Dysfunctional Family Drama — Delivery Transcript

Genesis 26:34–28:9 (CSB) · Wes Terry · Sunday, July 7, 2024 · *The Patriarchs*

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If you've got a Bible, you can open it to Genesis 27. I know I thought I'd take a break from the book of Genesis for Family Day, something special on Family Day. But I went back and reread through Genesis 27 and I thought there's no better sermon than Genesis 27 for Family Day because this is the most jacked up dysfunctional family I think I've ever seen. It's kind of like when you watch Jerry Springer to make yourself feel better about your life. That's kind of what Genesis 27 is like. And so I hope you'll be encouraged today.

I hope that you will come away thinking at least I'm not that bad. You know, at least we're not that bad. And some of you may not laugh and it may actually trigger in you some bad memories or maybe some bad circumstances that are going on in your life right now, but whether it's encouraging or unsettling, I really believe all of us can take away something from this chapter, specifically if you are trying to raise a family. The main idea of Genesis 27 is about the blessing of God. The word blessing gets used 23 plus times in this chapter alone.

It's clearly what the chapter is about. But what you see in Genesis 27 is four main characters try to pursue the blessed life in the wrong way. And they're like us in that way, in that I think all of us would recognize, I believe that God exists and I want God's blessing in my life. All of us pursue the blessed life. It's why the self-help books are the most popularly sold books in most bookstores. Everybody's wanting to be healthy, wealthy, and wise. But like the characters in Genesis 27, some of us try to pursue the blessed life in the wrong way.

And so I think we'll learn maybe from their negative example how to pursue the blessed life in the right way. And more importantly, we'll see how God is faithful, irrespective of our doing it the right way or the wrong way and that his purposes ultimately prevail. So if you're new to the story, let me kind of give you the framework. In Genesis 25, we see the four characters first introduced. There's a guy named Isaac, he's the daddy. There's a woman named Rebekah, she's the mommy. And there are two sons that are born at the same time.

We call them twins. One was named Jacob and one was named Esau. Except they weren't twins. They look totally different. But they were born at the same time. It says that Jacob was gripping Esau's heel. The reason I'm mentioning this is because before they were born, Rebekah, while she was pregnant, was all tore up because the two babies in her belly were fighting against one another. And the mom went to the Lord and asked the Lord, what is going on? Why are these kids constantly fighting in my womb? And the Lord said to her, there's two nations in your womb.

In other words, those are not just two people. They're two nations. They're going to be the heads of nations. And they are going to be separated from each other. One people will be stronger than the other. This is talking about the older son is going to be stronger than the younger son. But the older son, even though he's stronger, is going to serve the younger son. And so what you have is God giving a prophecy before the children are born that my plan and my promised seed, that's been a theme of Genesis, is going to go through Jacob and not Esau.

And so the two boys are born, and what happens? Well, dad has a favorite; dad shows favoritism towards Esau because Esau was super hairy. And what dad doesn't like hair? And he's super manly and he likes to hunt and what dad wouldn't like that kind of child? And then there's another child, the younger named Jacob. It says that he was a little more... the Bible doesn't use this language, but I am. He was a little more effeminate. He was a mama's boy, he liked being in the kitchen cooking with mom, and mom showed favoritism towards Jacob.

And what we see at the end of Genesis 25 is that God's purpose to use Jacob and not Esau begins to materialize because Esau comes in from a hunting trip. He's tired, he's worn out, and he wants a bowl of stew from Jacob who was cooking stew in the kitchen with mom and Jacob says, If that's what you want, sell me your birthright. And the birthright back then was a big deal. It was like your line in the inheritance, the firstborn got everything. And so Esau says, I don't care about dumb rules about birthrights or God or anything like that.

I just want this food. So he trades his birthright for a bowl of stew. And when we get to our text today, which is in Genesis 27, we see that what began as Esau kind of rejecting God and the whole plan of God materializes even further in that he marries not believing women or godly women, but very ungodly women. So let's pick it up in Genesis 26, at the end, starting in verse 34. So it says Esau was forty years old and he took as his wives Judith, daughter of Beeri the Hethite, a Canaanite, a non-believing tribe, and then another wife named Basemath, daughter of Elon the Hethite, and they, notice this phrase, made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah.

In other words, he married not only one woman, which is God's design, one man, one woman, one lifetime. He married two women, and they were both godless, didn't love the

Lord or believe in the Lord, and Isaac and Rebekah didn't like it. Because those women made life bitter for mom and dad. We got any moms and dads in here who had children marry people you didn't like? Show of hands? Okay, some of us actually showed our hands. I know if you didn't raise your hand, some of us would say yes, yes, they did.

This is, I believe, mentioned by Moses as a way of saying Esau is not living right, he's not doing right. And that's important for the rest of the passage. Even though Esau's not the promised child, he's not the chosen child, even though he's not living a godly life, Isaac is still playing favorites with Esau. So it says, when Isaac was old and his eyes were so weak that he couldn't see, he called his older son Esau into the room, and he said to him, my son. And Esau responded, here I am.

And he said, look, I'm an old man. I don't know the day of my death. And so I want you to take your hunting gear, your quiver, and your bow, and I want you to go out into the field and hunt some game for me. Then I want you to make me a delicious meal that I love. Underline this phrase here. Isaac loved his food. And I want you to bring it to me to eat so that I can bless Jacob. No, so that I can bless you before I die.

I got a little clip for the kids to see if you like it better this way. [Video clip] The two sons in your womb will become two nations. The younger one will be stronger and the older one will serve them. The boys grew up. And Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was content to stay at home among the tents. We need a bit more paprika. Isaac who had a taste for wild game loved Esau. But Rebekah loved Jacob. Father's been calling for you. You called me father.

Esau. I am an old man now. And I don't know how much longer I am going to live. Go out quickly and hunt and come back and prepare my favorite meal for me. Then, since you are my firstborn son, I will give my blessing to you. [End of clip] Besides the fact that they have British accents and Esau looks like an Asgardian prince, it's a pretty good recollection of what transpired. A couple things I want to point out: Isaac the dad is extremely old. He's not about to die. He thinks he's about to die, but he's blind.

Every faculty of his is going to fail him in this chapter. He's going to be deceived in his physical touch. He's going to be deceived in his eyesight, and in some way he's going to be deceived in his hearing. He knows Esau's not the chosen child. He knows Esau is not a godly man. Even though he knows those things, he's still prioritizing Esau over Jacob. And you know that because they're having this conversation in secret. The blessing was a public event. It was very ceremonial. Everybody would have been invited. Even other people from the community would have been able to see.

The father blessed the son and it was just meaningful. But here is Isaac and Esau conspiring together, even though they know Jacob was the one to receive the blessing. Isaac is saying,

Esau, I want you to have the blessing. And so go out, kill me some game, cook me that meal that you know that I love, and then I'm going to bless you with nobody able to see it other than the Lord. Now why is he doing this? I ultimately don't really know why he's doing it. Could be because maybe he thought Esau was a better man.

Maybe he thought Esau could provide better for the family. Maybe Esau, you know, big burly manly man, he was going to bring home the bacon in a very literal sense. Because I think it was kosher back then before the laws and all that stuff. But whatever the case was, it was wrong. And so the first principle for how to pursue the blessed life in the wrong way, according to Isaac, is to indulge in your preferences over and above God's purpose. God's purpose, even before the two boys were born, was to choose the younger to receive the blessing and to advance the promise.

But here is Isaac in his old age saying, I don't care what God wants, I want what I want. And that's prioritizing your preferences over God's purpose. And a lot of dads and moms do this when it comes to seeking after the blessed life or seeking blessings for their children. And when I was kind of thinking about why it is that Isaac does this, it's shocking to me because one chapter earlier Isaac was doing no wrong. Isaac was doing a lot of things right. Well he didn't do no wrong. He did a few things wrong but by and large he was seeking the Lord, following after God's will for his life, making hard decisions, being brave.

But now he's old. And it's just a reminder, dads, that just because you were godly in a season doesn't mean you'll be godly in every season. It's a reminder, men, that just because you start well doesn't mean that you're necessarily going to finish well. You have to persevere in grace, you've got to continually seek after the Lord. And what happened to Isaac, I believe, is he allowed his love for this world. He allowed those creature comforts like food and alcohol and whatever else that he was, you know, all about, to weaken his appetite for the things of God.

And so you have a man, an old man, who started well but he's not finishing well because he's allowed the appetites of the world to weaken in him his appetite and his desire for God. And I think it's a powerful warning for dads in particular to not let your love for the world weaken your appetite for God. And a lot of you men know exactly what I'm talking about. That is not the way to get the blessed life. That is not the way to transfer the blessing to the next generation.

Don't put your preferences above the purpose of God. Rebekah just so happened to be listening in. I don't know if this was a habit of hers. She could have just called Isaac out on the table, said, You crazy old man, what are you thinking? The blessing belongs to Jacob, but she doesn't confront Isaac. She instead goes and conspires with her favorite child, which was Jacob. So it says in verse five of Genesis 27, Rebekah was listening to what Isaac said to his son Esau, and so while Esau went to the field to hunt some game to bring it in, Rebekah said to her son Jacob, Listen, I heard your father talking with your brother Esau, and he said,

bring me game and make that delicious meal for me to eat so that I can bless you in the Lord's presence before I die.

So here's what I want you to do, Jacob. Listen to me and do what I tell you. Go to the flock, bring me two choice young goats, and I will make them into a delicious meal for your father. Notice this phrase: the kind that he loves. She knows Isaac is weak in the flesh when it comes to food. I don't know if he was, you know, an overeater or what the case was, but he is weak in this moment, and I'm going to exploit his weaknesses. That's what Rebekah is saying.

Let's do this. You take it to your father to eat, and then he'll bless you before he dies. So they've got a concoction of some kind of plan, very deceptive. Jacob is not on board immediately. He says to his mom in verse 11, look, my brother Esau is a hairy man, and I'm not. I'm a man with smooth skin. And suppose my father touches me, and then I'm going to be revealed to him as a deceiver and bring a curse rather than a blessing on myself. And so the mother just dismisses his concerns and says, Your curse be on me, my son, just obey me and do what I say and go get them for me.

So that's what Jacob does. He goes in verse 14, he gets the goats, brings them to mom. Mom makes delicious food that the father loves. And then Rebekah took the best clothes of her son Esau, who was out hunting for game, according to his dad's command, and when they were in the house she had the younger son Jacob wear the goat skins. She put the skins of the young goats on his hands and the smooth part of his neck, and she handed the delicious food that she made to him and sends him into the father's tent.

Here's a clip just for the kids to catch you up on the story. [Video clip] Quickly. Go get a goat so that I can prepare a meal for your father, and then go to him and pretend to be Esau so that you can receive his blessing. But Esau is so hairy. Father will never believe it's me. Oh, just trust me. A little goat hair on your hands and on the back of your neck and there. Esau. Father? [End of clip] I love that. A little goat hair on your arms. There, Esau.

The British accent's killing me. So Jacob is not on board up front, right? He's like, if I do this, I'm a deceiver. I'm living into my name. I don't know. I don't really want to do this. But he's mama's boy, and for whatever reason, mom had great sway over Jacob, and so he caves to the pressure. Now maybe this was because of his own moral compromise. We're certainly going to see that later in the story. Maybe it was because Rebekah was so convincing. And I think one of the reasons Rebekah was convincing is because she in a way is trying to do the right thing.

She's doing the right thing the wrong way, but she believes it's right because God, before they were born, said Jacob would be the one. God is going to bless Jacob because Jacob has the birthright. What my husband and son are doing is immoral. And so since they're doing something immoral, it's going to require me to do something immoral to get the right thing

done. And I think that is a great lesson in how to pursue the blessed life in the wrong way. Oftentimes, moms especially can allow fear and anxiety to cause you to manipulate people or circumstances or events so that the right thing happens, even if you have to sacrifice a little bit of your character in order to bring it about.

And so it's a warning. If you want to pursue the blessed life, to not manipulate circumstances to force God's hand. She manipulates her husband by preying on his weaknesses. She manipulates her younger son by preying on his fears and weakness. She manipulates her older son by doing it secretly while he's away and she does all of it supposedly for the right reasons, but ultimately invites a curse on herself. She's going to eventually lose both of her sons as a result of her conniving. And so she sends Jacob into the tent to talk to Dad.

He says, Dad, here I am. And verse 18: When he came to his father, he said, my father, and he answered, here I am. Who are you, my son? Notice he's confronted. Are you going to be honest or are you going to lie? And Jacob lies. He replies to the dad. I'm Esau, your firstborn, and I've done as you told me. Please sit up and eat some of my game, so that you may bless me. But Isaac said to his son, how did you find it so quickly, my son? Again, he's confronted.

Are you going to be honest or are you going to lie? Your dad is suspicious. Here's your chance. Bring the truth out on the table, but Jacob doesn't do so. He says, the Lord, your God, made it happen for me. He invokes the name of God sinfully to deceive his dad. And then Isaac says to Jacob, please come closer so that I can touch you, my son. Are you really my son Esau or not? Three times he's asked the question, three times Jacob is going to lie. He comes closer to the dad.

When the dad touches him, he says, the voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau. I know this isn't right. I don't recognize him, but his hands are hairy like those of his brother, and so he blesses him. And then even after the blessing in verse 24, he asked him, are you really my son Esau? And he replied, I am. So he said, bring it closer to me and let me eat some of my son's game, so that I can bless you. Jacob brought it closer to him, and he ate, and he brought him wine, and he drank.

One wonders how much wine. Then the father Isaac said to him, please come closer and kiss me, my son. So he came closer and he kissed him, betrayed his dad with a kiss, kind of like Judas. Isn't it interesting? Jacob, even though before this happens, he is resigned, he's not excited about it, he's trying to cling to his morals. But with every question, every confrontation of exposing him in his sin, instead of being honest, he doubles down. Why? Well you could say it's because he was afraid of getting caught and I've already committed, I might as well lie all the way through.

Or you could say Jacob is doing exactly what his mom did in that he's justifying unrighteous means because I'm pursuing a righteous goal. And that's the third and final principle for how

to pursue God's blessing in the wrong way. It's something I see a lot of parents do and a lot of individuals do. I know this is what God wants. I know this is maybe where God has us to go, but I can't get there using God's methods, and so I'm going to use my methods to get where God wants us to go.

And when you do that, especially if it involves deception and compromising your character, a little bit of your soul is going to die with each and every lie. Just like I think with Jacob, every time he lied to his dad, a little bit of his soul died along the way to the point that he finally is going to get the blessing, but he's not going to be someone who's worthy of it, or maybe even someone who is willing to receive it because he's been so compromised in the process. And so don't put your preferences above God's purpose.

Don't let your fears cause you to manipulate circumstances, to force God's hand, and don't let a noble goal cause you to use unrighteous methods. You've heard the phrase, two wrongs don't make a right. Responding to a wrong thing with a wrong thing doesn't make the wrong thing right. A wrong thing in response to a wrong thing is a wrong thing. And that is clearly evident in Genesis chapter 27. Now some of you say, well, what should he have done? I mean they're lying, they're conniving, they're secretly trying to get Esau the blessing, even though Esau's not the chosen son.

And I don't know, there's a thousand things that they could have done other than what they did do. The one thing that strikes me is they didn't talk to each other. You notice how much talking there is in this chapter? There's more dialogue in this chapter than almost any other chapter in the book of Genesis. Everybody's talk, talk, talk, talk, talk, but nobody's talking to the right people about the right things. Isaac should have talked to Rebekah. Rebekah should have talked to Isaac. Jacob and Esau should have talked to one another.

But instead, the spouses choose their children over each other. Which is maybe one of the biggest takeaways of this chapter as it relates to raising your children. I actually want to give you two principles for raising children out of this chapter. The first one is always choose your spouse over your children. And I know that's unpopular in our culture, and some would say, well, yeah, but there was this one time where I... And, you know, okay, maybe if your spouse was a danger, a physical danger to your child, I can understand you wanting to choose your child to put them in safety.

That's not what I'm talking about. I'm saying by and large in the priority of your choices, in the affections of your heart more than anything, what your children need is to see mom and dad treat each other like number one and not number two. I tell my children all the time, your mom is number one, not you. Mom is first, you're second, and God is above you both. And the littlest one, he don't like that. No, it's my daddy. And sometimes he'll get upset. And you know what? I'll just let him cry.

Because what children need is not a dad or a mom that's their friend or that's their advocate, conniving and misleading and thwarting the will of a spouse, they need a mom and a dad who are on a team. You've heard the word division. The word division literally means two visions. And when you choose your children over your spouse, you're creating division in your home because there's two visions. There's dad's vision and there's mom's vision. Or there's God's vision and then there's the deceptive partner's vision. And a house divided against itself cannot stand.

And that's exactly what you see happen in Genesis 27. Their world is destroyed because mom and dad aren't on a team. Because they're choosing their children over their spouse. So husbands, choose your wife over your children. Wives, choose your husband over your children. They need that more than they need anything. You may be able to satisfy their instant desires by choosing them. But ultimately you're creating a structure that leaves them unsafe and leaves your family in disaster. It's kind of like trying to run an engine without engine oil, running a family divorced from God's good design.

He designed mom and dad to treat each other as number one and kids as number two. The second thing is to take what's hidden and bring it into the light. At any moment if Isaac would have just been honest and said, I'm really struggling with blessing Jacob. And they just had that out, maybe this could have been avoided, or if Rebekah, instead of listening in and going to Jacob, would have just said, Isaac, what are you thinking? This is wrong. This is crazy. They could have avoided this. Or if Esau would have said to Jacob, Dad wants me to go steal your blessing.

Or if Jacob would have said to Esau, Mom wants me to try to deceive Dad. Nobody said anything because they were hiding and there were secrets and all of this agenda. Your family more than anybody else has to deal with your weaknesses if you'll bring it into the open. Your friends can check out on you. They can go make new friends. Your family can't get a new family. They're stuck with you. So bring what's hidden into the light. And say, I'm struggling here, I'm broken here, and allow God's grace through the institution of family to heal those areas of brokenness.

So choose your spouse first and then bring what's hidden into the light. What's amazing is even though these four people pursue God's blessing in these three wrong-headed ways, God is still faithful to give them the blessing. If you look in verse 27, it says that Isaac kisses him, and when Isaac smelled Jacob's clothes, because he was wearing Esau's clothes, he blessed him and he said, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed. May God give you from the dew of the sky and from the richness of the land an abundance of grain and new wine.

May peoples serve you, and may nations bow in worship to you. Be master over your relatives, and may your mother's sons bow in worship to you. Those who curse you will be

cursed, and those who bless you will be blessed. So I want to close with some things to learn about God's blessing from this passage. Number one, God does not bless people who deserve it. Jacob did not deserve this blessing, and yet he receives it. And his blessing has echoes of Abraham's blessing. Those who curse you will be cursed, and those who bless you will be blessed.

But God's blessing is also looking forward to Joseph and the brothers of Joseph bowing down to him. Jacob did not deserve this blessing. He deceitfully misled his father. But even though all that's true and Jacob is a sinner, God blesses him anyway. Do you know why? I think the reason why Moses is making this point is to establish in God's people that God doesn't bless righteous people, He blesses sinful people, because the only people who exist are sinful people. There are none righteous. I think that's the point of Genesis 27.

Nobody is good. Nobody does the right thing. And yet God chooses to bless Jacob, not because he deserves it, but because that's what God has chosen. And Isaac's response to that is really interesting. I want to pick it up. Or do I have a clip? Do I have a clip or okay? Let's play the clip and then I'll read the passage. [Video clip] From the dew of heaven and the richness of the earth, may God always give you abundant harvests. Father, sit up and eat so that you may bless me.

Who are you? What are you talking about? It's me, your son Esau. Then who was it who just came and brought me food and received my blessing? Oh, and he will surely be blessed. Oh, he thinks he can steal my blessing too, huh? [End of clip] So pick it up with me in chapter 27, verse 30. As soon as Isaac finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob left the presence of the father Isaac, Esau comes in from the hunting. He had made the delicious food. He set it before the dad, and the dad gets up and eats the son's game.

Or I'm sorry, he says, let me give you some of this game so that you may bless me. And then the father says, who are you? Esau says, I'm your firstborn. Notice this phrase, Isaac began to tremble uncontrollably. He raises the question, what's going on? Your brother came in here. He deceived me. I've already ate the food. I've already blessed him. Indeed, he will be blessed. Notice he's angry, but he's accepting the fact that God has got the last laugh. He's probably like, well, I'll be. You know, the Lord got her done.

Indeed he will be blessed. And when Esau heard this, notice his response. He cries out with a loud and bitter cry. He says to his father, bless me too, father. The dad again accepts the reality of the situation. He says, Your brother came in and he deceitfully took your blessing. But essentially says there's nothing I can do about it. So Jacob says, or Esau says, well, isn't he rightly named Jacob? He has cheated me twice now. Notice he's going to reject responsibility. He took my birthright, not I sold it to him for a bowl of stew.

He took my birthright and now look he has taken my blessing. Not I tried to take his blessing. No, he's taken mine. And then he asked, why didn't you save a blessing for me, Father? And again, Isaac is saying, I can't give you what you want because God got what he wants. Look, I have made him a master over you. I've given him all of his relatives as servants. I've sustained him with grain and new wine. What then can I do for you, my son? And Esau's just not getting the point.

He says, do you have only one blessing, my father? In other words, why do we have to do it God's way? Why do we have to pretend like that God's blessing is some special thing? Why can't you just give me stuff? Bless me too. And he weeps loudly, and the father Isaac answered him, Look, your dwelling place will be away from the riches of the land, away from the dew of the sky. You're going to live by yourself with your sword, you're going to serve your brother until you rebel, and then you're going to break his yoke from his neck.

The reason I read that is because I want you to notice the difference between Isaac and Esau. Isaac is mad. He's trembling mad. He is shaking mad. But at the end of the day, he is accepting God's choice. He's saying, You know, I'll be. God got his last laugh. God said the older will serve the younger, and somehow he pulled it off. Now he pulled it off with a deceitful little boy, but he pulled it off nonetheless. And so Isaac, his idols have come down, right? Esau was his favorite son.

He was trying to get Esau the blessing and God said no. And so what was Isaac's response? Repentance. Isaac said, if this is what the Lord wants, I'm going to stop sinning. I'm going to humble myself and I'm going to do this God's way. Esau, on the other hand, says no way. He rejects responsibility. He points the finger. He pretends as if God's plan is irrelevant. You can give me a blessing. You can give me stuff. I don't have to do this whole divine thing. And he refuses repentance. And the point, I think, Moses is trying to establish is you can't have God's blessing without repentance.

I don't know that Jacob has repented yet, and God, I don't think, is going to bless him until Jacob repents, but the point is the blessing of God requires repentance, and Esau refused it. In fact, he instead chooses to hold a grudge. Look at verse 41. Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing of his father, and Esau determined in his heart, the days of mourning for my father are approaching, and then I'm going to kill my brother Jacob. And so when the words of the older son Esau were reported to Rebekah, she summoned her younger son Jacob and said to him, listen, your brother Esau is consoling himself by planning to kill you.

So now my son listen to me, flee at once to my brother Laban in Haran, stay with him for a few days until your brother's anger subsides, until his rage turns away from you, and he forgets what you've done to him, and then I'm going to send for you and bring you back from there. Why should I lose you both in one day? One more clip and then we're going to wrap it

up. [Video clip] Oh, he thinks he can steal my blessing too, huh? That fool, Jacob. My father will soon be dead.

And as soon as we have laid him in the family tomb, I am going to bury my brother and his blessing right beside him. Jacob! You've got to get out of here right away. Your brother plans to kill you. I will tell your father that it's time for you to go to your relatives to find a wife for yourself. Now, hurry. Get yourself ready to leave. I love you, Jacob. I always have. I love you too, mother. Goodbye. Go with God. [End of clip] So God doesn't bless people who deserve it.

Only sinners receive a blessing. God's blessing requires repentance. Isaac shows repentance, Esau does not. What Esau demonstrates instead is grievance and anger and unforgiveness. And I think this chapter ends on that note as a warning to every one of us who want the blessed life but maybe don't want to do it God's way, and that is to not let your grievance keep you from a heart of repentance. I know that's what's going on here because the New Testament talks about this event in the life of Esau in the book of Hebrews, chapter twelve.

And it's a warning to the church there and the believers there, some of whom have made a decision, but it may not be genuine. And he's saying you need to pursue peace with everyone and holiness. Without it, no one will see the Lord. And then he begins to reference this story of Jacob and Esau and says, make sure no one falls short of the grace of God, and that no root of bitterness springs up, causing trouble and defiling many. Who are you talking about, Hebrews, man? I'm talking about Esau. Make sure that there isn't anyone immoral or irreverent like Esau, who sold his birthright in exchange for a single meal.

Notice what he says about Esau. You know that later when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected. Isaac said, no go. Why? Even though he sought it with tears, he didn't find any opportunity for repentance. Esau was never sorry for the right reasons. The Bible in the book of 2 Corinthians 7 says there's godly grief and then there's worldly grief. Worldly grief is sadness, it's regret, it's genuine remorse, but not genuine remorse that leads to repentance where you're sorry, not that you got caught, but that you sinned against a holy God.

You're remorseful not because you lost some material gain, but because you violated the design of a God who created you and loves you. Esau is worldly grief. He's sorry he got caught. He's sorry he can't have what he wants, but he's not so sorry that he's willing to humble himself and agree with God about the facts, because that would have required Esau to say God is right to choose Jacob instead of me. If that's what God wants, God is sovereign. If in God's sovereign plan he's decided Jacob to be the child who carries the promise.

What is that to me? It doesn't mean God doesn't love me. Doesn't mean I can't have a good life. It just means I've got to submit to God's will. He refuses to do so. Why? Because of his grievance, because of his anger, because of his bitterness. And there are many of us here

today who maybe want the blessed life, but you're unwilling to let go of whatever they did to you. And it may have to do with your family. It may have to do with your mom or your dad or some brother or some other thing.

And the word of the Lord to us this morning is to not let personal grievance keep you from a life of blessing. A blessing that you can experience through repentance of sin. What ends up happening with the rest of the story, we don't have time to get into it, but what you see is these two sons take on two totally different trajectories. Jacob is going to end up repenting of his sin. He's going to end up marrying a godly woman. He's going to end up blessed by the Lord because of his repentance and become the nation of Israel.

Esau is going to live with his grievance and anger. He's going to try to get God's blessing outside of God's way by marrying a non-Canaanite woman, but he doesn't marry from the tribe of Abraham. He marries from the line of Ishmael, who is again a rejected child, even though it's from the line of Abraham. So what you see again is Esau trying to have his cake and eat it too, get God's stuff without God's way. Both children end up in two totally different destinations because they were starting from two totally different directions.

And that's where I want us to end this morning. I want all of us to experience the blessed life. But the only way we can arrive at that destination of a life of blessing is if we're facing in the right direction. And that doesn't mean you need to turn from where you are and turn to Jacob, your younger brother or older brother. That's an earthly story pointing to a heavenly reality. Isaac is representative of Jesus. God chose Isaac so that eventually through the line of Isaac and then Joseph and so on and so forth we could have Jesus.

And Jesus is the ultimate promised son. So what repentance is, is turning from your way of doing things and turning towards the Lord Jesus Christ. And saying he's the promised son. It is through Jesus. God has chosen for whatever his reasons and his sovereign plan, he has chosen that if I want blessing, it comes through the Son. It comes through Jesus the Son. And even though I may not like that and I may have to repent and I may have to take ownership and responsibility and humble myself, I will humble myself, I'll repent of my sin and I'll put my faith in Jesus because I want the blessing of God.

And God's blessing comes through the promised son. And if you've never made that decision this morning, I would encourage you to repent of your sin and put your faith in Jesus for salvation. A lot of you have put your faith in Jesus for salvation, but this morning you're probably resonating with one of those three or four characters. You may be a father who's started well but you're finishing poorly. You've allowed the comforts of the world to numb your appetite for God, and your children and your wife are suffering as a result.

And this morning the Lord would say to you, wake up. You need to fast, you need to stop drinking, you need to turn off the television, get rid of your... I don't know what it is. But you

need to let these worldly comforts stop lulling you to sleep spiritually and you need to lead your family well. Some of you may be like Rebekah as a mom and you're fearful and you're anxious and you've compromised your morality not because of bad reasons, but because you wanted to protect your child or you wanted to give them a good life and you've divorced yourself from God's way of doing things.

You may be like Jacob in that you're allowing peer pressure or a noble goal to compromise your morals. I can't have him if I don't do it this way, or I can't have that if I don't pursue it this way. Or you may be like Esau in that you're angry, you're mad, there's a root of bitterness, that if you don't sever it today, it is going to creep up and cause problems down the road. Defilement, trouble, most importantly, keeping you from a heart of repentance and faith. And so as the Lord leads us during this time of response, I want to encourage you to respond to the Lord based on what the Holy Spirit is saying to you.

The altar is open if you want to pray with me or someone else. I'd be happy to do that. There will also be a QR code you can scan and submit prayer requests or spiritual...