

**Changed - Part 2**  
**"Changed... How God Changes us for the Better"**  
**September 19-20th, 2020**

**Intro:**

- **Joe & Jen Anderson Announcement**
  
- **This is Part 2 of our Series: "Changed"**
  - **We are all being changed by the circumstances we are walking through, but not all of us are being changed for the better.**
  
- **This week, I want to talk about "How God Changes us for the Better."**
  - **I want to tell you the story of a man named, "Jacob."**

**PRAY**

- **Tell the Story of Jacob...**
  
- **Father Abraham -> Isaac -> Jacob & Esau (twins)**
  - **Esau came out first (Had the blessing)**
  - **Jacob grabbed his heel (They named him "Jacob" which means Usurper, Undercutter, Deceiver)**
    - **For his entire life, he lived into his name!**
  
- **On one occasion, Jacob deceives his father & ends up Stealing the Birthright, or the blessing from his brother Esau.**
  - **Esau was hairy, Isaac was blind, he puts on animal skin & has his father pray the blessing on him.**
    - **It was Irrevocable!**
    - **It sounds silly but that was how it worked!**
  
- **Of course, from then on things were pretty tense between he & his brother.**
  - **Until things finally come to a head in Genesis 32**
  - **Jacob has once again deceived his brother & now Esau has had enough!**
    - **He's coming to kill him!!!**

- Jacob does what Jacob does & he tries to use all of his tricks & gimmicks & charms to appease him but nothing in his flesh is working... at all!
- He tries to bribe him... he sends animals ahead of him as gifts!

Genesis 32:14 "Two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty female camels with their young, forty cows and ten bulls, and twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys."

v. 17-18 "He instructed the one in the lead: 'When my brother Esau meets you and asks, 'Who do you belong to, and where are you going, and who owns all these animals in front of you?' then you are to say, 'They belong to your servant Jacob. They are a gift sent to my lord Esau, and he is coming behind us.'"

- Barf!!! Talk about Manipulation & Vanity!!!
- Jacob is pulling out every fleshly trick he knows how to do to appease his brother, but none of it works!

- Finally, Jacob has sent all of his people & possessions ahead & he is left at Alone... at the End of himself!!!

v. 24 "So Jacob was left alone..."

- MIP: Some of us feel like that right now!
- This last season has left us "At the end of ourselves."
  - We've tried everything we can to "Push & Work & Try our way out of what we're going through." & it hasn't worked!!!
  - You've been thinking that's a Bad thing, but Maybe, just Maybe, it's not a Bad Thing, Maybe, just Maybe it's a "God Thing!"
  - See, when Jacob was left alone, God was there.

v. 24 "So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak."

- What? How can you be "alone" & yet there be a "man" there???
- It was a Theophany, a Pre-Jesus appearance of God in the Flesh.

\* Sometimes God calls us to Wrestle with Him.

### 3 Thoughts on Wrestling with God:

#### 1. Wrestling is Hard.

A. Jacob wrestled with God... all night!!!

v. 25 "When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man."

#### 2. Wrestling results in Brokenness.

A. Brokenness is NOT always a bad thing!

- BROKEN BONE ILL. - If it doesn't get set right, the Dr. has to break it again to reset it right!
- Sin has broken all of us!!!
  - That means there are areas of our hearts that aren't "set" right!

B. God will use Hard things to allow us to be Broken, so He can reset our hearts in His Image.

Hebrews 12:7 "Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children."

v. 11 "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

Back to Jacob...

Genesis 32:26 "Then the man said, 'Let me go, for it is daybreak.' But Jacob replied, 'I will not let you go unless you bless me.'"

- This was not "bless me" like, oh, give me a lollipop at the bank!
- Jacob was Desperate for God to change him!!!
- He was tired of living the way he always had been!

v. 27 "The man asked him, 'What is your name?'"

- What???
- That's such a weird question, right?!?
- Picture 2 people wrestling & one says "What's your name???"

- God wasn't asking b/c He didn't know... God was asking b/c He needed Jacob to Say it out Loud!!!

- MIP: ? Has this season made you "Say anything out loud"???
- It has for me!!!
- MWK ILL - These last 6 months have revealed some things in my heart that have always been there, but I've been able to ignore them in the name of "Speed & Ministry & Busyness & Effectiveness & Leadership & Growth & Life."
- But in this last season of wrestling, I can't deny them anymore!!!

v. 27b **"Jacob,' he replied."**

- Jacob finally says it out loud!!!
- *"Fine! You want to know who I am... I'm Deceiver! I'm usurper! I'm liar! I'm undercutter! I'm a total jerk!!!"*

- And God is like, "Okay, now you're ready to be Changed!"

v. 28 **"Then the man said, 'Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.'"**

- Israel means: "One who struggles with God." "Triumphant w/ God."

### **3. Wrestling is how God changes our Name.**

- Here's the point: We all say we want God to change us, but when the Struggle & the Difficulty & the Pain & the Wrestling comes,
  - Most of us run away or whine or complain or get angry or question the goodness of God!!!

- But wrestling is How God changes us!!!

MIP: So what about us?

- How have we been doing at Wrestling with God in these last 6 mo's???
- Have we been resisting?
- Have we been questioning?
- Have we been fighting it?
- Have we been resenting it?
- Or have we allowed Him to change us into more of His Image???

Here's the most beautiful part:

Hebrews 11:21 "By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff."

- Jacob had the ability to worship God like nobody else could!
  - He could lean on his staff as worship!
  - Why? B/c it reminded him of how he had wrestled w/ God & how God had changed him forever for the better.
- We all want to be able to worship God like that, don't we?
- The only way to worship God with that kind of depth & intimacy is to wrestle with Him & let Him change you.

Conclusion:

- We are all being changed by this "Wrestling Season" we are walking through.
- Will you allow this season to Change you for the better, like Jacob?
- Or for the worse???

? What do you need to say out loud to God?

- Will you allow Him to change you today?

**TIME OF PRAYER & WORSHIP**

**SALVATION**