and how it impacted the way you struggled. Share a time you were persistent with those two things and how that created a different outcome in the struggle.
3. Pastor Jackson made the following statement about victory, "victory is not found in your ability to overcome earthly circumstances... victory is defined by your ability to stay faithful in the midst of the fight." How have you been victorious in your spiritual life lately?
4. Pastor Jackson pointed out that in the story of Moses, God said, "let my people go so they can worship me in the wilderness." (Exodus 7:16) They were changed in the wilderness like Jacob was in the wrestling. What can we learn about who God is and how He often works from these two examples?

LET'S DO IT! Commit to a step and live it out this week

1. Whether you are in a struggle or not in one quite yet... embrace your struggle. Wrestle with God by spending time with Him and others.
2. Commit to finding a couple of close friends, maybe even a few from your small group, that you can trust and be honest with during your struggles.
3. Write out an encouraging verse to read daily then pick a time each day to spend intentional time with God this week and do not miss it!

Pray

Father, thank you for this time as a group. Thank you for the way in which you transform and bless us through the struggles. Give us the patience and persistence to continue to meet with you and others. Give us the boldness and anticipation to ask you for blessing, so that we can understand you more and understand our purpose more. We trust you in the midst and thank you for what you are going to do on the other side of it. Amen.

Key Scriptures

During the night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two servant wives, and his eleven sons and crossed the Jabbok River with them. After taking them to the other side, he sent over all his possessions. This left Jacob all alone in the camp, and a man came and wrestled with him until the dawn began to break. When the man saw that he would not win the match, he touched Jacob's hip and wrenched it out of its socket. Then the man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking!" But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." "What is your name?" the man asked. He replied, "Jacob, your name will no longer be Jacob," the man told him. "From now on you will be called Israel, because you have fought with God and with men and have won." "Please tell me your name," Jacob said. "Why do you want to know my name?" the man replied. Then he blessed Jacob there. Jacob named the place Peniel (which means "face of God"), for he said, "I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been spared." The sun was rising as Jacob left Peniel, and he was limping because of the injury to his hip.

Genesis 32:22-31 (NLT)

When we arrived in Macedonia, there was no rest for us. We faced conflict from every direction, with battles on the outside and fear on the inside. But God, who encourages those who are discouraged, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus.

2 Corinthians 7:5-6 (NLT)

Then announce to him, 'The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to tell you, "Let my people go, so they can worship me in the wilderness."

Exodus 7:16 (NLT)

Leader Tips

If someone is in a deep struggle, allow them time to talk it out with the group but make sure he/she does not dominate the conversation. Ask them to coffee later to talk more about it so others still have the opportunity to share.