

Remnant Life Church
February 5, 2017
The Heart That Holds on to God's Blessings
Genesis 28:10-22

- We began with an examination of Esau's life
 - Lost his birthright because he could not control his impatience and basic desires of his flesh
- Last week we talked about to position and prepare ourselves to receive God's blessings in our lie
 - Esau lost out on much that God had for him
 - Reflect; repent; release; recover; rearrange; renew; rejoice
- We must be aware that satan wants to take our blessings away
 - He wants to rob from us what God has given
 - Our joy, our peace, our relationships; even our possessions
 - The vast majority of the time he can only do this if we give him access
 - It may not be a gross sin or an obvious point of entry
 - We have a choice
 - We either give to God a full surrender of our lives
 - Or we insist on calling the shots and attempt to manage it on our own
- Holding on to the blessings of God often requires great effort
 - God allows us to battle through these things in order to help us to grow and mature in our walk with Him
 - Most times the battle will get very uncomfortable
 - But for our own good
- Many of us have seen pictures of a huge eagle's nest high in the branches of a tree or in the crag of a cliff, but few of us have ever gotten a glimpse inside. When a mother eagle builds her nest she starts with thorns, broken branches, sharp rocks, and a number of other items that seem entirely unsuitable for the project. But then she lines the nest with a thick padding of foliage, feathers, and fur from animals she has killed, making it soft and comfortable for the eggs. By the time the growing birds reach flying age, the comfort of the nest and the luxury of free meals make them very reluctant to leave. That's when the mother eagle begins "stirring up the nest." Using her powerful talons she begins pulling up the thick carpet of fur and feathers, bringing the sharp rocks and branches to the surface. As more of the bedding gets plucked up, the nest becomes more uncomfortable for the young eagles. Eventually, through this and urgings from the mother, the growing eagles leave their once-comfortable childhood home and move on to more mature behavior.
- For many Christians there is a need to leave the comfort and safety of the nest and move into more mature behavior by doing battle to keep the blessings of God
- Let's look back again at Jacob

READ – Gen 28:10-22

- Jacob has left home because Esau is planning to kill him for what he had done
 - The Bible tells us that he “reached a certain place” (28:11)
 - This certain place is very different from what Jacob is used to
 - A rock instead of a soft pillow
 - A place that is uncomfortable
 - Fighting to hold to the blessings of God can get uncomfortable
 - But like with Jacob, this is very often the place God chooses to reveal Himself to us
 - Comfort is rarely the avenue to maturity
 - God had to get Jacob away from the safety and comfort of home and from the protection of his mother
- How do we hold to the blessings of God by what we read of Jacob this morning?
 1. Be willing to go and do what is necessary to strengthen your faith
 - a. Jacob was running from the fight
 - b. But he had to get out of the place of comfort to change his circumstances
 - c. Too many Christians are simply not willing to make the effort
 - i. **Gen 37** to the end of the book – Joseph’s life
 - ii. **Gen 39** – Joseph and Potiphar’s wife and in prison interpreting dreams
 - d. Joseph gave his best effort wherever the circumstances took him
 - e. God was with him and “*gave him success in whatever he did.*” (**Gen 39:23**)
 - f. Our culture has gotten lazy
 - i. Ill: Helping the lady move in Carlisle
 2. Be alert to what God is doing in your life
 - a. When we make the effort to get out of our comfort zones God often shows up
 - b. How many visions and dreams did Jacob have when he lived at home?
 - c. What distractions or even places of comfort prevent you from seeing and hearing God?
 - d. God’s way is rarely our way – **I Sam 16** – Eliab, oldest son of Jesse
 - i. **16:8** - *The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.*
 - e. Watch – Listen – Believe
 - f. *When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, “Surely the Lord is in this place and I was not aware of it.” (28:16)*
 3. Stand on the promises of God
 - a. Look what God promised Jacob in verse 15
 - i. I am with you
 - ii. I will watch over you wherever you go
 - iii. I will bring you back to this land

- iv. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you
 - b. If we trust God to be who He says He is how can we doubt or be afraid when we are given these promises?
 - c. **I Cor 1:20** - *For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.*
4. Give God the glory and share the blessings with others
- a. Jacob makes a vow to God
 - i. Set a monument to God's glory
 - ii. Tithe a tenth of all that God gives him
 - b. Giving thanks in any/every situation is one indication of your relationship to God
 - i. Complaining and grumbling is what got the Israelites into the most trouble on their journey through the desert
 - ii. Many times through Exodus and Leviticus Moses has to warn the people for God
 - iii. In **John 6:43**, speaking to His disciples, even Jesus said – *"Stop grumbling among yourselves."*
 - c. In every situation guard what you say – **Math 15:18** – *what comes out of the mouth is from the heart*
 - d. Glorify God by obeying His Word
 - i. The command and the example to tithe in the Bible has become optional for most people in churches today – to their detriment
 - ii. If you are asking 'where are my blessings to hold on to?' I would ask you first if you are giving to God what belongs to him of what he is already giving you
 - e. Abraham was the first example given of tithing when he met King Melchizedek on the road (**Gen 14:20; Heb 7:2**)
 - i. Jacob must have been taught this by his father and grandfather as he offers a tenth to God
 - ii. The Levitical laws for the people call for a tenth of ephah of grain to be given to the priests
 - iii. Even the priests were required to give a tenth of what they received back to God in thanks
 - iv. Nehemiah, Ezekiel, through the Gospels
 - f. Not only giving back to God but allowing Him to bless others through you
 - i. Always be on the lookout for these people who God will many times allow to cross your path
 - ii. Wisdom should accompany generosity
 - iii. But be willing to err in your giving to others

John 10:10 - *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; but I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*