



Sermon Notes

Genesis 32:22-32 “WRESTLING”

There is a major difference between wrestling against God and wrestling with God. Wrestling against God wants nothing to do with God except for maybe as a means to an end. Wrestling with God is struggling to more fully embrace God and what He has for us. Progress in the Christian life always involves struggle & pain. No struggle & pain is too great if it brings us a greater capacity for the beauty and glory of Christ. (Jer29:13; Heb11:6)

Why Would You Wrestle With God? (v24; Gen18:16-33; Ex33:12-23; Job; Psalms; Matt15:21-28; Luke18:1-8; Col4:12)

- 1) For the souls of lost loved ones.
- 2) For making difficult decisions.
- 3) For overcoming personal sins & past hurts.
- 4) For a greater sense of the presence of God.
- 5) For greater understanding of God's Word.
- 6) For narrowing the Gospel gap.

What Happens When You Wrestle With God?

- 1) You realize you must wrestle God alone (personally). v24 And Jacob was left alone.
- 2) You realize you've been fighting God all along. Jacob's life has been a life of struggle (Wrestling): With His brother Esau (chs25-27), with his father (ch27), with His father-in-law (chs29-31), with his wives (ch30).
- 3) You realize God has to wound you to show you His grace. vv5, 28-29 God must break us in order to bless us.
- 4) You realize the only thing you really need is God. vv26-30
- 5) You realize that by losing you win. vv31-32

V30 I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered. Beatific Vision: “To See God's face is the loftiest of aspirations.” – Alcorn (Ex33:20; 1Tim6:16; Heb10:19; 2Cor4:6; 2Cor3:18)
In heaven we will see His face and live, but we will likely wonder if we ever lived before we saw His face. (1Cor13:12; Rev22:4)

Growing Notes

- 1) What is the difference between wrestling against God & wrestling with God? Why do you think that any progress in the Christian life always involves some sort of struggle & pain? Why is it that no struggle & pain is too great if it brings us a greater capacity for the beauty and glory of Christ?
- 2) Read Genesis 32:22-32. What stands out to you from this story? There are certainly no lack of examples in scripture of this idea of wrestling with God (v24; Gen18:16-33; Ex33:12-23; Job; Psalms; Matt15:21-28; Luke18:1-8; Col4:12). Review the six reasons from the sermon notes on why we would wrestle with God. Which one(s) can you most identify with?
- 3) When it comes to wrestling with God other people's experiences can be helpful but why must we meet God alone (personally v24)? Jacob's life has been a life of struggle (Wrestling): With His brother Esau (chs25-27), with his father (ch27), with His father-in-law (chs29-31), & with his wives (ch30). Life doesn't put us in conflict with people, things & circumstances as much as it puts us in conflict with our own sinful nature & inability to trust God. Explain.
- 4) Why do you think God has to wrestle us into a transformed life rather than comfort us into one (vv25, 28-29)? Why do you think Jacob goes from wrestling against God to wrestling with God (desperately wanting Him vv24-30)? If total dependence on Christ is the goal then losing is winning (weakness is strength vv31-32). Explain. Review the five points under what happens when you wrestle with God. What is God speaking to you through this study? Where can we see the face of God today (v30; 2Cor4:6)? Pray.