

We Can All Relate - Genesis 33:1-20

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Date: 21 April 2024

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[0 : 00] We are in Genesis 33. We've been traveling with Abraham, Isaac, and now Jacob, and Jacob is finally out of Haran. He's finally back, not in the promised land yet, but he's on his way there.

He's on the east side of the Jordan, so he's not quite crossed over into the promised land. And he's just, last week, we just got into chapter 33. We looked at those three verses where he met Esau, or was about to. It was his approach to Esau. Today's message title is, we can all relate. So as Jacob has not seen Esau in 20 plus years, it's been 20 years since he's seen him. He's about to have this family reunion. And in light of that, if you want to look, kind of give an outline for today's message, the 20 verses in chapter 33, verses 1 through 7, our family reunion, where Jacob and Esau, after 20 years apart, get back together. Verses 8 through 11 is family talk. You know, when you're a kid, you love that. When your parents are like, we need to have a family meeting or a family talk tonight. It's like, oh, great.

Someone hasn't been doing their chores or, you know, whatever. So the family talk. Verses 12 through 16 is family trip. Let's all take a trip together. And verses 17 through 19 is having family time. And then the last verse, we'll see verse 20 is leading up to family worship.

And so Jacob, like we said, if we look on the map there, he's come down from Haran. He's all the way down to the Jabbok River, which empties, means emptying, into the Jordan. And he's just met with the Lord. He's come face to face with the Lord and face to face with himself. So before Jacob could enter the promised land, because God had said in the previous chapter, he had said, Jacob, it's time to go home. I want you to go back to the promised land. I am the God of Bethel, the place where you anointed the pillar. And I want you to go back there, Jacob. But before we can enter the promised land, we have to do what? We got to exit the world. He had to get rid of Laban. The world had to go.

Before he could go into the promised land, he had to be remade new. He couldn't go in as Jacob. He had to go in with a new name and a new nature. Now he's about to meet Esau. Do you remember what Esau represented as a type? Esau is our man of the flesh. So before we enter the promised land, we had to get rid of the world. We had to be remade new. It's like, all right, I'm set. Not quite. There's still the flesh.

[2 : 22] We still got to deal with that flesh. And so if we pick up in verse one, we're going to backtrack and do those first three verses briefly. Jacob, having now just spent the night wrestling with the Lord, and had been conquered by God. And so he prevailed with God by first being conquered by God.

And Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked and behold, Esau came and with him 400 men. And he, Jacob, divided the children unto Leah and unto Rachel and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost and Leah and her children after and Rachel and Joseph in the back.

And as we said before, this isn't, I don't think he's hiding or, or I'm not hiding because he goes in front of them. He's not doing this like, oh, maybe I could protect this group. If this group gets attacked, it's too late now. Esau's here with 400 men. I don't think he's doing that at all.

I think he's just lining them up in a sense of like saving the best for last. Look at God's blessing as he just kind of brings forth what God has done. And he, verse three, passed over before them. So he's not behind them anymore. He's in front and he bows himself to the ground seven times until he came near to his brother. And so he said last week that Jacob faced his future with faith, with confidence and humility. And that's how he left him, that he was facing the future in, with faith in God and what God had promised and what God had done and in confidence, confidence in himself. No, but confidence in who he was. Paul tells us make our calling and election sure that the gifts of calling of God are without repentance. He says, consider yourself whether you be in the faith. He says, we should know these things. We should be confident in them. I'm not confident in myself, but I am confident in who I am before the Lord. And then with humility, he doesn't come to Esau and be like, you wouldn't believe what God just did in my life, you know, buddy. I've got the blessing. No, he comes in humility, recognizing that despite who he is in God, he still has a past that he caused a lot of problems in.

And so then Esau runs to meet him and punches him on the jaw. Last time these men saw each other, they're in their seventies. They're now in their nineties, 90 some year old men who have not seen each other for 20 plus years. And Esau runs to him and meets him and embraces him and falls on his neck and kissed him. And they wept together, these men.

[4 : 51] A little different than the last time they saw each other, wasn't it? The last time Jacob and Esau met, or I mean, they were together. It wasn't so happy a moment, was it? The last time Jacob saw Esau, Esau wanted to wring his neck, right? Not hug it. In Genesis 27 verse 41, it says, And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father had blessed him. And Esau said in his heart, the days of mourning for my father are at hand. Then will I slay my brother Jacob.

It's like, hey, dad's about to die. Boy, did they have that wrong. Isaac thought he was going to die. So he's like, come on, Esau, I got to bless you before I'm dead. And Esau's like, well, dad thinks he's going to die soon. So when he does, I can kill Jacob. We're 20 years after that. Isaac is going strong.

No man knows the day of his death, does he? The last time Jacob saw Esau, Jacob took a blessing, right? Genesis 27, 36. And he said, Esau said, is not he rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright and behold, now he's taken away my blessing. What we're going to see today is this time Jacob is giving a blessing in the text. The last time Jacob saw Esau, Esau, Esau wept alone. Genesis 27, 38. Esau said unto his father, hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, oh, my father. And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. And now they weep together. Quite a work that God has done these last 20 years. Not all genuine apologies need to be spoken. I mean, well, you saw Jacob never said he was sorry, sorry to Esau. And Esau never apologized for wanting to murder him. Not all genuine apologies have to be spoken. Actions speak louder than words. And you can see in these two men that God has done a work in Jacob. And unbeknownst to

Jacob, God has done a work in Esau too, to bring him to this point. But at the same token, not all, not all spoken apologies are necessarily genuine. Right? You know, we know that when you're a kid or if you have kids say, you're sorry, sorry. You know, well, good. I'm glad you were so genuine in that. Right? But then later you see they're playing again. It's like, okay, there was a genuineness that allowed them to move past that in their relationship. But not all spoken apologies are necessarily genuine and not all genuine apologies need. And I'm sorry. Actions speak louder than words. And in verse 5, Esau lifts up his eyes and he saw the women and the children and said, who are these with thee?

And he said, the children which God has graciously given thy servant. So Esau's like, man, we have lots of women and lots of children. Are they all yours? God's been gracious. God has been gracious.

[7 : 46] And I want to take just a moment to kind of like step outside the text a little bit. Not exactly, but Jacob here says that the children which God has given, graciously given his servant.

We live in a day where children aren't looked at as a gift anymore. Children are a gift of God's grace. We are a fallen people. We're in a fallen world and we have fallen bodies. It's amazing that y'all turned out as good as you did. That we are able by God's grace to bear children and to experience that and the love and then the responsibility that comes with that. The world doesn't see that today. The world has long moved past that. I was just looking at a few things.

On the left there is a flyer that was from November of this year. It was a conference. And one of the sessions was, should I have children? And it wasn't like, is it time to have children? Am I at a place where I'm responsible for that? It was, is it environmentally responsible? Is it socially responsible? And is it going to fulfill my life? Primarily is, is it environmentally responsible? That's the thing today. On the right, that flyer, which is kind of blurry, is talking about the lie of the carbon footprint. You don't have a carbon footprint. Okay. That's a lie. And that somehow we can do something to affect this world in a way that God says we can't. He said that there will be seasons and there will be harvest and springtime and planting until the end. No man is going to change that. No effect we have. And if you look into the science, it's a, it's a bunch of junk anyway. But unfortunately, because of the lie that's being pushed right now, that you can supposedly make your carbon footprint smaller by all of these things that are listed. You could fly less, you could whatever. But each one of those is like single digits, supposedly how you can reduce it. Or you could have no children and that would reduce your carbon footprint by 50 some, whatever pounds of carbon a year. So don't have kids. That's irresponsible. It's such a lie and it's such nonsense, isn't it? Just think of it for a moment.

People should not have children because it's bad for the human race. How long does that last? It's just professing themselves to be wise, they've become fools. The world calls children a burden, but the word calls them a blessing. Psalm 127, lo children are an heritage of the Lord and the fruit of the womb, the fruit of the womb is his reward. Blessed or happy is the man that has his quiver full.

The world says children are a burden, but the word says they're a blessing. The world says children cost. It's too great of a cost, but the word says they add. In the beginning before the fall, in Genesis 128, and God blessed them, Adam and Eve, and said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, add, continue to add. This is a blessing. And fill up the earth and subdue it. The world says children have no purpose. It's just a biological coming together of a biological process that eventually somehow turns into people. The word declares God's purpose for them before they're born.

[10:57] Jeremiah 1 5, before I formed you in the belly, I knew you. And before you came forth out of the womb, I sanctified you and ordained you a prophet unto the nations. Children, thank you, are a gift of God's grace. I had read that this last year was the highest number of abortions in our nation to date.

You know, they think, oh, it's a good thing. They overturned, you know, Roe versus Wade. No, it's not a good thing because they said they sent it to the states. It should not have gone to the states. The states take up an issue that the constitution doesn't specifically deal with.

The constitution specifically deals with that we are endowed with inalienable rights. Life. And so that is saying essentially the states need to decide if an unborn child is alive. And that is not true, that that is something that needs to be debated. We know, as God just said, before I, before you were formed, I knew you. So children, they are a gift. But the funny thing is as well, it's not just that we're supposed to breed as rabbits, you know, just like pop out as many kids as you can, right? That's not what it is, that there's a specific environment for children to thrive in.

There's a little verse tucked away in Malachi chapter two, verse 15. And it talks, it's a prophecy to the priests who are just divorcing willy nilly, however they want. And it says, and did not he make one yet had he the residue of the spirit? And why one? What was the reason to make one between man and women that he might seek a godly seed? Therefore take heed to your spirit and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. That God has a purpose for marriage to be the environment in which children thrive. It's not just supposed to be, well, let's just have a bunch of kids. That there's a specific environment that God has created man to produce a family within and then for children to thrive in. Paul kind of brings this up in first Corinthians chapter seven.

He's talking about if a spouse is married, or of course a spouse is married. If one of the married people in the relationship is a believer and one is not, he's like, well, what do you do? Well, I should just leave that situation, right? Because we're not supposed to be only unequally yoked.

[13:10] But Paul says in verse 13 of chapter seven, he says, no, no, no, no. The woman, which has a husband that believes not the husband doesn't believe the wife does. If he's pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him for the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife.

And the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband. So the unbelieving spouse, there's an effect that the believing spouse has in that relationship. Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy. So if you have a relationship where one member of the spouse of the marriage, I'm sorry, is believing and one is not believing, if you get divorced, then your children are dirty. They'll never take a bath again.

Oh, sorry. There's an effect, there's an effect, a sanctifying effect that being in that relationship has. And I'm sure we all know people who after years and years in a relationship like that, man, their husband or their wife came to know the Lord, you know, that maybe they didn't. I know of a family I've known since I was a kid. He's not come to know the Lord, no interest. And she is a faithful follower of Jesus. And her kids have all heard the gospel and have had that opportunity to walk with the Lord because she's stayed there. So yes, children are a gift of God's grace, but God's grace is meant to then be administered to those children within the marriage, within a godly marriage. Deuteronomy 6, verses 6 through 7. And these words which I command you this day shall be in your heart, and you shall teach them diligently unto your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in thine house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. So what a blessing.

To know the truth. Man, children are a heritage. They're a blessing. They're a gift. And God has a plan for them and a plan for families. And we do not have to listen to the lies of this world that try to twist what God has taken and put a twist on it. Just has God said, okay, you can have kids, but let the state raise them. You can have kids, but you don't need to be in a marriage, you know. Or you can be married, but don't have kids. They're going to cramp your style, you know.

God has a purpose, and his purpose is always best. I just thought that just struck me when it said, when Jacob says, the children which God has graciously given me. And we live in a world that doesn't see that anymore as a gift. And then the handmaidens came near. In verse 6, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also with her children came near and bowed themselves.

[15 : 42] And after came Joseph and Rachel, and they bowed themselves. And here comes the whole family. And it's cool because you see Jacob's new nature, the new name of Israel, that new nature, it affected his whole family. Jacob, who was hiding at one time behind his family, he's now out in front leading. And he's bowed seven times before Esau. So here comes the family, and they follow as well. The father sets the tone in the home. Whether we like that or not, whether it's socially acceptable or not, I mean, I might as well just jump off the deep end if I'm talking about cultural norms that the Bible, you know, is against. Another cultural norm right now is that there's no place for order within the creation of men and women. There's no place for that, that we're all equal, and we're all the same. Well, that's about as silly as saying that children are beneficial to the human race. That only lasts so long before the consequences of that are shown.

And it's the same. The father sets the tone in the home. That's just how it is. And God has made it to be that way. And it's just really neat to see Jacob here setting the tone in his family, following through with that. But Jesus also recognized that and gives us that same example.

In John 5, 19, Jesus answered and said to them, truly, truly, I say unto you, the son can do nothing of himself but what he sees the father do. For what things soever he does, these also does the son likewise. So the son follows the example of the father. The son also speaks what he hears the father speak. In John 12, 49, I have not spoken of myself, but the father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak. And then in John 20, verse 21, Jesus said to them again, peace be unto you, as my father has sent me, even so send I you, directed by the father.

So, well, that's great, but you don't know my dad. I wish I had a father like Jesus. Well, we looked at this on Resurrection Sunday. John 20, 17, when Mary's clinging to him, he's like, don't hold me so tight. He says, I've not yet ascended to my father and your father. Go tell my brethren, I ascend to my father and your father, to my God and your God. And so our father sets the tone just as he did for Jesus. So here's Jacob and Esau having this family reunion after 20 years.

Now they begin to have this conversation, this family talk. In verse eight, Esau says, what do you mean? What, what, what meanest thou by all this drove, which I met? So like, as I was traveling here with my 400 friends, we passed all these sheep and cattle and, and every servant that we passed that was driving them was like, these are for Esau from Jacob. He's like, what did you mean by all that? And Jacob said, these are to find grace in the sight of my Lord.

[18 : 44] If you remember in Genesis 32, we saw the beginning of the chapter where Jacob says that he went, he said, he sent to tell Esau, hey, I'm coming to meet you. And I have oxen and donkeys, flocks, men, servants, and maidservants. Go and tell my Lord that I may find grace in his sight. He wasn't bragging.

He wasn't trying to flex on him. He was saying, Esau, I'm coming back, but I don't need anything you have. I'm not coming to take anything from you. I have, I have plenty. But he says that I may find grace in your sight. And from the beginning there, in the beginning of the chapter, we saw that his heart was right at that point. I think his heart was, you know what? God's just taking care of Laban. He can take care of Esau. I am just hoping to find favor in your sight. Well, then he wigs out because the 40 men are coming with Esau. And then in verse 20, it says that Jacob sends this present before him then with a different reason, not just a note to Esau saying, I'm coming home for a visit, but now he's sending all this stuff, all these gifts. And he said, I will appease him with the present that goes before me. And afterward, I will see his face peradventure. He will accept me. Hey, maybe I can somehow become acceptable by the gift I'm bringing. And so he reverses this.

And he tries, Jacob tries through gifts to gain Esau's favor. So Esau, after having just traveled through this herd of cattle, gets to Jacob and he's like, hey, can you explain this to me?

In verse eight, oh, we sorry, we read that. In verse nine, Esau said, in response to Jacob saying, hey, these are to find grace in your sight, my Lord. Esau said, I have enough, my brother, keep that thou has unto thyself. And I don't think at this point, Jacob is still trying to gain Esau's favor through this. I think he's just being honest. Hey, I had sent this originally. I was just trying to, you know, find grace in your sight. Because we're going to see that Jacob's heart has changed by the way he continues to respond here. But Esau says, I have enough. I don't need this, bro. I got everything I need. It's funny. Jacob's gifts were never needed, were they? All that anxiety and stress he had in the last chapter, all of this planning and these resources he's sending out, they were never needed to earn Esau's favor. Esau has a place, a place that God has given him. In Joshua 24, at the end of Joshua's life, he's rehearsing what God had done for Israel. And the Lord, through Joshua, is speaking and says, I took your father, Abraham, from the other side of the flood, the other side of Jordan, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac. True. And gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau. And I gave unto Esau Mount Seir to possess it. But Jacob and his children went down into Egypt. And so God is here proclaiming in

Joshua, hey, I gave Esau what he has. I gave him this portion. And Esau says, I have enough. I have all I need. If you remember in Genesis 27, when Esau was kind of weeping and begging for that, blessing from Isaac at that time. Isaac then blesses him. In verse 39, And Isaac, his father, answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth and of the dew from heaven above. And that's what Esau's blessing was. It never was any more or any less than that. He wanted the fatness of the earth. And how high into heaven is the dew from heaven?

[22 : 11] Where's that come from? It's just this world, still within the atmosphere. For Esau, hey, I got everything I want in this world. I don't need anything else. The word enough there means much or many. So Esau is saying to Jacob, I don't need this. I got tons of stuff. You see my car? You see my boat? Come on back to my house. I'll show you all my stuff. I got a lot of stuff. And I don't need anything else. Esau was satisfied with the enough he had founded in this life. And unfortunately, it never appears that he fully understands what Jacob truly had. He never understood what he lost in the birthright, in the blessing that he thought just meant fulfillment in this life.

Jacob had so much more. And in verse 10, Jacob then responds, and we see his heart now. Jacob said, no, I pray you. If now I have found grace in your sight, then receive my present at your hand. What came first? Grace. If there's grace, then receive this gift. Grace before gifts.

Then receive my present at my hand. For therefore, I have seen your face as though I had seen the face of God, and thou was pleased with me. We must accept God's grace before we can accept his gifts.

Right? You can't reverse it. I can't come to God and look for his gifts and his blessings and his promises without first receiving his grace. And unfortunately, there's many people out there living as if they can earn God's favor, earn heaven. And even in the church, those of us who know the Lord, we can still live in a way where we kind of expect that God kind of owes us for our Bible reading, for our witnessing, for our lack of sin, for our not walking in the flesh. It's like, well, Lord, I've done really well. I shared with that guy. I haven't missed Bible reading all week.

I didn't yell at my kids. And I said no to the flesh. So a little more grace, please. Well, that's not grace. It's impossible to do that. Romans 11, 6 says, if by grace, it's no more of works.

[24 : 14] Otherwise, grace is no more grace. If it be of works, it's no more grace. Otherwise, works is no more work. You can't do it. You just, you kind of step outside of grace as soon as you try to operate with God on a kind of a you owe me basis or a works basis. God says, well, now I can't bless you with grace.

Well, Lord, how do I receive grace? Just come like Jacob did. Come as you are and just let me do everything. Well, Lord, I'm not really involved in that. My pride doesn't really like that.

So then we still try to operate through other means. And grace also changes our perspective. Look at how Jacob now views Esau. He says, as though I had seen the face of God.

Jacob is able to see Esau as God sees Esau. Yes, but Jacob sees Esau as God sees Jacob. When we receive God's grace, we can then look at everybody else through God's eyes of how he sees me. I then look at others and realize, wow, if God could love me, if I received God's grace, I can then see them through those eyes. Yeah, I want to see you, how God sees you. But I think more importantly is understanding how God sees me. And then I can look at you with those eyes.

First John 4.10 through 11 says here in his love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us. It originates with God. Didn't originate with me. And sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we are also to love one another. How do we love others? By how God loved me. I love you because I've experienced how God's loved me. And then I can see you through the same eyes Jesus sees me. It's like, wow, Lord, if you could love me, if you've shown grace to me, then I can see someone else through those eyes. Grace enables me to be a blessing and provides all of the resources for that blessing too. I don't have to provide them myself. Second Corinthians chapter nine, verses six through eight, Paul is writing about giving. This is not a message on giving. This is a very generous church and nothing needs to be said about that. But Paul is writing and he has this interesting phraseology he uses here as he's talking about being generous and giving to

[26 : 30] God's work. He uses the word grace in the middle of this. He says, but this, I say, he which sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly. And he which sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully. You know, if you've grown up in the church, you've heard the term tithing. And why should tithe? Which is giving a tenth. That's not a law for the church. It's not. How do we know what is doctrine? Remember?

Taught on by Jesus or taught by Jesus. It's practiced in the book of Acts and it's expounded upon in the epistles, in the epistles. Tithing is not, it's not that we should give 10%.

Giving everything is. Giving of ourselves is. Being generous is. And Paul, I love how he likens this. He says, it's the same law of sowing and reaping. You know what that means? That means you can never, never out give God, but you can never not have the resources to give to God.

Because as you give to God, you will disproportionately reap what you've sown. Now I'm not saying, you know, if you would sow a seed in my garden today, \$10 in my garden, then God will bless you. That's not what I'm saying at all. You sow in God's garden. You sow to the Lord.

Every man, according as he's purposed in his heart, so let him give not grudgingly or of necessity. There's no law for God loves a cheerful giver. God's looking at the heart and God is able to make all grace abound towards you. That you always, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. Now we can apply that across the board. I can apply that, that God's grace is sufficient for me in every work, that he's going to be the one who supplies it. I don't have to have those resources myself. But this is specifically in context talking about giving. Paul is saying that God will always give you sufficient to what you need to give to God. So as you give to God, you can never run out of resources to give to the Lord. That's fantastic. I can then give to the Lord freely without having to worry about the things God said not to worry about. Taking heed, don't take any heed, what you shall eat, what you shall drink, what you shall wear. Matthew 10, 8, Jesus is sending out the disciples to go out and to heal the sick and cleanse the lepers, raise the dead and cast out devils. But he says, freely you've received, freely give. Now don't go out there and try and charge for your services and be like, well, you want that dead man raised? First, sow a seed in my garden and then I'll raise. No. He says, you've received freely. Grace gives us freely. So then we turn around and freely give that as well.

[29 : 03] Now, Jacob, where he had said here in verse, what verse did we got up to? 10, 11, sorry. Well, he says in verse 11, he uses the same word that Esau used. Where he says, I take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee because God has dealt graciously with me because I have enough. And he urged him and he took it. Now you see, he uses the same word Esau did. Esau said, I don't need your stuff. I got enough. And Jacob turns around and says, look, take this as a blessing. Isn't it amazing? He says, take, I pray thee, my blessing.

Years ago, 20 years ago, he took Esau's blessing. And now he's turning around going, Esau, man, God has been so gracious. There's enough for me and enough for you. Take of my blessing. So when we give to the Lord, when we give our time, our money, whatever it is, we're giving out of our abundance of what God has given us. It's out of our blessing. But the word he uses here for enough is interesting. It doesn't mean much or a lot. He says to Esau, Esau, I have enough. I have all things. I have the whole or the entirety. I've got everything, Esau. Esau's like, I got a lot of stuff. I don't need more stuff. Jacob's like, man, I've got everything. I have everything, Esau. So please take of my blessing.

Esau had enough. And yet it was too much. What do I mean by that? In Mark chapter 4, verse 19, this is the description, the definition of the parable of the sower. Jesus is responding and telling the disciples what it means. He's giving the interpretation for the parable, the part of the parable where the seed falls among the thorns and the weeds. In Mark 4, 19, he says, the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches and the lusts of other things entering in, they choke the word and becomes unfruitful. Esau had enough, but it was too much. Is it because he had riches? No, riches aren't a problem. Look what is. The deceitfulness of riches, the cares of this world, and the lust or the desire of other things. Lust is just, I want it and I want it now. I want to be fulfilled now. And that's Esau, the man of the flesh. Hey, I'm going to die. Give me some of your pottage. Give me some of your oatmeal. Well, I'll give you my oatmeal. If you give me your right to everything that dad has, it seems like a fair trade. Give me the oatmeal, right? This was, he wanted it now.

We didn't look at what the consequences were in the future. So Esau had enough, but it was too much. Jacob had all things, but it was not enough. It wasn't satisfying in the right way. Hebrews 11, we're told that by faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place, which he should after receive for an inheritance, he obeyed. And we saw that going through Genesis. And he went out, not knowing where he went. But by faith, he sojourned in a land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with who? Isaac and Jacob. And we saw that Jacob and Esau had a 15-year overlap with Abraham. With Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise, the same promise right now that Jacob is living under. For he, Abraham, looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. So Jacob says, I've got everything. And yet it wasn't enough to satisfy him in this world and in this life. He's like, that's not what I'm looking for, Esau. You and I, we have very different views of what is enough and what satisfies. And so Jacob says, no, please, if you've, if you've seen me in a light that's favorable, if there's grace, then receive the gift. Gifts come after grace. And to accept the gift in this culture was to accept the person.

And so Esau receives of that gift. It's the same for us. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, preaching that sermon to the Jews, he said to them, be baptized, repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remissions of sins. And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. To receive the gift is to accept the person. So we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit only by accepting the person of Jesus. We said this last week and we say it again, love cannot be bought or earned. It can't. Just like grace can't be bought or earned. It's no longer grace.

[33 : 34] Love can only be given and freely received. It can only be freely given and freely received. Anything else is outside the definition of love. You may call it love, but it's not. An earned love will become a burden for all involved. It becomes a burden. So if I have to earn someone's love, right? If I have to do something to get them to love me, right? I have to act a certain way or treat them a certain way or give them a certain whatever. So that, okay, now I've gained their love. Yes.

That becomes a huge burden and it leads directly to manipulation directly because that person now has me over a barrel because it's like, oh, I'm receiving their love and they can just change the wages 10 times. Who did that? Laban, right? As he changes the wage, he said, well, now I need you to do this.

Well, if you want to love me and if you want me to love you, I mean, if you want to receive of my favor, then you need to do this. So as soon as love or grace becomes something that is earned, it always goes directly to manipulation. Expectations and relationships drowned relationships because I can't live up to them. And if I do, it becomes a huge burden. Then I have to keep that up.

I have to keep up that expectation, right? But love, love emanates from the source. The source that love emanates from cannot be affected by the object that receives that love, right? I'm sure you all got that the first time. The source that love emanates from cannot be affected by the object that receives that love. The best way to describe it is like light, right? Light that shines upon the flowers and the trees and the grass. Oh, they love it. They're like, thank you. Give me more.

Give me more, right? Light that shines on the la cucaracha, right? You shine the light on the cockroach. He doesn't love it. He runs away. But did it affect the source? Did it affect the light at all?

[35 : 28] Not a bit. Not one bit, right? God is love. He is not affected by the object of his love. So he's the source. There are many who reject him. There's many who receive him, but it doesn't change God.

He that loves not knows not God for God is what? Love. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love. In other words, if it's a true love, it's not going to be something that's going to bring you under fear of losing that love because you didn't do X, Y, Z, right? We love him because he first loved us. He's the originator.

He's the source. That source, then we get to partake of. We love him because he first loved us. His love then dwells in us. You know, where scripture says, Jesus says, hey, love your enemies.

Do good to those that persecute you. Pray for those that spitefully use you. I don't love that guy who did whatever. How can I do that? Because true love comes from God because God is love. And that source is constant. It doesn't matter the object. So I can love my wife who does good to me, and I can love this guy over here who doesn't do good to me because the object has no effect at all on the source. Just like turning on your flashlight. It doesn't matter what you shine it on. It doesn't affect the source. And so Jacob now is able, as he interacts with Laban, with Esau, he's able to see this through those eyes. And he's able to interact with Esau in a way where he's like, Esau, whoever you are is who you are. Man, but receive this gift. It doesn't, it's not about who you are, Esau. It's about who I am now before my God. And so what are we down to? Verse 12. So Esau there, he urges him and he takes it in verse 11, which is essentially to accept the person then. To accept this gift is to accept the person. And Esau, as only Esau can, he says, by golly, Jacob, it's good to see you after 20 years. You know what? Let's go on family vacation together. This is going to be great. And he said, let us take our journey and let us go and I'll go before you. I got a great idea,

Jacob. Let's all just travel together. I mean, this should work out great. I've got 400 burly men and you've got a bunch of women and children. Well, how could this not mix? And Jacob said unto him, my Lord knows that the children are tender and the flocks and herds with young are with me.

[37 : 56] And if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. Let my Lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant and I will lead on softly according as the cattle that goes before me and the children be able to endure until I come unto my Lord unto Seir. Now I've read different commentaries and a lot of them talk about how, oh, Jacob's still trying to be tricky. He's still lying. I don't think so. I don't think so at all. After what he just came off of at the end of 33 and the way he's talking to Esau, he's like, receive my gift because of grace, not for the earning of grace.

I think Jacob's being very wise here. Now listen, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things have become new, right? But a new nature does not mean that my old nature is eradicated, right? We're told in Ephesians that we have the Holy Spirit as the down payment, the earnest of our inheritance. So it's that, it's that small piece we get, but we don't have the full thing yet. Then we'll have new bodies and we'll have our new natures fully realized. It'll be great. Right now we just have an inheritance, a piece of that, but we still have our old natures and our old selves and our old bodies.

So Jacob is still Jacob, right? I'm still Jared. Born again, praise God. Made new, yes. Walking in the spirit most of the time. But I'm still, I have a fallen nature. So Jacob is, yes, still Jacob. It's still in there. But I think he's being wise here. And then there's the picture too of Esau, a man of the flesh, isn't there? And Israel, the new man cannot dwell with the man of the flesh. He can't be led by the man of the flesh either. Talked away in the minor prophets in Amos 3.3, we all know the scripture, but we might not know where it is. It's in Amos that says, can two walk together except they be agreed? Jesus says the same thing when he says a house divided cannot stand. Jacob is very wise to separate at this point, I think. Listen, a relationship restored, after 20 years, a relationship restored does not necessarily mean that fellowship should be restored. It doesn't mean that their differences aren't still there. It doesn't mean their reasons for cohabitating, that they couldn't cohabitate, aren't still there. Jacob is the man of the spirit, a man under promise. Israel, I mean,

Esau's a man of the flesh. Jacob is very wise here, I think, to separate. 2 Corinthians 6.14, be you not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? What communion has light with darkness? They're not going to mix. Just like grace and works can't mix, the flesh and the spirit can't mix. Galatians 5.17, for the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. In other words, the desires of the spirit and the desires of the flesh are completely contrary. They're never going to go together. When you are in the spirit, you are not in the flesh. When you are in the flesh, you are not in the spirit. You can't have a half and half. And these are contrary one to the other so that you cannot do the things you would.

And in this section, Paul is saying that even though you've been remade, even though you are now having the spirit indwelling you, you have a new life in the spirit, that you can't live in the flesh as a believer and expect then that the outworking of that is going to be fruitful because the flesh will always lead to corruption. Jacob and Esau have a reconciled relationship, but it doesn't mean their differences can ever be reconciled. The nature of the flesh will always be opposed to the nature of the spirit. That's how it is.

[41 : 28] And so Jacob, like a true shepherd, gently leads those that are with young. And he said to Esau in verse 15, let me now, or Esau said to him, so he says, uh, uh, Esau, I just don't think it's good. We just do a family vacation right about now.

And Esau said, well, I got an idea. Let me leave some of these folk that are with me. Yeah. Have you met Sven and Thor? So two of my right-hand men of these 400 burly guys, I'm sure they can, the boys will love it. You know, what if Jacob's kids now are like 13 is his oldest, you know, I'll leave a couple of these guys. It'll be great. And Jacob says, what, what needs it? Let me find grace in the sight of my Lord. Jacob's trust and the strength of the flesh had been broken. He had learned that God is the one who preserves.

God had promised, God had provided, God had protected. And now he learned that God can preserve. So what's the difference between preserve and protect? Well, protect is he's kept him safe, but preserve is he's lost nothing through all of this. Here comes Jacob. Not only does he have God's promise, God's provision and God's protection, but he has now seen, man, God can keep, God can keep all this. I don't have to try and do this. All that was needed was grace.

So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir and Seir means hairy, shaggy or rough. What a place. Esau's like, I got everything I need. That's the world. That's about the best they can give you. You know, it's hairy, it's shaggy, it's rough. You know, some of you ladies are like, that's my husband. Sanctified, hairy, shaggy and rough is wonderful. Got John the Baptist and Elijah. But this is what Esau, Esau thought, this is the best place ever, Jacob. Come and visit me. He's like, no, no, I don't think so. Now, did Jacob lie to Esau and say, yeah, yeah, I'll come eventually, but never did. He may have visited him. We don't have that in the text. Maybe he did.

Or like we said, maybe this was a weak moment where he didn't know quite what to do, but he knew it is not good for my family to be influenced by this part of the family. I'm sorry. You know, that's those family reunions. I had them. I had an uncle and one side of my family that was just, they were crass and they were, it was awkward. And, and they'd always be like the way we need to do more together. We only ever see you at these couple holidays, you know? And for my parents, it was kind of like, yeah, sure. Eventually we'll get together. I mean, how do you tell them?

[43 : 54] They had no interest in the Lord and they thought they were great. They thought they were fine. And so Jacob now recognizes this, this is not healthy. And verse 17 now, Jacob journeys to Sukkoth and built him a house and made booths for his cattle there. Therefore, the name of the place is called Sukkoth. Now Jacob does something interesting. He doesn't quite cross the Jordan at this point. As we kind of bring this into a close here and finish these few verses, we're going to see where he ends up. So you see Sukkoth is still on the east side of the Jordan.

He's not yet crossed over, but he builds a house there. Now there's going to be a passage. There's going to be some passage of time through like these three or four verses. Excuse me. Because when we get into chapter 34, Dinah, his daughter is old enough to be prey to undesirable young men, right? So she's not like eight years old. We're going to find out by the time we get to Joseph again, that Joseph, I think he's 37. Yeah. He's 17 at that point. So there's a passage of time from when they leave Haran to by the time Jacob is back in the land of his birth. But even as we get into 34, there's a large passage of time where Dinah at this point leaving Haran may have been like, I don't know, three, four, something like that. And yet at the beginning of 34, she's accosted by this young man. So there's this passage of time and we see what Jacob does in verse 17, he builds a house. And if you put yourself in Jacob's position right now, how old is he? He's 90 some years old. The man's never been on his own yet. He lived at home until he's in his seventies. And then he lived with his uncle until he was in his nineties. I think he's just like, and then here comes Esau and Esau's like, dude, we could be best friends. And he's just like, man, I need a break. I need some space. I just, I need a little space from all the family here. And so he goes to this place and he builds a house there in Sukkoth, meaning booths. And then in verse 18, we read, and Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan Aram and pitched his tent before the city. So he's in

Sukkoth a bit, takes more than a day to build a house. He builds a house. He's there with his family. And then he comes across the river. Shechem is on the other side of the Jordan. Now he's come west. He's in the land of promise at this point in Shechem. And he comes to Shalem, which is a derivative of peace, but it also has this idea of being full, whole, or complete. And it's almost, I think for Jacob at this point, he wanted space, which wasn't wrong, but he assumed that a lack of strife meant peace and blessing. Jacob's had strife his whole life, or at least for 20 plus years.

Strife, since he was a kid with Esau, wanting his dad's favor and not getting it. Strife with Laban, comes back, here's Esau. It's just been strife, strife, strife. And now he's got a little break.

He's like, I need a breather, which wasn't wrong. But I think he assumes that a lack of strife means peace. And he's going to sit in this place a little too long. When we came down from New York in 2016, 2016, we were pretty burned out. I mean, just to be candid, we were pretty burned out in ministry.

[47 : 09] We had stuff happen, and the church we were at, that, you know, things that you think should be stable and foundational and people that should back you up, and then they don't. And it just kind of rocks you. And I'd lived there my whole life and never thought I'd go anywhere else. It's always funny, Derek and I joke about it, because he travels everywhere. And like, I just came back from a little pastor's retreat in Virginia. And it's like, whoa, man, that was a long drive. Good to be home.

I was away for two nights. Separation anxiety. I'm a stay put guy. That's just how God made me. So when we came down here, we were burned out. And we're like, man, I don't want to be in ministry.

I don't want to be around people. I just need space. And God gave us space. It was so good. He did. But if I tried to stay in that space, if I tried to stay in a place that was like, had no strife and no problems and none of that, I think I'm going to end up where we're going to see next week Jacob is.

For Jacob, he's like, this is a good place, but had a detrimental effect on his family. So just because there's no strife doesn't necessarily mean it's peace, whether there's true peace there.

Verse 19. And there he bought a parcel of a field where he had spread his tent at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of money. Jacob's desire for space was not wrong, but for a little bit of space, Jacob is willing to sell that where it says a hundred pieces of money is a hundred lambs. He's willing to give up a hundred lambs to this man Hamor. Hamor means donkey. You can read between the lines of what the scripture interprets donkey. This man is a donkey of a man. And he was willing to sell a hundred lambs to this man, the shepherd, Jacob, to just get a little bit, a little space of his own. Just because there's no strife, Jacob assumed there was no problems. This mindset will blind Jacob to the pitfalls that Shechem will pose for his family.

[49 : 08] He thinks, hey, there's no strife. There's no problems. This is a good place for my family. A false peace is no peace at all, but simply the calm before the storm. Just because there's no strife doesn't mean that it's peace. It could just be a calm before a storm that we're heading into.

True peace, though, is what? It's having calm in the storm. Who cares if the storm comes or if it doesn't? It's just like love. It's like grace. The source doesn't change, so the peace doesn't change. So God had given Jacob space, and what did he do with that space? In verse 20, he erected there an altar and called it, and I'm going to butcher this name, Elohim Israel, or God, the God of Israel, or literally God, the gods, because Elohim, El Elohim Israel, God, the gods of Israel. There you see the Trinity in there. I just thought that's pretty cool. God, the God of Israel. This is why I don't think Jacob is like backslidden at this point. I don't think he's like trying to be tricky.

I think he's just like all of us. We've got the new nature and the old nature, and we're learning to walk it out by faith, and we're going to make decisions sometimes that are really dumb, and the Lord's gracious through them. And so here he has space. God had given Jacob space, and he had just enough space to build his first altar. This is the first altar Jacob builds.

He'll build one other. We'll see eventually. God had given Jacob space for the purpose of worship. God gives us space, too, when we need it, but it's to worship him. It's not just to consume it upon ourselves or just be comfortable in life, to build our booths and settle down. God desires us to have space, but the point is we must let him determine what that space is, right? We don't get to pick.

We all know what Psalm 23 is, right? The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. That sounds great. I want to be by still waters. I want to be in green pastures. That sounds wonderful. But then it goes on, and it says, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.

[51 : 13] If I rob my staff, they comfort me. I don't want to be in the valley of the shadow of death. I don't like that. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. That's not where I want to eat dinner. Hey, y'all, come on over for dinner. Well, who's going to be there? Well, I got a list of your enemies, and I thought we could, like, have dinner together.

You know? What do you think? That's not where I want to eat. My cup runs to over. God is the one who chooses our space for us. We let him determine that space.

And there'll be times where that space is, man, it's still waters. It's green pastures. And God will give you space to grow. He gently leads those that are with young. And then there'll be those moments where he puts you in a space that's tight, and it's the valley of the shadow of death.

You're like, this isn't where I want to be. But remember, the source is the same, right? So it doesn't matter the circumstances because the source is the same. And it'll be those moments where you're face to face with Laban or Esau or whoever, and in the presence of your enemy, God is still there because his grace abounds in every one of those situations. And so it's Jacob now. He has a little space. He's got a little break from the family. I think we leave him in a really good spot here at the end of chapter 33. I think we get to 34. There's a good deal of time that's passed.

He's been there too long. You know, if we seek out spaces that are free of strife and free of trouble, one of the things we'll miss out on is God's presence. What I love about Psalm 23 is right there in the middle where we read that God's leading him beside the still waters, leading him in the paths of righteousness. And then all of a sudden, right in the middle there, it just says, boom, yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. How did he get there? We don't know, but he's there. And it's there that he's in God's presence. God was leading and God was directing before, but in the hard times, in those narrow places, those spaces, then he says, oh, well, there your presence was with me, Lord. That's right. I sensed your presence the most. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. There is a space for us that's full of goodness and mercy. And it's God's house. Until we get there, man, we have the promise that goodness and mercy are going to hunt us all of our life.

[53 : 24] We're not going to get away from it. If Jacob's not an example of God's grace and mercy hunting someone down, man, I don't know what is. This guy, he's 90 some years old and he's just learning lessons that we've all learned, hopefully, long before that. So we're never too old to have seasons of fruitfulness. We're never too old for God to give us a space just to worship him afresh.

So as we worship now, I encourage you just receive the grace and the love from the source that doesn't change. Man, let him fill you again so then you can go out and whatever comes your way, you can be like, hey, God's in this space. God's grace and love is here. I don't have to figure this out. I can just let it shine. Lord, thank you so much, Lord, as we let your light shine. In this world, it's your light. We are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Thank you, Lord. That light originates with you. Lord, you tell us to love one another as you have loved us. God is love. Love originates with you. Lord, we are saved by grace through faith and that not of ourselves. Thank you, God. It is a gift of God, not of works. We can't boast in that. But Lord, we are your workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Those works aren't mine. They're yours.

And God, we have the promise as we saw today that you will always supply enough for us to be a blessing in this world, Lord. We will always have enough to give to you and to your work, to your people. Lord, that doesn't always mean financial. We will have enough there too.

But Lord, hard times may come, those narrow places, but there will always be enough because of your grace, Lord. Help us, Lord, to be like Jacob who responded to Esau when he said, hey, I got a lot of stuff.

[55 : 25] Help us to be like Jacob and to see that that's not where it's at, that we have all things in Christ. And whether we have the stuff or don't have the stuff, who cares? We have all things in Christ. So Lord, as we sit with you now, I ask you just to renew afresh in our hearts, Lord, the love that comes from God. In Jesus' name, amen. God bless you and have a wonderful week.