



Sermon Highlights

The Journey of Faith: Learning to Turn Your Face Toward God

Sermon Summary:

This sermon examines Genesis 33, chronicling Jacob's reunion with his brother Esau after 20 years of separation. Through Jacob's journey, we see both a physical and spiritual narrative, one of reconciliation between brothers and one of a believer's growth in trusting God. Jacob's transformation from a self-reliant schemer to a man who acknowledges God's gracious dealings demonstrates the lifelong process of spiritual maturity. The sermon emphasizes that every encounter with God results in change, that our spiritual journey affects those around us, and that God continually works to turn our faces toward Him through life's circumstances. Though Jacob makes missteps even after meeting God, he gradually learns that God must always lead the way. The message challenges believers to examine where they are on their spiritual journey and whether their faces are turned toward God or toward worldly concerns.

Key Points:

- Every encounter with God results in a change in your life; God uses circumstances and people to show you His will
- Jacob's transformation is evident when he steps out in front of his family to meet Esau, taking the position of protector rather than hiding behind others
- The way we walk with God affects those closest to us, either positively or negatively, with enduring consequences
- Jacob's humility before Esau, bowing seven times, demonstrates complete submission and acknowledgment of wrongdoing
- When believers develop a vital relationship with God, they learn to value others rather than viewing them as resources to use
- Jacob's statement "I have enough" shows his transformation from a man driven by greed to one content in God's provision
- Believers must be careful about associating too closely with worldly influences, as we tend to become like those we spend time with rather than them becoming like us

- Jacob's journey includes missteps—staying in Succoth and pitching his tent before Shechem—showing that spiritual growth is not always a straight path
- God uses discipline to reorient our lives when we turn our faces from Him
- The goal of the Christian journey is to one day see God face to face in heaven

Scripture Reference:

- Genesis 33:1-20 (primary focus)
- References to Jacob's earlier encounters with God, including wrestling with God
- Allusion to Lot pitching his tent before Sodom
- Reference to the tribes of Gad settling outside the Promised Land

Stories:

- Jacob's 20-year separation from Esau after stealing his birthright and blessing
- Jacob leaving his father's house with only his staff and returning with great wealth
- Jacob wrestling with God and receiving a permanent limp as a reminder of the encounter
- Jacob sending five groups of livestock ahead to meet Esau as peace offerings
- The emotional reunion between Jacob and Esau, with both brothers weeping
- Jacob's journey to Succoth where he built a permanent house instead of continuing to the Promised Land
- Jacob eventually moving to Shechem and pitching his tent before the city
- A contemporary illustration from children's church about a child wanting another child's tractors, demonstrating the natural human tendency toward selfishness
- The broader narrative of Lot pitching his tent before Sodom as a warning parallel