

You don't have to stay the same!
April 29, 2007

1. In God's Kingdom people change.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:17

2. God uses crisis to change me.

This left Jacob all alone in the camp, and a man came and wrestled with him until dawn. When the man saw that he couldn't win the match, he struck Jacob's hip and knocked it out of joint at the socket. Genesis chapter 32, verses 24-25

- ❖ If necessary God will isolate me to get my attention.
- ❖ God was using Jacob's sin for his good.
- ❖ Inviting God into my crisis means He will change me more than he will change the circumstances.

3. God is willing to wrestle with me over what's important.

Before Jacob was born, he struggled with his brother; when he became a man, he even fought with God. Yes, he wrestled with the angel and won. He wept and pleaded for a blessing from him. There at Bethel he met God face to face, and God spoke to him- Hosea chapter 12, verses 3-4

***What God really desires is an opportunity to deal with me face to face.

***"God loves you just the way you are but He loves you far too much to let you stay that way." Rick Warren

***When you wrestle with God you will never be the same again.

Q. Are you willing to wrestle with God?

4. Change is possible when crisis turns into commitment.

Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is dawn." But Jacob panted, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." Genesis chapter 32, verse 26

- ✓ Up to this point Jacob had spent most of his life trying to manipulate a blessing.
- ✓ Sometimes God doesn't solve your crisis immediately to see if you really want His blessing.
- ✓ If God answered all my prayers immediately I would learn nothing of true value.
- ✓ God still loves me even when he chooses not to rescue me.

Q. Which are you more committed to: your blessing or God's blessing?

5. Change is occurring when commitment turns into confession.

"What is your name?" the man asked. He replied, "Jacob." Genesis chapter 32, verse 27

- ✓ Jacob = "deceiver (manipulator)"
- ✓ For one of the first times in his life Jacob is claiming his sin.
- ✓ Confession is owning my sin with the intent of never doing it again.
- ✓ God is offering Jacob a second chance.
- ✓ Every Christ follower has something that needs to be changed.

Q. What do you need to claim and confess?

6. Change has happened when confession results in conversion.

"Your name will no longer be Jacob," the man told him. "It is now Israel, because you have struggled with both God and men and have won." "What is your name?" Jacob asked him. "Why do you ask?" the man replied. Then he blessed Jacob there.

Genesis chapter 32, verses 28-29

- Israel = "governed by God"
- If you are "in Christ" you have been given a new identity.
- God's extreme make over deals with the internal first but the results will be seen in the external.

Some information from this talk has been taken from the teachings of Rick Warren and Jon Courson.

Next week: Is God Pro-life or Pro-choice