



LIFE GROUP NOTES

Week Beginning: 13th October 2024



Limping along With God Genesis:33:1-20

Warm Up

Have you ever thought you were going in one direction but ended up going the opposite way? Was it deliberate, accidental or circumstantial?

Background and context

Jacob, now called Israel finally meets his brother Esau after twenty years. There is a joyful reconciliation between them and all seems to be fine. Yet Jacob (Israel) makes a surprising decision and chooses not to return to the heart of his family with Esau but to move away and start a separate life. The question is, why? Why, having struggled to find reconciliation with family, would he then choose to reject an invitation to go and live with Esau? What has caused Jacob to change his mind? What has he seen in Esau that he no longer feels comfortable with?

Thinking it through: Main discussion/activity

READ Genesis 33:1-20. What are the surprising things in the passage? What is new? What don't you really understand?



1. In his conversation with Esau, how many times does Jacob reference God? How many times does Esau? What might this tell us about Jacob and Esau's views on life?
2. In the previous chapter God gave Jacob a new name. How many of us have named someone? What does the act of naming a person indicate?
3. Read v20. Jacob names his new home "El Elohe Israel" meaning, Mighty is the God of Israel. What can we learn about Jacob's new understanding of God. (NB: Israel was not a land or a nation.)
4. How big was Esau's clan? How big was Jacob's. What danger could there be in Jacob's clan living with Esau's?
5. In what way does the phrase "limping along with God" apply to Jacob's family, the church and you? Why would this phrase be abhorrent to non believers or members of other religions? How is the phrase a **powerful image** of Christian faith?

Discipleship and Application



6. When a person becomes a Christian, how does their identity change? We don't receive a new name like Jacob. What do we need to leave behind?
7. The Bible and church history is full of weak people who have claimed "El Elohe Israel" for themselves and have done incredible things. Why should this give us hope and courage?

Try to leave 15-20 mins to talk about prayer needs of the group and to pray.



We want to encourage the development of prayer, to help everyone grow in confidence in praying. There are many creative ways of praying together: