

# Genesis 32:1-33:3

January 31, 2021



## Introduction

Have you ever found yourself in some type of struggle? What do you do when the struggle gets real? When the nights are long, and the day doesn't seem to be coming anytime soon? This is when we must learn to trust God: to know the gospel, obey His Word, humble ourselves before others, before God (pray), and cling to our God's grace.

## Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

## Read & Discuss

Read [32:1-33:3](#)

Jacob was in a variety of struggles. First, Jacob had a struggle with his brother Esau. Second, he had a struggle within himself as he wrestled with current and past sins. Third, Jacob's biggest struggle was with God. Jacob (who was known as a 'trickster' or 'deceiver') was known for trying to take matters into his own hands. We, like Jacob, are all in a fight for control over our lives – a battle for self-reliance or God-reliance. Will you wait on the Lord or will you take matters into your own hands? This is our biggest struggle.

### 1. To overcome struggles... we have to know the gospel.

Why didn't God crush Jacob but instead spare him? By doing so, God shows the world that He keeps his promises, and His grace is glorious. Jesus is the better Jacob. He took on flesh, obeyed God the Father perfectly, and took our punishment. Jacob, like us, deserved punishment, but Jesus the Son of God was undeserving of punishment. He died in our place, so that we could have eternal life if we put our trust in Him. If you don't put your faith in Christ, you will wrestle with God the rest of your life and you will lose in the end and be thrown into Hell. Yet, if you put your faith in Jesus, you will overcome, because Christ has overcome. If you repent of your sins and trust in Him, God is not against you, but for you. You are standing in God's steadfast love and grace. He has made a forever covenant with you. No matter what, He is working all things for your good and for His glory.

### 2. We have to obey God's Word.

Jacob learned to listen to God and obey in vulnerable and uncomfortable situations like meeting Esau whom he had betrayed earlier in his life. Obeying God does not always feel good, but it is for our good and evidence we're trusting God and not ourselves. We should seek to be reconciled to our brothers ([Matt. 18:15-17](#)). We are to love our enemies ([Matt. 5:43-49](#)). Are there brothers/sisters in the church right now you need to make amends with or people outside the church that are you're enemies that you need to love better? Take time this week to make that happen by God's grace. No matter how wild your children are you

must not provoke them, but patiently teach them ([Eph. 6:4](#)). What are some ways you can love your children more and areas where you can improve on as parents in training your child in godliness? There are many commands we must obey that do not appear practical, but we must trust the Lord and know He has good plans for us. We have to walk by faith. Obedience in the struggle is a sign we've stopped fighting against God and have submitted to Him no matter the hardship.

### 3. We must humbly pray. (v 9)

How should we pray? We pray, confessing our sins. We praise God for what He's done. We know whatever we have is by God's graciousness. We have to be willing to pray honest prayers like Jacob did. Are you honest with God in your prayers? We should also pray the promises of God. (v. 12). Jacob calls the Lord to be faithful to His word and we know God will be for He is faithful. Don't overlook the importance and the power of prayer. God hears you.

### 4. We have to cling to the Lord and His grace.

God broke Jacob's hip to subdue his heart. Jacob clings to God in his weakness. He finally knows God is all that He needs. Prayer can be a struggle, but sometimes God's blessing is comes through resilient prayer (See Luke 18:1-8). Do you feel distance from God? Let's challenge each other to cling to God in prayer this week. Jacob received a new identity from God as God changes his name to Israel. Are you struggling with your identity lately? Do you stay in your guilt? Christian, if you've come to Christ, you're not just a sinner; in Christ you are a new creation, you are a saint. As you follow Christ, He will produce fruit. He will work through you. Keep trusting in the Lord. The Lord's power is made perfect in our weakness. God didn't make Jacob physically stronger, he left him with a limp to remind him that God's grace is sufficient for him. What is your limp? Trials, in God's hands, can shape believers to be more like Christ. Sometimes, He breaks us to preserve our souls. Your "limp" is a testimony to the world as you walk in faith that God has set His love on you. He will sustain you through all life's trials. Jacob found a new courage, because of God. He goes ahead of his family now to meet Esau. He has great hope and so do we church. If God doesn't condemn you then what shall stand against you?

Additional Reading: [Colossians 4:12](#), [Matthew 6:6](#), [Romans 5:3-5](#), [Habakkuk 3:17-19](#)

#### **Prayer of Response**

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to confess? From what do I need to repent?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I understand, believe, desire, or do?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

**\*Next week's sermon text:** we turn to [John 1:1-18](#) "God Made Known"