



# Sermon Highlights

## **Walking by Faith: How God Uses Flawed People**

### **Sermon Summary:**

This sermon explores how God uses imperfect individuals to accomplish His purposes by examining the lives of Jacob and Esau in Genesis 28. Pastor Bruce Gordon addresses the fundamental question of how God can work through flawed people, using the example of Jacob's journey from secondhand faith to personal faith. The message distinguishes between two types of believers: those who walk by faith like Jacob, stepping out on God's promises despite uncertainty and inadequacy, and those who live like Esau, attempting to please God through their own efforts and understanding. The sermon emphasizes that walking close to God requires acting on the truth of His Word based on historical evidence and personal surrender, not on our own worthiness or abilities. True spiritual growth comes when we abandon self-reliance and trust God's plan, even when we cannot see the full path ahead.

### **Key Points:**

- God works through flawed individuals not based on who we are, but based on who He is
- Jacob represents the spiritual person who walks by faith, while Esau represents the person living according to the flesh
- Both Jacob and Esau were part of God's family, illustrating that saved people can live either spiritually or carnally
- Secondhand faith (believing based on others' testimonies) must eventually become firsthand faith (personal experience with God)
- Faith is believing what God says is true and acting upon that truth, even without seeing the full outcome
- Christianity is based on historical evidence and facts, not cunningly devised fables or emotional experiences
- Living by our own efforts to please God leads to unsettled, unsatisfactory spiritual life
- True spiritual growth requires casting ourselves at God's feet and trusting Him to lead us on a journey of faith upon faith

- We cannot work out our salvation through our own abilities; we must surrender to God's plan

**Scripture Reference:**

- Genesis 28:1-9 (primary passage)

- Genesis 27:46 (contextual verse)

- Hebrews 11:1-3 (faith defined as substance of things hoped for and evidence of things not seen)

**Stories:**

- Jacob's journey from being a mama's boy to stepping out in faith to travel to Haran with nothing but the clothes on his back

- Esau's attempt to please his father Isaac by marrying into Ishmael's family, trying to earn blessing through his own works

- Abraham's servant being sent with a caravan of camels and wealth to find Isaac's wife, contrasted with Jacob having only a stone for a pillow

- The historical evidence for Jesus Christ's life, crucifixion, and resurrection, including the testimony of early Christians who died for what they witnessed

- The contrast between dying for a principle you believe in versus dying for something you know is a lie

- Isaac's blessing of Jacob and sending him away to preserve both his life and God's lineage

- Rebecca's concern about Jacob marrying Canaanite women like Esau did