

IT'S NEVER EASY

INTRODUCTION

In the book *City of God*, Augustine says we need a well ordered heart. His definition of well ordered was "Loving the right thing, to the right degree, in the right way, with the right kind of love."

DISCUSSION

In American culture, what different kinds of love are there?

EXPLANATION

When the miser prefers gold to justice, it's through no fault of the gold. For although it's good, it can be loved with an evil as well as a good love."

What is the difference between an evil and a good love?

What things do you think are out of whack when it comes to your "loves?"

APPLICATION

Read Roman's 8:18-25.

When was the last time everything "fell apart?"

How do you respond when everything falls apart in your life?

What gives you strength in those times?

MISSION

How can we begin to live with the right affections?

What message do you think it would send if God's children live with the right affections?

HOMEWORK FOR NEXT WEEK

Read Genesis 36

Why does God make the rain shine on the righteous and the wicked?

How should understanding God being this way change how we treat each other?



GENESIS

THE FINAL CHAPTERS

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PART 54

GENESIS 35:16-29

John 16:33
Genesis 35:16-29

Hebrews 9:27
1 Peter 1:17-19

James 1:2-4
James 1:5

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

CINDERELLA'S CLOSET
March 9th

**TRADER JOES & UFO'S
GIRL'S NIGHT OUT**
February 25th, 6:30p
<http://goo.gl/o9zUq>

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

BAPTISMS
Want to be baptized?
Signup: <http://goo.gl/bs7zk>



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John 16:33 “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

Jacob's life continues to move forward, as do all of ours, but the more he does, the more things seem to unravel. The most devastating is losing his wife, whom he loved dearly.

Rachel, Joseph's mother and Jacob's favorite wife, died giving birth to her second son, Benjamin. The account of the birth of the youngest son, Benjamin, is separated from the rest of the sons in by almost 6 chapters. The last son that Rachel gave birth to was her first and only son, Joseph. At the time of his birth, Rachel had said, “May the LORD add to me another son” (30:24). Apparently looking back to that request, Rachel's midwife said, “Don't be afraid, for you have another son” (35:17).

Benjamin was the other son. As she was about to die, Rachel named the son “Ben-Oni,” meaning “son of my trouble.” Jacob, however, making a wordplay on “Oni,” which can mean “trouble” changes his name to “Benjamin” (lit., “son of my right hand”), reinterpreting the name given by Rachel.

It was important to Moses that the site of Rachel's burial, Ephrath, be clearly identified with the city of Bethlehem, an important place in later biblical history, though Moses probably didn't know why. This site is further identified by the pillar that Jacob set up to mark Rachel's grave (v. 20).

Only a brief allusion to the site of Rachel's burial is made in the further narratives of Genesis, this passage continued to play an important role in later biblical texts. The prophet Jeremiah alluded to this passage in his description of the destruction of Jerusalem: “*Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because her children are no more*” (Jer 31:15); and in Micah 5:2, the prophet alludes to this passage in his vision of the future Davidic King. It appears that Rachel's agony in the birth of Benjamin had later become a picture of the painful waiting of the sons of Israel for the promised Messiah (cf. Matt 2:18).

The next thing that happens to Jacob is his son, Reuben, sleeps with one of Jacob's wives. The narrative is concerned to show that one of the oldest sons of Jacob fell from favor because of his horrendous conduct. The writer has already recounted the violence of Simeon and Levi in chapter 34, and now he briefly notes the

misconduct of Reuben. There is a list that follows (v23-26) that shows the next brother in line was Judah, the son of Leah. With the older sons out of the way, the stage is then set for the development of the line of Judah and the line of Joseph. The narratives that follow are devoted primarily to Joseph, but that by no means is an indication of the final outcome. The last word regarding the future of these two lines of Abraham's descendants is not heard again until chapters 48 and 49.

The last thing that happens to Jacob in these verses is his father, Isaac, dies. The purpose of this notice is not simply to record Isaac's death but rather to show the complete fulfillment of God's promise to Jacob (28:21). According to Jacob's vow, he had asked that God watch over him during his sojourn and return him safely to the house of his father. Thus, the conclusion of the narrative marks the final fulfillment of these words as Jacob returned to the house of his father, Isaac, before he died.

Jacob encounters so much pain and loss in a few verses. It is true that pain was not part of God's original creation, that one day He will wipe all tears from our eyes, yet now God uses pain to speak to us. He allows things that we have done in our past to come back up so we grow into the people He intends for His children to be. Pain and loss doesn't mean He is absent, it means He is present walking with us through them.

In the book City of God, Augustine says we need a well ordered heart. His definition of well ordered was “Loving the right thing, to the right degree, in the right way, with the right kind of love.” He says the result of the fall is that we have “disordered affections.”

Augustine wrote, “When the miser prefers gold to justice, it's through no fault of the gold. For although it's good, it can be loved with an evil as well as a good love.” Money itself is a good thing, but that does not absolve of blame those who love it *so much* that they will oppress or hoard or cheat to obtain it. Augustine wrote further, “It seems to me that a brief but true definition of virtue is this: ‘It is well-ordered love.’”

By loving Jesus with a well ordered love, pain and loss both come into proper perspective.