

Meditations for your week

What is the difference between the things that come easily and the things for which I have to struggle and fight? How have I chosen the easy route? How have I fought for the wrong things that did not prove worth the struggle? How have I stopped engaging God in a challenging way?

What kind of fight does my faith need to have with my choices, my goals, my purpose, my schedule, my work, and my wants? What will my church life and worship look like if I am engaged in a spiritual struggle for my life? How will my struggle impact others in their struggles with faith?

In what ways have I been defeated by or won over by God? What effect has God's generosity had on me? What effect has God's sacrifice had on me? What effect has God's faithfulness had on me? What is my spiritual problem if who God is and what God does have no effect on me at all?

How tenacious will I be in the struggle of faith when things are not going well? How tenacious will I be when things are going great? To whom will I go that will encourage my struggle, understand my struggle, even struggle with me without trying to dismiss my struggle?



Sermon Notes
February 14, 2021

*"Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like you
in heaven above or on earth below." —1 Kings 8:23*

Let's Get Ready to Rumble – Genesis 25-35

God's people wear a name

that is troubling and yet accurate.

We are not the submissive nor the compliant;

we are Israel, the God-wrestlers.

Why is Jacob the epitome of being God's people?

God keeps His covenant.

God wins us with His generosity.

God is willing to lose against us to hold onto us.

We are not chosen because of who we are;

our identity is based on who God is.

Is there any fight left in you

to meet Him and to be challenged by Him?

Group Discussion Questions

Open

What are the differences between fighting with enemies, fighting with family, and fighting with friends? How can fighting actually bring you closer together?

Dig and Reflect

1. Read Genesis 32. How do you feel Jacob has changed since he left his father's home? How has Jacob remained the same? What is your impression of Jacob's prayer in verses 9-12? How is fear helpful to faith, and how is it revealing of one's faith condition?
2. What is your impression of how Jacob gets ready to meet Esau? What do you think he should have done differently to meet Esau? What is the best way to renew an injured relationship after a long time in tension?
3. Why does Jacob need a wrestling match? How do you think Jacob defeated the man, and what is the value of Jacob winning? When do you need a good fight? Where would you go to get one?
4. Why do you think the name Israel, or "God-wrestler," seems to be a name of honor for Jacob? Why would God want that designation for His own people? In what ways should we wrestle with God? In what ways is wrestling not the right thing to do?
5. Verse 32 describes a tradition for remembering this story. What should the people continue to live with from this story? What would change about your faith and practices if struggling with God were central to your identity?