

FIGHT OR FLIGHT

INTRODUCTION

We don't need to second guess what God is doing. We need to trust because we live in dark world and many times we cannot see, so we trust the only one who truly can see.

DISCUSSION

Based upon how you (personally) live, define the word "Faith" as you live it.

EXPLANATION (PROVERBS15:33)

What are some times in your life where you have felt like you were blind (metaphorically)?

How do you trust and follow God even when you feel like you cannot see?

Have you ever felt like God enjoyed beating you up?

APPLICATION

Read 2 Peter 2:3-11.

Have you ever met people who thought God took a perverse delight in hurting people?

How did you respond?

How can perseverance take us through times of pain without losing faith?

MISSION

How does a view of a big God affect our idea of His mission for your life?

Do you have any areas where you feel like you now limp?

How can our limps show the greater glory of God?

HOMEWORK FOR NEXT WEEK

Read Genesis 33 and ask the following Questions:

Who would you hope you never had to bow down to?

Is there anyone you harbor secret thoughts about who you wish would bow to you?



GENESIS

THE FINAL CHAPTERS

FIGHT OR FLIGHT

PART 50

GENESIS 32:13-32

2 Corinthians 5:7
Proverbs 1:7
Proverbs 1:29-31
Proverbs 23:17
Proverbs 29:25

Proverbs 2:5
Proverbs 16:6
Proverbs 8:13
Proverbs 10:27
Proverbs 14:26-27

Proverbs 15:33
Proverbs 19:23
Proverbs 22:4
Genesis 32:13-32
Deuteronomy 25:11-12

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

MOE GO KART RACING
January 16th
<http://goo.gl/hu2Fh>

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY
13 Week Study
Tuesdays 9:30am

GOSPEL CLASS
January 20th, 9:30am
In Element Offices

SOFTBALL SIGNUPS
<http://goo.gl/WIPgh>

NEWCOMER PARTY
February 1st, 7pm
<http://goo.gl/y6ZuP>

CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING
January 27th, 6pm

FIGHT OR FLIGHT

2 Corinthians 5:7 For we walk by faith and not by sight

Jacob lives in fear of his brother and what might happen when they reunite. Jacob makes elaborate plans to save himself and his family in the face of Esau's potential threat. He provided his servants with abundant gifts for Esau and instructed them carefully on how to approach Esau when they met. He seems to believe that he would "pacify" Esau and deliver his family from danger.

This picture of Jacob is one that continues to pop up throughout the scriptures; it is Jacob: the planner and the schemer. He had taken Esau's birthright and blessing, he had taken the best of Laban's herds, so now he had a plan to pacify Esau. We eventually see that it was not Jacob's plan that succeeded, but his prayer.

When Jacob meets with Esau (next week), he finds that Esau has had a change of heart; this was a result of God's workings and not Jacob's. Running to meet Jacob, Esau will embrace, kiss, and weep over Jacob (Chapter 33:4). All of Jacob's plans and schemes had meant nothing yet, in spite of them all, God had prepared Jacob's way.

In preparing Esau's heart, God also has to prepare Jacob. Jacob's fear was misplaced in Esau. It's like Jesus says in the New Testament in *Matthew 10:28* "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

PRACTICALLY, IF WE LIVE WITH A GOD THAT IS TOO SMALL TO BE FEARED, THINGS HAPPEN:

- *Proverbs 1:29-31 Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord, would have none of my counsel and despised all my reproof, therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way, and have their fill of their own devices.*
- *Proverbs 29:25 The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe.*

PRACTICALLY, IF WE LIVE WITH A BIG GOD, THINGS HAPPEN:

- *Proverbs 2:5b ...then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.*
- *Proverbs 16:6b ...by the fear of the Lord one turns away from evil.*
- *Proverbs 8:13 To fear the Lord is to hate evil...*
- *Proverbs 10:27 The fear of the Lord adds length to life, but the years of the wicked are cut short.*

- *Proverbs 14:26 He who fears the Lord has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge.*
- *Proverbs 14:27 The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, turning a man from the snares of death.*
- *Proverbs 15:33 The fear of the Lord teaches a man wisdom, and humility comes before honor.*
- *Proverbs 19:23 The fear of the Lord leads to life...*
- *Proverbs 22:4 Humility and the fear of the Lord bring wealth and honor and life.*

In the middle of Genesis 32 the scene shifts to Jacob being alone and God showing up - "And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day." Jacob has been running scared his whole life, this night Jesus teaches him to fight and to be a man.

Jonathan Edwards writes extensively about this section of scripture when God comes and fights with Jacob. He points out that Jacob is seeking God's mercy and blessing on the occasion of Esau coming to meet him. He believes they might have had a conversation before they begin to wrestle and fight. Then he says "This wrestling denotes the seeming opposition that God oftentimes make to persons when seeking his blessing. When God has a design of bestowing the blessing on persons in answer to prayer, he stirs 'em up to be earnest in seeking, and oftentimes for a time seems not to hear and regard their requests, but on the contrary seems to oppose and resist them, which is for the trial of persons' resolution, constancy, and perseverance in seeking for it."

Most significant is the fact that, according to this narrative, Jacob had emerged victorious in his struggle: "You have struggled with God and man and have overcome" (v. 28). Jacob's victory, even in his struggle with God, came when, as the text says, the angel "blessed him" (v. 29).

Jacob names the place God wrestled with him "Peniel" (v. 30). He identified the one with whom he was wrestling as God. Jacob said, "I saw God face to face" (v. 30).

God doesn't promise Jacob he won't get killed the next day. He doesn't promise that his wives will make it. God simply says, "GO." Trust God and go on with your life, there is no one to fear when God is your God....

We don't need to second guess what God is doing. We need to trust because we live in a dark world and many times we cannot see, so we put our trust in the only one who does see. Will you trust even when you can't see, even in the midst of your trial, even when it seems God gains pleasure from beating you up?

That's faith.