

Called By Name: "Jacob!"

January 17, 2021

Scriptures: Genesis 46:1-7

Bottom Line: God uses our wilderness experiences to help us become new

Jacob's Story

Jacob has two names:

- Jacob — over-reacher, deceiver
- Israel — strives/struggles with God, one whom God strives for

Jacob's life story moves from one identity to the other. He begins as a deceiver, is deceived, and eventually clearly has God working on his behalf.

Genesis 46

Jacob is making a big move, and deals with fear:

- Afraid of leaving the familiar (he is an old man now)
- Afraid of the dangers of the Negev wilderness ahead of him

God meets Jacob in his moment of weakness and fear. He assures Jacob that, in his fear God is trustworthy; in his weakness, God is strong.

Jayson's Story

Jayson has experienced (and is still experiencing) a period of wilderness like Jacob.

- Jayson left familiar job surroundings, not sure what was in store
- He experienced anxiety and fears about finances, identity

Through it all, God has been faithful, showing His goodness, providing direction, and helping Jayson to come to a greater understanding of who God is.

He has found that God is loving, good, and gentle with us as He guides us from our old identity to the new identity in Christ.

LISTENING

Have someone in your group share something about their week. They could answer one of the following questions:

- What was a big challenge or problem you faced this week? How did you handle it?
- Where did you experience God this week? Or where do you wish you had experienced God this week?
- Based on your life experience this week, what do you think God is trying to teach you right now? What is He trying to build in you?

After the person shares, the group can respond. Make sure you let them know you heard them: tell them what you heard, offer wise advice where it's asked for, share from your own experience as well.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Review Sunday's message. What stood out to you? What challenged you? Are there any lingering questions?
2. How do you understand God? What 3 words would you use to describe God? How have you seen or experienced Him in these ways?
3. How do you hear God? What does His voice sound like? How do you recognize it and distinguish it from others?
4. What fears are holding you back in life? How is God asking you to trust him at this stage in your journey?
5. God is transforming us, moving us from our old identity to the new people we are in Christ, the people we were meant to be. What is your old identity? Where are you at in that journey of transformation? What does God want to do in you right now?

DIGGING DEEPER

Bible Project Word Study Series: The Character of God

A word study through the attributes God uses to describe Himself.

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/category/character-of-god-series>