



## 2019 August Series: All in the Family

### Message #1: Family Drama

#### Getting the Nod:

#### Video: **Family Horror**

**Family.** Love them and tolerate them! Adore them and sometimes flee from them for short periods of time. Laugh with them and cry with them. We hold them close and sometimes we close them off. **Family.** The best of us and the black sheep of us. Our homes can be both a beautiful place and a battlefield.

**This reality is not out of the eyesight of God!** We just came out of a month of powerful activity and a bunch of miracles and reasons for celebration... all because we decided to make faith a verb. I'm certain that we are supposed to keep it that way for the length of our lives! Even though our faith can test to our limits most by our families...

**Illustration on the Pastor's Changing Perceptions:** A young minister, with very small children, preached to his congregation on the theme, "10 ways to raise good and godly children." Some years later, with his children entering their teens, he returned to his theme, but the same sermon was entitled: "10 suggestions for raising good and godly children". Several years later, with his children now in their late teens, the sermon got another airing, this time presented as, "Feeble hints for fellow strugglers."

Life is full of drama. But the worst dramas I've ever seen were family dramas. Maybe you can relate to this truth. Those we love the most can be the ones who hurt us most.

**Transition:** You know the Bible has family dramas! Sarah and Hagar; Jacob and his Father-in-law Laban; Joseph and his brothers; even blended families and sibling strife!!! So, the Bible is where we will go this month to address what's ALL IN THE FAMILY!!

#### Connecting Us:

NKJV | Ge 25:19-34 This is the genealogy of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham begot Isaac. 20 Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah as wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian. 21 Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived. 22 But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If all is well, why am I like this?" So she went to inquire of the LORD. 23 And the LORD said to her: "Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger." 24 So when her days were fulfilled for her to give birth, indeed there were twins in her womb. 25 And the first came out red. He was like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau. 26 Afterward his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. 27 So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents. 28 And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob. 29 Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. 30 And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." Therefore his name was called Edom. 31 But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day." 32 And Esau said, "Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to

me?" 33 Then Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob.

### Background and Comments on Jacob:

- **At 130 years of age**, Jacob stood before Pharaoh and said, "My years have been few and difficult."
- **Here was a man on whom God fixed his love upon even before he was born**, but his life had been fraught with many ups and downs.
- **There is no doubt that Jacob often thought his life was a righteous contradiction!** So many people that I have ministered to over the years have said, "This is not the way it is supposed to be when God promises to bless your life."
- **We all learn the same lesson Jacob learns:** To live in this sinful world and to also know God... is to come to this reality... we often face difficulties that aren't prayed away, and we are to struggle right alongside him.
- In some ways, Jacob's years of difficulty were less than blessed and highly favored... and in other ways— Jacob experienced difficulty mostly by taking things into his own hands—Jacob made his life with God especially difficult.

### Transition:

## God's Take on Jacob and Esau's Family Drama:

### Jacob and Esau's Drama:

#### 1. The family God blesses may not start out well.

- By the time we get to Genesis 25:19-34, we've **already heard the promise God made to Abraham** (Genesis 12:1-3).
- **The tension in Genesis is what Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph—will** do when that promise seems threatened. Will they trust God, or will they take matters into their own hands?
- **Rebekah and Isaac remained childless for 20 years**, but unlike Abraham and Sarah, they prayed and waited on God, and God answered their prayers, and Rebekah became pregnant with twins.
- **Still, the pregnancy was unbearable**, because the two boys were in a great struggle with each other in the womb.
- **Sarah inquired of the Lord in her distress**, and the Lord offered a troubling word: "The older will serve the younger."
- **That's not how life was supposed to work in the ancient culture**—the firstborn child was prized—so Rebekah knew a complicated life awaited her.
- Here's the takeaway: the life God blesses may not be the life you'd choose... but is being orchestrated by God for a purposeful future. Don't be dismayed...
- NLT | Is 41:10 **Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.**
- NLT | Mt 6:31-33 **"So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?'** 32 These things dominate the thoughts of

unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. 33 Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

- It says that God already knows your needs... and He will provide everything we need if we seek His kingdom first!!

## 2. **The family God blesses may not be the family they hoped for.**

- In these personal struggles, we learn to treasure God's promises, to keep walking toward the glorious city we cannot yet see, to believe that if God is all we have, we have enough. And to be thankful... even though we have these struggles...
- **Illustration of the Young Boy Saying Grace:** A family sat down at the table and the dad asked his young son to "say grace" over the meal. While the family waited, the little boy quickly eyed every dish which his mother had prepared; then he bowed his head and prayed, "**Lord, I don't like the look of it, but thank you — I'll eat it anyway.**" It is always better to close your eyes when you pray during times of struggles... it allows us to focus on our invisible God!!
- **When God himself seems to complicate the life you thought he would bless, what should you do?** Do what Isaac and Rebekah did—pray, inquire of the Lord.
- **Review God's promises with God in the room.** Tell him again and again that you're putting your full weight on those promises.
- **Then you wait and trust God.**

## 3. **In this drama, choose the faith that treasures God's blessing.**

- In Jacob's story we see the character traits of Esau and Jacob. Specifically, Jacob was always focused on tripping up his older brother in an effort to be first.
- In verse 28 and following, the plot thickens. When Esau comes in from the open country and says he has a raging hunger, Jacob, who is making some stew, sees an opportunity.
- Jacob gives Esau some food in exchange for Esau giving Jacob the birthrights and Jacob would now get a double portion of the estate, serve as a makeshift family priest, etc.
- **Isaac's family had an "heirloom" of great value—the promise that God would make a great nation from the seed of Abraham—yet he sold that promise for stew!** • The text says that Esau "despised his birthright." All he cared about was eating. Hebrews 12:16
- **Esau's failure was not that he was hungry or impetuous; it was that God didn't matter to him.**
- **Here's the takeaway: while it is true that the life God blesses may not be the life you'd choose; we must have the faith and foresight to treasure the life God blesses.**
- **Jacob, for all his conniving, saw what mattered in life.** He understood how valuable God's blessing was. **His chief failure was taking things into his own hands**, rather than trusting God's promise. For that reason we must follow the passage in Proverbs...
- NKJV | Proverbs 3:5-6 **Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.**

**Transition:** You might be someone who is in a place where you don't feel blessed by God... and find it hard to choose faith as your response. And maybe your home could be defined best as dramatic... here are a few suggestions to consider in handling your family drama...

## Our Action Response:

### Handling Our Family Drama:

1. **Don't seek the quick fix, seek the Holy Spirit.** NLT | Ro 8:26 *And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.*
2. **Don't sell out for less, surrender for God's something better.** NLT | Mk 8:35 *If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it.*
3. **Pray, wait, and trust the Lord.** NLT | Ps 28:7 *The LORD is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving.*

**Transition:** Let me close with this story...

## Closing:

**Final Illustration of Love Finding a Way:** "Grandpa walked into the family room and found his little grandson, Jeffy, standing up in his playpen, crying. "He looked so pitiful, standing there in his little baseball T-shirt and diaper. His face was red and tear-stained from crying. When Jeffy saw his grandpa, his face lit up in a way that smote the old man's heart. He immediately reached up his chubby little hands in supplication. "Out Papa, out!"

"What grandpa could resist such a plea? Not this one! He walked over to the playpen and reached down to lift his little buddy out of captivity and distress. "Just then, however, Law and Order stepped into the room. "Jeffy's mother walked out of the kitchen with a dishtowel in her hand and spoke sternly. "No, Jeffy! You are being punished. You have to stay in bed! Leave him right there, Dad."

"Oh, fine. Now what's a grandpa to do? His grandson's tears and reaching little hands tugged mightily at his heart- but he didn't want to interfere with a mother's discipline either. "He couldn't stand staying in the same room with the boy, reading his newspaper and pretending to be aloof. Nor could he turn around and walk out the door without feeling like a betrayer to his little pal. What could he do? **"Love found a way."**

**"Since Grandpa couldn't take Jeffy out of the playpen, he climbed in with him.** "If you're in the playpen, Buddy, I'm in the playpen. What's your sentence? How long are you in for?" And finding a big, jolly grandpa suddenly filling his little prison cell, **the little boy found comfort even in his captivity."**

**Transition:** **Love will find a way!!!** God has crawled into our world and our lives... to save us and to help us.

## Faith as a Verb:

As you see on the platform, we have a house representing our homes and a Family Prayer Banner. There are pens for you to use. This banner is going to be our prayer banner for each of us to write down family prayer needs and for the next four weeks there will be prayer warriors assembled to pray over every prayer concern.

You are not to write your name, unless you feel comfortable doing so, and this Family Prayer Banner shall remain here the rest of the month. Let's believe by faith that our families will celebrate answers to those prayers.

So, as the praise team sings... feel free to place your prayer need this morning. Let us pray one last time.