

THIS ONE'S TROUBLE

Dear Friend:

I came from a family of five -and- seven. What? My mom married my stepdad when I was in high school, and he had two grown children. Family dynamics never cease to amaze me, siblings from the same parents can be so different. Take for example Jacob and Esau in the book of Genesis. Jacob's name meant deceiver. He was slick as a whistle, AND a momma's boy. He would have made the cover of GQ Magazine, city slicker all the way. Esau couldn't have been more opposite of his 3-minute younger twin brother. He had more hair than Grizzly Adams (some of you can remember him) was a "man's man" AND daddy's favorite son.

Jacob's name means deceiver and deceive he did. He was born trouble. Esau was first born but as he was coming out of the womb Jacob followed right behind grasping his brother's heel as if to say: "Oh no you don't" but Esau prevailed to become the firstborn. The firstborn in Old Testament days received what was called "The firstborn rights", thus inheriting more than any other sibling and receiving the father's blessing. Jacob lived up to his name as the two brothers grew older and Jacob through circumstances stole Esau's birthright three times (don't ask me why it happened more than one time). Back to the story...Jacob the deceiver, the scoundrel clearly ignored God on more than one occasion. However, everything changed one night in a place called the Jabbok River. Jacob lays down to sleep for the night and when he does, he literally gets into a wrestling match with God (or, the pre-incarnate Jesus). Bottom line: Jacob almost overcame God, but when God had had enough, he reaches out and puts Jacob's hip socket out of joint. God steps away and says: "Your name is no longer Jacob (deceiver), it is now Israel (someone who struggles with God).

Could your name be Israel? Can you remember struggling with God? We all have. The question is...did you/have you surrendered? Sometimes God allows us to go into some pretty painful situations. The good news is, you may come out limping but God never abandons you and God never gives up on you. At times we all have been like Jacob: sometimes a deceiver, sometimes one who struggles with God. The scriptures assure us that God never gives-up on us. Let me make it even more assuring: God never gives up on YOU, so don't give-up on Him!

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Mike

Prayer: Tom Stag family, Glenna Stanley Family, Jon
Martindale (heart), Michael Carroll (leg swelling)

Events: This Sunday: Scout Sunday & Potluck, Monday Management
Team meeting 7:00 p.m. Sunday February 18th Building Fund
Commitment Sunday (pray for God's miracle again)