

# Wright Baptist Church

## Sermon: Wrestling with God

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Recap from last week:

God is sovereign

God is in control

We will get through this

We will be better for it

The Gospel will go forth

Our God will be glorified

In **John 10:10** Jesus offers an abundant, full, and meaningful life. But what does that kind of life look like? Some have misunderstood Jesus to mean that a choice to follow Him is a “get out of jail free” card from life’s hurts, pains, and struggles.

But if we read more of what Jesus taught us, we see:

-life has its challenges

-we are vulnerable to pain and hurt

-we will be tested

-we will have struggles

-we will experience sorrow

**BUT, WE WON'T DO IT ALONE...HE WILL BE WITH US!**

Central to Jesus' teaching: HIS PRESENCE!

**Matthew 28:20**

**John 15:4**

In this season of our lives, we're all doing life differently. To a certain extent, we're all struggling:

-new schedule

-new way of kids doing school (at home)

-new way of working (at home)

-lack of being social, gathering with larger groups

So I have a question for you: **WHAT ARE YOU WRESTLING WITH RIGHT NOW?** Take a few moments and write that down:

I want to show you a place in Scripture where a guy wrestled with God one night and walked away from that experience changed forever. It changed his *identity*, his *walk*, and his *legacy*.

## **LET'S READ: Genesis 32:22-32**

So let's peel this apart and look at **3 things** God did for Jacob during this divine wrestling match:

### **1) God changed Jacob's identity**

**Genesis 32: 28**, "Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans **and have overcome.**"

-Jacob - from the Hebrew meaning "to follow, to be behind"

-Israel - from the Hebrew meaning, "to struggle, to contend, to fight"

**BUT DON'T MISS THIS...Jacob OVERCAME!**

-the wrestling match didn't defeat him

-it didn't even define him

-and notice, God did not overpower him...

If you are in Christ, you are a new creation (**II Corinthians 5:17**).

And this struggle you're going through doesn't have to defeat or define you. God is bigger than your struggle and you can be an overcomer!

So while God didn't overwhelm him, he certainly left Jacob with a reminder:

### **2) God changed Jacob's walk**

**Genesis 32:25-32**, *When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man... 31 The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip. 32 Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob's hip was touched near the tendon.*

Why do you think God touched Jacob's hip this way?

I think it was a reminder to Jacob of this divine encounter with God...the moment God changed *his identity* and *his legacy*.

This could be YOUR MOMENT!

All that we're going through, this adversity that is bringing out your true character (from last week: *adversity brings out one's true character*) could be your moment you'll look back on the rest of your life and remember the changed that occurred in your life!

### **3) God changed Jacob's legacy**

What do we remember Jacob for today?

Abraham's grandson, the son of Issac and Rebekah, and the patriarch of Israel, having 12 sons who were the 12 tribes of Israel. Jesus himself descended from the house of David and *tribe of Judah*.

Do a *Google* search on Jacob of the OT, and what you'll see overwhelmingly is his Godly legacy, not his screwups as a young person!

How will you walk away changed from this event in human history?