

## THE TRICKSTER GETS TRICKED

Dear Friend:

If you have been reading In Touch over the past three to five weeks you know we have been following the life of Jacob. He's quite a character, quite the trickster. He cheats, he lies, he steals, he even ignores the rape of his own daughter to save bad publicity from the people who were pagans that lived around him. Long story short, after hitting the lowest of lows in character, somehow by the grace and mercy of God, Jacob spiritually gets back on track and in Genesis 35:1 God tells Jacob (and all his clan) to go back home to Bethel. From Bethel he eventually moves back to Hebron, the city of his father, Isaac. At the very end of Genesis 35 we read that Isaac dies and Jacob and Esau together bury their father. Obviously, bad blood between them is forgotten and brothers become brothers again.

We are not sure how much time passes between Genesis 35 and 37 but chapter 37 thru the last chapter of Genesis turns the spotlight on Jacob's son Joseph. In short, Jacob loves Joseph more than all his other sons. This becomes a huge problem; Joseph's brothers try to kill him but thanks to his brother Judah, Joseph is sold to the Midianites instead of being left in a well to die. The brothers don't want to tell their father Jacob what they did so they dip Joseph's coat in blood and say that Joseph was killed by a lion. They lied and tricked their father- I wonder where they learned to do that? Joseph ends up in Egypt as Minister of Agriculture and eventually gets promoted to Prime Minister. When famine strikes the Mideast Joseph's brothers (who expected him to be dead by now) go to Egypt to buy food and come face to face with the Prime Minister, getting the shock of their life. Beyond their imagination Joseph is the Prime Minister. As Genesis comes to a close Jacob is reunited with Joseph and Jacob's family becomes on big happy family again.

What's the "take-aways" from all of this? Not enough space to write all of them, but here's a few. Surely, we learn from Jacob's early life that lying, stealing and cheating come with a high cost. Also, never forget that our kids watch us and copy us. Jacob's traits of trickery are seen in his kids (Joseph, not a much). Third, favoritism does no one any favors and only causes pain in the long run. And finally, grace. God's Grace! Jacob didn't deserve God's grace, but he got it. What about you? No one deserves God's grace, but God is always ready to give it to those who honestly seek Him.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Mike

Prayers: Dave Maynard (OSU hospital), Paul Vasquez (seizures), Dick Fisher (heart), Jon Martindale

Events: Election Connection. What is it? We need both food and people! Franklin Church is a New Albany voting location. On Tuesday March 19th we want to show we care for the community, no strings attached. Ruth and Greg Eller are asking that you bring cookies to church this Sunday, or even drop-off on Monday or Tuesday. Free cookies and water being served. We also need volunteers, at least one per hour 7:00 a.m.-6:30 p.m. especially rush hours 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm and 4:30-6:30 pm Call Ruth at 614-203-8539 or email her [ruthaeller@yahoo.com](mailto:ruthaeller@yahoo.com)