

Family Worship Guide

Week 14

Read

Genesis 32

- **Questions**

1. In our last time of family worship, we read about how Jacob had to run away from his brother Esau. Esau was furious because Jacob had tricked their father Isaac into giving him the family blessing. In the chapter we just read, Jacob was finally returning home. How was Jacob feeling about seeing Esau again?

He was terrified. Jacob did not know if Esau was still angry with him. He was afraid that Esau still wanted to kill him.

2. What did Jacob do to show Esau that he was sorry for what he did?

He sent respectful messages to Esau. Jacob presented himself as a “servant” and he hoped that he might find favor in Esau’s eyes (Gen. 32:4-5). He also sent his servants ahead with gifts for Esau.

3. Jacob was terribly afraid. He did what God wants us to do when we are afraid. What was that? (Gen. 32:9).

He was afraid, and so Jacob prayed. Look at how Jacob prayed. He prayed the promises of God. He spoke the words of God back to God. He told God he was afraid. He asked God to save him.

4. After Jacob sent his family and possessions across the river, he spent the night alone. But he was not alone for long. What happened?

We can’t understand everything that happened, but the Bible says that Jacob wrestled the entire night with a “man.” It seems that this was no ordinary man, but actually the Lord in the form of a man. Jacob kept struggling until finally the Lord touched his hip and “wrenched” it. Then Jacob seemed to just hang on for dear life because he could not fight anymore.

5. After the wrestling match, the Lord gave Jacob a new name. What was it and what does it mean?

The name Jacob means “deceiver.” Jacob had lived up to his name had he not? At this moment, God was giving Jacob a new identity. He would no longer be known as “deceiver” but as Israel - a name which means “God’s fighter.”

6. This is a beautiful story of God taking a broken relationship between two brothers and bringing them back together again. Jacob returned home. Jacob was sorry for lying. He faced his fears and prayed. He “wrestled” with God. God put Jacob’s past behind him and gave him a new name - and a new future. What

lessons can our family learn about working through the hard times and hurt feelings we face?

Praise

Praise God for giving us:

Himself

Grace and Mercy

Salvation

Our family

Our church family

What has God done in our family this week that we can give him praise?

Pray

Use the ACTS model (Example below.)

- ADORATION – “He keeps His promises.”
- CONFESSION – “Confess times when we have not obeyed”
- THANKSGIVING – “How has God been faithful to your family?”
- SUPPLICATION – “God encourages us to bring all of our needs and burdens to Him.”
- Pray that we will live obediently to God’s Word.
- Pray for your neighbors by name! Pray that God will bless them!

Option two:

For your prayer time today, consider using the “High-Low” prayer approach. You can use the words **in bold** below to help guide you.

In our prayer time I would like us to do “High-Low.” To start, I would like to see if each person would be willing to share the high, or the best part, of your day (or your week).

Now would someone be willing to pray and thank God and give Him praise for all the blessings that were just shared?

If no one is comfortable praying, you can take the lead and thank God for the “highs” that were shared.

Now, would someone be willing to tell us about a “low” from today or from this week? What was the worst part of your day/week?

It is helpful for you to go first when sharing “lows.” Listen to each person share their lows with the family.

Memorize

“We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD.”

Psalm 78:4

Digging Deeper

(Optional activities)

Kids Fun

Option 1

Words in **bold** are what you can say to lead this activity.

Supplies needed: A spool of string (a couple hundred feet) or a spool of fishing line.

We are going to have a great time of family worship tonight. In order to get started, I would like us to move around so that we are sitting in a circle. It will also help if we are all on the same level (everyone in chairs, or everyone on the floor).

Have you ever seen a cool spider web? We are going to make an “encouragement web.” Here is how it works. In my hand I have a spool of string. In just a minute I am going to hold on to the end of the string, and then toss the spool to someone in the circle. Once they catch the spool, there will be a line of string between us. I then have a chance to say something encouraging to that person. It is a chance for me to say something that I appreciate about them or thank them for something nice they did.

Then the person that I encouraged will hold on to the string and toss the spool to someone else. They will encourage that person, who will then toss the spool to someone else and pretty soon you will see our “encouragement web” start to grow!

So let me get things started...

Here are a few things to watch for:

- Allow the game to continue so that people receive more than one encouragement. But pay attention if someone is being left out and make a point to encourage them next chance you get.
- Do what you can to focus encouragement on character traits rather than on looks or superficial things. “You have nice hair” is not what we are looking for! Instead seek to encourage character traits or actions such as, “I noticed that you cleared the table after dinner without being asked. I really appreciated that.” “You are a really good friend.” “I see you spend time reading your Bible. I admire that.”

For Teens

1. Terrible things happened between these two brothers, Jacob and Esau. They did things that hurt each other deeply. Genesis 32 is a story of the healing of their relationship. Are there problems between you and one of your siblings, or between you and one of your close friends? What can you learn from Jacob and Esau that can help you make peace in that relationship?

2. According to the Scriptures, Jacob physically wrestled with the LORD who appeared to him as a man. We don’t “wrestle” with God that way - but that doesn’t mean that we don’t struggle with our faith and struggle to follow and obey God. In what ways do you feel that you “wrestle” or “struggle” with God?

Parents, you can take the lead in sharing personally about the “wrestling” or “struggling” you have done in your faith journey. This is also an opportunity to encourage your teen to “doubt his/her doubts” and “believe his/her beliefs.” Jacob had to face his fear, take it to God in prayer, and act with courage.

3. When Jacob was wrestling with God, he would not let go. He would not give up. He wanted to know God and have God bless him. Sometimes, when life gets hard, we can feel like giving up in following God. Have you ever felt like that? Are you feeling like that now? What would it mean to follow Jacob’s example and “hold on” to your relationship with the Lord?