

THE REAL OT
JACOB

The BIG Idea Team, Individual and Family Study Guide

Please take time to run through this study guide with your team, on your own, or with your family so that you can further apply and process the BIG Idea.

Big Idea:

God uses our struggles to shape and mold us into the people we were created to be.

Key Verse:

Read Genesis 32:27-31 (The Message)

The man said, "What's your name?"

He answered, "Jacob."

The man said, "But no longer. Your name is no longer Jacob. From now on it's Israel (God-Wrestler); you've wrestled with God and you've come through."

Jacob asked, "And what's your name?"

The man said, "Why do you want to know my name?" And then, right then and there, he blessed him.

Jacob named the place Peniel (God's Face) because, he said, "I saw God face-to-face and lived to tell the story!"

The Scoop:

The story of Jacob reveals that he has been a deceiver, a conniver, and a con man since day one. He does whatever he has to do to get what he wants. Jacob deceives his brother, his father, and nearly meets his match when he tries to deceive his uncle Laban. He had been wrestling with everybody since the womb until he finally meets his match when he wrestles with God.

Jacob becomes "crippled" when he wrestles with God. Throughout Jacob's life he fights to attain what he wants for himself, but finds out quickly that he could not do this with God. While we may not feel we can directly relate to Jacob, we all wrestle and fight with God for control. God is always present and always pursuing us, but we push him away trying to take control of any and all situations. Often it is not until we have come to complete desperation that we cry to God for help. Jacob has come to the point in his life where he has reached the end of himself and is now completely reliant upon God.

1. What does it look like in your life to wrestle with God?
2. What is the significance of Jacob's name change?
3. How have you seen God positively change your life through struggle?

What's Next? (take home/further processing/application)

Reflect on the struggles in your life and the struggles in the lives of those around you. Look for God in tough situations and pray regularly for an understanding of His plans.