

LIFEGROUPS

JACOB WRESTLING WITH GOD

Read Genesis 32-33 Discovering the Word

1. After Jacob receives the ominous report brought back by the servants (32:6), he alternately plans and prays. How does his prayer in 32:9-12 reflect his relationship with God at this point?
2. To what extent do you think Jacob's plans are consistent or inconsistent with his prayer (32:13-21)?
3. How does the struggle with the unknown man give insight into Jacob's personality (32:22-32)?
4. How does the change of Jacob's name from "he deceives" to "he struggles with God" indicate the development of his character?
5. In what ways does this meeting between Jacob and Esau (chapter 33) contrast with the last time they saw each other (chapter 27)?

Applying the Word

6. In what ways can Jacob's prayer be a model for our own praying?
7. In what areas do you struggle to trust and obey the Lord?
8. In what areas can Jacob's actions toward Esau be a model for us of repentance and reconciliation?

Leaders Notes

These notes are here as guidelines or commentary notes to help the leader. Let the Word of God lead you and your Lifegroup to HEAR God's prophetic message this week as you explore His Word together.

A little context on Genesis 32-33 (taken from a commentary)

The Christian life is a mysterious mixture of God's work and ours, his gracious provision and our effort. Sometimes we are perplexed over who should make the next move. We see this pattern in the life of Jacob, whose planning and praying, labouring and believing are prominent in this narrative. The previous chapter in Genesis ended with reconciliation and peaceful departure. Now Jacob resolutely heads toward another confrontation with his adversary of twenty years earlier –his brother Esau, whom he cheated. Jacob combines planning and prayer as he obeys God's command to return to his country and relatives. His struggle can teach us how to redress past wrongs and effect reconciliation with someone we have injured.

Adapted from <http://www.ivpress.com/bible/study.php?study=392>